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General Debate

Statement by the Ambassador for International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Wednesday, 20 July 2016

Speaker: H.E. Mr. Toshio Suzuki

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Address by H.E. Mr. Toshiro SUZUKI,
Ambassador for International Economic Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of
Japan
on the Occasion of the Fourteenth Session of
the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

Madam President,
Secretary General of UNCTAD,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

To begin with, I would like to thank our host, the Government of Kenya, and the people of Kenya for their hospitality.

Madam President,

This fourteenth session is an important occasion to guide UNCTAD's activities for the next four years. Japan values the role of UNCTAD as a focal point within the United Nations for the integrated treatment of trade and development and the interrelated issues of finance, investment, technology and sustainable development.

As far as Japan is concerned, we also value the precious opportunities we have been given this year to contribute to the international arena as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council and the G7 presidency. Moreover, Japan will lead in accelerating African development by holding the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) here in Nairobi in August.

Madam President,

The year 2015 was a milestone, in which joint international efforts towards sustainable development culminated in the successes of Sendai, Addis Ababa, New York and Paris. As rightly reflected in the theme of UNCTAD XIV, we should build on this momentum and move swiftly from decision to action. In this regard, UNCTAD XIV is expected to play an important role to facilitate the global implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Japan is firmly committed to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and will play its part both in domestic implementation and in international

cooperation. To this end, the Government of Japan has launched the SDGs Promotion Headquarters in the Cabinet, headed by the Prime Minister and attended by all Ministers. It will ensure a whole-of-government approach mobilizing all available resources to implement, monitor and review the SDGs. At the Ise-Shima Summit, G7 leaders committed to advance the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, domestically and internationally, in a people-centered and planet-sensitive manner. In addition to domestic actions, G7 commits to support developing countries' efforts to implement the 2030 Agenda, with a particular emphasis on the dignity of individuals in vulnerable groups and promoting human security.

Japan, as the G7 presidency, announced the following commitments on the occasion of the G7 Ise-Shima Summit.

- First, towards the stabilization of the Middle East, Japan will provide support totaling about 6 billion US dollars, including human resource development programs for about 20,000 people.
- Second, for the improvement of global health, we will provide support totaling about 1.1 billion US dollars to relevant international health organizations.
- Third, on Quality Infrastructure, we delivered a new initiative, titled the “Expanded Partnership for Quality Infrastructure,” to promote quality infrastructure investment, aiming to provide, among all, financing of approximately 200 billion US dollars in the next five years to be allocated to infrastructure projects across the world.
- Fourth, based on our new “Development Strategy for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment,” we plan to train roughly 5,000 female administrative officers and assist education for approximately 50,000 female students over the coming three-year period.

Gender issues are particularly important among those agendas. The G7 leaders endorsed the “G7 Guiding Principles for Capacity Building of Women and Girls” and the “Women’s Initiative in Developing STEM Career (WINDS),” focusing on women’s empowerment through education, training and promotion of women’s active role in the workplace.

With a view to creating “a society where all women shine,” Japan has hosted the World Assembly for Women (WAW!) in 2014 and 2015. The meeting this year will be held on the 13 and 14 of December in Tokyo.

Madam President,

It is essential for UNCTAD to promote the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of its activities, in order to deliver tangible results for countries most in need. Japan therefore welcomes recent efforts for improvement in the management and administration of UNCTAD through results-based management.

At the same time, UNCTAD should, within its mandate and in collaboration with other relevant agencies, actively engage in new challenges facing developing countries in the new SDG era. In this regard, Japan supports the recently launched “eTrade for All” initiative.

We also believe that UNCTAD’s work on South-South cooperation, including defining and establishing a South-South database, is meaningful also for nurturing a more comprehensive understanding of the international flow of financing for development.

Madam President,

As mentioned earlier, this coming August, TICAD VI will be held here in Nairobi, in this very building. It will mark a historical milestone as the first TICAD to be held in Africa, embodying African ownership.

Through the TICAD process, Japan has committed to provide assistance for the sustainable and quality growth of Africa. At TICAD VI, participants will discuss three priority areas, namely, industrialization, health, and social stability, in order to address the challenges that emerged after TICAD V and the last year’s adoption of the SDGs.

Madam President,

In closing, I would like to express my sincere wishes that UNCTAD XIV will be highly productive and successful for all of us. Thank you very much.