

[Agenda Item 7: UNIDO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic]

Mme. President,

Japan takes note of document IDB.49/12, the DG's report on UNIDO's response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a human security crisis, posing a threat to the lives, livelihoods and dignity of people across the globe. In dealing with this situation, "leaving no one's health behind" should be the guiding principle. The pandemic and the global socio-economic disruption may continue for years to come. Strong industries play a key role in protecting peoples' health and livelihoods, and in supporting societies to build back better from this crisis. Japan believes that UNIDO's mandate of ISID is more relevant than ever.

Japan appreciates the prompt and vigorous response of UNIDO to this emergency. Japan commends every effort made by the DG and UNIDO staff, both at the HQ and in the field.

Japan has intensified its cooperation with UNIDO, aiming at supporting those in need to overcome the crisis. The project of ITPO Tokyo with Japan's contribution of 4 million USD, is ongoing in 12 countries in Asia and Africa. Relevant technologies of 13 Japanese private companies such as disinfectant production and clean water provision are being transferred.

In addition, Japan made contributions to ten UNIDO projects with a total amount of 7.3 million USD in Africa and the Middle East. Some of the projects aim to contain the pandemic through local PPE production and proper medical waste management. Others are designed to increase the resilience of the economies affected by the crisis, through job creation, vocational training and reinforcement of industries. These contributions represent Japan's firm trust in, and expectations towards UNIDO as a partner for international crisis response.

Two weeks ago, UNIDO and Japan co-organized a Webinar Series on our cooperation. One of the them focused especially on investment promotion and technology transfer under the COVID-19 pandemic. The various stakeholders shared good practices and challenges. Japan hopes that UNIDO leverages its technical cooperation and its partnering and convening power to bring about tangible results and increase our collective wisdom for building back better.

The continued implementation of UNIDO's mandate during this pandemic is of utmost concern to Member States. Japan is ready to engage in active dialogue with the Secretariat and Member States on this issue.

Thank you. (END)