

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, 2025 was a year in which the importance of development cooperation in addressing these issues was further recognized.

1 Development Cooperation

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

A Effective and Strategic Implementation of ODA⁽¹⁾ based on the Development Cooperation Charter

Development cooperation has been facing changes in recent years, including an increase in private capital flows and the increasingly complex needs of developing countries. In addition, given Japan's difficult fiscal situation, further efficiency improvements are also necessary. Against this backdrop, the "Development Cooperation Charter,"⁽²⁾ approved by the Cabinet in June 2023, identifies "co-creation" — under which various actors bring together their respective strengths and jointly create solutions through dialogue and collaboration — as one of its basic policies, while also setting out a policy to more effectively and strategically utilize development cooperation as one of the most important tools of diplomacy.

To strengthen the strategic utilization of development cooperation, Japan launched the Co-creation for common agenda initiative, under which Japan proactively proposes attractive cooperation menus to developing countries that leverage Japan's strengths, combining ODA, other official flows (OOF), and private finance, in areas that should be strategically addressed from a

foreign policy perspective. In September 2023, Japan published the Strategy Document for the Co-creation for common agenda initiative, detailing strategically important areas to focus resources and human capital in line with Japan's foreign policy. In August 2025, the strategic document was revised adding "Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)" so that the strategic area became "Climate Change Response, Green Transformation (GX), and DRR," as well as introducing "Health" as a strategic area.

Japan is also advancing initiatives to contribute to further improve ODA efficiency and strengthen coordination with a wide range of public and private actors. In 2024, the "Advisory Panel on New Financing for Development" was established, and recommendations were submitted calling for, among other things, the strengthening of ODA's risk-taking function. Building on these recommendations, in April 2025, the Act of the Incorporated Administrative Agency - Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) was amended, with three main objectives: promoting the mobilization of private financial resources; strengthening partnerships with domestic and international entities capable of addressing diverse development challenges, and increasing flexibility and efficiency of finance of JICA.

(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
(Ref.) ODA White Paper
https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000017.html

(2) For the Development Cooperation Charter, please refer to the MOFA website:
https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page24e_000410.html

(1)



(2)



B Japan's ODA Allocation

Japan's total ODA in 2024 was approximately 16.49 billion U.S. dollars (-15.9% year on year),⁽³⁾ based on the Grant Equivalent System (GE system).⁽⁴⁾ Japan ranks fourth among the members of the OECD/DAC,⁽⁵⁾ following the United States (U.S.), Germany, and the United Kingdom (UK). Japan's ODA as a percentage of Gross National Income (GNI) based on the GE system was 0.39%, placing Japan in 13th place among members of the OECD/DAC (Source: OECD Data Explorer (December 2025)).

(2) Development Cooperation in 2025

In 2025, 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 provided assistance to Ukraine and relevant surrounding countries in the fields of humanitarian assistance, finance, food, and recovery and reconstruction. For example, in order to address Ukraine's difficult fiscal situation and support Ukraine's reconstruction and development, in April, the Exchange of Notes on a yen loan "Extraordinary Revenue Acceleration (ERA) Loan for Ukraine" was concluded. Under the framework of "ERA Loans for Ukraine," which the G7 leaders agreed to launch at the G7 Apulia Summit in 2024, Japan will provide a yen loan of up to 471.9 billion yen. In addition, Japan held the "Ukraine Mine Action Conference" in Tokyo in October. At this conference, Japan announced the "Ukraine Mine Action Support Initiative," consisting of three pillars of support for mine action in Ukraine: (1) Strengthening Human Resource and Technology; (2) Ensuring Seamless Transition to Recovery and Reconstruction: The Nexus; and (3) Diversifying and Strengthening Partnerships with Third Countries and International Organizations.

With regard to Palestine, in response to the worsening situation in Gaza, which was triggered by the terror attacks against Israel by Hamas and others in October 2023, Japan has been implementing humanitarian assistance in areas such as health and medical care, food, and water, as well as early recovery assistance including debris removal, support for debris management and health and medical care systems, and the provision of equipment and materials necessary for the restoration of water supply and sewage systems, through international organizations and Japanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs), among others.

Furthermore, in order to strengthen relationships with developing and emerging countries, known as the "Global South," Japan utilized opportunities such as the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9), held in August 2025, and the Summit of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue (CA+JAD), held in December, to carry out development cooperation, including the Co-creation for common agenda initiative tailored to the characteristics of each country and region, and worked to strengthen relationships with Global South countries.

In addition to the deterioration of humanitarian conditions caused by conflicts as described above, with natural disasters becoming more frequent and severe worldwide due to the effects of climate change, damage is becoming more serious and the humanitarian situation is worsening, particularly in Global South countries with fragile economic and social foundations. In response to this situation, Japan also continued to provide humanitarian assistance through bilateral channels, international organizations, and Japanese NGOs.

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

(3) The main forms of Japan's ODA are divided, from the perspective of the nature of funds, into grants (comprising grant and technical cooperation) and government loans, and from the perspective of recipients, into bilateral aid (to governments) and multilateral aid (mainly contributions and subscriptions to international organizations).

(4) The "Grant Equivalent System (GE System)" was introduced by the OECD/DAC as the standard ODA accounting method from 2018 onwards, and records the grant-equivalent amount of government loans as ODA. The grant-equivalent amount is calculated by applying a formula to the terms of lending such as disbursement amount, interest rate, and repayment period; the more concessional the terms, the larger the amount recorded. Compared to the net disbursement method (the previous OECD/DAC standard, which records the full disbursement amount while deducting repayments), this method more accurately evaluates Japan's government loans.
(<https://warp.ndl.go.jp/web/20240305164854/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



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, at the G7 Development Ministers' Meeting held in October 2025 under the chairmanship of Canada, the Ministers reaffirmed the importance of the G7 working together to mobilize public and private investment toward quality infrastructure, and welcomed the fact that the G7 has collectively mobilized more than 410 billion U.S. dollars to the initiative under PGII to date.

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”⁽⁶⁾ as its guiding principle and under the revised SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles of December 2023.⁽⁷⁾ Japan will continue to proactively promote “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 state-building, based on the concept of the “Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDP Nexus)” which in addition to humanitarian and development assistance, aims to strengthen efforts to address the root causes of conflict in order to achieve sustaining peace.

D Diplomatic Efforts in Support of Japan's Economy

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

Specifically, Japan will continue to promote public-private collaboration through the Co-creation for common agenda initiative, which proactively offers attractive cooperation menus that leverage Japan's strengths as set out in the Development Cooperation Charter, and through ODA that mobilizes private financial resources, among other means. In addition, in order to utilize Japan's advanced technologies to address social challenges in developing countries, Japan will promote quality infrastructure investment and supply chain resilience through financial cooperation and technical cooperation leveraging Japanese products. Furthermore, with the aim of addressing challenges in developing countries through the overseas

(6) Human security is a concept that pursues freedom from fear and want, and the right of individuals to live happily and in dignity through their protection and empowerment.

(7) SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles (decided by the SDGs Promotion Headquarters on December 19, 2023)

business operations of Japanese companies, Japan will support the overseas expansion of Japanese companies, including small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and startups, by supporting preliminary surveys such as needs assessments and business validation in developing countries through JICA's "SDGs Business Supporting Survey (JICA Biz)."

(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 has 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 ASEAN integration. Based on the fact that it was confirmed that the principles of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) and FOIP match one another at the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting held in 2020, Japan plans to continue strengthening Japan-ASEAN cooperation going forward in terms of maritime cooperation, connectivity, the SDGs and economy, which are priority fields of the AOIP. As a principal initiative under this framework, the "Japan-ASEAN Comprehensive Connectivity Initiative," announced in September 2023, is further promoting efforts to strengthen connectivity on both the structural and non-structural fronts. For example, in addition to physical infrastructure development such as the development of passenger railways in Metro Manila (the Philippines) and the expansion of Vientiane International Airport (Laos), Japan is promoting support to strengthen connectivity across diverse areas including digital connectivity, maritime cooperation, supply chains, electricity, and human and knowledge connectivity. Furthermore, at the Japan-ASEAN Summit in 2025, Prime Minister Takaichi proposed the launch of the new "Japan-ASEAN Co-creation Initiative for Artificial Intelligence (AI)"

and announced Japan's commitment to promoting cooperation aimed at building an AI ecosystem in the ASEAN region.

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 promoting the resolution of social challenges in Cambodia utilizing digital technologies, with the participation of Japanese companies.



A patrol vessel procured with Japan's assistance (Philippines; Photo: JICA)



Technical guidance on firefighting for the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) (September, Philippines; Photo: JICA)

Japan is actively providing support for capacity building for maritime law enforcement to countries positioned along Japan's sea lanes such as the Philippines and Viet Nam, with the aim of building a free and open international order. Such efforts include providing equipment such as patrol vessels and coastal monitoring radars, as well as human resource development through the dispatch of experts. Furthermore, Japan is providing consistent support to eradicate domestic and regional disparity, and support for the creation of a sustainable society in areas such as disaster risk reduction, environment and climate change, and energy. In 2025, training was provided on topics such as public international law, criminal justice, the creation and promotion of new industries through innovation promotion, smart cities, and the strengthening of local government capacity.

Japan is also providing a variety of bilateral and multilateral forms of cooperation to the four Mekong region countries (Cambodia, Thailand, Viet Nam, and Laos) as a traditional development partner. In response to the expansion of damage from flooding and drought due to the effects of climate change and river basin development, in March Japan decided to provide a grant for the Flood and Drought Risk Management, including strengthening early warning systems, coordinated with the Mekong River Commission (MRC).

With regard to Myanmar, since the coup d'état in February 2021, and compounded by the effects of the earthquake that struck central Myanmar in March 2025, the humanitarian situation has been deteriorating continuously. Accordingly, Japan is actively implementing humanitarian assistance (food, medical supplies, etc.) and support to improve the lives of the people of Myanmar in forms that directly benefit them, through international organizations and NGOs. In particular, in response to the earthquake damage that occurred in March, Japan dispatched Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) Medical Teams and Japan Self-Defense Forces unit to transport medical equipment and supplies, conducted medical activities on the ground, and also provided emergency relief goods such as sanitary items and water through the United Nations (UN) and JICA. Furthermore, Japan provided an Emergency Grant of 6 million U.S. dollars in the fields of health and medical care, among others, through international organizations and so on.

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 is undertaking efforts 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. In addition, from the perspective of addressing global challenges, the need for economic and social development in India, with its large population, remains substantial. In 2025, Japan concluded the Exchange of Notes concerning yen loans for support in areas such as the promotion of private investment, capacity building for forest officials, the construction of seawater desalination facilities and metro systems, and assistance to improve livelihoods for those engaged in the fisheries sector, thereby supporting the realization of inclusive and sustainable growth in India.

In August, at the Japan-India Summit Meeting held during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Japan, both leaders confirmed their continued cooperation toward the realization of the "Project for Construction of Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail," which is a flagship project of Japan and India. In addition, in the "Japan-India Joint Vision for the Next Decade" announced at the same meeting, both sides concurred to broaden the scope of cooperation, including through the launch of the new "Japan-India AI Cooperation

Initiative (JAI)” to promote complementary cooperation between Japan and India on innovation promotion and AI.

Under the “Strategic Partnership” elevated between Japan and Bangladesh in 2023, and with a view to Bangladesh’s graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status in 2026, Japan continues to advance support related to infrastructure development and improvement of regional connectivity under both the “Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B)” initiative and the “Industrial Value Chain concept connecting the Bay of Bengal and Northeast India” concept based on the new FOIP plan — extending this support also to the interim government that was inaugurated in August 2024. Japan is also continuing humanitarian assistance to more than 1.14 million displaced persons from Myanmar who remained in Bangladesh following the mass influx since 2017 and whose numbers continue to grow. In addition, Japan is implementing cooperation in support of the priorities of the Bangladesh interim government, including the provision of voter registration equipment in preparation for Bangladesh’s next general election, financial support in the areas of economic reform, and climate action, and is working to maintain and strengthen the longstanding bilateral relationship with 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 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. Furthermore, in March 2025, Japan concluded the first bilateral agreement on debt restructuring between a member country of the OCC and Sri Lanka, formally completing the debt restructuring between the two countries. In addition, during President Anura Kumara Disanayaka’s visit to Japan in September, Japan decided to provide the “Project for the Enhancement of Productivity in the Dairy Sector” (463 million Japanese yen), contributing to the improvement of livelihoods of small-scale dairy farmers in the Northern and Eastern Provinces of Sri



Medical examination by a medical team (December 6, Chilaw, Sri Lanka)

Lanka, among other continued support measures. In response to the severe damage caused by a cyclone in late November, Japan dispatched the JDR Medical Team and provided emergency relief goods. Japan also decided to provide an Emergency Grant of 2.5 million U.S. dollars through international organizations to provide humanitarian assistance such as distribution of food and non-food items.

In the Maldives, in order to strengthen counter-measures against high waves and storm surges on the main island of Malé, in July Japan decided to provide a grant (1.555 billion Japanese yen) for the “Project for Disaster Resilience Enhancement in the Malé Island.”

In Pakistan, in May Japan provided water-related equipment (510 million Japanese yen), and in December decided to provide cooperation for the strengthening of local administration in border areas contributing to regional stability (518 million Japanese yen), among others.

In Nepal, in February Japan decided to provide cooperation (250 million Japanese yen) contributing to the development of infrastructure such as irrigation facilities and the improvement of the capacity of local government officials to respond to disasters, centered on areas affected by natural disasters.

In Bhutan, Japan is providing support not only in infrastructure areas such as road development and bridge replacement, but also across a wide range of fields including improving agricultural productivity

and hydroelectric power stations, and is also providing human resource development support utilizing technical cooperation.

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 damage from natural disasters. In light of these circumstances, Japan, as a partner of the Pacific Island countries, has implemented cooperation to support their autonomous and sustainable development.

At the 10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM10), held in July 2024, participants adopted the "10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM 10) Joint Action Plan," which positions as priority areas for cooperation the seven priority areas identified in the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)'s "2050 Strategy": (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. 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. Examples of support in these priority areas include assistance for improvements to water supply systems in Koror State and Airai State in Palau and for the development of Fua'amotu

International Airport in Tonga in the area of infrastructure development; support for the development of facilities and training equipment at a national fisheries university in Papua New Guinea in the maritime area; provision of the Stand-by Loan for Disaster Recovery and Rehabilitation in Fiji in the area of disaster risk reduction; and provision of equipment for groundwater resource development in Samoa in the area of climate change.

Japan is also implementing the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS), a grant program to train young government officials through studying at Japanese higher education institutions, in Solomon Islands, Fiji, and Papua New Guinea as well. 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 has maintained long-standing friendly relations with Japan and shares historical ties with Japan, as demonstrated by the presence of around 3.1 million Japanese descendants, known as "Nikkei," residing in the region. The region is a major supplier of natural resources and food, as well as a potential emerging market with gross regional product of more than 7 trillion U.S. dollars. On the other hand, the region has large development needs in the areas of climate change and the environment, disaster risk reduction, health and medical care, and public security, among others, and Japan has been providing various forms of cooperation tailored to the circumstances and needs of each country.

In the area of climate change and the environment, at the Japan-Brazil Summit Meeting in March, Japan decided to advance cooperation — also utilizing the Co-creation for common agenda initiative — focused on the recovery of degraded pasture (pastures and farmland whose soil has deteriorated due to inadequate land management, overgrazing, etc.) and on measures to address illegal deforestation in the Amazon, from the perspectives of global warming countermeasures and food security. Additionally, as emergency humanitarian assistance in response to natural disasters, Japan provided emergency relief goods to Bolivia, which was

struck by flooding, and provided an Emergency Grant to three Caribbean countries; Jamaica, Cuba, and Haiti.

In the area of health and medical care, regarding Honduras, where the cancer mortality rate is high, Japan signed a letter of intent on tripartite cooperation in medicine (radiotherapy) among Japan, Honduras, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and decided to provide a grant of 640 million Japanese yen for the procurement of cancer treatment-related equipment in order to establish an environment in which the people of Honduras can more easily receive radiotherapy.

In addition, in response to the rapid deterioration of the security and humanitarian situation in Haiti, caused by the recurrent violence and human rights abuses by armed groups (gangs), Japan is undertaking initiatives focused on both security and humanitarian assistance to contribute to the stabilization of the situation in Haiti. In September, Japan decided to provide a grant of approximately 400 million Japanese yen through the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to strengthen the suppression of illegal trafficking at borders and at sea by improving the operating environment and conducting training for law enforcement agencies (the National Police, Coast Guard, and Customs) in the Western and Southeastern Departments.

Japan also has entered into partnership programs with Chile, Brazil, Argentina, and Mexico to promote human resources development in Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and other regions, through triangular cooperation⁽⁸⁾ in areas such as disaster risk reduction, poverty 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 its transportation routes connecting East Asia and Europe, the development and stability of this region are important for the development, stability, and connectivity of the whole of 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.

Against this backdrop, in December, the Summit of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue (CA+JAD) was held in Tokyo for the first time at the leaders’ level, and it was agreed that “Green and Resilience,” “Connectivity,” and “Human Resource Development” would serve as priority areas for future cooperation. Under the priority area of “Green and Resilience,” grants were decided to be provided to support the development and energy efficiency of economic and social infrastructure and to strengthen disaster risk reduction capacity. In the area of “Connectivity,” the sides concurred on promoting “Enhancing Connectivity through Support for the Further Development of the ‘Trans-Caspian International Transport Route.’” Within this cooperation framework, cooperation was carried out in collaboration with the World Customs Organization (WCO), which works on international cooperation in the area of customs, to improve the efficiency of customs clearance and enhance risk management capabilities for customs officials, and grants were decided to be provided for the development of the route through provision of equipment and infrastructure development. Furthermore, under the priority area of “Human Resource Development,” Japan provided support for the development of government officials who are expected to demonstrate leadership in policymaking at the core of their government in the future through the grant Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS), as well as support for the development of advanced human resources through Japan Centers and other projects. In addition, Japan has also contributed to improving the welfare of the people through grants in the healthcare and medical fields.

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

⁽⁸⁾ 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.

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.

In Egypt, Japan is providing support across a wide range of fields, including human resource development and infrastructure development. For example, Japan is working to promote the introduction of Japanese-style education at Egypt-Japan Schools (EJS) and the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST), which are being advanced under the leadership of President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi, and is devoting efforts to cooperation in the area of education and human resource development, covering the full range from pre-school education through postgraduate study. In September 2025, the opening ceremony for the Egypt-Japan KOSEN (EJ-KOSEN) was held. In August of the same year, the Exchange of Notes concerning the grant “Project for the Construction of Diving Support Vessel” was concluded for the provision of a diving support vessel for the maintenance of the Suez Canal. In September of the same year, the Exchange of Notes concerning the yen loan “Greater Cairo Metro Line No.4 Phase 1 Project (IV)” was concluded for the development of Cairo Metro Line 4. In light of the deteriorating situation in Gaza and other developments in the international community, Egypt has become increasingly important for peace and stability across the Middle East, and further strengthening of comprehensive bilateral cooperation under the Japan-Egypt Strategic Partnership is anticipated.

Jordan is experiencing social and economic burdens due to the influx of displaced persons from neighboring countries and regions, and is in a difficult fiscal situation due to the impact of the worsening situation in neighboring countries and regions. To help improve this situation, Japan concluded an Exchange of Notes concerning the yen loan “Enhancing the Resilience for Economic Growth and Human Capital Development Program Loan” with Jordan in November 2025, and decided to provide financial support through the loan. Furthermore, to address challenges such as the heightened risk of terrorism and the increase in cross-border crime arising from the recent destabilization of the Middle East as a whole and the worsening situation in neighboring countries, in November of the same



Open class on classroom guidance for Special Activities (Tokkatsu) at an Egypt-Japan School (EJS) (Cairo, Egypt; Photo: JICA)

year Japan concluded an Exchange of Notes of the “Economic and Social Development Programme” to provide a grant for the procurement of equipment for security enhancement and cybersecurity.

In Morocco, Japan has been actively promoting bilateral cooperation in areas such as fisheries and agriculture. In January 2025, Japan concluded the Exchange of Notes concerning the grant for “Project for the Development of the New Generation Fishing Port at Souiria K'dima” and has been advancing the development of the fishing port at Souiria K'dima. In February of the same year, Japan delivered a marine and fisheries research vessel constructed through a yen loan to strengthen scientific survey capabilities related to the marine environment and fisheries resources. Furthermore, in November of the same year, Japan concluded the Exchange of Notes concerning the yen loan “Project for Agricultural Water Development in the Southeast Area of Gharb Plain” under which agricultural trunk canals, pumping stations, and other facilities will be constructed in the Gharb region.

With regard to Syria, under its assistance policy of providing humanitarian assistance to all Syrian people facing difficulties, Japan has been providing humanitarian assistance to Syria and neighboring countries in coordination with international organizations and others. In addition, 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 December 2025, Japan resumed bilateral economic cooperation with Syria, which had been suspended following the Syrian crisis that began in 2011.

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 organization etc. In response to earthquake damage in eastern Afghanistan in September 2025 and in the north of the country in November, Japan provided emergency relief goods such as blankets and sleeping pads through JICA. In addition, in response to the damage of the earthquake in September, Japan also implemented an Emergency Grant of 1 million U.S. dollars in such fields as food, and health and medical care through international organizations and so on.

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 to the development of Africa over the years, utilizing development cooperation.

Building on this, Japan held TICAD 9 in August and, under the theme of “Co-create innovative solutions with Africa,” engaged in discussions with co-organizers, African countries, and other participants, focused on private-sector-led sustainable growth, youth and women, and regional integration and connectivity within and beyond the region. In this context, Japan announced a number of initiatives reflecting its

unique strengths. For example, in the Indian Ocean-Africa economic region, which has the potential to become a new center of growth in the global economy, Japan launched the “Economic Region Initiative of Indian Ocean-Africa” aimed at contributing to Africa's regional integration and industrial development through collaboration with countries surrounding the Indian Ocean, including India and Middle Eastern countries. In the area of health, Japan launched the “Investment Promotion Package for Sustainable Health in Africa” to support improvements in governance, the enhancement of the investment environment, and the mobilization of domestic resources in African countries. Furthermore, on the occasion of TICAD 9, Japan launched two Co-creation for common agenda initiatives: the region-wide Co-creation for common agenda initiative “Strengthening the Global Supply Chain through Nacala Corridor Development” targeting Mozambique, Malawi, and Zambia, and the initiative “Resolving Social Challenges and Strengthening Economic Resilience through Startup Support” targeting Nigeria.

(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 (5,507 projects published as of the end of December 2025) 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



Nacala Port connecting the Indian Ocean and the Nacala Corridor (Nampula, Mozambique; Photo: Penta-Ocean Construction Co., Ltd. and Tooa Kensetsu Kogyo Co., Ltd. Joint Venture)

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 engaged in development cooperation, MOFA and JICA are striving 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 engaged 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 project 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 development 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 the promotion of private finance

mobilization with ODA as a catalyst toward financing for sustainable development, and on collaboration with diverse partners including emerging donors. 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 rules and standards.

D Efforts toward Promoting Understanding of ODA

It is vital to have the understanding and support of the people when implementing development cooperation. To that end, 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, as well as through YouTube videos, e-mail subscriptions, contents creation and other tools, and has produced a video in which "ODA Man," MOFA's ODA public relations character, explains the benefits that ODA brings to developing countries and to Japan, among other topics. The 34th "Global Festa JAPAN 2025" (September), co-hosted by MOFA, JICA, and the Japan NGO Center for International



Key visual for "Taka no Tsume-dan no Ike! ODA Man"



Key visual for Global Festa JAPAN 2025

Special Feature

ODA Evaluation Workshop – A Quarter Century of Elevating the Quality of International Cooperation together with Recipients –

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) conducts an initiative called “ODA Evaluation” to enhance the effectiveness of ODA. The purpose of ODA Evaluation is to objectively assess how ODA has been utilized and what effects it has produced, with a view to improving future assistance approaches and raising its quality, and to explain the results and lessons learned to the Japanese public. Based on the recognition that donor countries and developing countries are “equal” partners in a cooperative relationship, MOFA has focused on the importance of strengthening developing countries’ own evaluation capabilities, and has been holding “ODA Evaluation Workshops” since 2001. These workshops deepen the understanding of government officials from the Asia-Pacific region regarding ODA evaluation methods and challenges and enhance their capabilities, thereby contributing not only to improving the efficiency of the donor side but also to a more proactive approach taken by developing countries and to greater transparency in evaluation.

Through the accumulation of ODA Evaluation Workshops held in various countries, calls for those specialized in evaluation across the Asia-Pacific region to gather in one place to discuss each country’s experiences and challenges — as a means of further enhancing evaluation capabilities throughout the region — came to fruition, and the Asia Pacific Evaluation Association (APEA) was established in 2012, bringing together evaluation experts from the Asia-Pacific region. Through people-to-people and intellectual exchanges among experts from within and outside the region, APEA has made significant contributions to fostering an evaluation culture throughout the Asia-Pacific region, and has also been highly regarded for its contribution to the promotion of Japan’s international cooperation through evaluation. In recognition of these achievements, APEA received the Foreign Minister’s Commendation in 2025.

On November 13, MOFA co-hosted with APEA the 20th ODA Evaluation Workshop in Tokyo as a key component of the 5th APEA Conference program. Thirty-one government officials from Asia-Pacific countries involved in their respective governments’ evaluation work and in reporting on SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals) progress to the United Nations through Voluntary National Reviews (VNR) participated online in the workshop. Furthermore, in a first for the workshop that had previously been held exclusively for government officials, 24 evaluation experts in business and academic fields attending the APEA Conference also participated in person, contributing to mutual understanding between the two groups.

At the inauguration of the APEA Conference, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs ERI Arfiya delivered remarks, emphasizing the need to further strengthen the values of “co-creation” and “equal partnership” at the core of Japan’s international cooperation framework, as the world faces common social challenges. She also praised APEA’s receipt of the Foreign Minister’s Commendation, touched on the indispensability of strengthening monitoring and evaluation capabilities in addressing these challenges, and expressed the importance of strengthening collaboration and partnerships with various stakeholders in this field.

To date, MOFA has worked to enhance the evaluation capabilities of developing countries through ODA Evaluation Workshops. Going forward, MOFA intends to make an evolutionary change to the format of these workshops and, in collaboration with international evaluation networks including APEA, to advance a new form of cooperation in which participants learn from one another.



In-person participants at the 20th ODA Evaluation Workshop (November 13, Tokyo)



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Eri delivering remarks at the inauguration of the APEA Conference (November 12, Tokyo)

Cooperation (JANIC), was held in a hybrid format combining in-person attendance and online streaming, attracting 30,000 visitors and viewers over two days. MOFA has continued to dispatch ministry officials to educational organizations in actively conducting “ODA Delivery Lectures” for youth and others as part of its efforts to promote understanding of development

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

2 Response to Global Issues

(1) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda)” was adopted at the United Nations (UN) Summit in 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 youth 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, in addition to serious global issues such as climate change and infectious diseases, the international community as a whole is facing 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 Government of Japan revised the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles in December 2023, presenting guidelines for strengthening and accelerating efforts toward achieving the SDGs, and

worked to strengthen the implementation structure and cooperation among stakeholders. At the UN High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2025, Japan conducted its Voluntary National Review (VNR) on SDGs progress for the third time and for the first time in four years. State Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAJI Takuma expressed Japan's unwavering commitment to advancing efforts toward achieving the SDGs, and demonstrated that not only the government but also diverse stakeholders are participating to promote efforts toward achieving 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 through contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Human Security, which was established at the UN in 1999 under Japan's leadership, has supported 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 noted that human security has functioned not only as a concept but also as a genuinely useful tool in practice, and that the importance of human security-based approaches is increasing. It also emphasized that human security serves as a tool to enhance “solidarity” among states, among people, and between people and the planet, premised on the ownership of each country over the survival, livelihoods, and dignity of its own people. The importance of human security was highlighted in 2025 through the aforementioned VNR and through events held during thematic weeks at Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. At TICAD 9 in August, a thematic event on human security in Africa was held, during which Foreign Minister Iwaya referred to the importance of human security in Africa. Furthermore, in his general debate statement at the UN General Assembly in September, Prime Minister Ishiba spoke about Japan's international cooperation based on the concept of human security, and stated that Japan will continue to work to disseminate and implement 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 adoption 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 United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July 2025, in conjunction with the conduct of Japan's VNR, Japan hosted a side event on the theme of “Sustainable Economic Growth and Disaster Risk Reduction,” attended by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Miyaji, JICA, the City of Sendai, and others. With the participation of representatives from the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP),

the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR), and officials from the governments of Thailand and Mexico, the event served as a platform to convey the importance of disaster risk reduction in the international community and Japan's efforts in this area.

In 2025, the 10th anniversary was marked of the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution designating November 5 as “World Tsunami Awareness Day.” Japan co-organized an event for “World Tsunami Awareness Day 2025” with the permanent missions of relevant countries to the UN and relevant international organizations, at UN Headquarters in New York on November 5, and Foreign Minister Motegi sent a message to the event. Three high school students from Miyagi Prefecture and the City of Sendai participated in the event and shared their own efforts in disaster risk reduction. Furthermore, the High School Students Summit on “World Tsunami Awareness Day” was held in Sendai on November 27 and 28, with 27 high school students from 9 countries visiting Japan and, together with 61 Japanese high school students, compiling the “Sendai Declaration” on tsunami disaster risk reduction.

Starting with the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction scheduled to be co-organized with UNDRR in Sendai in 2027, 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, in 2015 Japan formulated the “Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth” in conjunction with the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, and announced a new strategy for promoting sustainable development through inclusive, equitable, and quality educational cooperation based on the concept of human security. In the Development Cooperation Charter revised in June 2023, building on this strategy, Japan positioned education as an indispensable “investment in people” for advancing human security and clarified its policy of working toward quality education for all and ensuring educational opportunities in conflict and

disaster situations. In particular, with regard to collaboration with international organizations, Japan places emphasis on this as a means of generating synergies with bilateral cooperation, and has provided financial cooperation to the “Global Partnership for Education (GPE)” and the “Education Cannot Wait (ECW),” which play central roles in the field of international education. At TICAD 9 held in August 2025, Japan participated in thematic events hosted by each fund and introduced the cooperative relationships Japan is implementing.

D Approaches in Agricultural Areas

In coordination with relevant countries such as G7 and G20 member states and international organizations, and also utilizing opportunities such as TICAD 9 in August, Japan is examining approaches toward resolving food security challenges facing Global South countries and is supporting initiatives to apply the technologies and knowledge possessed by Japanese companies to solve challenges on the ground. Through these efforts, the Government of Japan is contributing to the resolution of food security challenges on a global scale, while also promoting the expansion of business operations and growth investment in the Global South by Japan's agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and food-related companies. At the G20 Johannesburg Summit in November, Japan issued a statement by Prime Minister Takaichi expressing Japan's commitment to providing support for strengthening production capacity tailored to the circumstances of each region, with the aim of building resilient and sustainable agricultural and food systems.

E Approaches in the Area of Water and Sanitation

Japan has continuously been one of the largest donor countries in the area of water and sanitation since the 1990s. Furthermore, Japan has implemented high quality assistance utilizing Japan's experiences, expertise, and technologies, as well as proactively participated in discussions in the international community. At the 3rd High-Level International Conference on the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable

Development 2018–2028” held in June 2024, Foreign Minister Kamikawa stated in a video message that Japan would promote various initiatives through water-related initiatives including the “Kumamoto Initiative for Water,” and expressed Japan's desire to work together, focusing on vulnerable people such as women, children, youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and indigenous peoples, to achieve all goals and targets through water, leaving no one behind and working toward a desirable future. In 2025, Japan also implemented various forms of support, including the development of water supply systems to ensure safe water access for people in developing countries in Asia and Oceania, Africa, and Latin America, among other regions.

(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. In recent years, 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)⁽⁹⁾ that is required in the post-COVID-19 era to ensure human security.

As a specific initiative, the Government of Japan, together with the World Bank and the World Health Organization (WHO), is working to support capacity building for health and finance officials in developing countries toward achieving UHC, and to enhance momentum for advancing UHC through the convening of high-level events. In 2025, Japan launched

(9) UHC (Universal Health Coverage): A state of which all people have access to the basic health services they need, when and where they need them, at an affordable cost without financial hardship.

the “UHC Knowledge Hub” in Japan to foster collaboration among stakeholders. In December, as part of the activities of the UHC Knowledge Hub, the Government of Japan invited leaders from countries and organizations committed to advancing UHC and convened the “UHC High-Level Forum.”

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),⁽¹⁰⁾ Unitaaid, UHC2030,⁽¹¹⁾ 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 “neglect” 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.

In June, the fourth replenishment meeting of the Gavi Vaccine Alliance (Global Summit: Health and Prosperity through Immunization) was held, attended by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs MATSUMOTO Hisashi on behalf of Japan, who stated that Japan strongly supports Gavi's mission to “leave no one behind through immunization” and will continue to provide support. Furthermore, during the High-Level Week of the UN General Assembly in September, Foreign Minister Iwaya attended the UHC Friends Group ministerial meeting and reiterated Japan's determination to continue promoting efforts toward achieving UHC and contributing to global health.

At the 8th replenishment conference of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria held in November, Japan explained its efforts on global health and expressed its determination to continue supporting the Global Fund.

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.

From 2021 to 2022, 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”). As a result, the legal instrument was adopted by consensus as the “WHO Pandemic Agreement” on May 20, 2025 at the 78th World Health Assembly. Furthermore, the International Health Regulations (2005) (IHR (2005)), whose amendments were adopted at the 77th World Health Assembly in 2024, entered into force on September 19, 2025.

(3) Labor and Employment

Promoting decent work is one of the goals in the 2030 Agenda (Goal 8: Promote sustained, 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).

As a permanent member of the ILO Governing Body, Japan actively participates in deliberations on international labor standards and other matters at the International Labour Conference and the Governing Body, together with representatives of governments, employers, and workers from its member states. Through voluntary contributions to the ILO, Japan is also actively providing support for the creation of employment opportunities and improvement of working conditions with a focus on youth and women in developing countries, and for efforts to eliminate child labor, thereby working toward sustainable development in the area of labor.

(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

⁽¹⁰⁾ Gavi (Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance): A public-private partnership that supports immunization in low- and middle-income countries.

⁽¹¹⁾ An organization that works to promote UHC in the international community with the aim of achieving UHC by 2030.

in various multilateral environmental agreements and relevant international organizations. At the seventh session of the United Nations Environment Assembly, held in Nairobi, Kenya in December, various environmental issues were addressed under the theme of “Advancing sustainable solutions for a resilient planet,” and Japan conveyed its views and initiatives during thematic discussions and co-proposed a resolution on “Promoting synergies, cooperation or collaboration for national implementation of multilateral environmental agreements and other relevant environmental instruments,” leading discussions toward its adoption. Japan also contributes to projects that address global environmental issues as one of the major donor countries for the Global Environment Facility (GEF), which is designated as a financial mechanism for multiple environmental conventions.

(A) Conservation of the Marine Environment

Addressing the problem of marine plastic litter, as a matter of urgency, is growing in importance in recent years, given its potential adverse impact on marine ecology, tourism, fisheries, and human health. The problem is caused by factors such as illegal dumping and improper waste management. Toward the realization of the “Osaka Blue Ocean Vision,” launched at the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019, which aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050, Japan, in cooperation with international organizations such as the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), provides support mainly in Asia for environmentally sound plastic waste management and disposal, including support for the accumulation of scientific knowledge and model building necessary for measures to prevent the outflow of marine plastic litter. In response to the growing momentum toward the creation of a new international framework for measures against plastic pollution including in the marine environment, at the 5th United Nations Environment Assembly in March 2022, it was determined to establish an Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC)

for the development of an international legally binding instrument on plastic pollution including in the marine environment, with the ambition to complete its work by the end of 2024. However, negotiations were not concluded by the end of that year, and the second part of the fifth session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC5.2) was held in Geneva (Switzerland) in August 2025. At this session, Japan actively worked to facilitate discussions, including by leading informal consultations on the core obligations provisions of the treaty, but significant gaps remained among countries on issues such as restricting plastic production, and substantive agreement on the text of the articles was not reached. A further resumed session is to be held to continue negotiations, and Japan will continue to actively contribute to discussions with a view to reaching an early conclusion of negotiations.

In June, the 2025 United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 (the 2025 United Nations Ocean Conference (UNOC3)) was held in Nice, France. A political declaration and voluntary commitments from countries, international organizations, and civil society, collectively referred to as the “Nice Ocean Action Plan,” were compiled, with Japan registering 24 voluntary commitments. Japan also highlighted its strong commitment to international cooperation on ocean matters as an ocean nation, introducing Japan’s advanced initiatives such as the calculation of absorption by blue carbon⁽¹²⁾ ecosystems and the utilization of marine biological big data to better understand marine ecosystems, as well as support for developing countries including waste management support for the prevention of marine pollution, contributing to the realization of sustainable oceans.

In September, the Seventh Ocean Panel Leaders’ Meeting of the “High Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy”⁽¹³⁾ was held in New York, U.S., during the High-Level Week of the United Nations General Assembly, where views were exchanged on the acceleration of action toward building a sustainable

⁽¹²⁾ Carbon that is absorbed by coastal and marine ecosystems through photosynthesis and subsequently accumulates on the seafloor or in the deep sea. (Source: Ministry of the Environment website)

⁽¹³⁾ A panel composed of the leaders of major maritime nations, co-chaired by the Prime Minister of Norway and the President of Palau. Japan has been a member since receiving an invitation to participate at the time of its establishment in 2018, with successive Prime Ministers serving as members. Member countries (as of 2025): Norway, Palau, Japan, Australia, Canada, Chile, Fiji, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Mexico, Namibia, Portugal, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Seychelles, UK, and Brazil.

ocean economy and on climate action in the ocean. The Government of Japan stated that it places high importance on the early conclusion of negotiations for the treaty on plastic pollution and will work with other countries to achieve this.

(B) Conservation of Biodiversity

In February, the resumed meeting of the Sixteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP16.2) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was held in Rome, Italy, where decisions were adopted on the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) monitoring framework and review mechanism and on resource mobilization for biodiversity conservation.

In July, the 15th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Wetlands (COP15) was held in Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe, where a total of 25 resolutions were adopted, including the “Strategic Plan of the Convention on Wetlands 2025-2034.” At the Wetland City Accreditation ceremony held during the same conference, Nagoya City in Aichi Prefecture was accredited. Also in the same month, Lake Inawashiro was newly registered as a Ramsar Site.

With regard to the regulation of international trade in endangered species of wild fauna and flora, the 20th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (CITES CoP20)⁽¹⁴⁾ was held from November 24 to December 5 in Samarkand, Uzbekistan. Japan actively participated in the deliberations from the perspective of emphasizing, based on scientific evidence, the harmonization of conservation and sustainable use of wild fauna and flora, and the implementation of rational trade regulation. Regarding the proposal to list all species of the genus *Anguilla* in Appendix II, Japan responded by taking the position of opposing the listing with respect to the Japanese eel, on the grounds that resource management is thoroughly implemented, sufficient resource levels are secured, and there is no risk of extinction due to international trade. The proposal was rejected in Committee I by 35 votes in favor and 100 votes against, with the opposition exceeding one-third of voting countries, and the rejection of the proposal was also finalized at the plenary session.

In recent years, illegal wildlife trade has intensified, drawing international attention as one of the key sources of funding for international terrorist organizations. Japan is working to strengthen capacity to combat illegal wildlife trade through contributions to the CITES “Monitoring the Illegal Killing of Elephants (MIKE) Programme,” among others. As recent contribution results, Japan has been supporting projects in Rwanda, Botswana, Namibia, and Zimbabwe since 2021, and in October 2025 supported the “MIKE Sub-Regional Steering Committee Meeting in West Africa” held in Senegal.

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 Eleventh Session of the Governing Body of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGRFA) held in November, Japan participated in discussions toward improving the functioning of the Multilateral System (MLS) to promote access to genetic resources and their use, including in plant breeding.

With regard to efforts in the forestry area, through contributions to the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), Japan continued to implement field projects in 2025 that contribute to the sustainable management of tropical forests and the promotion of sustainable and legal trade in tropical timber. In October, the 61st Session of the International Tropical Timber Council was held in Panama City, Panama, where discussions were held on the renegotiation of the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), which is valid until December 6, 2029, as well as on administrative budgets.

(C) International Management of Chemicals and Hazardous Waste

From April 28 to May 9, in Geneva, Switzerland, the Joint Conferences of the Parties (COPs) to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade, and the Stockholm

⁽¹⁴⁾ Full name: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES)

Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants were held, where technical issues and operational challenges for each convention were discussed. Furthermore, in June, an intergovernmental meeting aimed at establishing a science-policy panel on the sound management of chemicals and waste and pollution prevention was held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, and the “Intergovernmental Science-policy Panel on Chemicals, Waste and Pollution (ISP-CWP)” was newly established. Japan contributed to the smooth formation of consensus, including by serving as co-chair at the meeting.

In November, the Thirty-Seventh Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer (MOP37)⁽¹⁵⁾ was held in Nairobi, Kenya, where discussions were held on the effective implementation of the Protocol, including the enhancing of regional atmospheric monitoring.

With regard to the “Minamata Convention on Mercury,” the Sixth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP-6) was held in Geneva, Switzerland in November, where decisions were made on the “programme of work and budget for the biennium 2026–2027,” as well as and progress and future efforts on the activities of the Implementation and Compliance Committee and effectiveness evaluation were discussed. Agreement was also reached on prohibiting the manufacture, import, and export of dental amalgam by the end of 2034. Furthermore, Japan submitted a draft resolution on the regulation and management of mercury-contaminated waste and led the discussions.

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 (UNFCCC), 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 21st session of the Conference of the Parties (COP21) held in Paris in December 2015. The Paris Agreement provides that parties communicate their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) 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 2025).

(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 its intention to continue its strenuous efforts in its challenge to meet the lofty goal of cutting its emissions by 50%. In February 2025, as an ambitious target consistent with the global 1.5°C goal and on a linear pathway toward achieving net zero by 2050, Japan decided to aim for reducing 60% and 73% from fiscal year 2013 levels in fiscal years 2035 and 2040 respectively, and submitted these goals as new Nationally Determined Contributions (NDC) under the Paris Agreement to the UNFCCC Secretariat.

(C) 30th session of the Conference of the Parties to UNFCCC (COP30)

At COP30, held in Belém, Brazil from November 10 to November 22, host country Brazil presented the Portuguese “Mutirão” (joint effort, collaboration, working together) as the theme, and discussions were held on accelerating the implementation of the Paris Agreement and advancing international cooperation. As an outcome of COP30, the “Global Mutirão Decision” was adopted, incorporating a wide range of content spanning areas such as mitigation and finance,

⁽¹⁵⁾ MOP: Meeting of the Parties

based on three pillars: (1) the 10th anniversary of the Paris Agreement; (2) transition from negotiation to implementation; and (3) accelerating implementation, solidarity, and international cooperation. Specifically, regarding mitigation, language was incorporated calling for a strong message toward achieving the 1.5°C target and early submission by countries that have not yet submitted their NDC. Regarding finance, a call was incorporated to triple adaptation finance in the context of the New Collective Quantified Goal (NCQG) decided at COP29 the previous year. Separately, decisions were adopted under each negotiating agenda item, including one on the Global Goal on Adaptation, and together with the “Global Mutirão Decision,” these are collectively referred to as the “Belém Political Package.”

(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.

Japan announced at the G7 Summit in 2021 and at COP26 that it would provide climate assistance in both private and public finance totaling up to approximately 70 billion U.S. dollars over the five-year period from 2021 to 2025, and double its assistance for adaptation, totaling approximately 14.8 billion U.S. dollars, and has been steadily implementing this.

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. At the GCF Board meeting in October 2025, the expanded accreditation of JICA — one of Japan's Accredited Entities (partner institutions authorized to access GCF funds) — was approved, and 22

new cooperation projects were adopted, including a results-based payment project for mitigation outcomes through JICA's activities related to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD+) in Laos.

With regard to the “Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD)” to assist developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, in responding to loss and damage, Japan contributed 10 million U.S. dollars (1.37 billion Japanese yen) in March 2024 and 5 million U.S. dollars (695 million Japanese yen) in March 2025. The Fund's Board has convened a total of seven times by the end of 2025, during which progress was made on the selection of an Executive Director, the establishment of the legal basis for setting up the Fund Secretariat at the World Bank, and other matters, and the board decided that an early support scheme — the “Barbados Implementation Modalities (BIM)” — will be implemented for two years from 2026.

Japan is actively contributing to discussions toward the appropriate operation of these funds as a board member of the GCF and FRLD.

(E) Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC)⁽¹⁶⁾

On October 26, Prime Minister Takaichi co-chaired the 3rd Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC) Leaders Meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, jointly with Prime Minister Anwar of Malaysia. Prime Minister Takaichi noted that approximately 120 cooperation projects had been developed through MOUs between Japan and AZEC partner countries in the one year since the 2nd AZEC Leaders Meeting, and referred to the progress being made in the development of rules to promote activities that contribute to decarbonization of Asia, sectoral initiatives, and individual projects involving both the public and private sectors. At the meeting, AZEC partner countries adopted the AZEC Leaders' Joint Statement and its attachment “The Progress Made in 2024–2025 Following the Action Plan for Next Decade.” In these documents, the importance of the AZEC principles and the need to accelerate action in “this critical decade” were reaffirmed, and progress

⁽¹⁶⁾ Asia Zero Emission Community (AZEC): A platform proposed by Japan in January 2022 with the aim of having Asian countries share the vision of advancing decarbonization and cooperate to promote energy transition. There are 11 participating countries: Indonesia, Australia, Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand, Japan, the Philippines, Brunei, Viet Nam, Malaysia, and Laos.

over the past year based on the “Action Plan for Next Decade” adopted at the previous meeting was shared.

(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 states that Japan will accelerate consultation with relevant countries, aiming to increase JCM partner countries up to around 30 by 2025. In 2025, Japan newly signed Memoranda of Cooperation on the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) with Tanzania and India, and in August the number of partner countries reached 31. As of December of the same year, 290 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

Following the adoption in March 2023 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 were 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 July 2025, the ICJ issued an advisory opinion on climate change, covering the obligations of States Parties under the UN Charter, climate change-related treaties and other relevant international agreements, as well as the obligations of States under customary

international law. This constituted the first advisory opinion by the ICJ on State obligations in respect of climate change. Japan will continue to actively engage in strengthening the rule of law in the international community, while working proactively to address climate change, 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 Arctic Ocean coastal States, and eight countries (adding Iceland, Sweden, and Finland to the above five countries) comprise 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. In response to changes in the strategic environment, some Arctic States and others are also strengthening their security initiatives to secure their own interests.

The Arctic Council (AC),⁽¹⁷⁾ 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. In May 2025, the chairmanship transitioned from Norway to Denmark (for a two-year term). The AC has identified climate change countermeasures, environmental protection, sustainable development,

⁽¹⁷⁾ 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.), on common issues related to the Arctic region (in particular, sustainable development, environmental protection, etc.), while gaining the involvement of indigenous communities. (It does not address military and security issues.) Japan obtained observer status in 2013.

and the rights and livelihoods of Indigenous peoples as priority issues, and cooperation on these issues is taking place. 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. In addition to 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 international community with an emphasis on 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, based on the “Ocean Development Strategy” formulated in 2024, Japan is promoting research and development and sustainable utilization of the Arctic region, as well as international cooperation in Arctic policy. Furthermore, Japan aims to accelerate Arctic research and strengthen international collaboration by utilizing the Arctic research vessel ‘Mirai II,’ which is expected to enter service in 2026, as an international research platform. 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 in January 2024, 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. Moreover, exchanges of views and sharing of insights on Arctic issues are taking place at various forums hosted by Arctic States. In particular, by participating in events such as the Arctic Frontiers Conference, the Arctic Encounter Symposium, and the Arctic Circle Assembly, which bring together a diverse range of stakeholders from industry, government, and academia, Japan is sharing its knowledge on Arctic scientific research and conveying the importance of the rule of law in the Arctic Ocean.

B Antarctic

(A) Japan and the Antarctic

Japan has been conducting Antarctic observation surveys utilizing its advanced technology at Syowa Station established in 1957, thereby contributing to global environment conservation and international development of science and technology. Moreover, as one of the original signatories of the Antarctic Treaty adopted in 1959, Japan strives to maintain and strengthen the Antarctic Treaty System, which is essential to the peaceful use of the Antarctic, while contributing to the promotion of environmental preservation and international cooperation in the Antarctic.

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

At the 47th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM47), held in Milan, Italy from June to July, 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. The next session, the 48th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM48), for which Japan will serve as the host country for the first time in 32 years, is scheduled to be held in Hiroshima City in May 2026.

(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

Special Feature

Japan's SDGs Progress Report: Voluntary National Review (VNR) 2025

In July, at the Ministerial Segment of the High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) held in New York, the United States (U.S.), State Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAJI Takuma presented, on behalf of the Government of Japan, a Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the implementation of 2030 Agenda.¹ The VNR is an important opportunity for Member States of the United Nations (UN) to conduct regular reviews of progress toward the SDGs, based on the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” adopted at the UN Summit in 2015.

In this VNR, Japan highlighted, as one of its strengths in promoting the SDGs, the fact that the SDGs have broadly permeated Japanese society, with diverse stakeholders actively engaging from their respective positions. Japan also affirmed that the concept of “everyone will make it happen” is indispensable to realizing the SDGs’ principles of “Leave No One Behind.” Against this backdrop, Japan expressed its commitment to continuing its efforts toward achieving the SDGs without wavering, together with various stakeholders, even amid a challenging international situation.

The VNR process itself embodies this multi-stakeholder partnership. Diverse stakeholders, centered on the members of the SDGs Promotion Roundtable Meeting,² were actively involved, and an independent stakeholder assessment chapter was included. In March, a “Stakeholder Meeting toward the Implementation of the VNR” was convened to facilitate an exchange of views among stakeholders from a wide range of fields. Furthermore, opinions from a broad spectrum of the public were incorporated through a public comment process.

Japan also presented its approach, as a “nation on the leading edge of societal challenges,” to addressing the issues it faces, including the declining birthrate and aging population, SDGs promotion in local communities, and disaster risk reduction. Japan set out its intention to draw on these experiences and knowledge and to co-create with the international community, making use of opportunities such as the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

At the HLPF presentation, Japan made concerted efforts to deliver a concrete and impactful address based on these principles. Through video, Japan introduced “WheelLog!,” an accessibility digital map developed by ODA Yuriko (Founder and Executive Director of Non-Profit Organization, WheelLog!), that assists wheelchair users with their mobility. This was followed by a presentation by CHIBA Soichiro (Chair of Y7/Y20, Founder of Thousandleaf LLC),



Japan's Delegation at the HLPF Ministerial Segment (July 22, New York, U.S.)

a member of the SDGs Promotion Roundtable Meeting, who spoke from a youth perspective on the nature of a sustainable society. Finally, KANIE Norichika (Professor, Graduate School of Keio University) highlighted the importance of the multi-stakeholder partnership fostered through the VNR process, and stated that Japan should jointly engage in discussions on frameworks beyond 2030.

Japan will play a leading role in achieving the SDGs and in discussions and rule-making on international sustainability beyond 2030.



VNR Report on the implementation of 2030 Agenda

¹ For the VNR report, see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website: <https://warp.ndl.go.jp/web/20251018203906/https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/sdgs/vnr/vnr2025en.html>

² A consultative body established under the SDGs Promotion Headquarters at the Prime Minister's Office, in which a wide range of stakeholders from government, NGOs, NPOs, experts, the private sector, youth, and various organizations gather to exchange views and cooperatively advance Japan's efforts toward achieving the SDGs.



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. From April 2022, KOTANI Motoko, Executive Director of RIKEN, a National Research and Development Agency, and Executive Vice President of Tohoku University, assumed the post as the new Co-Advisor. 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. The 8th Advisory Board Meeting was held in December.

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. Prof. Matsumoto visited Germany and Switzerland in October, the Netherlands and Italy in November, and Denmark in December; Dr. Kotani visited the U.S. in February, the UK in March, Malaysia in August, and Mexico in December. At meetings with science and technology organizations in each country, they introduced Japan's science and technology diplomacy initiatives and exchanged views with counterparts on science and technology cooperation.

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.⁽¹⁸⁾ Based on these agreements, it organizes regular Joint Committee meetings with these countries to conduct intergovernmental dialogue. In 2025, Japan held Joint Committee meetings with Israel, Switzerland, Germany, India, Brazil, the ROK, and Chile, and with the attendance of relevant ministries and agencies, discussed the current state of cooperation in various fields and future directions.

In December 2025, Japan reached an agreement in principle with the European Commission on an agreement concerning Japan's associate membership in Horizon Europe, the EU's international research and development support framework.

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 is 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.

⁽¹⁸⁾ The Japan-USSR Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement was succeeded by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan on different dates. The Japan-Czechoslovakia Science and Technology Cooperation Arrangement was succeeded by the Czech Republic and Slovakia respectively in 1993. The Japan-Yugoslavia Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement was succeeded by Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia (name at that time), Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro on different dates.

Column

Strategic Strengthening of Science and Technology Diplomacy Centered on International Brain Circulation

MATSUMOTO Yoichiro, Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs (MOFA)

While global challenges such as climate change, environmental degradation, and resource constraints are becoming increasingly serious, it is also said that the international community has entered an unpredictable and divided era amid rising geopolitical tensions in recent years. In today's world, where such complex factors are intertwined, ever more sophisticated diplomatic strategies are required. Science and technology diplomacy, which links science and technology — indispensable for addressing global challenges — with diplomacy, is one such strategy and is being practiced by many countries.

Science and technology is not merely a driving force of economic growth; its importance in the realm of social and public policy has also grown simultaneously. As complex and global social challenges become apparent, science and technology is being deployed not only to advance specific fields and strengthen economic competitiveness, but also as a means of achieving social sustainability and serving the public interest. Underlying this shift is the fact that the impact of science and technology on society has expanded to a point where its relationship with society, including ethical, legal, and social acceptance dimensions, can no longer be ignored. At its core is the growing emphasis on the concept of inclusiveness: the pursuit of a society in which everyone can equitably enjoy the benefits of science and technology.

As seen in recent developments surrounding critical and emerging technologies, science and technology can function both as a strategic resource that influences competition among nations and as a factor of disparities among them. At the same time, science and technology, as the common knowledge of humanity, also constitutes a foundation for dialogue and cooperation. No recent research in science and technology can be completed within a single state; it has evolved into activities that presuppose the movement of human resources across borders and the establishment of sustainable international networks. Many countries are implementing policies, centered on both attracting outstanding researchers from abroad while strategically sending domestic talent overseas, thereby raising both the level of research and international influence. Statistically, international collaborative research co-authored by multinational teams shows markedly higher citation counts and greater research-paper impact compared to teams comprising a single institution or nationality. In order for Japan's science and technology to maintain its presence in the world going forward, and to enhance its international contributions and diplomatic influence through science and technology, it is necessary for Japan as a nation to clearly position a human resource strategy, with international brain circulation at its core. To that end, the integration of science and technology diplomacy, the strategic external foundation, with science and technology policy, the domestic institutional foundation, is indispensable. MOFA is also advancing initiatives that contribute to the promotion of international brain circulation, including the establishment of Science and Technology Fellows at diplomatic missions overseas and support for building networks of leading Japanese researchers active abroad.

The challenge of science and technology diplomacy lies in how to achieve both “competition” and “co-creation” between states simultaneously. Today, when technology is deeply intertwined with economic security, neither complete openness nor complete closure is realistic. What is needed is “strategic coordination,” that is, a framework for working together with trusted countries and regions on common challenges. It is important to also explicitly articulate the promotion of science and technology diplomacy in science and technology policy, and to strongly communicate and implement an approach in which Japan works as one.



The author