

## Section 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 worsening situation in the Middle East, and global issues, 2024 was a year in which the importance of

Japan's development cooperation was reaffirmed as a way to address these issues. In Japan, various events were carried out to mark the 70th anniversary of Japan's launch of Official Development Assistance (ODA).<sup>(1)</sup>

## 1 Development Cooperation

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

#### A Revision of the Development Cooperation Charter

In June 2023, the Cabinet decided on the revision of Development Cooperation Charter,<sup>(2)</sup> showing a new direction for the country's development cooperation, in order to strengthen Japan's involvement in developing countries and more effectively and strategically utilize development cooperation as one of the most important tools for diplomacy. The revised Charter sets forth "co-creation" as one of its basic policies, which means involving various actors, including developing countries, to bring together the strengths of each for the creation of new solutions together. As one of its measures, the revised Charter also proposed Co-creation for common agenda initiative (which proposes attractive cooperation menus that leverage Japan's strengths and combine ODA, other official flows (OOF), and private sector funds in the areas that should be strategically addressed from a foreign policy perspective).

Specifically, at the Japan-Fiji Summit Meeting in July 2024, the two countries concurred on implementing Co-creation for common agenda initiative in the

areas of disaster prevention and climate change measures in Fiji, and at the Japan-Laos Summit Meeting in October, both countries shared the intention to consider utilizing Co-creation for common agenda initiative to strengthen electricity connectivity in Laos and its neighboring countries as well as promote decarbonization through clean energy.

In addition, in the current situation where the flow of private funding to developing regions far exceeds public funding, including ODA, there is an increasing need to maximize development impact through the mobilization of new resources. In response, in March 2024, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) established the Advisory Panel on New Financing for Development to explore new measures for the mobilization of these resources. The Panel met a total of three times, and in July 2024, it presented a report to Foreign Minister Kamikawa entitled "Contributing to a Sustainable Future and Creating a Virtuous Cycle of Growth."

#### B Japan's ODA Allocation

Japan's total ODA in 2023 was approximately 19.6 billion U.S. dollars (+12.0% year on year),<sup>(3)</sup> based on the

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

(2) For Japan's Development Cooperation Charter, see the MOFA website:  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page24e\\_000410.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page24e_000410.html)

(3) 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.



Grant Equivalent System (GE system).<sup>(4)</sup> Japan ranks third among the member of the OECD/DAC,<sup>(5)</sup> following the United States (U.S.) and Germany. Japan's ODA as a percentage of GNI<sup>(6)</sup> based on the GE system was 0.44%, placing Japan in 12th place among members of the OECD/DAC (Source: OECD Database (OECD. Data Explorer) (December 2024)).

## (2) Development Cooperation in 2024

In 2024, Japan engaged mainly in the following (A to D below).

### A Support for Ukraine, Assistance to the Palestinians, 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 more than 12.0 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, Foreign Minister Kamikawa, during her visit to Ukraine in January 2024, attended a ceremony for the transportation support of seven large transformers through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the provision of five gas turbine generators, including those manufactured by Japanese companies, through the UNDP and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Furthermore, when Foreign Minister Iwaya visited the country in November, he attended a ceremony for the delivery of one gas turbine, 15 variable frequency

drives for water pumping facilities, and two gas pistons through the UNDP, as well as 32 small-scale power generators through JICA. As part of assistance in mine action, training programs were held in August for staff members of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) in Cambodia, where Japan has cooperated with demining for more than two decades. These programs covered the operation and maintenance of demining machines Japan provided to Ukraine.

Additionally, in response to the situation in Gaza triggered by the terrorist attacks against Israel by Hamas and others in October 2023, Japan provided assistance to Palestine totaling approximately 130 million U.S. dollars between October 2023 and November 2024, and decided to provide additional assistance totaling approximately 100 million U.S. dollars at the end of December 2024. In particular, in response to the Gaza crisis, Japan provided humanitarian assistance in the form of the provision of food, blankets, and medicines.

Regarding the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which plays an indispensable role in supporting Palestine refugees, Japan suspended its funding (approximately 35 million U.S. dollars) following allegations in January that its staff members were involved in the terror attack. In April 2024, however, Japan lifted the suspension of its funding. In disbursing the contribution, Japan reaffirmed with UNRWA, in order to ensure the appropriateness of the projects funded by Japan, establishing a "Japan-UNRWA Project Management and Monitoring Mechanism," promotion of the participation of women in leadership positions in UNRWA governance reform and other initiatives, and Japan taking all necessary measures in the event of misuse of funds by Japan.

Countries in the Global South, including Africa, face severe food insecurity and shortages due to rising inflation and supply chain disruptions, partly influenced by Russia's aggression against Ukraine, along

(4) Grant Equivalent System (GE system) was introduced by the OECD/DAC in 2018 as the standard method for calculating ODA loans. Accordingly, government loans entering the calculation of the ODA grant equivalent measure are referred to as ODA flows. The GE system records the amount of government loans by reflecting the financial 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, while, the amount repaid is counted as negative) that was previously the standard method used by the OECD/DAC, the GE system measures Japan's actual government loans more accurately. (<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/white/2019/html/topics/01.html>)

(5) OECD/DAC: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development /Development Assistance Committee

(6) GNI: Gross National Income



with worsening humanitarian crises. In response, Japan has provided food assistance and support for strengthening production capacity through bilateral channels, international organizations and Japanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in order to address global food security.

### **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.

In addition, with regard to the G7 Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII), an initiative to promote quality infrastructure investment

launched at the G7 Elmau Summit in 2022, side events were held at the G7 Hiroshima Summit in 2023 and the G7 Apulia Summit in June 2024, which involved not only the G7 but also private sector participation. The G7 countries introduced efforts to strengthen connectivity in Africa and expressed their hope that infrastructure investment, including private finance, will be promoted under PGII. Prime Minister Kishida introduced Japan's efforts to enhance connectivity in Africa and Asia and stated that the results of PGII will be incorporated into the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9), scheduled to be held in the summer of 2025.

### **C Addressing Global Issues**

Japan is working to resolve global issues, including the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These efforts are taking place in line with the country's Development Cooperation Charter, which positions the concept of “human security in the new era”<sup>(7)</sup> as its guiding principle and under the revised SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles of December 2023.<sup>(8)</sup> 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. Furthermore, as humanitarian crises become more protracted and diversified, Japan will promote humanitarian assistance, including support for refugees and displaced persons, poverty reduction, economic and social development, and peace-building and nation-building, based on the concept of the “Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDP Nexus)” which aims to provide not only humanitarian and development assistance but also support for sustaining peace, through addressing the root causes of conflict.

(7) Human security: An approach that focuses on freedom from fear and deprivation through the protection and empowerment of individuals, as well as the right of each person to live with happiness and dignity.

(8) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Implementation Guiding Principles (December 19, 2023; SDGs Promotion Headquarters)  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/sdgs/pdf/kaitei\\_2023\\_en.pdf](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/sdgs/pdf/kaitei_2023_en.pdf)



## 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 fundings from the private sector, as laid out in the revised 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. In addition, to encourage the overseas expansion of Japanese companies, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and startups. Japan will support the identification of needs and the formulation of business models in developing countries through JICA's private sector partnership projects, thereby promoting the resolution of challenges in developing countries through the overseas expansion of Japanese companies.

### (3) Initiatives in Major Regions

#### A East and Southeast Asia

The peace, stability, and prosperity of the East and Southeast Asia regions are directly linked to Japan's national security and economic development and are therefore vital to Japan. 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



Construction site of the Metro Manila Subway Project, a loan aid project in the Philippines (May, Manila, Philippines)

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. The “Japan-ASEAN Comprehensive Connectivity Initiative,” announced in September 2023 seeks to further promote efforts to strengthen connectivity on both the structural and non-structural fronts. For example, the Initiative promotes support for strengthening connectivity through physical infrastructure projects such as the development of passenger railways in Metropolitan Manila Area (the Philippines) and the improvement of Vientiane International Airport (Laos), as well as non-structural support through the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC).

Furthermore, a wide range of concrete cooperation is being promoted in light of the “Joint Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation” and its implementation plan adopted at the Commemorative Summit for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation in December 2023. For example, as a new public-private partnership initiative to solve issues through co-creation, cooperation in the digital field is being accelerated in collaboration with various actors, including private companies, with regard to “Co-creation for common agenda initiative,” which was agreed upon with Cambodia in December 2023. This includes the establishment of a public-private roundtable meeting in March 2024.

Japan is actively providing support for capacity building for maritime law enforcement to countries





Measurement of plastic waste using drones in the technical cooperation project for Thailand called Formation of a Center of Excellence for Marine Plastic Pollution Studies in the Southeast Asian Seas (December, Chonburi, Thailand; Photo: JICA)

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 2024, training was provided on topics such as measures against marine plastic waste, public international law, food value chain development, customs administration, and infectious disease control. 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 regard 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 is a strategically important region situated as a marine transportation hub that connects East Asia with the Middle East. It also offers immense economic potential, with high economic growth and

large-scale infrastructure demand expected. As a result, the region is attracting attention from Japanese companies as an important market, production base, and investment destination. On the other hand, parts of the region face many challenges such as serious poverty, undeveloped basic social infrastructure, such as education and healthcare, measures against frequently occurring natural disasters, and delays in the development of industrial infrastructure. Japan provides assistance for resolving these challenges through ODA, which includes human security, achievement of the SDGs, and fostering the investment environment for Japanese companies.

Development cooperation with India, which has achieved remarkable economic growth in recent years, represents an important component of the "Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership." Japan is promoting development cooperation that benefits both Japan and India by bringing together the strengths of both countries to solve social issues through the co-creation of new value. From the perspective of addressing global issues as well, Japan supports the realization of inclusive and sustainable economic growth in India, considering that the country has a large population and still faces a great need for economic and social development.

In addition to supporting entrepreneurs along with micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises with the aim of strengthening industrial development through co-creation, Japan provided support for the construction of roads, bridges, and other infrastructure to strengthen multi-layered connectivity, the construction of medical university hospitals that will contribute to clean economic and social development, the development of urban water supply systems, and forest and biodiversity conservation in 2024.

The relationship between Japan and Bangladesh was elevated to a "Strategic Partnership" in 2023, and Japan continues to provide support for improving connectivity within and around the country, infrastructure development, and the investment environment, aiming for Bangladesh to move on from the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in 2026, under both initiatives of the "Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B)" and the "Industrial Value Chain" concept that connects the Bay of Bengal to the North Eastern Region of India based on the new FOIP plan. Japan



Opening ceremony for the main shaft of the Nagdhunga Tunnel (April 15, Kathmandu outskirts, Nepal; Photo: JICA)

has also maintained its long-standing support in the areas of education and health, and is also assisting in resolving issues that require immediate action, such as rapid urbanization and climate change. Moreover, Japan continues to provide humanitarian assistance in cooperation with the Government of Bangladesh and international organizations to the large number of displaced persons who have come to Bangladesh from Myanmar since 2017 and who remain in the country.

In Sri Lanka, the humanitarian situation has worsened due to an economic crisis, including a shortage of imported materials due to an acute shortage of foreign currency, since the temporary suspension of all payments on the country's foreign debt payments in April 2022. As co-chair of the Official Creditor Committee (OCC), Japan has led Sri Lanka's debt restructuring process, and in July 2024, the members of the OCC and Sri Lanka signed a Memorandum of Understanding on debt restructuring. Additionally, as the intention of the Government of Sri Lanka to quickly conclude a bilateral agreement between Japan and Sri Lanka was confirmed in writing, Japan decided to resume the disbursement of yen loans, etc. Japan continues to provide support to Sri Lanka for environmental measures, such as a grant aid of 300 million Japanese yen for the provision of waste treatment equipment, and for the development of infrastructure for economic growth, and others.

In Pakistan, Japan approved cooperation in areas such as the recovery of Maternal and Child health care equipment for the affected areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (1.503 billion Japanese yen) and strengthening flood protection and dike improvement in the Indus River (2.831 billion Japanese yen), with



The Project for Development Support of Electronic Navigational Charts for Honiara and Noro Ports in Solomon Islands aimed at improving the safety and efficiency of maritime transport (October, Solomon Islands; Photo: JICA)

a focus on continuing to support recovery and reconstruction efforts following the major floods in 2022.

In Nepal, cooperation focused on natural disaster measures and the development of transportation infrastructure, etc. In particular, Japan provided a yen loan of 16.636 billion Japanese yen, contributing to the opening of the Nagdhunga Tunnel, the country's first mountain road tunnel.

### 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), 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.

The 10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM10) held in July was attended by leaders and representatives of 19 countries and regions, as well as the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF). At the



A route bus currently in trial operation as part of the Project for Establishing an Eco-Friendly Transportation System, a technical cooperation project with Palau (September, Babeldaob Island, Palau; Photo: JICA)

meeting, participants adopted the 10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM10) Japan-Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Declaration and the PALM10 Joint Action Plan. In its 2050 Strategy, the PIF has set out seven priority areas: (a) political leadership and regionalism, (b) people-centered development, (c) peace and security, (d) resources and economic development, (e) climate change and disasters, (f) ocean and environment, and (g) technology and connectivity. The Joint Action Plan also positions these seven areas as key areas for cooperation. Furthermore, at PALM10, in response to climate change, which is the "single greatest existential threat" to the Pacific Island countries, Prime Minister Kishida announced the "Pacific Climate Resilience Initiative," an initiative that mobilizes all of the country's technologies, know-how, and funds by a concerted national effort and is comprised of three pillars: (a) strengthening disaster risk reduction and response capacity, (b) promoting decarbonization, and (c) supporting Pacific-led efforts. For example, in the area of infrastructure development, Japan announced support for the replacement of the Minato Bridge in Palau and the construction of an international airport passenger terminal in the Marshall Islands; while in the maritime area, Japan announced support for patrol boats for Nauru and the provision of a fishery research vessel to the Federated States of Micronesia, and the development of a fisheries industry research center at the national university in the Solomon Islands; and in the area of climate change, Japan announced support for a stand-by disaster recovery loan to Fiji.

The Government of Japan has also decided to implement the Project for Human Resource Development

Scholarship (JDS), a grant aid program to train young government officials through studying at Japanese higher education institutions, in some Pacific Island countries. Furthermore, in collaboration with the U.S. and other countries, Japan is strengthening cooperation in new fields that contribute to economic security, such as cooperation related to submarine cables.

#### **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 the area of health and medical care, Japan decided to provide Paraguay with grant aid worth approximately 500 million Japanese yen for medical equipment at public medical institutions, including the



Field examination of landmine removal methods in Colombia (August, Bolivar Department, Colombia; Photo: JICA)



Maternal and Child Health Center at the Asuncion University Hospital, which had been constructed with ODA in the past, and to improve access to health care for low-income groups, particularly mothers and children. In addition, as emergency humanitarian assistance in the event of a natural disaster, Japan provided emergency relief goods through JICA to Brazil, which was hit by torrential rains.

In the climate change/environment sector, the Government of Japan has decided to provide the Dominican Republic with a yen loan of up to 6.66 billion Japanese yen for the Integrated Solid Waste Management Improvement Project, which seeks to improve waste management through on-site improvements and technical assistance at the Duquesa disposal site, the only final waste disposal site in the northwestern part of the capital, Santo Domingo. The Government of Japan has also provided approximately 1.33 billion Japanese yen through the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to support the strengthening of protection for refugees and migrants and their resettlement in Ecuador, Colombia, Brazil, and Peru, which are accepting large numbers of Venezuelan refugees and migrants, as well as to support their humanitarian assistance and socio-economic inclusion.

In addition, in response to the frequent occurrence of violence and human rights violations by gangs in Haiti, which has led to a rapid deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation, Japan is providing support focused on both security and humanitarian assistance to contribute to the stabilization of the situation in Haiti. In October, Japan decided to provide grant aid of approximately 400 million Japanese yen through UN Women to protect and support women who have become victims of gender-based violence, to take preventive measures, and to promote the empowerment of women.

Japan also has entered into partnership programs with Brazil, Mexico, Argentina, and Chile to promote human resources development in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and other regions, through triangular cooperation<sup>(9)</sup> in areas such as 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 of this region are also important for the development, stability, and connectivity of the whole Eurasia, including Japan. Cooperation with this region, which continues to see high growth and a rising population, is becoming increasingly important from the perspective of maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order based on the rule of law amid a rapidly changing international environment.

In terms of strengthening connectivity, Japan is working to develop the Trans-Caspian Transport Corridor (TCTC). For example, in 2024, in cooperation with the World Customs Organization (WCO), which works on international cooperation in the area of customs, Japan began cooperation to improve the efficiency of customs clearance for customs officials in the region.

Additionally, through the grant aid project JDS, Japan is contributing to the development of government officials who are expected to demonstrate leadership in policymaking at the core of government in the future. In addition, in the area of economic and social infrastructure, Japan has decided to build a water distribution network to establish a safe and stable water supply service in Tajikistan, and to provide medical equipment to Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic. Furthermore, Japan is providing support for strengthening border management capabilities in the Central Asian region that borders Afghanistan.



The Project for the Reconstruction of Urmalar River Bridge on Talas-Taraz Road (June, Talas Region, Kyrgyz Republic; Photo: JICA)

<sup>(9)</sup> Triangular Cooperation refers to a form of development cooperation in which a developed country, a donor country or an international organization supports collaboration between developing countries by providing resources such as human resources, technology, funding, and knowledge.



## **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 Lebanon, in response to the rapid deterioration of the humanitarian situation due to the large-scale air strikes by Israel since mid-September 2024, which have resulted in more than one million internally displaced persons, Japan has decided to provide the country with an additional 10 million U.S. dollars in emergency grant.

With regard to Syria, under its assistance policy of providing humanitarian assistance to all Syrian people facing difficulties, Japan has provided assistance totaling approximately 3.5 billion U.S. dollars to Syria and neighboring countries since 2012. In order to provide educational opportunities to Syrian youth who have been deprived of the opportunity to attend school, Japan has accepted 144 Syrian students since 2017. Furthermore, in response to the influx of many refugees from Lebanon into Syria since mid-September 2024 due to the worsening situation in Lebanon, Japan has decided to provide an additional 10 million U.S. dollars in emergency grant.

In Yemen, where a severe humanitarian crisis is still ongoing, Japan has provided more than 400 million U.S. dollars in support since 2015. In 2024, Japan, in cooperation with international organizations, provided humanitarian assistance in particularly high demand areas of food, health care, and refugee assistance. Japan also provided cooperation such as renovating workshops at the Port of Aden, providing mooring vessels, and in human resources development through JICA training from a medium- to long-term perspective.

In Afghanistan, in light of the serious humanitarian crisis since the Taliban took over Kabul in August 2021, Japan has been providing humanitarian support in areas such as health care, education, and food, including support for basic humanitarian needs, while collaborating with international organizations. In response to the flood damage in northern Afghanistan in May 2024, Japan provided emergency relief goods

such as tents and blankets through JICA, and provided emergency grant of 3 million U.S. dollars in areas such as food and health through international organizations.

Human resource development is vital to realize stability in the Middle East in the mid- to long-term. As an example, in Egypt, under the initiative of President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi, Japanese-style education has been introduced at the Egypt-Japan School (EJS) and the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST), and efforts are also being made to cooperate in the areas of future education and human resource development, from preschool education to graduate school. Furthermore, when Minister of Planning, Economic Development and International Cooperation of Egypt Rania A. Al-Mashat visited Japan in December, three Exchanges of Notes were signed with State Minister for Foreign Affairs FUJII Hisayuki regarding a yen loan of up to 35 billion Japanese yen to support private sector development and economic diversification, a grant aid of 500 million Japanese yen to provide equipment related to the digitalization of the agricultural machinery loan centers, and a grant aid of 180 million Japanese yen to provide equipment at the National Cultural Center. In light of international developments such as the worsening situation in Gaza, Egypt's importance in maintaining peace and stability in the entire Middle East region is increasing, and it is expected that comprehensive cooperation between the two countries will be further strengthened under the Japan-Egypt strategic partnership.

In regard to Türkiye, the Government of Japan decided to provide a total of 80 billion Japanese yen in yen loans, including 20 billion Japanese yen in December 2023 as emergency support for micro, small and medium-sized enterprises affected by the earthquake that struck southeastern Türkiye in February 2023, and 60 billion Japanese yen in April 2024 to support the rehabilitation and reconstruction of infrastructure in the affected areas.

## **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, Foreign Minister Kamikawa visited Madagascar and agreed to strengthen connectivity through the Toamasina Port Development Project and to work on the multifaceted development of Madagascar by utilizing Co-creation for common agenda initiative. Later, during a visit to Côte d'Ivoire, Foreign Minister Kamikawa confirmed the strengthening of cooperative relations with the country by attending the launch ceremony for a cooperation project with UN Women and visiting the Centre Hospitalier & Universitaire de Cocody, where Japan has provided support for construction and renovation. During the minister's next visit to Nigeria, she toured Ventures Park, startup accelerator hub, as well as held talks with internationally displaced women, and expressed her determination to continue supporting efforts to stabilize northeastern Nigeria, while also taking into account the perspective of Women, Peace and Security (WPS). In August, the TICAD Ministerial Meeting was held in Tokyo and attended by representatives of 47 African countries, as well as international organizations, private companies, members of Japan's Diet, and civil society groups. At the meeting, under the theme of "Co-create innovative solutions with Africa" and with a view toward TICAD 9 in 2025, discussions were held on the three pillars of society, peace and stability, and economy, with an awareness of the three perspectives of future-oriented problem-solving, youth and women, and connectivity and knowledge platform. 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.

#### **(4) Approaches to Appropriate and Effective Implementation of ODA**

##### **A Approaches to Appropriate Implementation of ODA**

In order to secure transparency and improve planning of ODA projects, MOFA listens to the views of external experts at each phase and formulates projects based on these opinions. In the planning phase of project candidates, 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 (5,405 projects published as of the end of December 2024) on the "ODA Mieru-ka Site" after the implementation 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 (internal evaluations for projects valued between 200 million and 1.0 billion Japanese yen and third-party evaluations for projects valued at over 1.0 billion Japanese yen) on projects implemented by MOFA to improve ODA management and ensure accountability. The suggestions and lessons drawn from the evaluation are utilized for the policy formation and project implementation of future ODA. MOFA also publishes the evaluation results on its website to ensure transparency.

Furthermore, from the perspective of ensuring the safety of personnel involved in development cooperation, MOFA and JICA are working to implement the safety measures formulated in the Final Report of the Council on Safety Measures for International Cooperation Projects (released in August 2016) and are continuing and strengthening efforts to ensure the effectiveness of safety measures for personnel involved in international cooperation projects.

##### **B Approaches to Effective Implementation of ODA**

In order to promote the formulation of ODA projects that can produce high project effects, MOFA formulates country-specific development cooperation

policies that set out priority areas and policies for each ODA project target country, while comprehensively examining the key policies of Japan's Development Cooperation Charter and the priorities of issues and development plans of the developing countries themselves. Moreover, the Rolling Plan is formulated as an appendix to the Country Development Cooperation Policy that lists projects at various stages from implementation decision to completion, visualizing where individual projects are positioned within the policy and how they correlate with other projects. Through these efforts, the limited ODA budget is strategically allocated to projects that are important to both Japan and recipient countries, and multiple projects are implemented in an organically linked manner to increase effectiveness.

### 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 private finance mobilization with ODA as a catalyst, and assistance for climate change related issues, etc. 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 Initiatives to Foster Understanding and Support of ODA

It is vital to have the understanding and support of the people when implementing development cooperation. To that end, MOFA makes efforts 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 also created First Step 3, a television drama series set on the frontline of international cooperation, as a new venture. Furthermore, various commemorative events were held in 2024, marking the 70th anniversary of Japan's ODA. MOFA,



State Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAJI Takuma reading the keynote speech on behalf of Foreign Minister Iwaya at the Symposium to Commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Japan's Official Development Assistance (December 17, Tokyo)



First Step 3: Sekai wo Tsunagu Heiwa e no Negai, Television drama now available (as of February 2025)

in collaboration with relevant organizations such as JICA, held the Kick-off Event for the 70th anniversary of international cooperation in Kobe in March, the International Cooperation MIRAI Conference in May and the Symposium to Commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Japan's Official Development Assistance in December. Additionally, the 33rd Global Festa JAPAN 2024 (September) was held in a hybrid format that combined in-person events and online streaming, attracting 74,000 visitors and viewers over two days. MOFA has continued to dispatch ministry officials to educational organizations in actively conducting "ODA Delivery Lectures" for youth 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

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## 70 Years of International Cooperation and New ODA

With the year 2024 marking the 70th anniversary of Japan's launch of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in 1954, various commemorative events were held throughout the year to raise awareness of international cooperation. Following the Kick-off Event for the 70th anniversary of international cooperation in Kobe in March, the International Cooperation MIRAI Conference took place in May and the Global Festa Japan 2024 in September. In December, as the finale of the 70th anniversary commemorative events, the Symposium to Commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Japan's Official Development Assistance was held using a hybrid format, both in person and online. Each of the events was attended by many people.

Furthermore, in order to consider new ODA measures, the Advisory Panel on New Financing for Development was launched under Foreign Minister Kamikawa, holding discussions while obtaining the opinions of various relevant actors within Japan.

### ■ Symposium to Commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Japan's Official Development Assistance

The symposium, with the theme “Co-Creation, Solidarity, and the Future: Toward a Free and Open International Order and a New Era of Development Cooperation,” opened with a speech by OBUCHI Yuko, a member of the House of Representatives and President of the JICA Parliamentary Union. This was then followed by keynote speeches from Foreign Minister Iwaya (read by State Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAJI Takuma on his behalf) and Administrator for UNDP Achim Steiner. Thereafter, a panel discussion was held, attended by important figures and experts from Japan and abroad as well as international organizations. Attendees included Minister of Planning, Economic Development, and International Cooperation of Egypt Rania A. Al-Mashat, Vice Minister of Planning and Investment of Laos Phonevanh Outhavong, Secretary, Economic and Development Cooperation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Maldives Hussain Niyaz, Ambassador of Senegal to Japan Jean Antoine Diouf, and Ambassador of Tunisia to Japan Ahmed Chafra. In the first part, participants discussed an evaluation of Japan's 70 years of international cooperation, challenges the countries and international organizations are facing in light of global issues and changing international circumstances, the future potential of Japan's international cooperation, and expectations and hopes for the global situation in the future. In the second part of the session, under the theme of “New Approaches to International Cooperation,” the participants discussed new forms of international cooperation, including the significance and potential of international cooperation in solving common social challenges in international society and in Japan. The symposium concluded with closing remarks by Administrator for UNDP Steiner. This symposium serves as the finale of the series of events to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) held throughout the year.



Panel discussion at the Symposium to Commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Japan's Official Development Assistance (December 17, United Nations University, Tokyo)

### ■ Advisory Panel on New Financing for Development

The recommendations submitted by the Panel expressed the view that as Japan and developing countries work together to address diversifying social issues, it is becoming increasingly important to collaborate with various stakeholders, such as private companies, that have the ability to solve these problems. In order to increase collaboration, the recommendations found that it is important to create an ecosystem in which ODA serves as a catalyst, allowing private companies and investors to make investments based on economic rationality, ultimately leading to development in developing countries. As a measure to achieve this, it was stated that strengthening collaboration between ODA and “sustainable finance,” a financial mechanism for realizing a sustainable society, is important. In addition, the recommendations also emphasized the importance of sharing the experience of former JICA Overseas Cooperation Volunteers with the Japanese economy and society through post-return support, etc. Going forward, Japan will review its ODA mechanisms based on these recommendations and aim to realize a “new international cooperation” system that responds to recent changes in the environment.

1 For details, see the report of the Expert Panel on Sustainable Finance established by the Financial Services Agency.  
[https://www.fsa.go.jp/en/refer/councils/sustainable\\_finance/index.html](https://www.fsa.go.jp/en/refer/councils/sustainable_finance/index.html)







Main visual for the events to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Japan's Official Development Assistance

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.



Logo of the events to commemorate the 70th Anniversary of Japan's Official Development Assistance

## 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 2015 and sets out the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for realizing a society under the principle of “Leave No One Behind.” Japan is promoting initiatives for achievement of the SDGs, having established 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. Additionally, Japan 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 to exchange views on the promotion of the SDGs. Since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, through the process of various initiatives and rule-making efforts by diverse stakeholders both at home and abroad, the nature of economic and social activities in the international community as a whole, including Japan, has undergone rapid and significant transformation, from people's awareness and lifestyles to industrial structures and financial flows.

On the other hand, the international community faces serious global issues such as climate change and infectious diseases, as well as complex crises that were

not anticipated at the time the SDGs were adopted. As a result, progress towards achieving the SDGs by 2030 is facing significant difficulties.

The SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles, revised by the SDGs Promotion Headquarters in December 2023, stated that amid accelerating population decline and an aging society, efforts toward achieving the SDGs will be strengthened and accelerated in order to build a diverse and inclusive society and realize Japan's sustainable development, prosperity, and enhanced international competitiveness through the resolution of social issues using innovation. In addition, they also present guidelines for further contributing in the most effective manner to the efforts of the international community towards achieving the SDGs, and efforts have been made to strengthen the implementation structure and cooperation among stakeholders. In April 2024, under the leadership of Foreign Minister Kamikawa, the Advisory Panel on Sustainability of the International Community was launched to consider approaches to simultaneously achieve growth and sustainability, with an eye toward the period beyond 2030, the deadline for the SDGs.

### 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 2023, Japan positioned human security as a guiding principle that underlies all of its development cooperation. In regard to bilateral cooperation, too, Japan has also put effort into the dissemination and implementation of this concept through support including Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects.

Japan has also led discussions at the UN, and had contributed a cumulative total of approximately 51.9 billion Japanese yen by the end of 2024 to the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, which was established at the UN in 1999 under Japan's leadership, to support the dissemination and implementation of human security by UN agencies. The 2030 Agenda, which advocates the principle of "Leave No One Behind," also places the concept of human security at its core. Additionally, in response to Japan's efforts, the UN Secretary-General's report on human security was published in January 2024, the first one in 10 years. The report points out that human security has not only been a concept but has also functioned as a useful tool in practice, and that an approach based on human security is becoming increasingly important. It emphasizes that human security is a tool that enhances solidarity between nations, between people, and between humans and the planet, based on the premise that each country takes ownership of the survival, livelihood, and dignity of its own people. Furthermore, an informal plenary meeting of the General Assembly on human security was held in April attended by UN Secretary-General António Guterres and President of the 78th Session of the General Assembly Dennis Francis. At the Summit of the Future held at the UN in September, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan would make bold efforts to "invest in people" under the concept of human security, and Japan will continue to work to promote and put into practice the concept of human security.

## **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. Leveraging the Japanese

knowledge of disaster risk reduction accumulated through numerous experiences with disasters, Japan has actively promoted international cooperation in various fields of disaster risk reduction, including, leading the adaptation of the "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030," at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai, Miyagi Prefecture in 2015. At the 2024 Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, Japan stated that it prioritizes strengthening disaster response, promoting investment in disaster risk reduction, and developing early warning systems. It also stressed the need to further promote international cooperation in disaster risk reduction.

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 hosted the High School Students Summit on "World Tsunami Awareness Day" (November 5) on October 23 and 24, 2024, in Kumamoto. At the opening ceremony, Minister of State for Disaster Management SAKAI Manabu delivered a speech, and for the closing ceremony, Prime Minister Ishiba sent a video message. Additionally, at the event for World Tsunami Awareness Day on November 5 at the UN Headquarters, the high school students who chaired the High School Students Summit and others gave a presentation about the summit, and Foreign Minister Iwaya sent a video message. Furthermore, in October, the 5th World Tsunami Museum Conference was held in the Philippines, where three high school students from Sendai took to the stage to give a presentation on their project to create a guidebook compiling museums related to disasters and disaster risk reduction in the Tohoku region.

Japan provides training on Tsunamis for women administrators and other officials in Asia and the Pacific in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Hiroshima Office and supports the formulation of Tsunami evacuation plans and implementation of Tsunami evacuation drills for countries in the Asia-Pacific region with high risk of Tsunamis in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

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). In addition, the Development Cooperation Charter, which was revised in June 2023, clearly states that Japan will pursue quality education for all, empowerment of women, children and the youth, and ensuring educational opportunities in conflict and disaster situations. Taking this into consideration, in 2024 Japan made a new contribution to the Education Cannot Wait Fund, a global fund for education in crises, to enable Ukrainian children to learn in a safer environment.

### **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. Through assistance via international organizations, Japan has been addressing issues of deterioration within the food system due to the stagnation in distribution of agricultural products as a result of worldwide climate change and the situation in Ukraine.

In November, Prime Minister Ishiba attended the G20 Rio de Janeiro Summit, where he pointed out the importance of food security and building sustainable and resilient food systems. He also stated Japan will actively contribute to the Global Alliance Against Hunger and Poverty, which was established at the summit under the leadership of Brazil, the country's presidency, within the framework of the G20 and to which 80 countries, including all G20 members, have declared their intention to join, with the aim of stimulating joint actions to eradicate hunger and poverty around

the world. Prime Minister Ishiba also expressed Japan's intention to utilize its advanced technology to spread sustainable and highly productive agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries to new partners, including countries in Latin America and the Caribbean as well as Africa.

### **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. In December 2016, the UN General Assembly adopted the International Decade for Action on Water for Sustainable Development (2018-2028) to promote a shift in water management practices, and water-related initiatives are now considered important in the international community. At the Asia-Pacific Water Summit held in Kumamoto City in April 2022, Prime Minister Kishida announced the Kumamoto Initiative for Water, Japan's contribution initiative, which includes Japan's proactive efforts to resolve social issues related to water through cooperation and collaboration with other countries and international organizations. Furthermore, the Third High-Level International Conference on International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development” was held in June 2024, and in her video message, Foreign Minister Kamikawa stated that Japan will promote various initiatives, including the aforementioned Kumamoto Initiative for Water. She also said that Japan will focus on vulnerable groups, such as women and children, youth, elderly, persons with disabilities and indigenous peoples, and we will work together to achieve all goals and targets for water, toward the future we want, with no one left behind.

### **(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 COVID-19 pandemic 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)<sup>(10)</sup> that is required in the post-COVID-19 era to ensure human security.

Japan continues to work closely with public-private partnerships and international organizations, such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, Gavi (the Vaccine Alliance),<sup>(11)</sup> Unitaid, UHC2030,<sup>(12)</sup> Global Health Innovative Technology Fund (GHIT), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), to address various global health issues. Furthermore, under the philosophy of breaking the cycle of “panic” and “forgetfulness” and leading the world to structural change in preparation for the next pandemic, Japan continues to work to raise international awareness and maintain momentum through various international conferences it hosts or participates in.

Specifically, based on the outcomes and follow-up of the G7 Hiroshima Summit 2023, Japan continued to actively contribute to discussions on global health in 2024. The outcome documents of the G7 Apulia Summit in June included Japan's points of emphasis and areas it has emphasized at the G7 Hiroshima Summit and elsewhere, such as the achievement of UHC, equitable access to medical products and medical countermeasures (MCMs),<sup>(13)</sup> the need to strengthen the GHA, and coordination between finance and health tracks. The outcome documents of the G20 Rio de Janeiro Summit in November also reiterate the central coordinating role of the World Health Organization (WHO)

in the GHA and included terms and sentences such as UHC and equitable access to MCMs.

Regarding equitable access to MCMs, the African Vaccine Manufacturing Accelerator (AVMA) was launched in June 2024 with the aim of establishing a sustainable vaccine manufacturing base in Africa and improving the resilience of vaccine supply. Japan attended the launch meeting and expressed its support.

During the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Ministerial Meeting in August, two thematic events were held on “Global Health Financing to Achieve Universal Health Coverage in Africa” and “New Partnership for Health Equity in Africa: Accelerating universal health coverage (UHC) with Innovations toward 2030.” Representatives from African countries and public-private partnership funds participated and engaged in lively discussions.

As in the previous year, many events related to global health were held during the High-Level UN General Assembly Week in September, one of which was the Ministerial Meeting of Foreign Ministry Channel (FMC) for Global Health Security. The framework, which was launched in March 2024 under the initiative of the U.S. as a successor to the COVID-19 Pandemic Global Prioritized Action Plan for Enhanced Engagement, a foreign ministerial framework for COVID-19 countermeasures, reflects the importance of cooperation and coordination between diplomatic authorities in discussions on international health security. In addition, a Political Declaration on antimicrobial resistance (AMR) was approved by consensus at the High-Level Meeting on AMR, and was subsequently adopted by the UN General Assembly in October.

A collective response of the international community is needed for global health crises such as COVID-19. Efforts have been undertaken to review and create international norms to strengthen pandemic PPR. In the 2021 to 2022 period, WHO Member States decided to hold discussions to amend the International Health Regulations (IHR) and to negotiate a new legal instrument on pandemic PPR (“Pandemic Agreement”). Subsequently, after more than two years of discussions

<sup>(10)</sup> UHC: Universal Health Coverage; All people can receive basic health services when they need them at an affordable cost without financial hardship.

<sup>(11)</sup> Gavi (The Global Alliance for Vaccines): A public-private partnership to support immunization in developing countries.

<sup>(12)</sup> An organization that works to promote UHC in the international community, with the aim of achieving UHC by 2030.

<sup>(13)</sup> MCMs: medical countermeasures



and negotiations, amendments to the IHR were adopted by consensus at the World Health Assembly held in May/June 2024. A decision was also made to extend negotiations on the “Pandemic Agreement.” Japan believes that strengthening international norms is important to enhance pandemic PPR, and continues its constructive engagement in negotiations to improve international responses to infectious diseases.

### **(3) Labor and Employment**

Promoting decent work is one of the goals in the 2030 Agenda (Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all), and achieving this is also positioned as a primary objective of the activities of the International Labour Organization (ILO).

Through its voluntary funding contributions to the ILO, Japan actively provides support for improving occupational safety and health standards and establishing social insurance systems in developing countries, and is working to promote sustainable development in the area of labor. In January, Japan announced its participation in the initiative for the Global Coalition for Social Justice launched by the ILO, which aims to promote social justice and decent work for all, everywhere, through cooperation that transcends the frameworks of countries, regions, and international organizations, and is contributing to ensuring that the initiative produces concrete results.

### **(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. The sixth session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, held in Nairobi, Kenya in February, addressed various environmental issues under the theme of “effective, inclusive and sustainable multilateral actions to tackle

climate change, biodiversity loss and pollution.” Japan co-sponsored a resolution on “Promoting synergies, cooperation or collaboration for national implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and other relevant environmental instruments” and led the discussions leading to its adoption. The fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States (SIDS) was held in Antigua and Barbuda in May, where discussions were held on the sustainable development of SIDS. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs HOSAKA Yasushi attended from Japan and introduced Japan's cooperation with SIDS. Furthermore, as one of the major donors to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) of the World Bank, which serves as a financial mechanism for major multilateral environmental agreements, Japan contributes to projects that address global environmental issues.

#### **(A) Conservation of the Marine Environment**

The problem of marine plastic litter, caused by illegal disposal and inappropriate waste management, is a pressing issue that can have a negative impact on marine ecology, tourism, fisheries, and human health. The importance of addressing the problem is growing in recent years. 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), to provide support for environmentally sound management and disposal of plastic waste, primarily in Asia, in the fields such as compiling scientific knowledge and building models necessary for measures against pollution by marine plastic litter. In response to the growing momentum for creating a new international framework to address plastic pollution including in the marine environment, at the resumed session of the Fifth United Nations Environment Assembly held in March 2022, it was decided to establish the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) for the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, with the ambition of completing its work by the end of 2024. Japan actively participated in the series of INC sessions, including the fourth session held in Ottawa,

Canada in April 2024 and the fifth session held in Busan, ROK in November 2024, with the aim of formulating an effective and progressive treaty in which major plastic consuming and emitting countries participate. At the fifth session of the INC, there was some progress, such as the Chair presenting a new draft text, but differences in opinion among countries continued to exist on issues such as plastic production restrictions, and no substantial agreement was reached on the draft text. A resumed meeting will be held in the future to continue the negotiations, and Japan will continue to actively contribute to the discussions toward an early conclusion.

The High-level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy,<sup>(14)</sup> which discusses issues such as marine environmental conservation, fisheries, and the use of marine resources, held its sixth summit in September. Discussions were held on the Third United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3) to be held in June 2025, as well as the Panel's contribution to realizing a sustainable ocean economy beyond 2025. In his message, Prime Minister Kishida stated that as a maritime nation, Japan intends to actively participate in UNOC3, and that as a proponent of the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision, Japan will continue to actively participate in the negotiations to develop an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution. He also cited blue carbon<sup>(15)</sup> as an example of an area in which the Ocean Panel can contribute after 2025, and introduced Japan's efforts in this area.

### (B) Conservation of Biodiversity

Japan is actively involved in international discussions on biodiversity conservation. At the 16th Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP16) held in Cali, Colombia in October, Japan participated in discussions to decide on the outline of the multilateral mechanism for the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of digital sequence information (DSI) on genetic resources, as well as the establishment of a subsidiary body for the

participation of indigenous peoples and local communities, and contributed to the adoption of these decisions. Japan also contributed to the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund (GBFF), which operates under the GEF and aims to promote the implementation of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF). The GBFF Council had approved 40 proposals by December of the same year.

In recent years, illegal wildlife trade has intensified, 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 CITES<sup>(16)</sup> Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) Programme among others. In recent years, in addition to providing poaching monitoring facilities to Zambia and Rwanda in 2022, Japan has also decided to provide facilities related to wildlife poaching and conservation measures to Botswana in 2022 and to Zimbabwe in 2023. Japan has also been elected as a Standing Committee member representing the Asian region at the 19th Conference of the Parties to the CITES (COP19) held in 2022, and is actively contributing to international discussions during the COP sessions.

Japan also contributes to international rule-making for promoting conservation and sustainable uses of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. Through participation in the working group of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) held in April and September, Japan took part in discussions aimed at expanding the scope of genetic resources covered by the Multilateral System (MLS) and improving its functioning in order to promote access to genetic resources and their use in breeding and other areas.

With regard to efforts in the forestry area, through contributions to the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Japan continued to implement projects in producing countries in 2024 that contribute to the sustainable management of tropical forests and the promotion of sustainable and legal trade

<sup>(14)</sup> A panel made up of leaders of major maritime nations co-chaired by the Prime Minister of Norway and the President of Palau. Since Japan was invited to join at the time of its establishment in 2018, successive Prime Ministers have served as members. The member countries (as of 2024) are Norway, Palau, Japan, Australia, Canada, Chile, Fiji, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, Portugal, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Seychelles, the UK, and the U.S.

<sup>(15)</sup> Carbon that is absorbed by coastal and marine ecosystems through photosynthesis and then accumulates on the seafloor or in the deep sea (Source: Ministry of the Environment website)

<sup>(16)</sup> CITES: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

in tropical timber. In May, member countries voted to further extend the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), the basis for the establishment of ITTO, until December 2029. In December, the 60th session of the International Tropical Timber Council was held in Yokohama, where discussions were held on negotiations for a new ITTA looking beyond 2030 as well as administrative and financial matters.

In December, the 16th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD COP16) was held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, where discussions were held on the establishment of a new framework for drought countermeasures. Japan actively participated in discussions in the Committee on Science and Technology, a subsidiary body of the Convention, as well as in discussions on land degradation countermeasures in the Convention's Committee for the Review of the Implementation of the Convention.

### (C) International Management of Chemicals and Hazardous Waste

From October to November, the 13th Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer (COP13) and the 36th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (MOP36) were held jointly in Bangkok, Thailand, where discussions were held on the effective implementation of the Protocol, including strengthening atmospheric monitoring. Regarding the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, Japan is moving forward with preparations for the domestic implementation of the amendments to the Annexes adopted at the 2023 Joint BRS Conference of the Parties.

In terms of the Minamata Convention on Mercury, based on a decision made at the fifth meeting of the Conference of the Parties in 2023, a working group was established to evaluate the effectiveness of measures under the Convention. This working group held a total of three meetings in 2024, with Japan contributing to the discussions as co-chair.

## **B Climate Change**

### (A) United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement

Global efforts are essential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, which are the cause of climate change. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, adopted in 1992, is an international framework for addressing climate change, and its ultimate objective is to achieve stabilization of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system. The Kyoto Protocol adopted at the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) in 1997 required only developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Paris Agreement was adopted at the 21<sup>st</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties (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 organizations, including Japan (as of December 2024).

### (B) 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, and in April 2021, Japan announced that it aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46% in fiscal year 2030 from its fiscal year 2013 levels. Furthermore, Japan announced to continue its strenuous efforts in its challenge to meet the lofty goal of cutting its emissions by 50%. Based on this, 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.

### (C) 29th session of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC (COP29)

At COP29, held in Baku, Azerbaijan from November 11 to 24, the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG), a new goal for the period after 2025 which replaces the previous goal for developed countries to jointly mobilize 100 billion U.S. dollars per year, was discussed. As a result, the decision to set the goal of “at least 300 billion U.S. dollars per year by 2035” to support developing countries was adopted. It was also decided to call on all actors to work together to enable the scaling up of financing to developing country Parties for climate action from all public and private sources to at least 1.3 trillion U.S. dollars per year by 2035.

In addition, with regard to mitigation, efforts toward decarbonization of buildings and urban systems were discussed. Furthermore, detailed implementation rules for Article 6 of the Paris Agreement were adopted, which concerns international transfer of the amount of greenhouse gas emission reductions and removals, realizing the full operationalization of the Article.

### (D) Providing Assistance to Developing Countries for Climate Action

Developed countries, including Japan, are providing various forms of assistance to developing countries, including financial support, capacity building, and technology transfer, so that developing countries can implement sufficient climate action.

At the G7 Cornwall Summit and the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) in 2021, Japan announced that it would provide climate assistance in both private and public finance up to approximately 70 billion U.S. dollars over the five years from 2021 to 2025, and as part of this, it would double its assistance for adaptation, totaling approximately 14.8 billion U.S. dollars. Japan continues to steadily implement this assistance.

The Green Climate Fund (GCF), a multilateral fund that provides support for developing countries to address climate change, also plays an important

role in this assistance. Japan has contributed a total of approximately 319 billion Japanese yen to the fund to date, and in October 2023, Japan announced that it would contribute up to approximately 165 billion Japanese yen during the second replenishment period (2024 to 2027), which is the same amount as in the first replenishment.

In addition, the Global Shield Financing Facility (GSFF) was launched in 2022 as a multi-donor trust fund under the World Bank 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 685 million Japanese yen in March 2024.

At COP28, held in 2023, the basic institutional design of the Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) was decided so that particularly vulnerable developing countries address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change. Japan contributed 10 million U.S. dollars (1.37 billion Japanese yen) to the Fund in March 2024. FRLD's board held a total of four meetings between April and December, deciding that the Philippines would be the host country of the board, and making progress in selecting the Executive Director and in developing the legal arrangements for establishing the Fund's secretariat in the World Bank. As a member of the board, Japan is actively contributing to discussions aimed at the appropriate operationalization of the Fund.

### (E) Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC) Platform<sup>(17)</sup>

In October, Japan took the opportunity of the ASEAN related Summit Meetings (Vientiane, Laos) to host the 2nd Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC) Leaders Meeting, where it reaffirm the importance of the AZEC principles, which consist of pursuing net-zero emissions through various pathways, taking into account each country's national circumstances, such

<sup>(17)</sup> Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC): a platform proposed by Japan in January 2022, with the aim of Asian countries sharing the idea of promoting decarbonization and cooperating to advance the energy transition. There are 11 countries participating: Indonesia, Australia, Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand, Japan, the Philippines, Brunei, Viet Nam, Malaysia, and Laos.



as industrial structure and energy mix, with a view to simultaneously achieving decarbonization, economic growth, and energy security. At the meeting, the leaders of the AZEC partner countries adopted the AZEC Leaders' Joint Statement, which reaffirmed that the AZEC partner countries intend to contribute to global decarbonization by accelerating implementation of their regional strategies to promote energy transition and decarbonization through various pathways. In addition, the leaders concurred in the Action Plan for the Next Decade, which consists of the following three pillars: (a) promoting "AZEC solutions," such as developing rules to promote activities that contribute to decarbonization in Asia; (b) launching initiatives for decarbonization and emission reductions in the sectors with high greenhouse gas emissions; and (c) promoting tangible projects. Furthermore, Prime Minister Ishiba acknowledged that approximately 120 cooperation projects have been developed between Japan and AZEC partner countries since the 1st Leaders Meeting in December 2023. He also announced his intention to conduct studies to develop projects in Laos through Japan's Co-creation for common agenda initiative, to support Laos to be a regional clean energy hub in the future, with a view to contributing to the decarbonization in the region.

#### (F) 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 to these countries. The mechanism allows Japan to acquire a portion of credits from its contribution, assisting both Japan and the partner countries to achieve their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC). The "Grand Design and Action Plan for New Capitalism, Follow-up," approved by the Cabinet in June 2022, aims to have around 30 JCM partner countries around the world by 2025, and will accelerate discussions with relevant countries. In 2024, a new Memorandum of Cooperation on the Joint Crediting Mechanism was signed with Ukraine, bringing the number of partner countries to 29 at the end of the year. As of December 2024, more than 250 JCM projects are being implemented with partner countries. Japan will continue to promote projects and

discover new cases to reduce greenhouse gas emissions worldwide.

#### (G) Request for Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice and Japan's Response

In March 2023, following the adoption of a United Nations General Assembly resolution requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) regarding the obligations of States in respect of climate change, procedures are being carried out for the issuance of the advisory opinion by the ICJ. Japan submitted a written statement to the ICJ in March 2024, and then made a statement at the oral proceedings in December 2024. In the oral statement, Japan explained its basic position and efforts regarding climate action, and expressed Japan's views on its obligations under international law and legal consequences in the field of climate change. Specifically, the report stated that while taking into account established international law in the field of the environment, the ICJ's advisory opinion should determine each country's obligations based on international agreements such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement, which are the main legal frameworks for combating climate change and to which the majority of the international community is party. Japan will continue to contribute to the activities of the ICJ, including participation in oral proceedings, thereby actively engaging in strengthening the rule of law in the international community, and will also work proactively to address climate change, which is a common and urgent challenge for all humanity.

### (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),<sup>(18)</sup> 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. Japan established the post of Ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs to oversee issues related to the Arctic. In

addition, the "Ocean Development Strategy" formulated in 2024 also calls for the pursuit of research and development and sustainable utilization of the Arctic region, as well as the promotion of international cooperation in the Arctic policy.

Japan places importance on cooperation related to the Arctic in its bilateral relations and regional cooperation with the Arctic States. Japan's Nordic Diplomacy Initiative, the basic policy of Japan's Nordic diplomacy, announced during Foreign Minister Kamikawa's visit to Finland in January, also lists the Arctic as a major area of cooperation. Additionally, 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. Furthermore, various forums hosted by the Arctic States and attended by a wide range of stakeholders from industry, government, and academia are also promoting the exchange of opinions and knowledge sharing 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.

<sup>(18)</sup> An intergovernmental consultation body established in 1996 with the aim of promoting cooperation, coordination, and interaction among the eight Arctic States (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.

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

At the 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM46), held in Kochi, India in May, discussions were held on a framework for tourism activities in the Antarctic, information exchange, and the engagement of the Antarctic Treaty System in addressing climate change issues.

### (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, 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 socioeconomic development, and play a vital role in ensuring safety and security. By harnessing its own advanced science and technology, Japan promotes Science and Technology Diplomacy, thereby contributing to the development of science and technology at home and abroad, the promotion of relations with other countries, the peace and stability of the international community, and the resolution of global challenges. As part of 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 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 MATSUMOTO Yoichiro, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo as the new advisor in April 2020. Moreover, 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, 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 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 22 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 2024, the 7th Advisory Board Meeting was held in April. Furthermore, at the 3rd Symposium on Science and Technology Diplomacy co-hosted by MOFA and the Japan Science and Technology Agency in March, Prof. Matsumoto gave a keynote speech on future science and technology diplomacy in light of the current international situation.

Prof. Matsumoto and Dr. Kotani are working to build and strengthen a network of science and technology advisors from various governments by taking advantage of opportunities such as meetings of the Foreign Ministry Science & Technology Advisors Network (FMSTAN), which brings together science and technology advisors from the foreign ministries of various countries. In May, the two advisors attended the FMSTAN meeting and the International Network for

Governmental Science Advice (INGSA) international conference in Rwanda, where they exchanged views with science and technology advisors from various countries on the nature of scientific advice. In addition, Prof. Matsumoto visited San Francisco in the U.S. in January, Belgium in May, and Europe (London in the UK, Geneva in Switzerland, Strasbourg in France, and Prague in the Czech Republic) in October, while Dr. Kotani visited Fiji in March, as well as Sweden and Germany in October, 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 to raise the level of knowledge on science and technology within MOFA.

In terms of science and technology cooperation with other countries, Japan has concluded 33 bilateral science and technology cooperation agreements with 47 countries and the EU.<sup>(19)</sup> Based on these agreements, it organizes regular Joint Committee meetings with these countries to conduct intergovernmental dialogue. In 2024, Japan held Joint Committee meetings with Norway, Finland, Canada, the U.S., and South Africa, where the current status and future direction of



Foreign Minister Kamikawa attending the 7th Meeting of the Advisory Board for Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy (April 22, Tokyo)

cooperation in various fields were discussed with the attendance of relevant ministries and agencies.

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 ITER project to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of fusion energy.

<sup>(19)</sup> 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.