

Remarks by H.E. Mr. ISHIKANE Kimihiro
Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations

At the High-level Event
"Accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda
through water, sanitation and climate action"
29 May 2020 from 9:00 am to 11:00 am EST

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to begin by thanking the co-organizers, partners and participants for making this event possible. As a long-standing partner and a top donor in the area of water and sanitation, Japan considers today's discussion timely and valuable from three fronts.

The first point is from the realization that water and sanitation are key elements of achieving human security embodied in the SDGs to leave no one behind.

The second point is from the perspective that safe water and sanitation systems is indispensable in the global efforts to achieve universal health coverage (UHC), as committed by leaders at the General Assembly high-level meeting on UHC on 23 September 2019.

The third point is on water-related disaster. 90% of global disasters are water-related, 40% of the world's people are affected by water scarcity, and increased incidences of flooding threaten to destroy water and sanitation facilities and contaminate water sources. We also need to scale up water and sanitation services as part of our fight against COVID-19. At the same time, even as we fight COVID-19, we must not neglect to improve our preparedness and resilience to water-related natural disasters around the world and to ensure that we build back better.

Above all, ensuring equitable access to basic services such as water and sanitation

is also a key to preventing violence and conflict, which can contribute to peacebuilding and sustaining peace.

Using this opportunity, I would like to update on the 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit, originally scheduled to be held in October 2020, in Kumamoto, Japan. This Summit is to follow the 3rd Asia-Pacific Water Summit in Myanmar in 2017, as an important occasion where the heads of state and government from Asia and the Pacific can gather together to discuss how to resolve a variety of water-related issues such as water and sanitation and water-related disasters in the region. However, taking into consideration the current circumstances, Japan has decided to postpone the Summit for a year. The new date and further information will be communicated to you following consultations with the relevant parties. We look forward to your high-level participation and collaboration to discuss our post-Corona lessons and ways to achieve the water-related SDGs next year.

Also, as an update on upcoming opportunities, Japan is currently considering a water-related side-event at the time of the HLPF in July. Our idea is to organize an opportunity to exchange views and ideas on how we can improve resilience to better mitigate water-related disasters and further our collaborations to achieve the water-related SDGs.

I look forward to a fruitful discussion today.

Thank you.