



Statement by Mr. YAMANAKA Osamu
Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations
At the 2023 First Regular Session of the UNICEF Executive Board

7 February 2023

(as delivered)

Thank you, Madam President,

At the outset, I would like to join Executive Director Madame Russel for expressing heartfelt condolences to those who lost their lives or their families due to devastating earthquake in Turkiye and Syria and I would like to appreciate UNICEF's swift response to rescue the victims particularly the children. Japan would like to congratulate Your Excellency, Ambassador Marie-Louise Koch Wegter, on your assumption as the new President of the Executive Board. We look forward to working closely with you to support UNICEF.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Madame Executive Director Russell once again for your fruitful visit to Japan last November. Your meetings with Prime Minister Kishida, members of the Parliamentary League for UNICEF, and the Japan Committee for UNICEF helped to highlight the importance of the Japan-UNICEF relationship. The renewed Memorandum of Cooperation between the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and UNICEF was another successful outcome of the visit. Japan looks forward to working with UNICEF to promote human security in the new era under your strong leadership.

Last year, Japan contributed about 200 million US dollars to UNICEF, including our JPO contribution, which was utilized to successfully assist 64 countries in the Asia-Pacific,

Middle Eastern, African, Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and Latin America and Caribbean regions.

As the G7 chair this year, Japan will lead the discussions of the G7 amidst historic events facing the international community. It is very encouraging to see that UNICEF — one of Japan's most important partners — is unwavering in its determination to deliver results for children in all settings and to secure the rights of all children everywhere, even in the most difficult situations, and that it prioritizes those most at risk of being left behind.

We need to tackle economic, social, and environmental challenges comprehensively. We need to redouble our efforts to achieve Universal Health Coverage (UHC) to protect the most vulnerable children and to respond effectively to future crises. Among UNICEF's priorities for 2023, Japan attaches particular importance to strengthening Primary Health Care (PHC) capacities, addressing food insecurity and reducing the impacts of malnutrition, and improving water and sanitation in schools. Accordingly, Japan decided to contribute 96 million US dollars to UNICEF last December. Japan also wishes to work with UNICEF toward the G7 summit as well as the SDG Summit.

To conclude, as a returning Member of the Executive Board, Japan is ready to play its part and remains deeply committed to its close cooperation with UNICEF.

I thank you.