



**Statement by H.E. Ambassador UMETSU Shigeru  
Deputy Permanent Representative  
of Japan to the UN**

At the Second Regular Session 2026  
Of the UNICEF Executive Board  
Tuesday, 1 September 2026, @CR1, UNHQ

Thank you, Mr. President,

In a time of growing needs and shrinking resources, UNICEF's ability to innovate will define its capacity to deliver for children. Japan pays tribute to Madam Executive Director for her committed leadership in navigating this challenging landscape and advancing reform efforts.

Japan underscores that the success of UN80 Initiative should be measured by whether it strengthens UNICEF's capacity to deliver

results on the ground and greater impact for children, particularly those in the most vulnerable situations.

We welcome that a project involving UNICEF received the 2026 Human Security Award at the ceremony held in June, with Executive Director in attendance. This recognition highlights the value of translating human security into concrete action for children. Interconnected crises can easily accumulate, leaving children increasingly exposed to compounding risks. We therefore need an approach that strengthens the resilience and agency of individuals and communities.

Mr. President,

Japan remains committed to leaving no one behind. We have put this commitment into practice with UNICEF. In just these last few weeks, we have started a project to strengthen immunization systems in Venezuela, by providing essential vaccines to pregnant women, mothers, and infants. We have also provided emergency assistance for the Ebola response in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The private sector can play an important role. It can bring capabilities that complement UNICEF's own strengths. Japanese companies, for instance, have collaborated with UNICEF's work by bringing their valuable expertise, particularly in WASH. From innovative products and technologies to technical expertise, such partnerships can help translate ideas into practical solutions and take them to scale. Japan encourages UNICEF to further harness these capabilities to maximize impact for children.

Let me conclude by paying tribute to UNICEF staff working on the front lines, often under exceptionally difficult circumstances, to protect and support children. Japan remains committed to supporting UNICEF.

I thank you, Mr. President.