

Address by the Government of Japan
Seventieth World Health Assembly (WHA70)

Advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: Building Better Systems for
Health

1. Opening words

Madame President, Director General Dr. Chan, Director-General-elect Dr. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am Seishi Baba, Parliamentary Vice Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan. First of all, on behalf of the Japanese government and people, I would like to offer my heartfelt condolences to the victims of the terrorist attack in Manchester. I wish to express my solidarity in this difficult time. Terrorism cannot be justified for any reason, and Japan firmly condemns such act of terrorism. In close cooperation with the United Kingdom and the international community, Japan will continue its efforts to combat terrorism.

Madame President,

I would like to send my warmest congratulations to the newly elected Director-General Dr. Tedros. I feel certain that Dr. Tedros shall carry on the legacy that Dr. Chan has created, and shall more strongly lead the WHO. We, Japan, are willing to offer any support for such efforts.

Madame President,

I would like to highly commend Director-General Dr. Chan for her outstanding leadership in the field of global health. In the increasing diversity and complexity of health issues today, we, Japan, deeply attach importance to ever-growing roles and responsibilities of the WHO.

2. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Madame President,

In the G7 Ise-Shima Summit and the G7 Kobe Health Ministers' Meeting held last year, we committed to the goal of health security for all towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Japan launched the SDGs Promotion Headquarters, headed by the Prime Minister, to lead firm implementation of the SDGs in Japan as well as in global cooperation. Under the headquarters, we will further

cooperate with the civil society, the private sector, the academic community, and all other stakeholders to implement a wide variety of measures in an effective and coherent manner.

3. Reforms of the WHO

Madame President,

Japan strongly support the health emergency reform carried out by the WHO under the powerful leadership of Director-General Dr. Chan. And we welcome the establishment of the Health Emergencies Programme. Last year in May, Japan pledged 50 million US dollars for the Health Emergencies Programme and we have already distributed half the amount. We trust that Director-General-elect Dr. Tedros will steadily continue the reform, which we are determined to support.

To prepare for and respond to public health emergencies, we believe essential is promoting the research and development (R&D) for emerging threats. Therefore, Japan decided to contribute annually 25 million US dollars, which is equivalent to 125 million US dollars in five years to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) which promotes development of vaccines based on the WHO R&D Blueprint. We hope that the WHO will continue to play a significant role in this field.

4. Strengthening responses to public health emergencies

The outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease in the Democratic Republic of Congo brought to mind that strengthening responses to the public health emergencies is imperative.

As the world has begun more globalized, and the threat of infectious diseases that may spread beyond borders has been increasing, we assume that we should not make geographical blank by leaving a specific region behind.

5. Health systems from the perspective of aging society

We are convinced that strengthening resilient, sustainable and inclusive health systems enable us to better prepare for public health emergencies. Japan places great importance on Universal Health Coverage (UHC), one of the targets of the SDGs. And we are going to host “UHC Forum 2017” in Tokyo this December, together with the WHO and the World Bank.

As the most advanced aging country in the world, Japan, would like to share with the

global community our wealth of policies and expertise we have accumulated. In July, we will host the first ASEAN - Japan Health Ministers Meeting on universal health coverage and population aging, supported by the WHO. We are willing to contribute to the world to overcome the challenges of an ever aging population.

6. Better response to antimicrobial resistance

Madame President,

Japan welcomes the establishment of the inter-agency coordination group which was requested in the political declaration of the UN High-level meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance. We believe that, to maintain the efficacy of antimicrobials as global public goods, appropriate use of antimicrobials based on precise diagnosis in clinical practices, strengthened surveillance, and R&D are essential. Japan will continue to work closely with the international community and to be at the forefront of the global action on AMR.

7. Closing words

Madame President,

For the past 10 years, Director-General Dr. Chan has truly advanced the reform of the WHO. We would like to express our deepest admiration for her achievements, and we strongly believe that the newly elected Dr. Tedros should also lead the international community to advance global health and to achieve the SDGs. The WHO's strong leadership in the field of global health contributes to enhance public health for all of us. Japan will therefore even more actively support the WHO to promote its activities, in cooperation with all of you that share the same path.

Thank you for your kind attention.