

General Statement under Item 3 by H.E. Mr. Osamu YAMANAKA
Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the UN

at the 2024 Annual Session of the **UNICEF Executive Board**

Tuesday 11 June @CR2, UNHQ

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to commend the efforts of all the Bureau members toward the success of the meeting.

I would also like to express my sincere respect to UNICEF's staff for their tireless efforts, including through humanitarian assistance in the field, amidst difficult situations all around the world in which the dignity of children continues to be disregarded due to frequent and prolonged conflicts, poverty and hunger, and climate change, among other challenges.

Japan looks forward to further collaborating with UNICEF under the strong leadership of Executive Director Russell. Also, I appreciate Ms. June Kunugi, Director of Public Partnership Division, for her leadership and dedication during her tenure. I wish her all the best for her future endeavors.

Mr. President,

I would like to praise UNICEF for being active in a variety of fields such as education, health and WASH. Japan and UNICEF should explore possibilities to further strengthen cooperation from the perspective of the Women and Peace & Security (WPS) agenda as well as human security.

With regard to human security, there was an informal plenary meeting under the General Assembly in April to discuss the Secretary-General's Report on Human Security, the first such report in 10 years. The meeting was attended by around 120 delegations, which proved to be a testament to the relevance of human security as a comprehensive approach to achieve the SDGs. Thus, Japan will continue to work with UNICEF to promote and mainstream human security around the world.

Our special thanks also go to the staff of UNICEF working on the ground in a number of conflicts in different regions of the world. For instance, In Palestine, many innocent children have lost their lives or are forced to live in lack of human dignity. Against this backdrop, in February, the Government of Japan provided, through UNICEF, assistance amounting to approximately 9.5 million USD to address urgent needs in Gaza and the West Bank. This assistance will enable the provision of social services to protect some 470,000 vulnerable children in Gaza, expand access to essential nutrition services for more than 300,000 children and 155,000 pregnant or lactating women, and provide water and sanitation supplies to some 200,000 Gaza residents. It will also provide comprehensive child protection, mental health, and psychological support services and education on risks of explosive remnants of war to more than 25,000 vulnerable children and their families there.

In addition, under the initial budget for Fiscal Year 2024, Japan has provided, through UNICEF, a grant of just over 1 billion Japanese Yen for Afghanistan to protect lives and rights of children and women and to address their urgent needs. Specifically, 4.1 million women and children will receive routine vaccinations against infectious diseases, including measles, tuberculosis, hepatitis B and tetanus, and 4.7 million children will be immunized against polio.

Mr. President,

In light of the difficulties facing UNICEF around its core resources, we should deepen our discussions on how to further mobilize and diversify funds from both public and private partners, while taking into account the crucial importance of the efficiency of the Organization's work. From this viewpoint, this session provides an important opportunity for the Member States to consider the future of the Organization, based upon the Secretariat's reactions to the recommendations made through various evaluations and audits, including those tabled by the JIU.

In closing, Japan looks forward to a fruitful exchange of views in this session and wishes to contribute to positive outcomes of the meeting.