

Foreword

The international environment surrounding Japan changes considerably on a daily basis. Amidst this change, the role of Official Development Assistance (ODA) as one of the most important means of diplomacy has become more significant than ever. Japan intends to utilize ODA in a strategic and effective manner under the three pillars described below.

Firstly, in order to achieve a free, prosperous, and stable international community Japan supports countries that share in our universal values such as freedom and democracy as well as our strategic interests. We also support countries working towards democratization and national reconciliation through the use of ODA.

Secondly, the notion of human security is essential. Human security promotes protecting the lives and dignity of people and enables individuals to achieve their full potential, thereby contributing to nation-building and developing societies. Based on the United Nations General Assembly Resolution on human security in September 2012, which was adopted unanimously under Japan's initiative, Japan will continue to emphasize this principle in implementing ODA. We will also work to ensure that Japan's presence in the international community and the trust placed in our country remains firm.

Thirdly, through ODA, we support the export of Japan's infrastructure systems, which are some of the most advanced in the world. At the same time, we intend to contribute to the revitalization of our economy by proactively supporting the overseas activities of Japanese local governments and private companies, including small and medium enterprises (SMEs) possessing advanced technologies. We reaffirm such international cooperation that allows for Japan to grow together with developing countries as a basic principle of Japan's ODA.

Additionally, to effectively address the various issues faced by developing countries, it is important for diverse actors to come together and bear the responsibility. This includes not only the central government, but also local governments, NGOs, private companies including SMEs, and individuals. With each of these entities bringing together knowledge, experience, technology and funds while utilizing their respective comparative advantages, the strengths of Japan can be manifested to the greatest possible extent. Going hand in hand with the people of our nation as a whole, we continue to support and provide assistance for developing countries.

Through the Great East Japan Earthquake, the people of Japan have once again profoundly recognized the importance of disaster risk reduction. Building on our experiences in recovering from many natural disasters, it is necessary for us to share the lessons we've learned with the world. Positioning disaster risk reduction as an important pillar in international cooperation, Japan will take the lead in building disaster-resilient societies.

Japan possesses wisdom and experience learned in the process of overcoming a variety of difficulties. We also have a high level of technology. By concentrating our collective efforts, Japan can contribute to the world in ways not possible by other countries. In order to bring this to fruition, we will strive to strategically and effectively use ODA in a manner that is consistent with the national interests of Japan.

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Minister for Foreign Affairs

岸田文雄

Fumio Kishida

