

**Statement by Dr. Yumiko Tanaka**  
**Representative of Japan**  
**62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women**

**14 March 2018, New York**

Madam Chairperson,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and respect to you, your fellow Bureau members and all those involved in your dedicated efforts to organize this meeting.

Madam Chairperson,

Japan has been making numerous efforts, both domestically and internationally, in order to realize a society where all women, including those who live in rural areas, can play active roles to achieve Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. In Japan, in order to improve the working conditions of women in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors, we encourage the farmers to make the “Family Management Agreement” which negotiates gender-equal working conditions including salary, leave and distribution of household work based on family discussion. Approximately 60,000 rural families have already signed this agreement today.

In addition, as well as setting concrete numerical targets for 2020, we are promoting the participation of women farmers in the decision-making processes through increasing the female percentage of committee members and executives in Agricultural Co-operatives. We also promote the creation of new products and services by connecting experiences of women farmers with various private sector technologies –called *Nougyou Joshi* project- as well as to train young women farmers who can be next-generation leaders. In 1988, the Government of Japan designated March 10<sup>th</sup> as “Rural Women’s Day” and since then, local governments and agriculture, forestry, and fishery associations hold commemorative events around the date all over Japan.

Madam Chairperson,

In order to promote rural women's empowerment in partner countries, Japan have been providing international cooperation including grant aid and technical cooperation. For example, in Africa, we are currently providing gender awareness programs for both male and female farmers to change their stereotyped gender roles, such as male managers and female laborers, in smallholder horticultural projects. As a result of conducting various capacity development activities, women's participation increased in management, which contributed to their income increase and sustainable agri-business.

Moreover, we are contributing to improving women's lives in rural areas through providing assistance in gender-responsive rice production technology, agricultural product processing and marketing, "One-Village-One-Product," formation of main producing area and branding, and food value chain development. Last month, the Embassy of Japan in Kenya held a workshop on women's empowerment in agricultural sector in cooperation with Kenyan Ministry of Agriculture and FAO.

Furthermore, Japan announced a contribution in the amount of \$50 million to the "Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi)," which was launched at the G20 Summit July 2017 to support women entrepreneurs in developing countries, in addition to the contribution of over \$3 billion to promote women's empowerment over the course of three years from 2016 to 2018, which was announced at the third World Assembly for Women in 2016. We will continue our efforts for gender equality in all sectors, including the agricultural, forestry and fishery sectors, in order to overcome barriers and obstacles faced by rural women in developing countries.

Last November, the fourth World Assembly for Women (WAW!) was held in Tokyo. "WAW! in Changing World" was the theme of WAW!2017. Panelists and speakers comprehensively discussed important subjects such as supporting women entrepreneurs, women in the media, redistribution of unpaid work, and women, peace and security. This

afternoon, Japan will hold a WAW! follow-up side-event and all of you are most welcome to attend.

Madam Chairperson,

In Japan, the migration of young women from rural to urban areas is partially causing declining rural population. We believe that, in rural areas, empowering women and girls, improving the enabling environment for them, strengthening women's voice and decision-making powers and supporting their participation in management will realize women's settlement in rural areas, local economic and social development and regional revitalization. In order to make a society where all women shine, we will steadily make efforts, both domestically and internationally, to promote women's empowerment in cooperation with all the relevant actors who share a common goal, including states, international organizations, private sectors and civil societies.

Thank you very much.