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Statement by Mr. Katsuhiro-Takahashi,
Minister, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations
At the General Debate of the Second Committee of the General Assembly
9 October 2013

Mr. Chair,

To begin, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Abdou Salam Diallo and the other bureau members on assuming their important positions. My delegation will spare no effort in supporting you and contributing constructively to the discussions in this Committee.

Mr. Chair,

The Special Event on the MDGs, held two weeks ago, was a great opportunity to renew our political commitment to achieve the MDGs, and also to lay out a clear work plan to integrate various related processes on the post-2015 development agenda organically.

Japan is committed to further accelerating our efforts towards achieving the MDGs. Let me give you several examples. As was announced by Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Shinzo Abe, during the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD V) last June, we set aside USD 500 million to address health issues in Africa, and have been setting up training programmes for some 120,000 health and medical service providers. Also, during the General Debate two weeks ago, Prime Minister Abe announced his intention to make an appropriate contribution at the upcoming fourth replenishment of the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and Prime Minister Abe further declared that creating ‘societies in which women shine’ is now a guiding thread of Japanese diplomacy and from this perspective Japan will implement ODA in excess of USD 3 billion over the next three years.
Mr. Chair,

Japan seeks to actively contribute to the discussions to formulate the post-2015 development agenda, including through the Japan-led informal forum called the Post-MDGs Contact Group. In this regard, my delegation would like to emphasize the following five points on the post-2015 agenda:

The first point is on human security. A GA resolution defining a common understanding on the notion of human security was adopted in September of last year. This resolution affirmed that the fruits of development must be brought to each individual, including all vulnerable members of society. The post-2015 agenda should be therefore guided by human security.

Second, economic growth and job creation are essential to achieving virtually all our development goals. The eradication of extreme poverty in a sustainable manner will be possible only through the development of infrastructure and human resources, and the re-investment of wealth brought by growth back into further economic and social development.

Third, universal health coverage (UHC) should be included in the post-2015 development agenda. We should aim at meeting broader health and medical needs based on a people-centered approach and supplementing a disease-centered approach. Measures for vulnerable people, women in particular, are the key to realizing UHC. Japan, together with other co-organizers, hosted a side-event on the issue of health and development chaired by Foreign Minister Kishida on 25th September, and Prime Minister Abe expressed his determination to promote UHC in the post-2015 development agenda in his remarks. My delegation is determined to provide leadership in this area as the international community works to formulate the post-2015 development agenda.

Fourth, disaster risk reduction should be mainstreamed in the post-2015 development agenda since a disaster can wipe out the hard-won achievement of years of development in an instant. Throughout its history, Japan has experienced numerous massive disasters, and we would like to share our experiences and lessons learnt, as well as our various disaster reduction technologies, with the world. With this in mind, we will host the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction at the ministerial level in the city of Sendai, the disaster-stricken area of the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami, in March 2015. I would like to call on your support in the upcoming negotiations of the ISDR resolution.
Fifth, a new global partnership framework is necessary to ensure achieving the post-2015 development goals, involving all the various actors in development cooperation such as emerging economies, the private sector and civil society.

Mr. Chair,

My delegation welcomes the agreement that was reached at the MDGs Special Event on the work plan towards the post-2015 development agenda, which seeks to organically integrate the various post-2015 processes including the SDGs-OWG and the Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Financing, with a view to working towards a single framework and a unified set of goals. Based on the five points I mentioned earlier, my delegation will continue to actively participate in those various discussions.

With particular regard to the perspective of sustainable development, I would like to introduce three events that serve concrete examples of the contribution of Japan to sustainable development: first, the Diplomatic Conference on the Minamata Convention on Mercury was held in Japan from 9-11 October; second, we will hold an international conference on sustainable cities in Kitakyushu City at the end of this month; and third, we will host the UNESCO World conferences on Education for Sustainable Development in Okayama City and Nagoya City in November next year.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my delegation’s resolve to work closely with you and all other delegations to find effective solutions to the crucial economic and development challenges that this Committee will be addressing.