Statement by H.E. Kazuyoshi Umemoto
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations
At the Annual Session of the Executive Board
of UN Women
17 June 2014

Mr. President,

I would like to first express our gratitude to Your Excellency, Mr. Gonzalo Koncke Pizzorno of Uruguay, for the strong leadership you have shown, including during the Joint Field Visit of the Executive Boards in which Japan participated.

We welcome the statement made by Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka. We would also like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for her dedicated work since assuming the post last September.

Mr. President,

We welcome the report (by the Executive Director) on the progress made in the Strategic Plan. We particularly appreciate its graphic description with trajectory charts and traffic light tables summarizing its progress against targets. It reads like a student’s “result sheet”.

We highly commend UN Women for its dedicated efforts to fulfill its unique mandate. We are very glad to note that these efforts have led to the results at the intergovernmental normative level, through coordination, as well as on the ground, and the progress in its five priority areas. We urge UN Women to further strengthen its work especially where the result sheet shows some shortcomings.
Mr. President,

Regarding the challenges that the report recognizes, I would like to highlight four areas where Japan has been cooperating and collaborating with UN Women.

(1) First, “Resources”:
In March, the Government of Japan invited the Executive Director of UN-Women to Japan. During her visit, Prime Minister Abe reassured her of Japan’s commitment to cooperate closely with her office. Regarding funding, although we will announce the details at the pledging event tomorrow, I am glad to inform you that this year Japan has increased its core contributions by about 4.5 times and its non-core contributions by about 6 times, which will amount to more than 10 million dollars in total.

(2) Second, “No Push-back on the Normative Agenda”:
Japan has also been closely cooperating with UN-Women in its normative work. For example, Japan proposed gender perspective language in various General Assembly resolutions last year, actively participated in the CSW Agreed Conclusion discussion, sponsored the CSW resolution on “Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment in Natural Disasters” (March 2014) and facilitated the ECOSOC resolution on “Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into all Policies and Programmes in the United Nations System” (June 2014).

(3) Third, “Post-2015 and SDGs”:
We recently hosted an Ambassador-level discussion in this regard. We fully support UN-Women’s position to have a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women’s empowerment including “unpaid care work” as one of the indicators, and to mainstream gender into other goals through appropriate targets.

(4) Fourth, “Beijing +20”:
Beijing +20 provides an important opportunity to look at achievements and challenges and renew our commitment. Under the Prime Minister’s initiative, in September this year, the Government of Japan will host the “World Assembly for Women: Tokyo 2014 - Towards a Society Where Women Shine” (WAW! Tokyo).

This Assembly will be one of the global events in commemoration of Beijing +20 on the theme of “Women and the Economy”. We hope that the Executive Director can participate in this Assembly, and provide us with her insight on women’s empowerment from an international cooperation perspective.

I thank you, Mr. President.