Statement by Ms. Yaeko Sumi
Alternate Representative of Japan
on
item 69(a): Implementation of human rights instruments
Third Committee
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Mr. Chair,

It has been almost ten months since the administration of Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo Abe was inaugurated in Japan last December. In that time, the new administration has been advancing ‘diplomacy emphasizing universal values’ including liberty, democracy and the rule of law, and has been also working in the area of human rights more actively than ever. The protection of all human rights and fundamental freedoms is a legitimate concern of international society, and it is furthermore a fundamental responsibility for each State to protect and promote them. With a view toward making progress on the issue of human rights and humanity, the Government of Japan has been working through both the United Nations and bilateral human rights dialogues, and has also been engaging enthusiastically in various human rights activities, particularly in measures related to the protection of women’s rights.

In June, our Cabinet adopted the “Japan Revitalization Strategy” in order to support and enhance a social and economic environment in which women can actively participate. The Government of Japan also intends to actively commit itself to international issues in addition to its domestic efforts. In this regard, as Prime Minister Abe mentioned at the general debate of the United Nations General Assembly this September, Japan will enhance its support to efforts to
address international challenges related to women, as well as to work on the formulation of our own National Action Plan to implement Security Council Resolution 1325, entitled “Women, Peace and Security”. In addition, the Government of Japan is preparing to submit a State report on the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women next year, with reference to the recommendations previously made by the Committee.

Mr. Chair,

Japan is faithfully implementing the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and relevant international human rights conventions. This shows, I believe, the degree to which Japan values the importance of human rights. With regard to the UPR, Japan was reviewed last October. Japan believes that the UPR is a very worthwhile process, which promotes the improvement of the human rights situations of all State parties based on ‘Dialogue and Cooperation’. The State report of Japan on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights was examined this April, followed by the examination of its State report on the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in this May. The Government of Japan would be able and pleased to engage in constructive and meaningful dialogues with the respective Committees on these issues. Next year, Japan will submit its State reports on the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. Japan will continue to make efforts to materialize the spirit of the UPR and all respective human rights treaties. Toward this aim, Japan will be enhancing its close cooperation with international society.

Mr. Chair,

The Government of Japan has presented the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to the Diet for its conclusion. It has also been preparing to conclude the Convention domestically since Japan signed the Convention in 2007, with reference to the wide range of opinions of relevant actors, including people with disabilities and their families. Japan has introduced important domestic legislation and policies related to persons with disabilities in line with the Convention, including the amendment of the Basic Act for Persons with Disabilities
in order to address such issues as the ‘denial of reasonable accommodation’ as a form of ‘discrimination of any kind on the basis of disability’, and the establishment of a domestic framework to monitor the implementation of the Convention. Moreover, the Act on the Elimination of Discrimination against Persons with Disabilities was enacted and the existing Handicapped Person’s Employment Promotion Act and the Order for the Enforcement of the School Education Act were revised this June. Through this legislation, the domestic systems in Japan are now more well prepared to realize and ensure ‘the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by all persons with disabilities’ as well as ‘the promotion of respect for the inherent dignity of persons with disabilities’, as set forth in the Convention. Japan will continue to enhance its efforts to realize the rights of persons with disabilities even after it concludes the Convention.

Mr. Chair,

In conclusion, Japan will continue to be engaged in all the various international frameworks for the protection and promotion of human rights and to make efforts to improve the situation of human rights through various approaches, in both international and domestic levels. That is the policy of the current administration which places great importance on human rights, starting with the rights of women. That is the path which Japan shall take forward. Toward this aim, Japan is committed to cooperating with every partner.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.