

Section 3

Japan's International Cooperation (Development Cooperation and Response to Global Issues)

1 Development Cooperation

(1) Development Cooperation Charter and Japan's ODA Performance

More than 65 years have passed since Japan started its Official Development Assistance (ODA)¹ in 1954. Japan's development cooperation policy including ODA has greatly contributed to securing peace, stability and prosperity of the international community and consequently the national interests of Japan for many years.

In recent years, the situation surrounding development is transforming, as indicated by the growing diversity and complexity of the issues facing development countries and the growing roles of non-ODA funds and support. In response to the transformation, in February 2015, the Development Cooperation Charter was decided by the Cabinet to replace its previous ODA Charter. Under the Development Cooperation Charter, taking into account its philosophy toward

development cooperation cultivated over many years and from the perspective of further evolving this philosophy, Japan has established the basic policies of (1) contributing to peace and prosperity through cooperation for non-military purposes; (2) promoting human security; and (3) cooperation aimed at self-reliant development through assistance for self-help efforts as well as dialogue and collaboration based on Japan's experience and expertise. Japan promotes development cooperation under these basic policies, with (1) "quality growth" and poverty eradication through such growth; (2) sharing universal values and realizing a peaceful and secure society; and (3) building a sustainable and resilient international community through efforts to address global challenges.

Under this Development Cooperation Charter, in 2019, Japan provided approximately 15.59 billion US dollars (+10.1% year on year) in ODA², based on the grant equivalent system (GE system)³

1 Official Development Assistance (ODA): For details on Japan's international cooperation, refer to "White Paper on Development Cooperation: Japan's International Cooperation."
https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000017.html



2 The main modalities of ODA from Japan are: grant aid, namely, bilateral fund donations; loan aid, namely, loan for development in developing regions; technical cooperation; and donations or contributions to international organizations. Of these, loan aid accounts for the largest share. Loan aid is typically repaid with interest.

3 The Grant Equivalent system (GE system) calculates ODA loans based on the amount that is equivalent to the grant. The grant equivalent is calculated by applying the terms of the loan, such as amount disbursed, interest rate and maturity, to a formula. The softer the terms of the loan are, the larger the amount will be. Compared to the net flow system (the full amount of loan disbursement is included, but the amount repaid is calculated as a negative figure) that has conventionally been used as the standard method of the OECD/DAC, the GE system reflects Japan's loan aid more accurately.

introduced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) since 2018 data as the standard method for calculating ODA. Japan ranks fourth among the member states of the DAC, following the U.S., Germany and the UK. The ODA/GNI ratio based on the GE system was 0.30%, placing Japan in 13th place among member states of the DAC. In terms of gross disbursements⁴, Japan's ODA rose by 9.7% year on year to approximately 18.92 billion US dollars, once again ranking fourth after the U.S., Germany and the UK.

(2) Development Cooperation in 2020

In 2020, Japan engaged mainly in the following (A to D below) in order to promote strategic and effective development cooperation, with the Development Cooperation Charter positioned at the core of these actions.

A Countermeasures against COVID-19

First, combating the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) marked a major challenge for the international community in 2020. The pandemic crossed national borders and became a global crisis. Countermeasures require the cooperation of the international community and not just the initiatives of individual countries and regions. With this belief in mind, Japan has provided health and medical equipment, and also technical cooperation for reinforcing capacities in the health and medical fields at an unprecedented speed in order to build a resilient medical and health system from a medium- to long-term standpoint in developing countries with vulnerable medical systems, through bilateral cooperation and international organizations. Furthermore, Japan has been providing the COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan up to 500 billion Japanese yen over two years to contribute to maintaining and

revitalizing economic activities in developing countries. Japan's assistance has been lauded by other countries and key figures from other countries have directly stated their appreciation for this assistance to Prime Minister Suga and Foreign Minister Motegi during their visits.

Japan will continue to provide assistance toward vaccines, treatments and diagnostics for overcoming the current COVID-19 pandemic. Japan will also offer assistance for health security in a broad range of fields including water and sanitation and for improving health and medical systems in developing countries in preparation for future health crises.

B Achievement of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)

Second, Japan is promoting concrete initiatives utilizing ODA strategically in order to achieve a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) in the Indo-Pacific region which is a focal point of the world's vitality.

Over the years, Japan has developed "quality infrastructure" for building regional connectivity, assisted in legal system development, offered training on public debt and risk management for ensuring debt sustainability, and capacity building for debt management and macroeconomic policy, and for maritime law enforcement agencies for securing safety at sea (provision of patrol vessels and coastal monitoring radars as well as human resources development, etc.). Japan will continue to offer these in the future.

The development of "quality infrastructure" is an important foundation for achieving FOIP and is particularly necessary in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. From this standpoint, it is important to continue to disseminate and implement the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment, endorsed at the G20 Osaka Summit of 2019 as an international standard, including such

⁴ The total amount Japan contributed as ODA during the year in question (without deductions of amounts repaid by the beneficiary country to Japan during the year in question for loans borrowed in the past)

principles as openness, transparency, economic efficiency in view of life-cycle costs, and debt sustainability. In November 2020, Japan co-hosted the Symposium on Quality Infrastructure Investment together with the OECD, where it stated that it will actively play a role in helping the international community to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic, while touching upon the utility of the OECD Compendium of Policy Good Practices for Quality Infrastructure Investment compiled by the OECD in the same month.

▣ Addressing Global Challenges

Third, Japan is working to address global challenges such as achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including combating COVID-19, based on the concept of human security.

Japan will continue to actively promote development cooperation in fields such as health, food, nutrition, women (gender), education, disaster risk reduction, water and hygiene, climate change and global environmental issues. In doing so, Japan will promote visible development cooperation while utilizing collaboration with NGOs working on international cooperation. In addition, Japan will continue to promote humanitarian assistance including support for refugees, peace building and nation building assistance based on the concept of “humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus” to reinforce responses to fundamental causes of conflict, in addition to humanitarian assistance and development.

▣ Diplomatic Efforts in Support of Japan's Economy

Fourth, Japan seeks to revitalize its own economy through the development of developing countries and Japan is promoting initiatives for achieving the growth of both. The “Infrastructure System Overseas Promotion Strategy 2025” approved in December 2020 and “Follow-up on the Growth Strategy” approved in July 2020 call for utilizing

ODA strategically to further encourage the overseas expansion of Japanese companies.

Specifically, in order to have Japan's leading technologies utilized for development in developing countries, Japan will promote the acquisition of business rights and operation rights of Japanese corporations through means such as the provision of grant aid for public projects implemented through public-private partnership and offer technical cooperation that contributes to quality infrastructure investment, such as trade facilitation and securing debt sustainability. Additionally, to encourage the overseas expansion of private companies including SMEs and local governments, Japan will increase the visibility of products and equipment that can help resolve issues in developing countries as well as continuously generate demand for these, and promote overseas expansion assistance for micro-, small- and medium-sized enterprises in the construction industry, including in local regions. Through human resource development, Japan will also contribute to advancing the improvement of the business environment, thereby promoting investment and overseas expansion by corporations.

(3) Safety Measures for Personnel Engaged in International Cooperation Projects

Amidst this approach to development cooperation, personnel engaged in international cooperation projects were heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. From mid-March, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) temporarily repatriated staff excluding managerial staff such as chief representatives and senior representatives of its overseas offices and many company officials also returned to Japan temporarily. Japan's diplomatic missions and JICA's overseas offices actively helped these Japanese nationals leave their respective countries. JICA has been resending its staff to countries that meet certain conditions since mid-July.

Japan will continue to strengthen safety measures for international cooperation projects

further while fully implementing safety measures for personnel engaged in international cooperation projects in terms of preventing the spread of COVID-19 infections and engaging in initiatives based on the final report of the Council on Safety Measures for International Cooperation Projects (August 2016) which focused on counter-terrorism measures.

(4) Initiatives in Major Regions

A East and Southeast Asia

The East and Southeast Asia regions are important to the achievement of FOIP, and the peace, stability, and prosperity in the region are important to Japan, which has a close relationship with the region. Through development cooperation, Japan has helped these regions to resolve various development issues including poverty reduction, by promoting economic growth and human security and contributed to the development of these regions.

Approximately 61.1% of the total bilateral ODA of Japan went to the Asia region in 2019. A large portion of it comprised of support for Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Japan not only provides support toward efforts aimed at overcoming issues faced by ASEAN and further promoting integration, but also places a strong emphasis on support for the building of quality infrastructure and training of industrial human resources to strengthen regional connectivity and develop industrial foundation.

Japan's support for the East and Southeast Asian regions was concentrated on measures against COVID-19 because of the large number of Japanese companies doing business there and the large resident population of Japanese nationals. Specifically, Japan provided a total of approximately 23 billion Japanese yen in health- and medical-related equipment to ten countries and is supporting assistance for improving health and medical systems in these countries through technical cooperation. Additionally, Japan provided fiscal support yen loans totaling approximately 295

billion Japanese yen to five countries to offset the economic impacts of the pandemic. At the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting held in November, a declaration was made that Japan will fully support the establishment of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases as part of its support to ASEAN during the pandemic.

Japan is also advancing cooperation to support initiatives aimed at strengthening the centrality and unity of ASEAN. At the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting held in November, the Japan-ASEAN Connectivity Initiative was launched focusing on quality infrastructure projects totaling two trillion Japanese yen that are already underway. It was announced that through this infrastructure development, the initiative will enhance connectivity in land, sea and air corridors and develop 1,000 human resources over a three-year period. Based on the Japan-ASEAN Technical Cooperation Agreement signed in 2019, Japan provided training on logistics, port administration and measures to combat marine plastics.

Furthermore, Japan is actively providing support for capacity building for maritime law enforcement to ASEAN countries positioned along Japan's sea lanes such as the Philippines and Viet Nam, with the aim of building the free and open international order. Such efforts include providing equipment such as patrol vessels and coastal monitoring radars, as well as human resource development through the dispatch of experts. In addition, Japan is providing consistent support to eradicate domestic and regional disparity, and support for the creation of a sustainable society in areas such as disaster risk reduction, environment and climate change, and energy. At the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting held in November, the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) was announced. Based on the fact that it was confirmed that the principles of the AOIP and FOIP match one another, Japan plans to continue strengthening Japan-ASEAN cooperation going forward in terms of maritime



The first train arriving in the Ho Chi Minh City Urban Railway Construction Project (Line 1) (October, Viet Nam)



Ceremony to mark the partial completion, Patimban Port Development Project (December, Indonesia)



Elementary school building construction support provided through Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (Myanmar)

cooperation, connectivity, the SDGs and economy, which are priority fields of the AOIP.

In the Mekong region, steady progress has been made with cooperation under the “Tokyo Strategy 2018,” a set of guidelines for Japan-Mekong cooperation. At the Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers’ Meeting held in July, Foreign Minister Motegi announced the “KUSANONE Mekong SDGs Initiative” and stated that Japan will support socioeconomic development and achievement of

the SDGs through grassroots efforts in the Mekong region. Under this initiative, Japan provided grant aid for grassroots human security projects in the amount of one billion Japanese yen to five countries in the Mekong region in FY2020. At the Japan-Mekong Summit Meeting held in November, as one of the “five forms of cooperation,” the “Mekong SDGs Investment Partnership” was announced in order to support the implementation of development projects by private companies amid the shortfall of development funds following the economic blow suffered by Mekong region countries at the hands of COVID-19. Under this partnership, Japan will promote the formation of overseas investment projects in the Mekong region. Japan has also been working on projects such as the development of Sihanoukville port in Cambodia and functional improvements at Wattay International Airport in Laos and will continue to contribute to enhancing connectivity in the Mekong region under “Tokyo Strategy 2018.”

B Southwest Asia

Southwest Asia holds strategic importance as a marine transportation hub that connects East Asia with the Middle East, and is also a region with immense economic potential, such as India, where economic growth and massive infrastructure demand are anticipated in the future. On the other hand, the region still faces many unresolved challenges such as undeveloped infrastructure, poverty and natural disasters. Japan provides a range of assistance through ODA to assist the region in overcoming these challenges, bearing in mind the improvement of the investment environment for Japanese companies, and ensuring human security. The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has also had a substantial impact on Southwest Asia due to its social and economic vulnerabilities along with an underdeveloped medical system. As a measure against COVID-19 in Southwest Asian countries, Japan has provided health- and medical-related equipment to seven countries, totaling five billion Japanese yen, and assisted in the enhancement of



Signing Ceremony of the Exchange of Notes for Grant Aid aimed at supporting measures against COVID-19 (June 7, Malé, Maldives; Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Maldives)

health and medical systems through JICA's technical cooperation as well as through international organizations. In addition, Japan has provided a total of 120 billion Japanese yen in fiscal assistance yen loans to three countries, taking into account the economic impacts from the pandemic.

India, which has the largest population in Southwest Asia, has been one of the largest recipients of Japanese yen loans. As part of its support for the development of economic and social infrastructure including electricity and transportation infrastructure that contribute to enhancing connectivity and strengthening industrial competitiveness, Japan has assisted with the construction of subways in a number of cities and road construction in India's northeast. In addition, Japan has supported India's sustainable and inclusive growth through such projects as those in the forestry sector including afforestation activities as well as those in the health sector that help improve health and medical services for women and children.

With regard to Bangladesh, Japan, under the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B) initiative, has provided support which contributes to strengthening domestic and regional connectivity, developing infrastructure, and improving the investment environment. A large-scale influx of displaced persons from northern Rakhine State, Myanmar, and prolonged evacuation have resulted in the deterioration of humanitarian situations in camps for displaced persons and has also had

a severe impact on the living environment of the surrounding host communities. In response to this situation, Japan provided support through international organizations and NGOs in the areas of water and hygiene, health and medical care, food security, livelihood assistance, education and environmental conservation.

In Sri Lanka, Japan provided equipment for countermeasures against illegal drugs and food aid for improving children's nutrition in partnership with the World Food Programme (WFP).

C Pacific Island Countries

In addition to being Japan's neighbors connected by the Pacific, the Pacific Island countries also share deep historical ties with Japan. Moreover, as these countries possess a vast exclusive economic zone (EEZ, or waters over which a country's economic rights extends), they are a key region for Japan's maritime transportation, and provide vital fishing grounds for Japan's distant-water bonito and tuna fisheries. As such, the stability and prosperity of the Pacific Island countries are of great importance to Japan.

The Pacific Island countries share common issues that are unique to small island states, such as smaller economies that are dependent upon primary industries, territories that are scattered over a wide ocean area, difficulty in breaking into the international market, and vulnerability to damages from natural disasters. In light of these circumstances, Japan, as a good partner of the Pacific Island countries, is providing support to boost their autonomous and sustainable development.

At the 8th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM8) held in Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture, in May 2018, with the pillars of (i) free, open and sustainable oceans; (ii) strengthening the foundations for resilient and sustainable development; and (iii) revitalization of people-to-people exchanges, and based on the achievement so far, Japan announced its commitment to continuing robust development assistance as before in keeping with the achievement so far. Japan also



Before reconstruction



After reconstruction

Before and after the Project for Reconstruction of the Nippon Causeway (Kiribati; Photo: Dai Nippon Construction Co., Ltd.)

announced to further strengthen human resource development and exchanges (5,000 people over a three-year period), which are the foundation for growth and prosperity. Steady progress is being made with cooperation based on this policy. Japan is implementing concrete initiatives such as bilateral cooperation on basic infrastructure such as ports and airports as well as technical cooperation targeting multiple countries in areas such as illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing (IUU), disaster risk reduction, waste management that contributes to measures against marine plastic waste, and climate change issues.

However, the COVID-19 pandemic limited the movements of people and goods, causing a major economic blow to the Pacific Island countries. Japan has provided a total of four billion Japanese yen in health- and medical-related equipment and support for improving health and medical systems through technical cooperation in order to assist the Pacific Island countries in combating COVID-19. Japan also approved fiscal assistance yen loans amounting to a total of 42.5 billion Japanese yen for Papua New Guinea, Fiji and the Solomon Islands in order to support the economic recovery.

In October, the PALM Ministerial Interim Meeting for PALM9 was held. The Pacific Island countries stated their strong praise and deep appreciation to Japan for steadily implementing its commitment to support in all the fields designated as pillars of cooperation at PALM8.

D Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin America and the Caribbean is a region with which Japan has enjoyed friendly relations for a long time. The region also has deep historical ties with Japan, as demonstrated by the fact that more than 2 million Japanese descendants, known as “Nikkei,” reside in the region. The region is a major supplier of resources and food, as well as a potential emerging market with gross regional production exceeding 5.5 trillion US dollars. On the other hand, as many countries in the region are facing challenges such as rectification of income inequality within country, response to natural disasters, and achievement of the SDGs in each country, Japan is engaged in various cooperative efforts while also taking into account the circumstances of each country in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Japan is providing health- and medical-related equipment to 18 countries in Latin America, totaling 7.9 billion Japanese yen, to help combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, Japan is also providing assistance to 17 countries through JICA’s technical cooperation for the improvement of health and medical systems in those countries as well as providing assistance to this region through international organizations.

Additionally, in response to the hurricane-related damages in November, Japan provided emergency aid supplies (tents, sleeping pads and blankets) to Colombia, Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala. Japan also provided support based



"Hand-washing COVID-19 (novel coronavirus disease) countermeasure training" in Totonicapán Department (September 22, Guatemala; Photo: JICA)

on the needs of each country; for example, Japan offered food aid to Haiti, which faces serious famine, and provided algae removal equipment to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) (Antigua and Barbuda as well as Grenada) experiencing substantial impacts to marine fisheries and tourism industries due to the accumulation and decay of sargassum seaweed along their shorelines.

In recent years, there have been concerns over the increase in the number of migrants from Central American countries to the United States, which results in deterioration of public security. As such, alleviating poverty, one of the causes of migration, has become an urgent issue that has to be addressed. Japan provided assistance through the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and WFP, to Guatemala and Honduras to curtail immigration and emigration caused by economic distress and to reintegrate migrants in communities to which they return. Recently, deterioration in social and economic conditions in Venezuela has also resulted in a large number of displaced persons. In response to this, in Peru, Japan is working with the IOM to provide food support and vocational training to displaced persons, and capacity building to Peru, which has accepted displaced persons. In Venezuela, Japan

partnered with the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) to provide assistance to increase access to regular vaccinations of children and expectant mothers.

E Central Asia and Caucasus

Central Asia and Caucasus are surrounded by Russia, China, South Asia, the Middle East and Europe. The stability and development of this region are also important for the development and stability of the whole of Eurasia, including Japan. Japan supports the "open, stable, and self-sustained" development of Central Asia and the Caucasus region. Japan supports nation building that allows fundamental values such as human rights, democracy, market economy and the rule of law to take root for long-term stability and sustainable development in this region, while also taking into account broad-based views covering neighboring regions including Afghanistan and Iran.

Japan is providing health- and medical-related equipment to six countries, totaling 2.5 billion Japanese yen, as a measure against COVID-19 in Central Asia and Caucasus. In addition, Japan is providing support to three countries for improving health and medical systems through JICA's technical cooperation as well as providing assistance



X-ray diagnostic system provided to the Tashkent Region Cancer Clinic (September 10, Uzbekistan; Photo: JICA)

to this region through international organizations. During the Foreign Ministers' Special Video Conference of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue in August, Foreign Minister Motegi stated that as measures against COVID-19 in this region, Japan is actively providing health and medical equipment, technical support through international organizations, provision of Avigan tablets, and exchange of opinions among medical professionals among others, so as to support the initiatives of respective countries.

F The Middle East and North Africa

Securing peace and stability in the Middle East and North Africa regions, which are the geopolitical keys, is crucial not only for the energy security of Japan but also for the stability of the world. From this point of view, Japan provided comprehensive support until 2018 at a sum of about 6 billion US dollars to stabilize the Middle East, including human resource development for about 20,000 people, as it announced at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit (2016), with a view to achieving peace and stability in the region. Thereafter, Japan is still continuing to provide support to the Middle East and North Africa.

In 2020, Japan provided COVID-19-related support to the Middle East and North Africa regions using ODA. Specifically, Japan earmarked a total of around 13.4 billion Japanese yen for support through international organizations, provided health- and medical-related equipment as bilateral assistance, and offered a loan to improve the health and medical system to Morocco.

With regard to Syria, where civil war has been prolonged, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakatani Shinichi participated in Supporting the future of Syria and the region, Brussels IV Conference, co-organized by the EU and UN in June 2020. Under its policy of providing humanitarian assistance to all Syrians facing difficulties, Japan has provided more than 2.9 billion US dollars to Syria and surrounding countries since 2012, and Parliamentary Vice-Minister

for Foreign Affairs Nakatani stated that Japan will continue to fulfill the role in improving the humanitarian situation in Syria going forward. Furthermore, in order to foster human resources who could contribute to Syria's future reconstruction, 95 Syrian students have been accepted in Japan since 2017.

In regard to Palestine, based on the Corridor for Peace and Prosperity initiative with the aim of promoting economic and social development for Palestine promoted through cooperation between Japan, Israel, Palestine and Jordan, Japan assists the development of Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP). Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki Keisuke attended the Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLIC) Ministerial Meeting held in June, where he stated that Japan will continue to create an environment for peace in the Middle East by promoting its own unique initiatives.

In Yemen, where a severe humanitarian crisis is still ongoing, Japan has provided more than 300 million US dollars in support since 2015. At the High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen held in June, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki stated that Japan will continue its support. Additionally, in 2020, Japan continued to offer humanitarian assistance and provided cooperation in the field of mental healthcare through partnerships with international organizations.

In Afghanistan, where the reconstruction progresses, peace negotiations were initiated in September. Japan has provided assistance to encourage the independent economic growth and poverty reduction in the country. At the 2020 Geneva Conference on Afghanistan held in November, Foreign Minister Motegi welcomed the start of peace negotiations and pledged to maintain annual support of 180 million US dollars, the same level as the previous four years, for the next four years on the condition that Afghanistan make progress in reforms. He also stated that Japan prepares to examine additional assistance if progress



Exterior view of E-JUST with establishment of new faculties under Japan's support in progress (November, Egypt; Photo: JICA)

is seen in the peace process.

Human resource development is vital to realize stability in the Middle East in the medium- to long-term. As one example, through the technical cooperation project “Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST) Project Phase 3,” Japan is providing support for the development of industrial human resources as well as science and technology human resources in Egypt, the Middle East and the Africa region. The scholarship program for accepting international students from Africa has been expanded since 2020.

G Africa

Africa has been gradually recovering from the economic depression caused by the rapid drop in natural resource prices around 2014, and continues to attract the attention and anticipation from the international community for its potential, backed by its abundant natural resources and a rapidly growing population. On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on Africa's fragilities in various areas including healthcare and medical sectors. In these circumstances, Japan has provided healthcare and medical equipment to 48 out of 54 African countries through bilateral arrangements as well as collaborations with international organizations, and has made a total donation of 14.8 billion Japanese yen in healthcare and medical equipment to 38 of those countries. Japan also provided assistance through technical cooperation for strengthening

the healthcare and medical system in Africa. In addition, through the longstanding process of Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), Japan has actively implemented programs to support the healthcare and medical system in Africa in a medium- to long-term perspective. These efforts have proven their true value as COVID-19 spread in Africa. The Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research in Ghana for which Japan has supported the establishment and cooperated in training laboratory technicians, was responsible for up to 80% of the PCR tests in the country. Likewise, other healthcare and medical research institutes that have received assistance from Japan, such as the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), are performing as a center for countermeasures against COVID-19 throughout Africa. Japan's support on healthcare and medical sectors has also borne fruit in areas other than COVID-19 measures. For example, as Nigeria was declared wild poliovirus-free in August, Japan had, to this end, conducted a wide range of assistance from vaccine procurement to human resources development in improving response to eradicating polio, for which the Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari also extended his appreciation.

COVID-19 also has a widespread impact on the African society and economy. Japan is implementing measures under each of the three pillars of TICAD7 held in August 2019: economy, society, and peace and stability, making contribution to

respond to the various social and economic issues in Africa.

In the pillar of Economy, Japan has promoted industrial human resource development through the African Business Education Initiative for Youth (ABE initiative) 3.0 and other means, in order to contribute to the promotion of African businesses. The ABE Initiative provides opportunities for youths in Africa to study at graduate schools in Japan and to do internships in Japanese companies. Since TICAD V (2013), under the initiative, Japan has accepted approximately 1,400 trainees through JICA. Furthermore, with a view to strengthening connectivity, Japan will also promote investment in quality infrastructure with a focus on the three priority regions (East Africa Northern Corridor, Nacala Corridor and West Africa Growth Ring). In July, Exchange of Notes on the Project for Improvement of the Tema Motorway Roundabout (Phase 2) (detailed design) was conducted in Ghana.

Under the pillar of Society, Japan is further promoting initiatives toward expanding Universal Health Coverage (UHC). In August, the Exchange of Notes on Health Sector Policy Loan for Attainment of the Universal Health Coverage (Phase 2) was conducted in Kenya. In addition, Japan is providing assistance for developing science and mathematics education and improving the learning environment, in order to help provide high-quality education.

Under the pillar of Peace and Stability, Japan is providing support to Africa-led efforts aimed at establishing peace and stability via support for provision of security equipment and human resource development, under the New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa (NAPSA) (see Chapter 2, Section 8 on page 162).

(5) Approaches to Appropriate and Effective Implementation of ODA

A Approaches to Appropriate Implementation of ODA

In the implementation of ODA, efforts are made

to enhance transparency and quality by listening to the views of external experts at each phase and formulating projects based on these opinions. In the phase of preliminary studies in the implementation of ODA, MOFA holds the Development Project Accountability Committee in public, exchanges views with independent committee members that have knowledge of the relevant field, and affirms the validity of the project. Furthermore, JICA publishes ex-post evaluation results for all projects valued at 200 million Japanese yen or more (2,618 projects published as of the end of January 2021) on the “ODA Mieru-ka Site” after the implementation of the projects in view of enhancing the transparency of the projects. Ex-post evaluations for projects valued at 1 billion Japanese yen or more are conducted by third parties. MOFA conducts third party evaluations at the policy level (such as country assistance evaluations, thematic evaluations and aid modality evaluations) and ex-post evaluations on grant aid projects implemented by MOFA to improve ODA management and ensure accountability. Efforts are made to utilize the lessons drawn from the evaluation results for the policy formulation and project implementation of future ODA. MOFA also publishes the evaluation results on its website.

B Approaches to Effective Implementation of ODA

ODA is implemented through three frameworks corresponding to the needs of the partner country and the scale of the project: grant aid, loan aid and technical cooperation. In order to utilize the limited budget efficiently and achieve a high level of development effectiveness, MOFA formulates a development cooperation policy for each country that defines the priority areas and policies of ODA, taking into account comprehensively the development plans and development challenges of respective partner countries. Moreover, the Rolling Plan is formulated as an appendix to the Country Development Cooperation Policy, with a summary for quick reference on how each individual

Column

Responding to the Largest Postwar Humanitarian Crisis

Currently, the number of refugees and internally displaced persons has risen to the highest level since World War II, to approximately 79.5 million, and the humanitarian crisis that is arising as a result of conflicts and natural disasters is becoming increasingly complex and prolonged. Moreover, the spread of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has further exacerbated the difficulty of providing humanitarian aid. Under such circumstances, Japan, in cooperation with international organizations, is providing efficient and sustainable assistance to meet the growing needs for humanitarian aid.

To ensure that “no one is left behind”: Providing aid to refugees in Syria during the COVID-19 pandemic

Ito Ayaki, Representative, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Representation in Lebanon (former Representative, UNHCR Representation in Syria)

The Syrian crisis, which has created the largest number of refugees since World War II, has marked its 10th year. At present, 5.6 million refugees outside of Syria and 6.6 million internally displaced persons within the country are still waiting for the day they can return to their hometowns. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has dealt an additional blow to this difficult situation, 500 UNHCR staff continue to provide assistance to internally displaced persons and repatriated refugees within Syria every day.

In the neighboring country of Lebanon, which has taken in over 1 million Syrian refugees, repeated lockdowns and economic collapse have led many Syrian refugees to lose their jobs, making it virtually impossible for them to sustain their lives. There has also been intense pressure and criticism against the refugees. Some of these refugees who could not find a way out of the situation attempted to enter Syria from Lebanon in June and July, disregarding the closure of the border between the two countries. The Syrian authorities had concerns over allowing them to enter the country due to the pandemic. As a result, several thousand people were stranded in the “no man’s land” of the border checkpoints between the two countries.

To break the deadlock in this situation, UNHCR obtained permissions from both the governments of Lebanon and Syria to enter the “no man’s land,” assess the situation of Syrians and find a solution while working in cooperation with the Syrian government. As the PCR testing system within Syria has not yet been adequately established, it was decided that a new quarantine facility would be set up as the only emergency measure. This would enable many refugees to be isolated for 14 days. UNHCR, in cooperation with the Syrian Ministry of Health, the Syrian Arab Red Crescent, and NGOs, established a system for accepting 3,000 new people in addition to the existing emergency isolation facilities. As a result, the Syrian government also allowed refugees to enter the country. UNHCR continues to offer comprehensive support to refugees who have returned to their hometowns after the isolation period, and to their host communities.



Newly established quarantine facility (Syria; Photo: UNHCR)



The author (on the right of Mr. Grandi) introducing the quarantine facility to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Filippo Grandi (center front) (Syria; Photo: UNHCR)



Staff of UNHCR and partner organizations preparing to receive Syrian repatriates at the quarantine facility (Syria; Photo: UNHCR)

Humanitarian aid to internally displaced persons in Myanmar during the COVID-19 pandemic

Ono Kyoko, Head of Rakhine Office, United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)

In Rakhine State, located in the western part of Myanmar, there are approximately 230,000 internally displaced persons needing humanitarian aid in areas such as food, health care, water, and education from UN organizations and NGOs. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), taking on a representative role of more than 40 humanitarian aid organizations such as UNHCR and UNICEF, is responsible for the overall coordination of humanitarian assistance and aid strategies, as well as collaboration and negotiations with the Rakhine State government to ensure that aid is delivered effectively.

Out of the 230,000 internally displaced persons in Rakhine State, about 130,000 are so-called "Rohingya"* people who are Muslims, while the remaining 100,000 are ethnic Rakhine people who are mostly Buddhists. In 2012, the Muslims and ethnic Rakhine people who had been living in harmony until then clashed for religious and political reasons, and the displaced Muslims have been forced to live in camps since then. Many of these people have had their citizenship stripped from them with the amendment of the Citizenship Law in 1982, and the situation has worsened further in the past eight years as they became internally displaced persons. They rely on humanitarian assistance for their survival. On the other hand, many of the ethnic Rakhine people, too, have been living in camps in order to escape from the conflicts that had erupted at the end of 2018, between the armed group known as the Arakan Army whom many Rakhine people support, and the military of the Myanmar government.

Under these circumstances, the situation with the COVID-19 pandemic became increasingly severe in Rakhine State in August. There are concerns of COVID-19 spreading in camps where it is impossible for people to maintain any social distance. To minimize the movement of people, many organizations refrained from entering the camps to provide direct assistance, and relied on remote management of assistance rendered through staff living in the camps. However, as there are limitations to remote assistance activities, very little support has been provided in areas such as education and the reinforcement of infrastructure, where specialized skills are required. Despite the circumstances, we strive to continue providing effective humanitarian aid as we tackle various new challenges every day. Closely working with the international community, the UN is also continuing to engage with the Myanmar government to find a political solution as soon as possible that would allow the internally displaced persons to return to their areas of origin and realize their hopes of living independently.



The author (right) and colleagues heading to a camp for internally displaced persons in Pauktaw by an OCHA boat (Photo: OCHA)



Scene at a camp for internally displaced persons in Sin Tet Maw (Photo: OCHA)



Scene at a camp for internally displaced persons in Kyauk Ta Lone (Photo: OCHA)

*The UN uses the term "Rohingya" in recognition of the right of people to self-identity.

ODA project is associated with a specific priority area. Through these efforts, the policy of development cooperation in each country is clearly identified, enabling more strategic projects to be formed across the confines of each framework.

C Efforts with regard to International Discussions on ODA

Japan also contributes actively to international discussions on ODA. The OECD/DAC is advancing efforts to modernize ODA, including changing the ODA calculation rules for debt relief and promoting the mobilization of private-sector funds. Japan also strives to ensure that ODA is aligned with the actual situation, and that efforts by donors are reflected accurately.

From 2019 to 2020, DAC Development Cooperation Peer Review for Japan, which is to review policy and implementation of Japan's development cooperation by other DAC members, was conducted for the first time in six years. Through the process, discussions were held on more effective development cooperation. While Japan was highly assessed for its promotion of quality growth and human security in accordance with the Development Cooperation Charter, efforts in addressing global issues, and human resource development cooperation through capacity building, recommendations were made to increase its ODA budget to reach the target of 0.7% of GNI.

D Efforts toward Promoting Understanding of ODA

It is vital to have the understanding and support of the people when implementing development cooperation. To that end, efforts are made to promote understanding among the citizens through the effective dissemination of information. In addition to promotions through events with participants, MOFA is also putting effort into introducing Japan's development cooperation activities around the world in an easy-to-understand manner through the production of the short animation series "Go! ODA-Man" based on the

popular anime "Eagle Talon," and the simulation game "You can be an ODA-Man too!" This short animation series is available to the public through MOFA's YouTube account, and is also broadcast on trains such as Tokyo Metro with the aim of reaching a wide audience. MOFA also dispatches officials to educational institutions and other organizations, and actively conducts "ODA Delivery Lectures" as a part of its efforts to promote understanding of development cooperation, including virtual lectures online in FY2020.

In addition, MOFA makes active efforts in overseas publicity, including plans for tours to its development cooperation project sites for the local media so that they will also cover Japan's cooperation, and issues PR pamphlets and materials in English and local languages.

2 Response to Global Issues

(1) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda)" is a set of international development goals to be achieved by 2030, which was adopted at the UN Summit in September 2015 as a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) formulated in 2001. The 2030 Agenda sets out international development goals for realizing a society that is sustainable, diverse and inclusive, and where "no one is left behind," by 2030.

The 2030 Agenda lists the "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" consisting of 17 goals and 169 targets that are interrelated and closely linked to each other, and which serve as development goals for the whole of the international community including developed countries.

After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Japan first built a foundation for the implementation of the SDGs by establishing the SDGs Promotion Headquarters headed by the Prime Minister and composed of all cabinet ministers as members, and formulating the SDGs Implementation

Guiding Principles that set out Japan's medium- to long-term strategy toward the achievement of the SDGs and eight priority areas that Japan will place particular focus on. Furthermore, Japan puts great importance on public-private partnership for the implementation of the SDGs, and established the SDGs Promotion Round Table Meeting, bringing together stakeholders from a wide range of fields including the private sector, civil society, experts, and international organizations. It also engages in the exchange of views on initiatives by local governments and businesses toward the promotion of the SDGs, measures for the empowerment of women and the next generation, and strengthening cooperation with the international community among others.

At the ninth meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters held in December 2020, key initiatives of relevant ministries and agencies toward the achievement of the SDGs were decided as the "SDGs Action Plan 2021." This Action Plan sets out four pillars to generate behavioral change in society as a whole in order to realize an era of with- and post-COVID19 with a virtuous cycle of economy and environment, which is agile and resilient, where the SDGs have been achieved: (i) countering infectious disease and preparing for next crises; (ii) business for building back better and growth strategies through innovation; (iii) SDGs-driven regional revitalization, and creating of a virtuous cycle of economy and environment; and (iv) accelerating actions through empowerment and strengthening bonds among people. In line with these, Japan will further promote efforts toward the achievement of the SDGs in both the aspects of domestic implementation and international cooperation.

On the same day as the ninth meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters, a conferment ceremony for the fourth Japan SDGs Award was held to commend companies and organizations that have put in place excellent initiatives toward

the realization of the SDGs. This year, Minnadenryoku, Inc. (Setagaya Ward, Tokyo Prefecture) received the SDGs Promotion Headquarters Chief's (Prime Minister's) Award for its efforts to promote intercommunity cooperation through renewable energy under the concept of "Face-to-face electricity TM."

In terms of international activities, at the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July, Foreign Minister Motegi emphasized the importance of international collaboration in addressing the spread of COVID-19. He commented on Japan's efforts in providing support in response to COVID-19 in many developing countries via bilateral arrangements or international organizations based on the philosophy of the SDGs, "leaving no one behind", as well as the concept of human security, which focuses on each individual in a vulnerable situation. Additionally, he highlighted Japan's proactive efforts aimed at achieving universal health coverage (UHC) through enhancing the health-care system. With year 2020 being the start of the Decade of Action to achieve the SDGs, he stressed that Japan will cooperate with the international community and continue to accelerate efforts aimed at realizing the SDGs building upon their philosophy. As we advance, Japan will continue to make the best use of various opportunities to promote its stance as a strong supporter of the SDGs to the world.

On the other hand, to achieve the SDGs by 2030, it has been estimated that there is an annual funding shortfall of approximately 2.5 trillion US dollars (approximately 280 trillion Japanese yen)⁵. In July, the advisory panel to consider new funding mechanisms for SDGs that was set up to discuss topics of this financing gap submitted the summary of its final discussion to Foreign Minister Motegi. With reference to this summary, Japan will continue to consider response measures to issues related to financing.

⁵ Source: The World Investment Report 2014, UNCTAD

A Human Security

Human security is a concept that pursues the right of individuals to live happily and in dignity, free from fear and want, through their protection and empowerment. Japan positions human security as a guiding principle that lies at the roots of Japan's development cooperation in the Development Cooperation Charter approved in 2015. Japan has led discussions on human security in the UN, and supported the dissemination and implementation of the concept of human security by UN organizations through the contribution of a cumulative total of about 47.8 billion Japanese yen by the end of 2019 to the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, established in 1999 by Japan's initiative. Furthermore, in the area of bilateral cooperation, Japan has also put effort into the dissemination and implementation of this concept through support for Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects. The SDGs, which advocate a people-centered approach and the vision of leaving no one behind, also position human security at its core.

The spread of COVID-19 is a human security crisis, posing a threat to the lives, livelihoods and dignity of people around the world. Actions based on the human security concept are crucial in order to overcome this crisis. At the General Debate of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly held in September, Prime Minister Suga addressed that Japan will accelerate efforts to achieve the SDGs and to tackle global issues, by looking to the human security concept of the new era in responding to various challenges, and proposed to tap into the wisdom from around the world to deepen discussions.

B Approaches in the Area of Disaster Risk Reduction

200 million people around the world are affected by disasters every year (90% of the victims are citizens of developing countries) and the annual average loss incurred by natural hazards extends to approximately 140 billion US dollars according

to estimates by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). Disaster risk reduction is essential for realizing poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Japan makes the most of its expertise in disaster risk reduction, built up through numerous experiences with disasters, to actively promote international cooperation. At the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai in March 2015, Japan took the lead in the adoption of the "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030," a guideline for efforts by the international community. Japan also announced the "Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction" as its independent contribution, which includes provision of 4 billion US dollars toward cooperation and training of 40,000 people in the four years from 2015 to 2018. With the achievement of these goals, the Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction Phase 2 was announced in June 2019, under which Japan plans to provide support to at least 5 million people from 2019 to 2022, in areas such as flood measures.

Coinciding with World Tsunami Awareness Day (November 5), proposed by Japan and enacted unanimously at the 70th UN General Assembly held in December 2015, Japan has hosted the High School Students Summit on "World Tsunami Awareness Day" for four times since 2016. High school students from countries around the world are invited to this event, and through practical learning about Japan's history of tsunami, recovery from earthquake disasters, and preparations for a possible Nankai Trough earthquake, the participants make proposals for future challenges and implementation in their home countries. In 2020, in light of the spread of COVID-19, Japan, in cooperation with the UNDRR and other organizations, supported the virtual holding of the Third World Tsunami Museum Conference, as well as the tsunami related training program for female administrative officers and formulating tsunami evacuation plans for schools in the Asia-Pacific

region. Japan will continue to share the experiences and lessons drawn from past disasters with the world, and to promote the “mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction” that incorporates the perspectives of disaster risk reduction in the policies of every country.

C Approaches in the Area of Education

In the area of education, Japan is engaged in various forms of educational support around the world under the “Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth,” announced by Japan in line with the timing for the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. At the World Assembly for Women (WAW!) held in March 2019, Japan announced that it will continue its efforts to provide opportunities for quality education and training to at least 4 million women in developing countries by 2020. Furthermore, at the meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters held in June of the same year, Japan announced its commitment to the “Education x Innovation” initiative, which aims to provide education for innovation, and education through innovation to at least 9 million children and youths. At the G20 Osaka Summit chaired by Japan, an agreement was reached on the “G20 Initiative on Human Capital Investment for Sustainable Development,” which places the focus on education, and the commitment to invest in human capital and promote access to inclusive, equitable and quality education for all people was affirmed in the Initiative.

Since the beginning of 2020, schools were shut down due to the spread of COVID-19, resulting in rapid increase of children in various parts of the world whose education opportunities were taken away. In light of this situation, Japan has been providing support to enable continued learning for children through coordination with international organizations, etc., including distance learning and support for reopening schools.

D Approaches in Agricultural Areas

In coordination with the relevant countries, such as G7 or G20 member states and international

organizations, Japan has delivered assistance for agriculture and rural development in developing countries. The G20 Niigata Agriculture Ministers’ Meeting was held in May 2019, during which the participants affirmed the importance of sharing knowledge among countries on various issues related to agriculture and food, such as new technology and the creation of human resources, food value chains, and the SDGs. The “G20 Niigata Agriculture Ministers’ Declaration 2019” was also adopted.

Since 2020, through the support via international organizations and others, Japan has been addressing issues of deterioration of the food system due to the stagnation of distribution of agricultural products as a result of travel restrictions due to the spread of COVID-19.

E Approaches in the Area of Water and Sanitation

Japan has continuously been the largest donor country in the area of water and sanitation since the 1990s and has implemented high quality assistance utilizing Japan’s experiences, expertise, and technologies. Japan proactively participates in discussions in the international community, and tackles global issues in the area building upon its contributions to date. Particularly, since the outbreak of COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020, Japan has been providing support through coordination with international organizations and agencies on the promotion of hand washing among other measures from the standpoint of infection control. The 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit, which had been originally scheduled to be held in Kumamoto in October 2020, was postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak. It has been determined that the Summit will be held in April 2022 on the theme of “Water for Sustainable Development -Best Practices and the Next Generation-.”

(2) Global Health

Overcoming health challenges that threaten lives and hinder all kinds of social, cultural and

economic activities is a common global challenge directly linked to human security. Japan advocates human security which is the basis of the Development Cooperation Charter, while promoting various activities in support of that principle. Japan puts emphasis on cooperation to tackle those issues. As Japan commemorates the 60th anniversary of the National Health Insurance system in 2021, it has become a society of the most healthy and active ageing and is further expected to play a proactive role in the area of health. Considering that investing in the healthcare sector leads to the enhanced energy level of every person, which contributes to the country's economic development and stabilized society, Japan has taken the lead in efforts of the international community to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC)⁶ on the basis of the "Basic Design for Peace and Health," a theme-based policy for the Development Cooperation Charter formulated in 2015.

To date, Japan has proactively advocated for the importance of achieving UHC and sustainable health financing at international meetings and conventions, including G7 and G20 summits, and the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). In 2019, Japan has taken the lead in international discussions on global health, including holding of the UN General Assembly High-level Meeting on UHC, and playing a leading role towards the agreement of political declaration. Additionally, Japan has achieved remarkable results in overcoming health issues such as infectious diseases, maternal and child health, and nutrition improvements through cooperation with a number of countries and various international organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the

United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Global Health Innovative Technology Fund (GHIT).

At Prime Minister Suga's first UN General Assembly since his inauguration in September 2020, he addressed the General Debate by starting out with Japan's global health policy which included response to COVID-19. During his speech, he pointed out the importance to achieve UHC in aiming to leave no one's health behind in implementing measures in response to the spread of COVID-19, which presents threats to human security. He announced that Japan will take an active leading role in international efforts with a focus on 1) full support to ensure fair and equitable access to therapeutic drugs, vaccines and diagnosis in both developed and developing countries; 2) support health system strengthening of each country through hospital construction, equipment preparation, human resource development, etc.; and 3) implementation of measures for ensuring health security, including environmental improvement, such as water, sanitation and nutrition. Moreover, in order to further promote UHC in the international community, Foreign Minister Motegi has hosted the Ministerial Meeting of the Group of Friends of Universal Health Coverage in October, and Prime Minister Suga has attended the Special Session of the UN General Assembly in Response to the Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic in December and stated the importance of achieving UHC.

Japan positions nutrition, one of the cross-sectoral initiatives, as an issue that is related to human security and indispensable for the achievement of the SDGs, and is making efforts to enhance measures directed at improving nutrition ahead of the hosting of the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021, which was postponed due to the spread of COVID-19.

⁶ Universal Health Coverage (UHC) refers to everyone getting quality health services at an affordable cost and being protected from financial risks.

(3) Labor and Employment

It is important to raise income levels through employment, in order to raise the living standards of those living in poverty. Against the background of an expanding supply-chain worldwide, it is necessary to put effort into developing the labor environment, and to realize “decent work” (work that is of an acceptable quality for motivated human beings) around the world. The realization of “decent work” has been positioned as a primary objective of the activities of the International Labor Organization (ILO), which marks its centenary year in 2019.

In view of this, Japan is also engaged in sustainable development cooperation in the field of labor. In 2020, Japan offered technical cooperation to developing countries in the Asia Pacific region, including Southeast Asia and South Asia and the African region (Mozambique), including support for the urgent creation of employment in the aftermath of a natural disaster and amidst COVID-19, the development of labor laws, and improvement of enforcement systems for labor, health and safety, by making voluntary contributions to the ILO and providing support to networks of international labor organizations.

In December, the third Japan-ILO Annual Strategic Consultation Meeting was held online, where Japan and the ILO affirmed the following points: enhanced cooperation for a better future of work where no one is left behind, including response to current issues related to COVID-19; Japan’s financial and human resources contribution to date and further strengthening of partnership in the cooperative assistance for sustainable development in the labor sector; and further reinforcement of Japanese staff within the ILO.

(4) Environmental Issues and Climate Change

A Global Environmental Issues

Awareness is building worldwide on the importance of addressing global environmental issues, as exemplified by the 2030 Agenda, which

embeds environmental goals. Japan is actively involved in conserving the natural environment and realizing sustainable development through negotiations and engagements in various multilateral environmental conventions and relevant international organizations. As the largest donor to the World Bank Group’s Global Environment Facility, a financing mechanism for the major environmental conventions, Japan also contributes to projects that address global environmental issues such as biodiversity and chemical pollution, etc.

(A) Conservation of the Marine Environment

Addressing the problem of marine plastic litter is growing in importance in recent years, given its potential adverse impact on marine ecology, tourism, fisheries, and human health. The problem is caused by factors such as the illegal dumping of waste and incomplete waste disposal. In order to achieve “the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision” that was launched at the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019, which aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050, Japan is working with international organizations, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in areas such as compiling scientific knowledge and providing assistance on building models necessary for measures against marine plastic litter contamination, in providing environmentally appropriate plastic waste management and disposal support in the Asian region.

On December 2, the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, which is comprised of leaders of maritime nations and established to discuss matters such as conservation of marine environments, fisheries and utilization of marine resources, released a joint document titled “Transformations for a Sustainable Ocean Economy” by joint names of 14 heads of states and government, including Prime Minister Suga. This document, states that member countries commit to “sustainably manage 100% of the ocean area under national jurisdiction, guided by Sustainable Ocean Plans, by 2025,” as well

as “we urge all coastal and ocean states to join us in this commitment so that by 2030, all ocean areas under national jurisdiction are sustainably managed.” In order to promote the leaders’ joint document, MOFA and the Ocean Policy Research Institute jointly held a webinar (an online seminar) on December 3. Prime Minister Suga sent a message for this webinar and emphasized the importance of utilizing the maritime power, such as offshore wind power generation, as a countermeasure to climate change. He also highlighted Japan’s projects for addressing the marine plastic litter problem.

(B) Conservation of Biodiversity

The second meeting of the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG2) under the Convention on Biological Diversity, was held in February in Rome, Italy where discussions took place on elements of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, which were to replace the Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Furthermore, in an effort to emphasize the urgency to take actions related to biodiversity at the highest level, and to promote decision making and implementation of the framework, the UN Summit on Biodiversity was held in September in New York as a hybrid meeting which also enabled online participation.

In recent years, the illegal wildlife trade has exacerbated, drawing international attention as one of the key sources of funding for international terrorist organizations. As a follow-up to its provision of elephant anti-poaching operation facilities in Uganda and Mozambique in 2019, Japan decided to provide the same monitoring facility in Zambia in 2020, underscoring Japan’s drive to address this issue seriously.

Japan also contributed to international discussions on promoting conservation and sustainable uses of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, with a view to enhancing sustainable agriculture and food security. At the 1st and 2nd meetings of the Standing Committee on the Funding Strategy and Resource Mobilization

of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture held in July and November, Japan, as a regional representative, provided advice on funding strategy and resource mobilization dealing with support and monitoring to monetary and non-monetary benefit sharing and access to genetic resources under the Treaty.

At the 56th Session of the Council of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) held online in November a new framework to enable efficient implementation of projects to promote sustainable forest management and trading of legally harvested timber were discussed.

(C) International Management of Chemicals and Hazardous Waste

The 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer and the 32nd Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer were held online in November. At the meetings, matters such as the operation of the amended protocol with the addition of hydrofluorocarbon (HFC) as a controlled substance were discussed.

Under the Basel Convention, which regulates the movement of hazardous waste across national borders, Japan is leading the compilation of referencing guideline for parties to the Treaty on the regulation of mercury waste, burning of hazardous waste on land, energy recovery and waste plastic.

Under the Minamata Convention on Mercury entered into force in 2017, Japan is actively contributing to discussions as an expert in the expert meeting on reviewing Annex A Mercury-added Products and Annex B Manufacturing processes in which mercury or mercury compounds are used, as well as in the expert meeting on mercury emissions and releases and their thresholds, as a preparation for the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties for the Convention.

As for the Stockholm Convention on Persistent

Organic Pollutants, parties to the Convention are to formulate and update its national implementation plan in order to fulfill their obligation of the Convention. In December, Japan reflected its measures on chemical substances, which have newly become subject to the regulation in the eighth and ninth meetings of the Conference of the Parties to the Stockholm Convention, into its national implementation plan and submitted it to the Secretariat of the Stockholm Convention.

B Climate Change

(A) Initiatives to Achieve Net Zero GHG Emissions by 2050

In October, Prime Minister Suga declared that Japan will aim to realize carbon neutral with net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. He also expressed that Japan would lead the world's green industry and create a positive cycle of economy and environment. The international community, including UN Secretary-General António Guterres, has expressed their welcome to this declaration of Japan (see the Special Feature on page 301).

(B) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Paris Agreement

Global efforts are essential in reducing greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change; however, the Kyoto Protocol adopted at the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) in 1997 required only developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Paris Agreement was adopted at COP21 held in Paris in December 2015. The Paris Agreement is a fair and effective framework that provides that parties communicate their nationally determined contributions to greenhouse gas emission reductions and undertake efforts toward the achievement of such goals regardless of whether they are developed or developing countries. The Agreement entered into force in November 2016,

and has been ratified by more than 180 countries including Japan (as of December 2020). While the U.S. announced its withdrawal from the Paris Agreement as of November 2020, in January 2021, it declared its re-adoption of the Paris Agreement, and officially adopted it again in February.

Upon the adoption of the Paris Agreement, negotiations commenced on the implementation guidelines of the Agreement toward its full implementation after 2020, and these were adopted at COP24 held in Katowice, Poland in December 2018. While the adoption of implementation guidelines of the market mechanisms was anticipated at COP26, which was scheduled to be held in November 2020, as the parties could not reach a complete agreement in negotiations at COP24 and COP25, due to the impact of the spread of COVID-19, the conference was postponed until November 2021.

Under these circumstances, there was a growing international momentum that sees measures against climate change as important even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, and various UN meetings were held online, including the June Momentum for Climate Change (June) and Climate Change Dialogues (November). In addition, in commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Paris Agreement, the Climate Ambition Summit 2020 was held online on December 12 under the joint host of the UK, France and the UN, aiming to call on the international community to take further actions on climate change. Prime Minister Suga attended the event and articulated Japan's efforts and international contribution.

Japan has also contributed to maintaining the international momentum on climate change through co-hosting events such as the Online Platform in September with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), a ministerial meeting on recovery from COVID-19, climate change and environmental measures.

Toward the Realization of Net Zero Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions by 2050

Japan took a bold step forward in its climate change measures in 2020.

The Paris Agreement, which is a new international framework for addressing climate change, was finally implemented in earnest in 2020. Although international talks on climate change have also been impacted by the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, such as the one-year postponement of the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) (COP26), initially scheduled to be held in November, the international momentum toward addressing climate change seems to be accelerating further, from the perspective of realizing sustainable recovery in the post-COVID-19 world.

Against this backdrop, Prime Minister Suga declared in his policy speech to the Diet on October 26 that, with a view to focusing on the realization of a green society, Japan aims to achieve carbon neutrality, by reducing GHG emissions to net zero by 2050. He also announced a drastic change in the long-standing policy on coal-fired power generation. These declarations promote a shift to a mindset that proactive measures against climate change, which cannot be delayed any further, bring about revolutionary changes in industrial structure and economic society while also contributing to significant economic growth, and indicate a strong resolve to take the lead in driving the world's green industry by creating a virtuous cycle of economy and environment.

The key to the realization of this goal lies in innovations such as hydrogen, next-generation power storage technologies, and carbon recycling. Hence, the "Green Growth Strategy to Support Japan's 2050 Carbon Neutral Goal" was compiled in December. This action plan takes the perspective of industrial policy, and alongside the realization of carbon neutrality by 2050, establishes ambitious goals for 14 sectors with high growth potential and sets out clearly the current situation and future initiatives, while incorporating all policies including budget, taxes, regulatory reform and standardization, and international cooperation.

In March, Japan submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the United Nations under the Paris Agreement, and announced that the review of its reduction target for 2030 will be carried out consistently with the revision of energy mix*, aiming at aspiring figures to reflect further ambitious efforts. In September, Japan commenced a review on the Plan for Global Warming Countermeasures, in order to submit additional information prior to COP26. In October, discussions were commenced with a view to reviewing the Strategic Energy Plan including energy mix.

Prime Minister Suga's declaration in his policy speech to the Diet in October was welcomed by the leaders and ministers of many countries. Prime Minister Suga also conveyed Japan's initiatives at the Climate Ambition Summit 2020 held on December 12 to commemorate the fifth anniversary of the adoption of the Paris Agreement, and took the opportunity of various international conferences such as ASEAN, G20 and APEC to explain Japan's efforts. Toward the realization of the goal of a decarbonized society set out in the Paris Agreement, Japan will communicate its initiatives to the world, as well as deepen collaboration and cooperation with other countries as it continues to lead efforts by the international community.

*An ideal vision as well as outlook for energy demand and supply structure in the future that should be realized when measures are implemented based on the basic direction of the energy policies.

(C) Efforts in Supporting Developing Countries

Developed countries including Japan have provided various supports for developing countries so that those countries can implement sufficient climate change measures. Those supports include financial support, capacity building, and technology transfer. From such perspectives, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) also plays an important role as a multilateral fund that provides support for developing countries to address climate change. In addition to its initial contribution of 1.5 billion US dollars (2015 to 2018), as Japan expressed at the High-Level Pledging Conference for the GCF's First Replenishment held in October 2019 that it would contribute up to 1.5 billion US dollars, the first payment was made in 2020. Moreover, Japan has actively participated in its management as well as policy-making as a member of the GCF Board. By December 2020, the GCF Board has approved 159 projects, which are projected to avoid CO₂ emissions by 1.2 billion tons and increase resilience of 410 million people.

(D) Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)

The JCM is a mechanism for contributing to measures to address climate change on a global scale through diffusion of advanced low carbon technologies, as well as the implementation of mitigation actions in developing countries and evaluating contributions from Japan to GHG emission reductions or removals in a quantitative manner, which are used to achieve Japan's emission reduction target. As of November 2020, Japan has established the JCM with 17 partner countries, and implemented more than 180 projects related to the reduction or removal of greenhouse gases. In 2020, the initiative has steadily produced results, such as through the issuance of credits from projects in Indonesia, Cambodia, Saudi Arabia and Thailand.

(E) Japan's efforts in Climate Change and Fragility Risk

In response to suggestions at the Roundtable Seminar on "Climate Change and Fragility Implications on International Security" held by MOFA in January 2017 and other fora, that Japan will focus on the Asia Pacific and conduct studies and engage in discussions on climate change and fragility, Japan convened the International Conference on Climate Change and Fragility in the Asia-Pacific Region once again in January 2021 following from the conferences in 2018 and 2019, as one of its initiatives on climate change and fragility risk. The 2021 conference was organized under the title of Youth Competition on Climate Change Policy on the theme of Policies for your town to realize a decarbonized society involving senior high school and university students. Participants competed in the event through presentations and sharing their paper on specific policy for realizing a decarbonized society.

(F) Climate Change Measures by Non-State Actors

Measures by non-state actors such as private corporations, local governments, and NGOs are also important in tackling climate change. In Japan as well, non-state actors have made further progress in their efforts, as demonstrated by keen activities of the network of non-state actors, including Zero Carbon Cities in Japan, comprising local municipalities that have declared the goal to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050, Japan Climate Initiative (JCI), which aims to take proactive action in the area of climate change, the Japan Climate Leaders' Partnership (JCLP), a corporate group with the same goal, and "RE Action - Declaring 100% Renewable," a corporate group whose members have established the goal of procuring 100% renewable energy for the electricity required in the operation of their businesses, as well as the increase in the number of Japanese corporations participating in the international

initiative “RE100” and the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)⁷. Japan intends to promote diplomacy in the area of climate change while collaborating with such non-state actor driven initiatives.

(5) Arctic and Antarctic

A Arctic

(A) Current State of the Arctic

There is a risk that rapid changes in the Arctic environment caused by global warming will have a drastic and irreversible impact on the ecology and the lives of those living there, including Indigenous peoples. At the same time, as the decreasing amount of sea ice is expected to expand the navigable area, there have been growing economic opportunities such as the use of the Northern Sea Route and the development of resources. Alongside this, Russia, as the largest arctic country, has announced the Basic Principles of Russian Federation State Policy in the Arctic to 2035 in March and the Strategy for Developing the Russian Arctic Zone and Ensuring National Security until 2035 in October 2020. It is also promoting military facility maintenance, resource exploitation and freight shipping on the Northern Sea Route. Meanwhile, China has also published a white paper on its Arctic policy in 2018 and is observed to be proactively advancing into the Arctic with its participation in resource development, commercial use of shipping routes and governance development, as it has positioned itself as an important stakeholder in Arctic affairs. In 2020, China started in-depth scientific research activities in the Arctic, including the launch of the

Arctic missions of polar-observing satellite BNU-1, and the Arctic expeditions of Xuelong 2, the first Chinese-made ice breaking research vessel. Against this backdrop, the U.S. is also enhancing its engagement in light of changes in the situation of the Arctic, including announcing an over 12 million US dollars economic aid policy for Greenland (Denmark) in April, and reopening the U.S. consulate in Nuuk in June after about 70 years.

(B) Japan's Arctic Policy and International Activities

As for Japan, it is proactively promoting activities in the Arctic with an emphasis on the three areas of research and development, international cooperation and sustainable use, with the Headquarters for Ocean Policy approving “Japan's Arctic Policy” in October 2015 as its basic policy on the Arctic. In addition, the Third Basic Plan on Ocean Policy, adopted by the Cabinet in May 2018, added a separate section on Arctic policy for the first time and positioned it as one of the main policy items in Japan's ocean policy.

In terms of international efforts, since 2013, Japan has appointed an ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs. The ambassador attends international conferences on the Arctic including the Senior Arctic Official's (SAO) meeting of the Arctic Council (AC)⁸, in which Japan participates as an observer, and presents Japan's efforts and views on issues surrounding the Arctic. For example, the Ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs delivered a speech, at the seventh Arctic Circle Assembly⁹ in October 2019 as well as at the ACSAO meeting in November 2020 (both held in Iceland),

⁷ The TCFD was established by the Financial Stability Board (FSB) as a task force on the disclosure of financial information related to climate change, led by the private sector. In its final report, it presented a framework on voluntary information disclosure by corporations pertaining to climate-related risks and opportunities.

⁸ A high-level intergovernmental consultation body established in 1996 with the aim of promoting cooperation, coordination, and exchanges between the eight Arctic countries (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the U.S.), while gaining the involvement of indigenous communities on common issues related to the Arctic region (in particular, sustainable development, environmental protection, etc.). (It is clearly affirmed that it does not address military and security issues.) Japan acquired an observer status in 2013.

⁹ An international conference established by Mr. Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, former President of Iceland and others in 2013 and attended by about 2,000 participants including government representatives, researchers, and business people. Japan has been participating in it since the first assembly with the attendance of the Ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs and other delegates. They deliver speeches at the plenary session, while Japanese researchers present the outcomes of their scientific research at breakout sessions.

which focused on Japan's efforts in the Arctic, including Japan co-hosting the third Arctic Science Ministerial (ASM3) with Iceland, the current Chair of the AC, for the first time in Asia. However, the ASM3 initially scheduled to be held in Tokyo in November 2020 was postponed until May 2021 in light of the spread of COVID-19.

In addition, Japan promotes international cooperation on the Arctic with the relevant countries including the Arctic countries. Through the Arctic Challenge for Sustainability (ArCS) project launched in FY2015 and its successor, the Arctic Challenge for Sustainability II (ArCSII) from FY2020, Japan promotes international cooperation for research and human resource development at research and observation stations in the U.S., Canada, Russia, Norway, and Greenland (Denmark) among other locations. Japan has also sent its researchers to the AC working groups specialized in specific themes, where they present outcomes of their research on the Arctic and contribute to discussions. During a thematic session on Regional Coordination of Marine Issues and Global Commitments at SAO Marine Mechanism, a webinar series held online from September to October 2020, hosted by Iceland, the chair of AC, an ArCSII expert reported on Japan's Arctic policy and international cooperation and cooperation with the local communities for on-site surveys.

B Antarctic

(A) Japan and the Antarctic

Japan has been conducting Antarctic observation surveys utilizing its advanced technology at Syowa Station established in 1957, thereby contributing to global environment conservation and international development of science and technology. Moreover, as one of the original signatories of the Antarctic Treaty, Japan strives to maintain and strengthen the Antarctic Treaty System, which is essential to the peaceful use of the Antarctic, while contributing to the promotion of environmental preservation and international cooperation in the Antarctic.

(B) The Antarctic Treaty

The Antarctic Treaty adopted in 1959 sets forth the following basic principles: (1) the use of the Antarctica for peaceful purposes, (2) freedom of scientific investigations and international cooperation, and (3) a freeze on territorial rights and claims. Among the signatories of the Treaty, 29 countries that carry out substantial activities in the Antarctic have consultations concerning issues in the Antarctic to take actions to promote the goals of the treaty as "Consultative Parties."

(C) The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and the Protection of Antarctic Environment

At the 42nd Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM 42) held in Prague, Czech Republic, in July 2019, discussions were held on recent issues, including the microplastics pollution in the Antarctic Ocean, and the impact of the increase in the number of tourists on the Antarctic environment, taking into account the yearly increase in the number of travelers to the Antarctic region for tourism and other purposes. The 43rd Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM 43) that was scheduled to be held in May 2020 was cancelled due to the global spread of COVID-19, and is now scheduled to be held in Paris in June 2021.

(D) Japan's Antarctic Observation

As for Japan's Antarctic observation activities, based on the ninth six-year plan of the Japanese Antarctic Research program (2016 to 2021), Japan is undertaking efforts to elucidate the role and impact of the Antarctic region on the global system, and in particular, to elucidate the actual conditions of global warming and its mechanisms. To that end, in addition to long-term continuous observation, it is also implementing various research and observation activities, including observations using a large aperture atmospheric radar, which is the only one of its kind in the Antarctic.

3 Science and Technology Diplomacy

Science and technology constitute the foundational elements for peace and prosperity that support socioeconomic development, and play a vital role in ensuring safety and security. By harnessing its own advanced science and technology, Japan promotes Science and Technology Diplomacy, thereby contributing to the development of science and technology at home and abroad, the promotion of relations with other countries, the peace and stability of the international community, and the resolution of global challenges. As part of this effort, Japan places emphasis on initiatives implemented through the activities of the Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In September 2015, MOFA established the post of Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and appointed Prof. Kishi Teruo, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo, as the first Science and Technology Advisor. Following the end of his term in March 2020, Prof. Kishi was replaced by Prof. Matsumoto Yoichiro, President of Tokyo University of Science as the new advisor on April 1. Moreover, since April of the previous year, Prof. Kano Mitsunobu has assumed the post of the Science and Technology Co-Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to support the work of the Science and Technology Advisor. Prof. Matsumoto supports the activities of the Foreign Minister from the perspective of science and technology, and provides advice on the utilization of science and technology in the planning and coordination of various foreign policies to the Minister and relevant divisions.

In September, the Advisory Board for Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy, chaired by Prof. Matsumoto, co-chaired by Prof. Kano and involving 20 experts was established to apply specialized knowledge in all areas of science and technology in the planning and drafting of diplomatic policies. In the future, the Advisory Board

will also conduct discussions on major issues relevant to science and technology and diplomacy, including their relations to security and response to global issues.

Prof. Matsumoto and Prof. Kano endeavor to exchange views with other countries' government science and technology advisors, such as the U.S., UK, and New Zealand in developing and strengthening a network. Meetings of the Foreign Ministries Science and Technology Advisors Network (FMSTAN) were held in July, October and December, in which in-depth discussion was conducted, including response to COVID-19. At the Japan-Sweden SICORP Symposium in November, researchers and government officials discussed the cooperation and strengthening of the relationship between the two countries in order to address issues of an ageing society. In the same month, at the online event hosted by the Japan International Science and Technology Exchange Center (JISTEC) and others, Prof. Matsumoto, together with Dr. Mung Chiang, Science & Technology Adviser to the U.S. Secretary of State, conducted an overview and discussion on science and technology policies and priority issues in Japan and the U.S., the importance of science and technology diplomacy, and Japan-U.S. science and technology cooperation. Furthermore, Prof. Matsumoto regularly hosts science and technology diplomacy seminars aimed at raising the level of knowledge within MOFA.

Japan has concluded 32 science and technology cooperation agreements, and these are now



Appointment Ceremony of the New Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs (April, Tokyo)

in force with 46 countries and the EU.¹⁰ Based on these agreements, it organizes regular joint committee meetings with these countries to engage in intergovernmental dialogue. In 2020, joint committee meetings were held with South Africa, Serbia, the U.S., India and Finland, respectively. Attended by delegates from the relevant ministries and agencies, consultations were held on the current status of cooperation in diverse sectors, and on the future direction of cooperation.

With regard to multilateral cooperation, as a member of the Board of the International Science

and Technology Center (ISTC), which was established to support research for peaceful purposes conducted by researchers on weapons of mass destruction from the former Soviet Union, and now involved in a wide range of research and development such as chemistry, biology, radioactive materials and nuclear power, Japan works to provide support mainly to countries of Central Asia. Japan also participates in ITER projects to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of nuclear fusion energy.

¹⁰ The Japan-USSR Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement was succeeded by Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan on different dates. The Japan-Czechoslovakia Science and Technology Cooperation Arrangement was succeeded by individual agreements with the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993. The Japan-Yugoslavia Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement was succeeded by individual agreements with Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia (country name at the time), Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro on different dates.

Column

Vision and Challenges for Japan's Science and Technology Diplomacy

Prof. Matsumoto Yoichiro, Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

I have been working in the field of research in universities for many years where I have been involved in science, technology and innovation from the standpoint of considering the relationship between society and research. Japan is applying its superior science and technology capabilities to diplomacy and enhancing its diplomatic skills, and by doing so, contributes to the development of science and technology in Japan and the world, to the furthering of relations with other countries, to the peace and stability of the international community, and to the resolution of global issues. In order to support these activities, I assumed office in April as the Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

We are currently faced with the pressing question of how to apply science and technology to resolve various issues. These include the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which has been greatly impacted by the spread of the novel coronavirus infectious disease (COVID-19), and how to advance diplomacy including from the perspective of security, through strengthening Japan's science and technology foundation.

With a view to resolving this wide range of issues, and with the aim of applying scientific knowledge and the appropriate recommendations and advice to the formulation of diplomatic policies, Japan has established the Advisory Board for the Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy comprising 20 expert members in addition to Prof. Kano Mitsunobu, Science and Technology Co-Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and myself, and created a system that is capable of consolidating the knowhow of all the board members. The importance of policy-making based on scientific advice and data science is gaining more and more attention worldwide, and discussions have been held using the international networks with the science and technology advisors and scientists of each country. Particularly with regard to COVID-19 countermeasures, in-depth discussions have been held on how to advance diplomacy based on scientific advice through sharing experiences such as the successes and failures of each country.

Japan's science and technology capabilities are an important tool for its diplomacy. However, there have been concerns in recent years that Japan's research capabilities, as well as science and technology capabilities, are on the decline. To overcome this situation, there is a need to create a mobile environment that facilitates free movement between the respective sectors of industry, academia and government. Within this environment, it is then necessary to enhance research as well as science and technology capabilities, while promoting international cooperation. Furthermore, there is also a need to promote science and technology diplomacy more strategically and effectively by consolidating the scientific expertise held by each government ministry and agency, as well as the fruit of their international cooperation efforts, under the Government of Japan as a whole.

The rise of emerging technologies has made it even more important to ensure the soundness and fairness of research (research integrity), and I believe that the first step toward this is to educate academics about research integrity. In addition, ensuring transparency in research and development is necessary for the proper development of science and technology, and it is important for scientists and research institutions to provide mutual guarantees in this respect when engaging in collaborative research. It is becoming increasingly important to advance collaborative research, and science and technology cooperation with countries that share these values.



The 1st Meeting of the Advisory Board for Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy (The author is seated second from the right of the table) (September, Tokyo)



Prof. Matsumoto at the panel discussion at the Japan-Sweden SICORP Symposium (November, Tokyo)