

2

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

As the international community faces compound crises, including Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the situation in the Middle East, and global issues, where the presence of developing and emerging countries, also known as the Global South, increased, the realization of a world in which "human dignity" is protected has become an even greater challenge to achieve. In this manner, 2023 was a year in which the importance of Japan's development cooperation was reaffirmed as a way to address these issues.

1 Development Cooperation

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

A Revision of the Development Cooperation Charter

In June, the Cabinet decided on the revision of Development Cooperation Charter, showing a new direction for the country's development cooperation (See the Special Feature on page 271). The reason behind the revision, which marked the first in eight years following 1992, 2003, and 2015, includes that the international community finds itself at a major turning point in history. In other words, the international community is facing compound crises (namely; (1) increasingly serious global issues, such as climate change and infectious diseases, and delay in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), (2) serious challenges to the existing international order and the deepening risk

of division, including in supply chains, and (3) the impact on the economies of developing countries and the occurrence of humanitarian crises linked to these crises). The role of development cooperation is becoming increasingly vital in overcoming these crises.

In addition, there is a growing need for development cooperation based on transparent and fair rules in the international community as a whole, given that the debt problem faced by some developing countries has become more serious. At the same time, as the inflow of private-sector financing to developing countries has greatly surpassed public sector funds, including Official Development Assistance (ODA),¹ there is an increasing need to maximize the effects of development through collaboration with various actors, including private sector companies and international organizations, and through the mobilization of new funds.

Against this background, Japan revised its Development Cooperation Charter to present a new direction for the country's development cooperation. Under the new Charter, Japan will further strengthen its engagement with developing countries and make more effective and strategic use of development cooperation as one of the most important tools of its diplomacy.

B Japan's ODA Allocation

In 2022, Japan provided approximately 17.50 billion U.S. dollars (-0.8% year on year) in ODA,² based on the grant equivalent system (GE system).³ Japan ranks third among the member states of the OECD/DAC,⁴ following the U.S. and Germany. The ODA/

¹ ODA : Official Development Assistance

Public funds to promote development cooperation, the main purpose of which is to help improve the economic development and welfare of developing countries.

https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000017.html

² The main modalities of ODA from Japan are: grants including grant aid, debt relief, grants through multilateral institutions and technical cooperation, government loans, and contributions and subscriptions to multilateral institution.

³ Grant Equivalent System (GE system) was introduced by the OECD/DAC in 2018 as the standard method for calculating ODA loans. The grant equivalent of government loans, is calculated as ODA flows. The GE system records the amount of government loans by applying the terms of the loan, such as the amount of loan provided, interest rate and repayment period, to a formula. The more concessional the terms of the loan are, the larger the grant equivalent is. Compared to the net flow system (the full amount of loan is recorded, on the other hand, the amount repaid is counted as negative) that was the standard method used by the OECD/DAC, the GE system measures Japan's actual government loans more accurately.

⁴ OECD/DAC : Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development/Development Assistance Committee

¹



New Development Cooperation Charter

In June, the Cabinet approved the revised “Development Cooperation Charter,” which sets a new direction for Japan’s development cooperation. The main points of the revision are as follows:

(1) Revision of basic policies

The guiding principle is “human security” in the new era, and Japan focuses on “investment in people,” through protection and empowerment of individuals, and has defined the “solidarity” among various actors as one of the pillars, so that each person can live with happiness and dignity.

In addition, Japan has newly adopted the concept of “co-creation,” involving various entities, with developing countries at the core, to jointly create new solutions and social values. Japan also aims to bring back home such values generated in this way and solve its own economic and social issues and to promote economic growth by nurturing the next generation of human resources in both Japan and developing countries.

(2) Three priority policies

First, “quality growth” is becoming increasingly important in this era with compound crises. Accordingly, Japan is providing cooperation to secure the foundation and driving force for economic growth. Japan will also strengthen its efforts to address the challenges that developing countries face today, such as strengthening economic and social autonomy and resilience, including food and energy security, as well as new challenges such as digital transformation.

Second, Japan will endeavor to contribute to the social stability of developing countries, which is a prerequisite for “quality growth,” by supporting the development of legal systems, achieving good governance, providing humanitarian assistance and peacebuilding, and strengthening maritime security capacity. Under the vision of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP),” Japan will also work with developing countries to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order based on the rule of law.

Third, Japan will address global issues that are closely related to “quality growth.” Global issues such as climate change have a particularly serious impact on vulnerable developing countries. In light of the slow progress on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Japan will accelerate its efforts, especially in the areas of climate change (improving the response capacity of developing countries for mitigation and adaptation), the environment, health (promoting universal health coverage (UHC)), disaster prevention, and education.

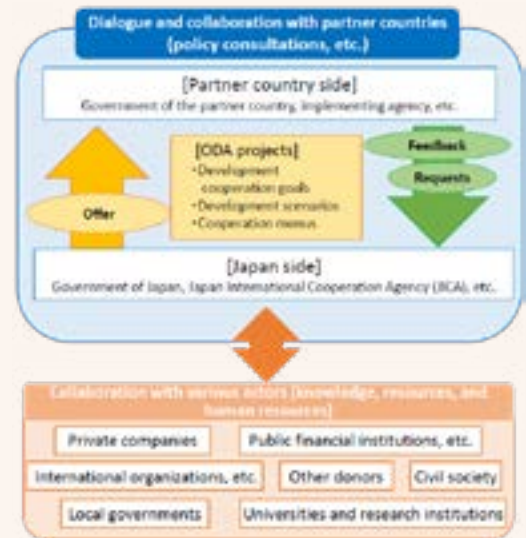
(3) Implementation: three approaches to evolve the implementation of ODA

The first is to maximize development effects through “co-creation” with various actors. Japan has shown its commitment to enhance solidarity with various partners, including private companies, public financial institutions, other donors (countries that share the same objectives and principles of development cooperation), and international organizations and Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs). Through the strategic use of public funds, including ODA for private finance mobilization and JICA’s private-sector investment finance, Japan will support sustainable finance, such as impact investment,¹ and work to improve the business environment in developing countries, including human resource development and support for legal system development.

Second, Japan will strengthen its strategic approach through measures such as Co-creation for Common Agenda Initiative. Co-creation for Common Agenda Initiative is a type of cooperation in which Japan proactively proposes an attractive cooperation menu that leverages Japan’s strengths, and formulates projects through dialogue and collaboration with the partner country. By choosing and announcing areas to be strategically addressed in light of Japan’s foreign policy, Japan will increase predictability and encourage the participation of various entities in projects.

Third, Japan will improve its ODA system. With “flexibility and efficiency” and “rapidity” as keywords, Japan will

work constantly to improve the system in response to the times by proposing comprehensive cooperation packages, strengthening involvement in countries with relatively high-income levels through the use of grants and technical assistance, speeding up decision-making in line with the private sector, and improving means of providing emergency humanitarian assistance.



Reference: Diagram of Co-creation for Common Agenda Initiative

¹ Investments that aim to not only secure investment returns but also to consider social issues and contribute to the benefit of the entire economy and society, with intention of creating environmental and social effects ("impact") (Source: Financial Services Agency website compiled based on <https://www.fsa.go.jp/en/news/2022/20221025.html>)

GNI⁵ ratio based on the GE system was 0.39%, placing Japan in 16th place among member states of the OECD/DAC (Source: OECD Database (OECD.Stat) (December 2023)).

(2) Development Cooperation in 2023

In 2023, Japan engaged mainly in the following (A to D below).

A Support for Ukraine and the Global South as well as Response to Humanitarian Crises

To date, Japan has announced and steadily has been providing Ukraine and relevant surrounding countries with assistance totaling 7.6 billion U.S. dollars covering the fields of humanitarian assistance, finance, food, and recovery and reconstruction areas. From the early days of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Japan has quickly implemented humanitarian assistance for Ukrainian displaced persons including in the areas of medical and health, water and sanitation, shelters, food, and protection of women and children, in addition to financial assistance. In response to the destruction of many energy facilities and widespread power outages in various parts of the country due to Russian attacks,

Japan provided two large autotransformers which will benefit 500,000 residents in Kyiv in September regarding winterization assistance through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). In countries of the Global South, including African nations, food insecurity and shortages have been exacerbated by rising inflation and supply chain disruptions caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine, further worsening humanitarian crises there. In response to the resulting global food security issues, Japan is providing food assistance and support to increase food production capacity through bilateral arrangements, international institutions, and NGOs in Japan.

The situation in Palestine and the Gaza Strip is becoming more serious. Japan provided humanitarian assistance totaling approximately 75 million U.S. dollars⁶ to Palestine, as well as in-kind assistance, such as tents and medical consumables through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Amid the worsening humanitarian situation around the world, the Second Global Refugee Forum (GRF) was held in Geneva in December, with Foreign Minister Kamikawa attending from Japan, which served as one of the co-conveners. Minister Kamikawa stated that

⁵ GNI : Gross National Income

⁶ On January 28, 2024, Japan suspended its financial contribution (35 million U.S. dollars) to UNRWA as part of its support for Palestine, following the alleged involvement of UNRWA staff in terrorism that was uncovered on January 26, 2024.

Japan hopes for a future where the dreams of each and every refugee and displaced person can be realized. Noting that the concept of Women, Peace and Security (WPS)⁷ is essential when considering solutions for refugees and displaced persons, she called for strengthening the unity and cooperation of the international community to halt the worsening of the humanitarian situation. In addition, Minister Kamikawa talked about Japan launching the “Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus”⁸ as a multi-stakeholder pledge as a platform for collaboration among donor countries, host countries, international organizations, and others. She explained that the efforts of HDP Nexus are expanding in Africa.

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

Japan is promoting concrete initiatives utilizing ODA strategically in order to achieve a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” together with the broad range of partners in the international community who share this vision and the Indo-Pacific region, which is a focal point of the world’s vitality.

Japan has been developing “quality infrastructure” to strengthen regional connectivity, supporting the development of legal systems, strengthening capacity building in the areas of debt management and macroeconomic policy, and extending capacity building assistance to maritime law enforcement agencies to ensure maritime security (provision of equipment such as patrol vessels and coastal monitoring radars, human resource development, etc.), and will continue to promote these efforts.

In particular, the development of quality infrastructure represents an important foundation for the realization of FOIP.

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 principles as openness, transparency,

economic efficiency in view of life-cycle costs, and debt sustainability.

In its new plan for FOIP, announced in March 2023, Japan will redouble efforts to achieve FOIP, mobilizing more than 75 billion U.S. dollars, representing a total of both private and public infrastructure spending, to grow the Indo-Pacific region by 2030 with other countries.

At the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May 2023, a side event was held jointly by Japan, the U.S., and the European Commission, with the participation of the private sector, on the Partnership for Global Infrastructure Investment (PGII), an initiative to promote quality infrastructure investment launched at the G7 Elmau Summit in June 2022. At the side event, the G7 expressed their intention to mobilize private capital for infrastructure investment in developing countries, in collaboration with a wide range of actors.

C Addressing Global Issues

Japan’s revised Development Cooperation Charter, approved by the Cabinet Office in June, lays out the idea of advancing human security in a new era as its guiding philosophy, and the country is now moving ahead with initiatives to resolve global issues, including achieving the SDGs. Japan will continue to proactively advocate “human-centered international cooperation” in the areas of health, food, nutrition, gender, education, disaster risk reduction, water and sanitation, climate change and environmental issues, including humanitarian assistance. In doing so, Japan will promote visible development cooperation while utilizing collaboration with Japanese NGOs working on international cooperation. Moreover, as humanitarian crises become more protracted and diverse, in addition to humanity and development, Japan will promote humanitarian assistance, including assistance for refugees and displaced persons, poverty reduction, economic and social development, and peacebuilding and nation-building, based on the philosophy of the HDP Nexus, which is redoubling efforts to address the

⁷ Women, Peace and Security (WPS) : An approach in which amidst protecting women, women themselves can help move closer to a more sustainable peace by taking leadership positions and participating in conflict prevention, reconstruction, and peace building. In 2000, for the first time in its history, the UN Security Council passed Security Council Resolution 1325 on WPS, which clearly states that international peace and conflict prevention and resolution require the equal participation of women, protection against sexual violence during conflicts, and gender equality.

⁸ Humanitarian, Development, and Peace Nexus: An approach, whereby, in parallel with humanitarian assistance, development cooperation is provided to support the self-reliance of refugees and reduce the burden on host countries, and peace efforts are promoted to resolve and prevent conflicts that are the root causes.

root causes of conflict and provide assistance for maintaining peace.

D Diplomatic Efforts in Support of Japan's Economy

Japan seeks to revitalize its own economy through the development of developing countries and Japan is promoting initiatives for achieving the growth of both.

Specifically, in the future, Japan will promote public-private collaboration, including the co-creation for common agenda initiative in development cooperation, which proposes an attractive cooperation menu to implement development cooperation, and ODA that mobilizes funds from the private sector, as laid out in the new Development Cooperation Charter. 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 furthermore, 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 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and local governments, Japan will increase the visibility of products and equipment that can help resolve issues in developing countries through JICA's private sector partnership in conducting surveys and verification on business models as well as continuously generate demand for these. 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 People Engaged in International Cooperation Projects

Ensuring the safety of people engaged in international cooperation projects against risks such as worsening security conditions due to political instability and natural disasters around the world is essential to the appropriate implementation of development cooperation.

Following the terrorist attack in Dhaka, Bangladesh

in July 2016, the "Final Report" was released as the outcome of the review by the Council on Safety Measures for International Cooperation Projects (August 2016). Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and JICA make efforts to implement the safety measures mentioned in the Final Report, continue and enhance actions to ensure the effectiveness of safety measures for people engaged in international cooperation projects.

(4) Initiatives in Major Regions

A East and Southeast Asia

The achievement of peace, stability, and prosperity in the East and Southeast Asia regions are important to Japan, which has a close relationship with these regions. 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.

Above all, as member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are keys to achieving FOIP, Japan provides support toward efforts aimed at overcoming issues faced by ASEAN and further promoting integration. Based on the fact that it was confirmed that the principles of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and FOIP match one another at the Japan-ASEAN summit Meeting held in 2020, Japan plans to continue strengthening Japan-ASEAN cooperation going forward in terms of maritime cooperation, connectivity, the SDGs and economy, which are priority fields of the AOIP. In 2023, the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, the Japan-ASEAN Comprehensive Connectivity Initiative was announced to further promote efforts to strengthen connectivity in both structural and non-structural. As a result, Japan pledged to strengthen multi-layered connectivity in a wide range of areas, including transport infrastructure development, digital connectivity, maritime cooperation, supply chains, electricity connectivity, as well as human and knowledge connectivity, and to provide capacity building projects for 5,000 individuals over the next three years through technical cooperation. At the Commemorative Summit for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation held in December, the leaders also announced new efforts in public-private partnership



Indonesia “the Economic and Social Development Programme (Provision of Fishery Monitoring Vessels)” (September, Indonesia; Photo: JICA)



Arresting technique course training for the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency by JICA and the Japan Coast Guard (October, Malaysia; Photo: JICA)

for finding solutions through co-creation, aiming to mobilize 35 billion U.S. dollars in private and public funds over the next five years in the ASEAN region by boosting private investment for strengthening connectivity, climate change measures, and support for MSME and startups.

Since there is a large number of Japanese companies doing business and a large resident population of Japanese nationals in the East and Southeast Asian regions, Japan has provided intensive support against COVID-19 in the region, including donations of health- and medical-related equipment and improving health and medical systems through technical cooperation. To date, Japan has provided a total of around 400 billion Japanese yen to Mongolia and Southeast Asian countries based on the economic impacts caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. As part of its COVID-19 support measures provided within the ASEAN region, Japan continues to support the operations of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases.

Japan is actively providing support for capacity

building for maritime law enforcement to countries positioned along Japan's sea lanes such as the Philippines and Viet Nam, with the aim of building a 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. Furthermore, 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. In 2019, Japan signed the ASEAN-Japan Technical Cooperation Agreement (TCA) and has been providing technical cooperation to the ASEAN Community based on the Agreement. In 2023, Japan provided training on public international law, criminal justice, local industry development, and strengthening local health systems. Japan has also provided cooperation to the Mekong region through the framework of the Japan-Mekong Cooperation, and will continue to contribute to the development of the Mekong countries.

With regards to Myanmar, in response to the worsened humanitarian situation following the coup d'état in February 2021, Japan has been providing humanitarian assistance that directly benefits the population of Myanmar (food, medical supplies, etc.) through international organizations and NGOs.

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 advancement of human security.

Japan has been providing support to India, which has a massive population, for the construction of high-speed railways, subways in a number of cities, and sea-crossing roads to support the development of

economic and social infrastructure including transportation that contributes to enhancing connectivity and strengthening industrial competitiveness, to realize FOIP. In addition, Japan has supported India's sustainable and inclusive growth by providing the Government of India with assistance for its initiatives to achieve the SDGs, and through such projects as those in the forestry sector including afforestation activities, those in the agricultural sector including aqueduct upkeep and farm operation support, as well as through those in the health sector that help strengthen the medical system. With regard to Bangladesh, under the Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B) initiative and the "Development of an Industrial Value Chain connecting the Bay of Bengal and North Eastern Region of India" concept, based on the new plan for FOIP, Japan is providing support which contributes to economic growth, such as for strengthening domestic and regional multi-layered connectivity, developing infrastructure, and improving the investment environment. Japan has decided to provide an Emergency Budget Support Japanese ODA Loan to the Government of Bangladesh, which is seeking to improve its expenditure management amid soaring transportation, food, and energy prices due to the situation in Ukraine and other factors, in order to support its fiscal management reforms. In addition, Japan provided Bangladesh with humanitarian assistance of approximately 3.5 billion Japanese yen in the areas of food aid, shelter renovation, water and sanitation, protection, education, and livelihood improvement for displaced persons from Rakhine State, Myanmar, who continue to face serious food insecurity and other problems. Japan also decided

to provide approximately 2.25 billion Japanese yen in livelihood improvement assistance to the surrounding communities that are hosting the displaced persons.

Japan provided assistance totaling 5 billion Japanese yen for Sri Lanka, which has seen the humanitarian situation deteriorate caused by economic crisis after it declared it would stop some payments on external debt in April 2022, to maintain health and medical services and ensure their stable delivery. In addition, Japan decided to support the improvement of infectious waste management (503 million Japanese yen), stabilization of electricity supply at hospitals using renewable energy (1.23 billion yen), and improvement of the livelihoods of fishermen, women, and others in poor and vulnerable areas such as northern provinces. With regards to Pakistan, Japan announced that it will provide Pakistan with aid of 77 million U.S. dollars in 2023 and beyond for such areas as disaster risk reduction, health, and agriculture as additional assistance once domestic procedures are completed at the meeting of donors held in Geneva in January in response to the floods that struck the country. As part of this, Japan decided to extend funding (794 million Japanese yen) to nine girls' elementary schools damaged in the flooding for repair work.

C Pacific Island Countries

The Pacific Island countries are not only Japan's "neighbors," connected by the Pacific, but also have deep historical connections with Japan. Moreover, as these countries possess a vast exclusive economic zone (EEZ, areas where a country's economic right reaches), they are a key region for maritime transportation for Japan, and also provide vital fishing grounds for Japan's distant-water bonito and tuna fisheries. Therefore, 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, 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 partner of the Pacific Island countries, is providing support to boost their autonomous and sustainable development.



Newborn baby room at the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences, newly established with Japan's support (October, Islamabad, Pakistan)



Tilapia aquaculture training (practical training on fry management) in a Pacific Island country for SDG 14 “Life below water” project (January, Fiji; Photo: JICA)



Mangrove water quality survey for the “Project for Enhancement of Integrated Management of Coastal Ecosystem for Strengthening their Resilience Climate Change” in Palau (April, Palau; Photo: JICA)

In particular, based on the five priority areas announced at the Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) held in July 2021, namely, (1) COVID-19 Response and Recovery, (2) Sustainable Oceans based on the Rule of Law, (3) Climate Change and Disaster Resilience, (4) Strengthening Foundations for Sustainable and Resilient Economic Development, and (5) People-to-People Exchanges and Human Resource Development, Japan is helping strengthen health and medical systems by providing medical containers as COVID-19 countermeasures. Japan is also providing maritime security related equipment for keeping sustainable oceans based on the rule of law in Oceania with its expansive EEZ and assistance for upgrading power transmission systems to promote the introduction of renewable energy.

Furthermore, in June 2022, Japan joined Partners in the Blue Pacific (PBP),⁹ launched as an initiative to coordinate the approaches of various countries for providing more effective and efficient assistance to Pacific Island countries. Together with Australia, New Zealand, the UK, the U.S., Germany, Canada and others, Japan has confirmed the need to strengthen partnerships and commitments with the Pacific Islands region. In particular, Japan intends to support regional initiatives led by Pacific Island countries on climate change and other issues.

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 around 3.1 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 of around 6.25 trillion U.S. dollars. On the other hand, the region has large demand for development in regard to common issues faced by the international community, such as disaster risk reduction associated with climate change, vulnerabilities in health and medicine, and poverty. Japan is engaged in various cooperative efforts while also taking into account the development circumstances of each country.

In 2023, in the area of health and medical care, the Government of Japan decided to provide Bolivia with a yen loan of up to 15 billion Japanese yen to support the continuation and expansion of public services related to the health and medical care and institutional improvements to protect vulnerable groups. In the area of assistance for natural disasters, Japan provided emergency relief supplies to Chile for wildfire damage through JICA.

In the climate change/environment sector, the Government of Japan decided to provide grant assistance to Saint Christopher and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, St. Lucia, Trinidad and Tobago and Barbados in 2022 in cooperation with the UNDP

⁹ See the MOFA website for The Partners in the Blue Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Cooperation with Pacific Island Countries: https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/ocn/shin4e_000049.html





Disaster risk reduction work to prevent slope collapse and mudslides along the road under the “The Project for Road Disaster Prevention of National Road No. 7” grant aid for Bolivia (June, Santa Cruz Department, Bolivia)

for the removal of Sargassum seaweed, amounting to approximately 1.4 billion Japanese yen. Furthermore, Japan decided to provide the Dominican Republic with 200 million Japanese yen of equipment and materials from Japanese companies in 2023 to help the country deal with the problem. As part of its civilian assistance to Venezuelans, including displaced persons, the Government of Japan provided 350 million Japanese yen through the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to provide humanitarian assistance, including protection activities and shelter construction, to the most vulnerable groups in the country, such as women and youth. Japan is also providing assistance to strengthen access to information as well as support local communities and humanitarian aid organizations. As part of the measures against irregular migration, JICA signed a partnership agreement with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in Guatemala in 2023 to address irregular migration based on Japan-U.S. collaboration.

Due to the deteriorating security situation in Haiti, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution authorizing the deployment of the Multinational Security Support Mission to Haiti. In order to contribute to the stability in the country, Japan decided to contribute approximately 2 billion Japanese yen to support capacity building of the Haitian National Police, as well as approximately 3 million U.S. dollars for emergency grant aid to combat cholera and 200 million Japanese yen for food assistance (grant aid).

Japan also has entered into partnership programs with Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, and Chile to promote

human resources development in Latin America and the Caribbean through triangular cooperation¹⁰ in areas such as SME support, disaster risk reduction, and policing systems.

E Central Asia and the Caucasus

The Central Asia and Caucasus region is surrounded by Russia, Asia, and Europe. Given its geopolitical importance and transportation routes connecting East Asia and Europe, the development and stability and of this region are also important for the development, stability, and connectivity of the whole Eurasia, including Japan. As a partner that supports nations of Central Asia and the Caucasus region to maintain and strengthen free and open international order based on the rule of law, Japan announced its commitment to support on the basis of a new development model with an emphasis on “investment in people” and “quality of growth” for sustainable development in Central Asia at the 9th Foreign Ministers’ Meeting of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue held in December 2022.

In the area of “investment in people,” the Government of Japan develops human resources by accepting young administrative officials who are expected to become leaders in the future as study abroad students at Japanese graduate schools and play active roles in policy planning and implementation after returning to their home countries through the grant aid Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS). As assistance focusing on “quality



Opening ceremony of the grant aid project “The Project for the Rehabilitation of Kizilkala-Bokhtar Section of Dushanbe-Bokhtar Road” in Tajikistan attended by JICA President Tanaka and Minister of Transport and Communications of Tajikistan Ibrahim (September 1, Khatlon Region, Tajikistan; Photo: JICA)

¹⁰ Triangular Cooperation: Support by developed countries for developing countries to cooperate with other developing countries by utilizing human resources, technology, funds, knowledge, etc.

of growth,” the repairs and lane widening of major roads by grant aid has improved safety and facilitated logistics in Tajikistan.

In addition, Japan is providing support for enhancing border control capabilities in the Central Asian region, bordering on Afghanistan.

F The Middle East and North Africa

Securing peace and stability in the Middle East and North Africa regions, which are geopolitical keys in that they are the crossroads of Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, is crucial not only for the energy security of Japan but also for the stability of the world. From this point of view, Japan is providing support to achieve peace and stability in the region.

With regard to Syria, where civil war has been prolonged, Japan has provided more than 3.5 billion U.S. dollars to Syria and surrounding countries since 2012 under its policy of providing humanitarian assistance to all Syrians facing difficulties. Furthermore, in order to foster human resources who could contribute to Syria's future reconstruction, 136 Syrian students have been accepted in Japan since 2017.

In Yemen, where a severe humanitarian crisis is still ongoing, Japan has provided more than 400 million U.S. dollars in support since 2015. At the High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen held in February, Minister for Foreign Affairs Hayashi stated that Japan will continue to offer support toward peace and stability in Yemen. Additionally, in 2023, through partnerships with international organizations, in addition to humanitarian assistance in particularly high demand areas of food, education, and refugee assistance, Japan provided cooperation in repairing roads connecting the Port of Aden and in human resource development through JICA training from a medium- to long-term perspective.

Afghanistan is facing a serious humanitarian crisis since the Taliban took over Kabul in August 2021. Given this situation, Japan has been providing humanitarian support in areas such as health care, education, and food, including support for basic humanitarian needs, through collaboration with international



Foreign Minister Hayashi participates in a high-level pledging meeting on the humanitarian crisis in Yemen (online) (February 27, Tokyo)

organizations. In response to the earthquake damage suffered in western Afghanistan in October 2023, in addition to the provision of emergency relief supplies such as blankets through JICA, the Government of Japan provided 3 million U.S. dollars in emergency grant assistance in the areas of food and health through international organizations, while providing approximately 1.46 million U.S. dollars in assistance by Japanese NGOs to disaster victims through the Japan Platform (JPF).¹¹

Human development is vital to realize stability in the Middle East in the mid- to long-term. As one example, Japan is also providing support in terms of future human resources development through provision of Japanese-style education via the Egypt Japanese School (EJS) and Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST).

In April, Prime Minister Kishida visited Egypt and held a summit meeting with President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi, where they held a signing ceremony for exchanges of notes on the provision of a 100 billion Japanese yen loan for the first phase of the Cairo Metro Line No.4 Phase 1 Project (III). They also confirmed the steady progress of Japan's assistance through ODA, including cooperation on strengthening food security and the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM) (See the Column on page 177).

Immediately after the earthquake that struck southeastern Türkiye in February, Japan provided emergency relief supplies to Türkiye and Syria through JICA and dispatched Japan Disaster Relief teams, including rescue, medical and expert teams, to Türkiye for emergency relief activities (See the Column on page

¹¹ JPF : Japan Platform, or JPF, is an NGO established in August 2000 (NGO status obtained in May 2001). It was established jointly among NGOs, business and the Government of Japan with the purpose of providing prompt and effective emergency humanitarian assistance activities by a Japanese NGO in response to natural disasters and refugee situations outside of Japan.

280). In addition, for the first time, Japan transported equipment and materials for the medical team by SDF aircraft and disaster relief supplies from Pakistan to Türkiye as part of an operation coordinated and cooperated with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). In addition, emergency humanitarian assistance was provided through international organizations and Japanese NGOs via JPF. Furthermore, during the Japan-Türkiye Summit telephone call in July, Prime Minister Kishida announced new support measures for recovery and reconstruction, including grant aid totaling 5 billion Japanese yen to help with

debris removal and the provision of medical equipment and heavy machinery, as well as an 80 billion Japanese yen loan to support recovery and reconstruction in the affected areas. In conjunction with this financial assistance, Prime Minister Kishida expressed his intention to provide technical cooperation that makes use of Japan's expertise, including assistance in the formulation of reconstruction plans, technical assistance for earthquake-resistant reinforcement of public buildings, and assistance in strengthening disaster waste management capacity, including debris disposal.

COLUMN

A Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed: a Century of Cooperation between Japan and Türkiye

A major earthquake with its epicenter in southeastern Türkiye occurred on February 6, 2023. On the day of the earthquake, at the request of the Government of Türkiye, Japan dispatched Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) teams consisting of 74 personnel from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), National Police Agency, Fire and Disaster Management Agency, Japan Coast Guard, and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and private sector personnel (including structural assessment specialists and medical personnel) to conduct search and rescue activities.

Starting February 10, JDR medical teams totaling 181 personnel were dispatched in three squads, which consisted of 75 members in the first squad, 65 in the second squad, and 41 in the third squad. The squads were comprised of MOFA officials, doctors, nurses, pharmacists, engineers, logistics support personnel (support staff to facilitate the teams such as providing accommodation and transportation arrangements), JICA task coordinators, and other personnel. The medical team provided medical care for over 24 days between February 16 and March 11 at a field hospital set up in Ozeri District, Gaziantep Province, located in southeastern Türkiye, which had a high medical need. Afterwards, a team of experts consisting of specialists in construction, seismic isolation, and earthquake resistant technology (representing the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, private consultants, JICA, etc.) was also dispatched.

When one thinks of medical assistance in the aftermath of a disaster, the first thing that may come to mind is the treatment of people rescued from collapsed buildings. However, we must also consider the fact that since local hospitals have been affected by the disaster and rendered dysfunctional, they are no longer able to provide the same medical services as before to the public.

In light of this situation, Japan dispatched a "Type 2" Emergency Medical Team authorized by the World Health Organization (WHO) for the first time ever. This team carried out surgical and inpatient care functions, providing a total of approximately 2,000 treatments (including 17 inpatient care, 49 surgeries, 361 X-rays, etc.) on a 24-hour basis.

The high level of professionalism, morale, and thoughtful treatment of the medical team members has garnered gratitude from both patients and the local community. Although the team had to work under severe weather conditions with temperatures below freezing at the beginning of the dispatch, the entire medical team was encouraged by the words and appreciation of the Turkish people, some of whom said, "We feel safe when we receive medical treatment from Japanese doctors," and "We trust Japan."



The medical team treating the injured
(Photo: JICA)

Türkiye is known as a friendly country to Japan. Both countries have strengthened their friendly relationship over the years, which owes to a long history of reaching out to each other in the aftermath of earthquakes such as the recent one. Türkiye, like Japan, is an earthquake-prone country. When a major earthquake hit northwestern Türkiye in 1999, Japan provided assistance to victims of the disaster by dispatching international emergency aid teams and constructing temporary housing sites known as the “Japan Village.” Again, after the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, the Government of Türkiye dispatched a rescue team of 32 people to Miyagi Prefecture, where they worked for about three weeks and provided various additional assistance. The three-week deployment of the rescue team was the longest of any aid and rescue team dispatched from any country or region. In addition to the earthquake disaster, Türkiye also dispatched Turkish aircraft to help Japanese nationals in Tehran leave the country during the Iran-Iraq war.

The year 2024 marks the 100th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Türkiye. The relationship between the two countries has developed in a manner that truly embodies the proverb, “A friend in need is a friend indeed.” Japan hopes that its relationship with Türkiye will be further enhanced over the next 100 years given this foundation of friendship.



Medical team examination
(Photo: JICA)



Field hospital constructed by the team
(Photo: JICA)

G Africa

Africa has a population of approximately 1.4 billion people in 54 countries, and continues to attract attention and anticipation from the international community for its high potential in becoming the driving force for the world's growth, backed by its abundant natural resources. On the other hand, it also faces various challenges such as poverty, a vulnerable healthcare system, and the rise of terrorism and violent extremism. Given this background, Japan has been contributing for the development in Africa over the years through assistance provided via bilateral and international organizations and frameworks such as the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD).

In April, armed clashes in Sudan caused a humanitarian crisis domestically and in neighboring countries. Security has deteriorated in many areas of the country and more than 6 million people have been displaced, both domestically and abroad. In response, Japan provided emergency grant aid through international organizations and assistance to displaced persons through NGOs via JPF to provide humanitarian assistance in Sudan.

In May, Prime Minister Kishida also announced during his visit to Ghana that Japan would provide assistance with the aim of contributing to peace and

stability and promoting sustainable growth in the Sahel region and Gulf of Guinea coastal countries.

To commemorate the 30th anniversary of TICAD, which was launched in 1993, a TICAD 30th Anniversary Event, “TICAD’s 30-Year History and Prospects,” was held in Tokyo in August, and a TICAD 30th Anniversary Event was also held at UN Headquarters in New York in December, where frank discussions were held on the past achievements and future direction of TICAD. Japan has long embodied its commitment to promoting Africa’s growth while maintaining close ties with African nations, and as “a partner growing together with Africa,” Japan will promote African development with approaches quintessentially Japanese, focusing on “people” to realize the resilient Africa that Africa itself aims to achieve.

(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 prior to the implementation of ODA, MOFA holds the Development Project Accountability

Committee meeting in public, exchanges views with independent committee members that have knowledge of the relevant fields 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 (5,219 projects published as of the end of September 30, 2023) 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 suggestions and lessons drawn from the evaluation for the policy formation and project implementation of future ODA. MOFA also publishes the evaluation results on its website.

B Approaches to Effective Implementation of ODA

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 based on the priority policies of the development cooperation charter, comprehensively taking into account 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 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. At the OECD/DAC, discussions are being held on promotion of mobilization of private-sector funds with ODA as a catalyst, and assistance for climate change related issues. In addition, OECD/

DAC is working to provide opportunities for mutual learning so that development assistance provided by emerging donors will be accountable and transparent in a manner consistent with international standards and practices.

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. MOFA strives to promote publicity on Japan's development cooperation activities among a wider range of targets in an easy-to-understand manner through social media, such as the MOFA website, ODA X account (former Twitter), as well as through YouTube videos, e-mail subscriptions, and other tools. MOFA has created new documentary videos and television drama on development cooperation, etc. Furthermore, Global Festa Japan was held both online and in-person as a hybrid event, which attracted more than 39,000 participants in-person and online in two days between September 30 and October 1. MOFA has



First Step 2: Sekai wo Tsunagu Yuki no Kotoba, Television drama now available (as of February 2024)



Japanese Women Delivering Hope in a World of Uncertainty, Documentary video now available (as of February 2024)

continued to dispatch ministry officials to educational organizations in actively conducting “ODA Delivery Lectures” as part of its efforts to promote understanding of development cooperation. In addition, MOFA makes active efforts in overseas publicity, including site-visit tours to its development cooperation project 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)” was adopted at the United Nations (UN) Summit in September 2015 as a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) elaborated in 2001. The 2030 Agenda sets out international development goals for realizing a sustainable, diverse and inclusive society under the principle of “Leave No One 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, with the Chief Cabinet Secretary and Foreign Minister as the Deputy Director-Generals 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. 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 youth and women, and strengthening cooperation with the international community among others.

In 2023, the mid-way point for achieving the SDGs, at the SDG Summit held at the UN in September, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan would lead the world’s efforts to achieve the SDGs by upholding “human dignity” as a principle that supports solidarity throughout the international community, and in December, revisions were made to the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles for the first time in four years. In the remaining period until 2030, the target achievement year, Japan will continue to promote efforts to achieve the SDGs in Japan and in the international community as a whole based on the Implementation Guiding Principles.

A Human Security

Human security is a concept that pursues the creation of a country and society where individuals can live happily and in dignity, free from fear and want. Japan has long advocated human security as a pillar of its diplomacy, and in the Development Cooperation Charter revised in June, Japan positioned human security as a guiding principle that underlies all of its development cooperation.

In addition, the Leaders’ Communiqué for the G7 Hiroshima Summit, which Japan hosted in May as chair, referred to the promotion of human security in the new era aiming to realize a society that leaves no one behind. Japan has also led discussions at the UN and has contributed a cumulative total of approximately 50 billion Japanese yen by the end of 2022 to the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, which was established at Japan’s initiative in 1999, to support the dissemination and implementation of human security by UN agencies. Furthermore, in the area of bilateral cooperation, Japan has also put effort into the dissemination and implementation of this concept through support including 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 their core. At the SDG Summit held at the UN in September, Prime Minister Kishida stated that human security is a key concept for achieving the SDGs based on “human dignity.” Furthermore, in early 2024, the report of the

Secretary-General on human security was issued for the first time in a decade, and it is expected that discussions on human security will be reinvigorated in the UN and other international arenas in the future.

B Approaches in the Area of Disaster Risk

Reduction

While there are concerns about frequent and intensified disasters due to climate change, 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. The year 2023 marked the halfway point of the “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030,” a guideline for efforts by the international community adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai (2015), which was spearheaded by Japan. In May, the “high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the midterm review of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction” was held at the UN Headquarters to assess the progress of efforts in the field of disaster risk reduction to date. The meeting also indicated the need to accelerate efforts by each stakeholder to achieve the goals by 2030. Furthermore, 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 hosts the High School Students Summit on “World Tsunami Awareness Day,” as well as events in cooperation with the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR) aimed at raising awareness of tsunami preparedness. In cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Japan also provides training on Tsunamis for women administrators and other officials in Asia and the Pacific and supports Tsunami evacuation drills for schools in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Hiroshima Office. Japan will continue to share its experiences and lessons learned from disasters with the rest of the world and promote “Mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction” to introduce the perspective of disaster risk reduction into the policies of each country.

C 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. In September 2022, Prime Minister Kishida declared Japan’s intent to promote human resource development with investment in human assets placed at the core and “Education for Sustainable Development” (ESD) at the UN Transforming Education Summit (TES) held under UN Secretary-General António Guterres’ initiative. In the same month, Prime Minister Kishida assumed the position as an “Education Champion” in charge of maintaining the momentum of the summit in promoting global education transformation. Furthermore, at the G7 Hiroshima Summit, the G7 committed to making progress for ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education. In light of these developments, as stated in the Development Cooperation Charter (June 2023), Japan will continue to promote education, considering the perspectives of quality education for all, empowerment of women, children, and the youth, and ensuring educational opportunities in conflict and disaster situations.

D Approaches in Agricultural Areas

In coordination with the relevant countries, such as G7 and G20 member states and international organizations, Japan has delivered assistance for agriculture and rural development in developing countries. Since 2020, through support via international organizations and others, Japan has been addressing issues of deterioration within the food system due to the stagnation in distribution of agricultural products as a result of travel restrictions due to the spread of COVID-19 and the situation in Ukraine. As for international efforts, at the G7 Hiroshima Summit, the Hiroshima Action Statement for Resilient Global Food Security was issued, with the goal of realizing global food security and achieving zero hunger.

E Approaches in the Area of Water and Sanitation

Japan has continuously been one of the largest donor countries in the area of water and sanitation since the

1990s. Furthermore, Japan has implemented high quality assistance utilizing Japan's experiences, expertise, and technologies, as well as proactively participated in discussions in the international community. At the UN 2023 Water Conference held in March, KAMIKAWA Yoko, Special Envoy of Prime Minister of Japan (Member of the House of Representatives) co-chaired the thematic discussion "Water for Climate, Resilience, and Environment" and compiled recommendations for the resilience in the water sector in the world, based on Japan's experience in water-related disaster risk reduction.

(2) Global Health

Health is a basic condition that is essential to achieving human security that Japan is advocating for, which protects the survival, livelihood, and dignity of each individual. The global spread of COVID-19 has shed light on the fact that global health is not only directly relevant to people's health but is also an important issue for the global society, including that of Japan's. This includes major risks in the economy, society, and security. Given this understanding, and with lessons learned during COVID-19, the Government of Japan formulated its new Global Health Strategy in May 2022. The strategy outlines Japan's goals to contribute to developing a global health architecture (GHA), strengthen Prevention, Preparedness and Response (PPR) to public health emergencies such as pandemics, and achieve a more resilient, more equitable, and more sustainable universal health coverage (UHC)¹² that is required in the post-COVID-19 era to ensure human security (See the Column on page 287).

At the G7 Hiroshima Summit, Japan, as the chair, led discussions around three pillars of (a) develop and strengthen GHA to respond to public health crises, (b) the goal of achieving more resilient, more equitable, and more sustainable universal health coverage (UHC), and (c) promoting health innovation to address various health challenges.

Specifically, the G7 Leaders confirmed that they will develop and strengthen GHA through: improving international health governance; strengthening

collaboration between finance and health authorities; financial initiatives, including support through the Pandemic Fund¹³ and consideration of a rapid and efficient funding mechanism for pandemic response; and strengthening international norms and standards through negotiations on the amendments to the International Health Regulations (IHR) and the drafting of a new legal instrument (the so-called "WHO Pandemic Agreement") by the World Health Organization (WHO) concerning the PPR for pandemics.

With regard to their contribution to the achievement of UHC, the G7 Leaders also confirmed the facilitation of addressing various health challenges set back by the response to the COVID-19 pandemic and stressed the need to tackle communicable diseases including HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, hepatitis, malaria, polio, measles, cholera, and neglected tropical diseases (NTDs), antimicrobial resistance (AMR), non-communicable diseases (NCDs) including mental health conditions, maternal and child health, realizing comprehensive Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) for all, and promoting healthy aging, routine immunization, improved nutrition, and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). They pledged to contribute more than 48 billion U.S. dollars in public and private sector funds to achieve UHC and contribute to international health, including strengthening PPR. From Japan, Prime Minister Kishida expressed his country's intention to contribute a total of 7.5 billion U.S. dollars from the public and private sectors between 2022 and 2025, including a pledge of 200 million U.S. dollars to the Global Health Innovative Technology Fund (GHIT), as part of the G7's total financial contribution. The G7 Leaders stated their commitment to continue contributing to the achievement of UHC around the world by 2030, endorsing the "Impact Investment Initiative for Global Health (Triple I for Global Health)," which aims to solve health challenges by mobilizing private-sector funds through impact investment, and the "G7 Global Plan for UHC," which outlines actions that G7 countries should take to achieve UHC worldwide.

¹² UHC: Universal Health Coverage; All people can receive basic health services when they need them at an affordable cost without financial hardship.

¹³ A financial intermediary fund for PPR established within the World Bank in 2022 as a new financing mechanism to address the financing gap in the existing international health system in response to the global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Japan has pledged a total contribution of 70 million U.S. dollars to the Fund (of which 50 million U.S. dollars has already been disbursed).

In addition, with regard to the promotion of health innovation, which is key to strengthening GHA and achieving UHC, the G7 Leaders announced the “G7 Hiroshima Vision for Equitable Access to Medical Countermeasures (MCMs),” which outlines basic ideas and principles such as equity and inclusivity with regard to securing equitable access to MCMs including vaccines, which was a particular challenge during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, based on this Hiroshima Vision, the G7 Leaders launched the “MCM Delivery Partnership for equitable access” (MCDP). The MCDP is a cooperative effort focusing on the delivery of MCMs that leverages the knowledge and lessons learned from Japan’s pioneering Last Mile support for the COVID-19 vaccine. In the future, the MCDP is expected to work with related efforts by the WHO, in cooperation with relevant countries and organizations including the G7, G20, WHO, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF).

In September, on the occasion of the 78th UN General Assembly, the first high-level health-related

meeting since the end of the COVID-19 pandemic and side events, including one hosted by Japan, were held, featuring active discussions on global health at the summit level. At the first UN High-Level Meeting on Pandemic PPR, Foreign Minister Kamikawa reiterated to the international community Japan’s proactive stance on strengthening PPR; and at the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on UHC, Prime Minister Kishida communicated that the international community should continue to act toward achieving UHC. The G7 Health Follow-up Side Event, hosted by Japan, was attended by Prime Minister Kishida and Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare TAKEMI Keizo, as well as leaders and ministers from the G7, Thailand, Georgia, Bangladesh and Brazil, heads of international organizations such as WHO, World Bank and UNICEF, Bill Gates, Co-Chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, SHIBUSAWA Ken, Chairman of the GSG National Advisory Board, and others. Prime Minister Kishida confirmed the promotion of the MCDP and announced the launch



Prime Minister Kishida holding a press conference as Chair of the G7 Hiroshima Summit (May 21, Hiroshima Prefecture; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



Prime Minister Kishida delivering the opening remarks at the G7 Health Follow-up Side Event (September 21, New York, U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



G7 Hiroshima Summit Session 6: Working Together to Address Multiple Crises, which discussed Global Health (May 21, Hiroshima Prefecture; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



Prime Minister Kishida and Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare Takemi participating in the G7 Health Follow-up Side Event (September 21, New York, U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

of “Triple I.”¹⁴ He also announced the creation of a new yen loan program to enable developing countries to mobilize the necessary funds for PPR in a flexible and effective manner and reaffirmed the international community’s commitment to achieving UHC and strengthening PPR with world leaders.

Based on these achievements, Japan will continue to contribute to the promotion of global health, including negotiations on the WHO Pandemic Agreement, which is scheduled for submission and adoption at the 77th WHO General Assembly in May 2024, and international efforts to ensure equitable access to MCMs.

(3) Labor and Employment

It is important to raise income levels through employment, in order to improve the living standards of those who are 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,” which is one of the SDGs, has been positioned as a primary objective of the activities of the International Labour Organization (ILO). In view of this, Japan is committed to sustainable development in the area of labor, not only through its mandatory contributions to the ILO, but also through proactive support through voluntary contributions for the improvement of standards on occupational safety and health and the establishment of social insurance systems in developing countries. Furthermore, at the G7 Hiroshima Summit, the G7 Leaders issued a Leaders’ Communiqué that included the following points: ensuring respect for international labor standards, human rights and the fundamental conventions of the ILO in global value chains (international division of labor in manufacturing), and active involvement in the promotion of decent work, including technical cooperation.

COLUMN

Japan’s Initiatives for Achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC)

Universal health coverage (UHC) is a state in which all people have access to basic health care services when they need them at an affordable cost without financial hardship. Japan established a universal health insurance system in 1961 and has built one of the world’s healthiest and longest-living societies, while promoting UHC in Japan and contributing to the achievement of UHC throughout the world.

Some may ask why Japan, which has already built a healthy and long-lived society, should support the achievement of UHC globally. Wouldn’t it be sufficient to promote UHC only in one’s own country? The COVID-19 pandemic on a global scale showed that infectious diseases and other health crises are challenges that cannot be solved by any one country alone.

The recent pandemic shed light on the fact that in a global society, infectious diseases spread across national borders and throughout the international community along with the movement of people. It became evident that even if Japan alone were to build a strong health system and promote UHC only within itself, it would not be able to evade the threat of infectious disease spread due to weak health systems in countries around the globe. One of the lessons learned from COVID-19 is that achieving UHC worldwide will contribute to human health and stability of economy, society and security in the international community, including Japan.

Even before COVID-19, Japan has been a leader in global efforts to achieve UHC. When the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were defined by the United Nations in September 2015, Japan pushed for UHC achievement to be

¹⁴ G7 Impact Investment Initiative for Global Health, endorsed at the G7 Hiroshima Summit, to accelerate private capital mobilization through impact investing.

positioned as one of the targets (SDG Target 3.8). Subsequently, at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit in May 2016, UHC was addressed as a major theme for the first time and the G7 Ise-Shima Vision for Global Health was issued.

Japan also contributed to the launch of the “International Health Partnership for UHC 2030 (UHC2030)” (June 2016), an international health partnership to achieve UHC by 2030. Furthermore, in December 2018, Japan spearheaded the establishment of the Group of Friends on UHC, a group of countries volunteering to build momentum for the achievement of UHC, and as Chair of the Group of Friends, Japan played a pivotal role in compiling the UHC Political Declaration at the first UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on UHC in September 2019.

Moreover, in addition to building a Global Health Architecture (GHA) and strengthening Prevention, Preparedness and Response (PPR) against public health emergencies, including pandemics, Japan established the “Global Health Strategy” in May 2022 with the policy goal of achieving more resilient, more equitable, and more sustainable UHC required in the new post-COVID-19 era based on lessons learned from the pandemic. Based on this strategy, Japan announced its intention to contribute a total of 7.5 billion U.S. dollars between 2022 and 2025 in public and private funds to international health, including UHC, while the G7 will contribute a total of more than 48 billion U.S. dollars in public and private funds to the field at the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May 2023, in which Japan served as the chair. In addition, the G7 countries have compiled a “G7 Global Plan for UHC Action Agenda” consisting of actions to be taken to achieve UHC for the world as a whole. Subsequently, at the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on UHC held in September 2023, the Political Declaration was approved, with Japan being also actively involved in its negotiations. A strong commitment was demonstrated to achieving goals such as delivering basic health services to all by 2030, which was also confirmed at the 2019 High-Level Meeting on UHC. At this High-Level Meeting on UHC in 2023, Prime Minister Kishida reiterated that the international community should take action to achieve UHC and stated that Japan is also determined to further lead the efforts by the international community to achieve UHC by 2030 for the entire world, including with developing countries.

Japan will once again hold the G7 Presidency in 2030, the target year for achieving global UHC. Japan will continue to contribute to the achievement of UHC across the globe, drawing on its own knowledge of UHC and the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic.



Prime Minister Kishida attending the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on UHC (September 21, New York, U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

(4) Environmental Issues and Climate Change

A Global Environmental Issues

Further awareness has been built worldwide on the importance of addressing global environmental issues and global interest in these issues has also risen, 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 agreements and relevant international organizations.

As one of the major donors for Global Environment Facility (GEF) of the World Bank, which is a financing mechanism for the major environmental conventions, Japan also contributes to projects that address global environmental issues.

(A) Conservation of the Marine Environment

Addressing the problem of marine plastic litter, as a matter of urgency, 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 inappropriate waste management. 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 pollution by marine plastic litter, in providing support for environmentally sound management of plastic waste and disposal mainly in the Asian region.

In response to the growing momentum for creating a new international framework to address plastics pollution including in the marine environment, the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) was established at the Resumed Fifth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly held in March 2022 for the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, and it was decided to aim to complete the work by the end of 2024. At the second and third sessions of INC held in May and November, respectively, Japan insisted that the objective of the said international document (the treaty) should include the ambition to reduce additional plastic pollution to zero by 2040, and the need for provisions for establishing a plastic resource recycling mechanism for society as a whole and addressing the issue throughout the entire lifecycle of plastic from production to waste management should be established as the comprehensive obligations of each country under the treaty. Japan will continue to play a leading role in this area, while encouraging formation of effective and progressive rules.

The Fifth Leaders Meeting of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, which is comprised of leaders of maritime nations and was established to discuss matters such as conservation of marine environments, fisheries and utilization of marine resources, was held in September, and was attended by Foreign Minister Kamikawa as a representative of Prime Minister Kishida. Foreign Minister Kamikawa introduced the establishment of Japan's Fourth Basic Plan on Ocean Policy, and expressed her hope that the

ambition to reduce additional plastic pollution to zero by 2040 will be shared by many countries, while stating that Japan's leading efforts, such as those related to blue carbon (carbon fixation by marine ecosystems), will be disseminated as the “Japan Model.”

(B) Conservation of Biodiversity

In December 2022, the second part of the 15th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) was held in Montreal, Canada. A new global target for biodiversity, the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), was adopted. Based on this, Japan revised its National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan in March and is steadily implementing the GBF. In October, the resumed second part of COP15, the 10th Meeting of the Parties to the Cartagena Protocol and the 4th Meeting of the Parties to the Nagoya Protocol were held in Nairobi (Kenya), where decisions were adopted on the remaining agenda items before these meetings were officially closed.

In August, the Seventh GEF Assembly was held in Vancouver (Canada) and approved the establishment of the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF), which operates under the GEF in order to facilitate the implementation of the GBF. On December 9, at the side event of the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE)), the Minister of the Environment ITO Shintaro announced a 650 million Japanese yen contribution to the GBFF.

In recent years, illegal wildlife trade has exacerbated, drawing international attention as one of the key sources of funding for international terrorist organizations. Japan has been earnestly addressing this issue through contributions to the CITES¹⁵ Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) Programme among others. In recent years, Japan has provided poaching monitoring facilities to Zambia and Rwanda in 2022. In addition, Japan decided to provide facilities related to wildlife poaching and conservation measures to Botswana in 2022 and to Zimbabwe in 2023. Japan also attended the 77th session of the CITES Standing

¹⁵ CITES : Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

Committee (Geneva, Switzerland) in November where it actively contributed to international discussions.

Japan also contributes to international rule-making for 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 10th Session of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGR) Governing Body held in Rome, Italy in November, Japan participated in discussions for expanding the scope of genetic resources covered by the Multilateral System (MLS) and enhancing their functions, in order to promote access and utilization of genetic resources, such as breeding.

With regard to efforts through the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Japan continued to implement projects in the field in 2023 that contribute to the sustainable management of tropical forests and the promotion of sustainable and legal trade in tropical timber through its contributions to ITTO. In November, the 59th Session of the Council of the ITTO was held in Pattaya, Thailand, to discuss the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), which forms the basis of the ITTO and will expire in 2026, as well as the administrative budget. Regarding the extension of the ITTA, it was decided that the decision will be made by the written responses from the member countries by June 1, 2024.

(C) International Management of Chemicals and Hazardous Waste

The 35th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was held in Nairobi, Kenya, in October. At the meeting, matters such as replenishment of the Multilateral Fund for the Implementation of the Montreal Protocol to support developing countries as well efficient and effective operations of the protocol were discussed among the Parties.

In May, in Geneva, Switzerland, Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain

Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade were jointly held, in which matters were discussed such as technical cooperation common to the three treaties and the implementation of efficient measures through their enhanced coordination, in addition to issues related to the operation of each Convention, including the adoption of Annex amendments.

In September, the fifth session of the International Conference on Chemicals Management was held in Bonn, Germany, and adopted “the Global Framework on Chemicals (GFC) – For a Planet Free of Harm from Chemicals and Waste” as a new framework for international chemicals management.

From October to November, the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury was held in Geneva, Switzerland, where discussions took place on amendments to Annexes and the threshold for mercury-contaminated waste subject to the regulation.¹⁶

B Climate Change

(A) Initiatives to Achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2050

In October 2020, Japan declared that it would aim to realize carbon neutrality with net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. At the Leaders’ Summit on Climate, hosted by the U.S. in April 2021, Japan declared that it aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46% in fiscal year 2030 from its fiscal year 2013 levels, setting an ambitious target which is aligned with the goal of net-zero by 2050. Furthermore, Japan will continue its strenuous efforts in its challenge to meet the lofty goal of cutting its emissions by 50%. In October 2021, Japan submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) that reflects the new reduction target and Long-term Strategy under the Paris Agreement that reflects initiatives aimed at achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat.

(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

¹⁶ A boundary value that is affected above a certain value and not below it.

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 195 countries and institutions including Japan (as of December 2023).

At COP28, held in Dubai, UAE, from November 30 to December 13, a decision on the Global Stocktake (GST) to assess collective progress toward achieving the purpose of the Paris Agreement, as well as a decision on the framework for the new funding arrangements, including a fund for responding to loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, were adopted.

In the GST, in order to achieve the 1.5°C goal,¹⁷ ambitious emission reduction targets for all greenhouse gases and sectors were established, peaking global greenhouse gas emissions at the latest before 2025. In addition, sector-specific contributions (such as a tripling of renewable energy capacity globally and doubling the global average annual rate of energy efficiency, as well as accelerating zero- and low-emission technologies including renewables, nuclear, CCUS,¹⁸ low-carbon hydrogen, efforts in the fossil fuel and transport sectors, etc.) were decided, taking into account the different national circumstances, pathways, and approaches.

Regarding the fund for responding to loss and damage, it was decided that it will target assistance to developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, that it would be established under the World Bank, and that developed countries would defray the start-up costs while contributions would come from all sources, including public funds, private funds, and innovative sources.

Prime Minister Kishida attended the “Global Climate Action Summit,” a summit-level meeting held on December 1 and 2, during COP28, where he emphasized that our action until 2030 is critical. He stated that setting the economy-wide absolute reduction target covering all greenhouse gases and peaking global greenhouse gas emissions by 2025 are all required to achieve the global goal of net-zero by 2050. He also called for a common goal of achieving net-zero for all countries through various pathways that are compatible with economic growth and energy security. Furthermore, on top of thorough energy conservation, maximum deployment of clean energy through making renewable energy the main source of power, and utilizing nuclear power and other measures, he expressed Japan’s commitment, in line with its pathway to net-zero, to terminate the construction of domestic unabated coal power plants while ensuring a stable energy supply.

(C) Japan’s Contributions to the International Community

Developed countries including Japan have provided various assistance for developing countries so that those countries can implement sufficient climate change measures. Those supports include financial support, capacity building, and technology transfer.

The Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP), launched at COP26, created a Comprehensive Investment and Policy plan for Indonesia, where Japan serves as a co-lead country with the U.S., and a Resource Mobilization Plan for Viet Nam, where Japan serves as partner country. In the coming years, specific energy transition initiatives will be implemented in JETP countries in accordance with these plans.

Japan announced in 2021 at the G7 Cornwall Summit and at COP26 that it would provide climate assistance in both private and public finance totaling 70 billion U.S. dollars over five years between 2021 and 2025, and would double its assistance for adaptation, totaling 14.8 billion U.S. dollars. From such perspectives, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) also plays an important role as a multilateral climate fund that

¹⁷ The goal stated in the Paris Agreement, which is to limit the global average temperature increase to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to continue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels.

¹⁸ CCUS : Carbon dioxide Capture Utilization and Storage

provides support for developing countries to address climate change. Japan has contributed approximately 319 billion Japanese yen to date, and at the high-level pledging meeting for the GCF's second replenishment in October, Japan announced its commitment to contribute up to 165 billion Japanese yen for second replenishment (from 2024 to 2027), which is the same amount as the first replenishment.

In December, the First Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC) Leaders Meeting was held in conjunction with the Commemorative Summit for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation. The leaders of AZEC partner countries confirmed the importance of simultaneously achieving decarbonization, economic growth, and energy security, and of pursuing the common goal of carbon neutrality through diverse pathways tailored to each country's circumstances, and agreed to continue their cooperation.

(D) Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)

The JCM is a mechanism for contributing to greenhouse gas emissions reduction and removal in partner countries through diffusion of advanced decarbonization technologies. The mechanism allows Japan to acquire a portion of credits (or emission allowance) from its contribution, assisting both Japan and the partner countries to achieve their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). Japan plans to further expand the JCM globally, reflecting the adoption of the implementation guidelines of market mechanisms adopted at COP26 in 2021. The "Grand Design and Action Plan for a New Form of Capitalism Follow-up" approved by the Cabinet Office in June 2022 states that Japan will accelerate consultation with relevant countries, aiming to increase JCM partner countries up to around 30 by year 2025. Japan signed the Memorandum of Cooperation on the Joint Crediting Mechanism with 11 additional countries since 2022 and had established the JCM with 28 countries by the end of December 2023.

(E) Japan's efforts in Strengthening its Resilience to Impacts Resulting from Climate Change

Japan's Development Cooperation Charter, revised in June, and the National Security Strategy, revised in

December 2022, include the promotion of assistance for both mitigation measures, including decarbonization (such as emissions reduction and removals enhancement of greenhouse gases), and adaptation measures (e.g., avoidance and reduction of damage caused by climate change) for island nations and other developing countries so that sustainable and resilient economies and societies can be built. Japan will provide assistance that contributes to both economic growth and climate change countermeasures, depending on the circumstances of each country and region.

In addition, the Global Shield Financing Facility (GSFF) was launched in 2022 with the aim of increasing the capacity of developing countries to cope with climate change and disasters, and to increase their financial resilience. GSFF provides financial and technical assistance for risk financing such as disaster risk insurance, including the establishment and strengthening of regional risk pools and premium financing for risk transfer, to which Japan also contributed 800 million Japanese yen in March 2023.

Furthermore, in response to the COP28's decision on the general framework of the scheme to address loss and damage, Japan expressed its readiness to contribute 10 million U.S. dollars for the launch of the fund. Japan supports the early operationalization of the fund through contributions to start-up costs and will continue to actively contribute to discussions on the appropriate management of the fund.

(5) Arctic and Antarctic

A Arctic

(A) Current State of the Arctic

The Arctic Circle is centered on the Arctic Ocean and extends north of 66°33' north latitude. Five countries (the U.S., Canada, Denmark, Norway, and Russia) are the Arctic Ocean coastal States, and eight countries (adding Iceland, Sweden, and Finland to the above five countries) are the Arctic States.

If effective countermeasures are not taken, the Arctic Ocean's summer sea ice will likely disappear almost completely by the middle of this century. Furthermore, the effects of global warming are more amplified in the Arctic than in any other region of the globe, and rapid changes in the Arctic environment due to global warming could have serious and irreversible effects on the

livelihoods of the inhabitants and the ecosystems of the Arctic. On the other hand, the decreasing amount of sea ice is giving rise to growing economic opportunities such as the use of the Northern Sea Route and the development of resources. Some Arctic States are also strengthening their security initiatives to secure their own interests.

The Arctic Council (AC),¹⁹ established by the eight Arctic States, plays a central role in addressing issues related to the Arctic. Based on the discussions and knowledge sharing with relevant countries and Indigenous peoples at the AC, policies decided at the Ministerial meetings are orienting cooperation in the Arctic. The Arctic policies of the Arctic States have identified climate change measures, environmental protection, sustainable development, and the rights and livelihoods of Indigenous peoples as priority issues, and cooperation on these issues is also taking place at the AC. In addition, while the AC does not address military and security issues, peace and security in the Arctic is a major challenge among the Arctic States.

Non-Arctic states have also become increasingly interested in the Arctic in recent years due to global warming and expanding economic opportunities. On top of Japan, the UK, France, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands, Poland, China, India, Italy, Singapore, the Republic of Korea (ROK), and Switzerland are observer states to the AC.

(B) Japan's Arctic Policy and International Activities

Japan is aiming to contribute to the global society with an emphasis on the three areas, research and development, international cooperation, and sustainable use, based on "Japan's Arctic Policy" announced in 2015.

As an observer of the AC, Japan has been contributing to the AC's efforts through discussions and knowledge sharing at the Senior Arctic Official meetings, the sectoral Working Groups, and the Expert Groups of the AC on topics such as conservation of Arctic flora and fauna, protection of Arctic marine environment, and sustainable development, and will continue to actively

participate in these meetings. In addition, the several forums held at the initiative of the Arctic States and attended by various stakeholders from industry, government, and academia, have also facilitated the exchange of opinions and sharing of knowledge on issues related to the Arctic. Japan also participates in these forums to share its knowledge on Arctic scientific research and to communicate the importance of the rule of law in the Arctic Ocean.

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 adopted in 1959, 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 Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and the Protection of Antarctic Environment

At the 45th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM45) held from late May to early June in Helsinki, Finland, discussions were held on issues of climate change in the Antarctic and actions being taken by the Antarctic Treaty System.

(C) Japan's Antarctic Observation

As for Japan's Antarctic observation activities, Japan is implementing research and observation activities based on the 10th six-year plan of the Japanese Antarctic Research program (from FY2022 to FY2027), in addition to long-term continuous observation. The 10th six-year plan aims to conduct various research observation to understand past and present changes in the ice sheets, ocean and atmospheric general circulation,

¹⁹ An 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 does not address military and security issues.) Japan obtained the observer status in 2013.

and upper atmosphere in the Antarctic region as well as elucidating their mechanisms.

3 Science and Technology Diplomacy

Science and technology constitute the foundational elements for peace and prosperity that support socio-economic 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 science and technology diplomacy efforts, 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, Prof. Kishi was replaced by Prof. MATSUMOTO Yoichiro, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo as the new advisor in April 2020. Moreover, Prof. KANO Mitsunobu, Professor of Okayama University, has assumed the post as the first Science and Technology Co-Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to support the work of the Science and Technology Advisor in April 2019.

In April 2022, Dr. KOTANI Motoko, Executive Vice President of Tohoku University, was appointed as the Science and Technology Co-Advisor for the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Prof. Matsumoto and Dr. Kotani support the activities of the Foreign Minister from the perspective of science and technology, and provide advice on the utilization of science, technology and innovation in the planning and coordination of various foreign policies to the Minister and relevant divisions.

Additionally, the Science and Technology Diplomacy Advisory Network, composed of academic experts in a variety of science and technology fields, has been established under the supervision of the Science and Technology Advisor, aiming to make further contributions in the process of planning and formulating various diplomatic policies. As part of this network, “The Advisory Board for Promoting Science & Technology Diplomacy,” consisting of 20 experts from related fields, with Prof. Matsumoto as the chair and Dr. Kotani as the vice-chair, hold meetings regularly to discuss various topics aimed at enhancing the structure and function of science and technology diplomacy. In 2023, the 6th Advisory Board Meeting was held in August. In addition, according to the recommendations for “Strengthening the Foundation of Science and Technology Capabilities” compiled by the Advisory Board in 2022, MOFA established Science and Technology Fellows at six diplomatic missions overseas with the aim of strengthening the functions that are important for promoting science and technology diplomacy, and appointed Japanese researchers and experts based overseas as fellows.²⁰

Prof. Matsumoto and Dr. Kotani exchanged views with the scientific advisors from various countries, through meetings such as the Foreign Ministries Science and Technology Advice Network (FMSTAN), in an effort to build and strengthen networks. Prof. Matsumoto visited Singapore in January, Australia in June, Spain in July, and Europe (London, UK and Geneva, Switzerland) in October. In Spain and



Foreign Minister Hayashi attending the 6th Meeting of the Advisory Board for Promoting Science & Technology Diplomacy (August 30, Tokyo)

²⁰ Six diplomatic missions: Embassy of Japan in India, Embassy of Japan in Israel, Embassy of Japan in Sweden, Embassy of Japan in the UK, Mission of Japan to the European Union, and Consulate-General of Japan in San Francisco.

Switzerland, he spoke at international conferences on science and technology diplomacy and exchanged views with researchers and science and technology policymakers on science, technology, and innovation policy and science and technology diplomacy initiatives at each location. In addition to Singapore and Europe, Dr. Kotani also visited Panama in June, Malaysia in October, and Australia in December, introducing Japan's science and technology diplomacy efforts at symposiums and meetings with local science and technology-related organizations, and exchanging views on science and technology cooperation and other issues with related parties.

Moreover, Prof. Matsumoto regularly hosts science and technology diplomacy seminars by inviting experts in various fields aimed at raising the level of knowledge within MOFA.

In terms of international science and technology cooperation, Japan has concluded 33 science and technology cooperation agreements bilaterally, and these are now in force with 47 countries and the EU.²¹ Based on these agreements, it organizes regular joint

committee meetings with these countries to engage in intergovernmental dialogue. In 2023, joint committee meetings were held with Italy, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the U.S., Czech Republic, UK, and EU, 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 and the Caucasus region. Japan also participates in International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of nuclear fusion energy.

²¹ Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan each inherited the Japan-Russia Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement on different dates. In 1993, the Czech Republic and Slovakia respectively took over the Japan-Czechoslovakia Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement. Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia (the name of the country at that time), Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro inherited the Japan-Yugoslavia Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement on different dates.