

Statement by Ambassador KAIFU Atsushi
at the 20th Session of the General Conference of UNIDO
27 November-1 December, 2023

[1st Plenary Meeting: Opening of the Session]

Thank you, Madam President,

I would like to begin with my congratulation to your Excellency Ambassador Debora Lepre of Italy on your election as President of the twentieth session of the General Conference of UNIDO. I am convinced that this will be a successful General Conference under your able leadership and assure you of my country's full support. I also would like to extend my appreciation to the outgoing President, H.E. Ambassador Mohamed MEZGHANI, former Permanent Representative of Tunisia, and his Bureau members for their dedicated work. My appreciation also goes to DG Müller and his team for their tireless effort to prepare and organize this important meeting.

Madam President,

Japan notes with appreciation that UNIDO maintains its high level of technical cooperation delivery and continues to play a meaningful role in achieving the Agenda 2030 and IDDA3.

Japan expects UNIDO to continue to play a meaningful role in this context, including in mitigating worldwide concerns over food security aggravated by Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and in helping Ukraine to overcome the devastation caused by this aggression.

On the situation in Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank, Japan unequivocally

condemns the terror attacks by Hamas and others. Improving the humanitarian situation, especially in the Gaza Strip, is now the top priority. In this context, Japan welcomes the beginning of the release of the hostages based on the agreement between Israel and Hamas. We commend the efforts of the related countries and parties involved. When circumstances permit, we expect UNIDO to engage in a variety of support activities to the region within the scope of its mandate.

Madam President,

With regard to the cooperation between Japan and UNIDO, I would like to mention some projects. One has been recently launched in Ukraine, which will provide amputees with 3D-printed prosthetics and promote job creation for them. In addition, Japan continues to support industrial development in the continent of Africa. In Ghana, Japan is assisting the domestic agribusiness industry through the distinctively Japanese *Kaizen* initiatives. In Morocco, Uganda, Ethiopia and South Africa, Japan is contributing to the diffusion of technical knowledge and know-how by promoting industrial vocational training programs using Japanese technologies in collaboration with ITPO Tokyo.

Madam President,

Japan is ready to continue to work and engage in close dialogue with the Secretariat to advance all relevant reform efforts, such as the UN Development System Reform, the operationalization of Result-Based Management, resource optimization and revision of the staffing structure.

While facing financial constraints, Japan has joined the consensus to

recommend the Zero Real Growth budget proposal for the next biennium to support UNIDO. In this context, Japan requests the Secretariat to engage in further efforts to increase efficiency by optimizing the use of its resources, including staff costs, as well as to create further room for savings through the scrap-and-build approach.

Regarding the flexibility of the budget, we commend the Secretariat's efforts to explain its proposal including measures to ensure transparency and accountability. We are ready to continue the discussion in a constructive manner to introduce flexibility of the budget so that the Secretariat can respond to unexpected situations with agility while ensuring transparency and accountability to the Member States.

With regards to financial sustainability, it is essential for UNIDO to strengthen its strategic communication to enhance the visibility of all its activities. Furthermore we expect UNIDO, under the leadership of DG Müller, to lead a strategic and coordinated effort to reengage with former Member States.

Let me conclude by reiterating our hope and belief that UNIDO continues to play a unique and meaningful role in the face of urgent global issues.

Thank you, Madam President. (END)