

**Address by SUGA Yoshihide, Prime Minister of Japan,
At the Seventy-Sixth Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

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[Provisional Translation]

Mr. President,

Let me start by expressing my deepest sympathies to those who have passed away due to COVID-19. I would also like to convey my deepest respect for healthcare workers and all who are at the forefront of the fight against the pandemic.

The Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games were held with the aim of building a peaceful and better world through sport, under the Olympic Truce Resolution adopted in this very venue of the General Assembly. While there were various views about holding the Games this summer, we, as the host country of the Games, fulfilled our responsibilities and achieved what we set out to do.

Many people were deeply moved by the outstanding performances of the athletes which gave hopes and dreams to everyone across the globe. The Games also demonstrated the “barrier-free mindset” to the world, with aspirations for an inclusive society where all people with or without disabilities support each other to live in harmony.

Above all, while humanity has been faced with immeasurable hardships, the Tokyo 2020 Games proved to be a symbol of global unity among people around the world.

I would like to commend all the athletes who inspired us with their performances and express my gratitude to all who made this event possible.

Mr. President,

Many challenges confronting us, such as climate change, economic recovery and competition with authoritarianism, require our collective efforts. In particular, COVID-19 has inflicted unprecedented health crises, causing profound changes to people’s lives and global systems.

We now face questions on how to overcome these crises and build a better future. Today, I would like to share with you Japan’s vision of how to address these urgent challenges which could shape the course of the world.

Mr. President,

Let me first talk about how we will overcome this pandemic.

“Save as many lives as possible, and leave no one's health behind.” This has been the conviction that Japan, as a country upholding human security and universal health coverage, and I myself, have adhered to throughout this battle against the pandemic. Japan is determined to lead the global efforts to this end.

It is particularly important to ensure equitable access to vaccines in every corner of the world, which is the decisive factor in the fight against the pandemic. We must create an environment where all countries and regions can secure vaccines equitably with no political or economic conditions.

With this in mind, I co-hosted the COVAX AMC Summit together with Gavi in June this year. We were able to secure funds, including USD 1 billion from Japan, that go well beyond the funding target of securing 1.8 billion vaccine doses for 30 percent of the population of developing economies.

Additionally, Japan has provided countries and regions with approximately 23 million doses of vaccines manufactured in Japan through the COVAX facility and other initiatives so far. Today, I am pleased to announce that, with additional contributions, Japan will provide up to 60 million vaccine doses in total.

At the same time, we will steadily implement Japan's “Last One Mile Support” programme to ensure the delivery of vaccines to vaccination centers in each country and region.

Through these initiatives, Japan has provided assistance of the order of USD 3.9 billion worldwide and will continue to make the utmost effort in overcoming COVID-19.

Mr. President,

I would like to share with you four points that Japan considers particularly important in guiding our world towards a better future.

First, we need to build resilient global health systems.

We must learn from this pandemic and prepare ourselves for the future. Our experiences this time have taught us that there should be no geographical vacuum in addressing global health issues, and it is important that relevant information and knowledge on all countries and regions is shared promptly and extensively in a free and transparent manner.

From this perspective, Japan attaches importance to the role of WHO and will continue

actively contributing to discussions on its review and reform.

The pandemic has also led to renewed recognition of the importance of universal health coverage. In order to ensure equitable access to health care services and protection for socially vulnerable people, Japan intends to formulate its “Global Health Strategy,” thereby contributing to building a new architecture for global health security in collaboration with the international community.

I should also speak to the discussions in the United Nations on human security of the new generation, which I proposed at this very venue last year. Japan will render its full support to these discussions with high expectations that they will provide valuable guidance for the future, not only in global health, but in addressing various challenges across the world.

To build more resilient global health systems based on the principles of human security, it is necessary to tackle not only infectious diseases, but a broad range of relevant areas such as nutrition, water and sanitation. Japan will host the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 in December this year to improve nutrition for people around the world.

Second, we need to create a green and sustainable society.

Climate change is an imminent challenge that calls for the collective efforts of humanity as a whole to resolve. At the same time, addressing climate change will be the driving force of dynamic growth and a necessity for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Japan aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46 percent in fiscal year 2030 from its fiscal year 2013 levels, setting an ambitious target which is aligned with the long-term goal of achieving net-zero by 2050. Furthermore, Japan will continue strenuous efforts in its challenge to meet the lofty goal of cutting its emission by 50 percent. I would like to encourage other countries including major emitters to make further efforts as well.

In achieving global decarbonization, any developing country which genuinely needs assistance should not be left behind. Japan will provide climate finance, both public and private, to developing countries including small island states, totalling approximately USD 60 billion over the next five years from 2021 to 2025.

With these efforts, Japan is resolved to take the lead in achieving global decarbonization and creating a green and sustainable society.

Third, I would like to emphasize the importance of a free and open international order based on the rule of law.

We must uphold universal values such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law that our predecessors have established to maintain peace and prosperity in each region and in the world. I am convinced that the foundation of this undertaking is not force, but a free and open international order.

Our vision for achieving this task is the Free and Open Indo-Pacific. Japan will closely collaborate with like-minded countries and regions and work strategically to fulfill this vision.

At the same time, Japan continues to play a leading role in the establishment of a free and fair economic order. In the area of digital technology, Japan will exercise its leadership in making rules to advance the Data Free Flow with Trust in order to counter protectionism and inward-looking tendencies.

As we maximize the use of the potential of digital space, new technologies must not be used to undermine our universal values.

Japan will contribute constructively to the discussions at the UN and other multilateral forums and also provide capacity-building support to ASEAN and other countries in order to work towards the realization of a free, fair, and secure cyber-space.

Moreover, infrastructure building and development finance under appropriate rules are also essential to build back better and achieve growth. Japan will further promote and implement its "Quality Infrastructure Investment" programme and take the lead in establishing an environment where all countries abide by the international rules on development finance with transparency and fairness.

Fourth, we must realize a more peaceful and secure international community.

Japan is determined to play a proactive role in the maintenance of international peace and security and in establishing a rules-based international order, with the support from Member States at the election of non-permanent members of the Security Council in 2022.

Japan will also remain committed to peacebuilding. At the same time, Japan calls for the launch of concrete negotiations for the reform of the Security Council in order to make it a more effective body that reflects the realities of the 21st century.

To realize a more peaceful and secure world, it is crucial for all countries to make sincere efforts in a transparent manner in international arrangements on arms control and disarmament.

As the only country that has experienced the devastation of atomic bombings, Japan will endeavor to bridge the gaps among countries with different positions and contribute to international efforts towards the realization of a world free from nuclear weapons. Regarding the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, we aim to achieve a meaningful outcome at the Review Conference to be held next year.

We will also continue to work on the control and disarmament of conventional weapons, or “Disarmament that Saves Lives”.

Japan also continues to actively engage in promoting the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region.

We must prevent Afghanistan, which is still under a tense situation, from becoming a safe haven for terrorists once again. It is imperative to ensure that humanitarian aid organizations can safely deliver assistance and that human rights, especially those of women, are protected.

We will carefully monitor the actions, not words, of the Taliban, to see whether or not they will honor the commitments they have publicly announced. We will also work closely with relevant countries and organizations to that end.

The recent launch of ballistic missiles by North Korea is a clear violation of Security Council resolutions and we condemn this action. The recent nuclear and missile activities by North Korea pose a threat to the peace and security of Japan, the region and the international community. I strongly hope that North Korea will engage in diplomatic efforts and the dialogues between the United States and North Korea on denuclearization will progress.

The issue of abductions by North Korea is a matter of serious concern for the international community and also a top priority for Japan. As the families of the victims continue to age, there is no time to lose before we resolve the abductions issue.

Japan will continue to seek to normalize its relationship with North Korea, in accordance with the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration, through comprehensively resolving the outstanding issues of concern such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues, as well as settling the unfortunate past.

Establishing a constructive relationship between Japan and North Korea will not only serve the interests of both sides but also contribute to regional peace and stability.

Turning to Myanmar, Japan spares no efforts in supporting the will of the people of Myanmar to achieve democratization and the protection of human rights. We strongly support ASEAN's initiatives towards a breakthrough in the current situation and will

work closely with the international community.

Today, I discussed how to overcome the pandemic and the role Japan will play in realizing a better world. What I have consistently emphasized across these points are international collaboration and multilateralism.

Mr. President,

Ten years ago, Japan suffered an unprecedented scale of devastation due to the Great East Japan Earthquake. The international community kindly extended countless assistance to Japan, which allowed our country to take steps towards recovery.

These experiences remind us of the importance of international collaboration. Japan continues to further promote multilateralism, so that we can resolve the challenges facing the world and advance "Our Common Agenda" as upheld by the UN.

In this regard, we attach importance to dialogues with partners in various regions. In July, we hosted the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting, and next year, we aim to elevate the cooperative relationship between Japan and Africa to new heights at TICAD 8, which will be held in Tunisia.

Japan will also host the Sixth World Assembly for Women (WAW!) next year to realize gender equality and promote the empowerment of women in the world, in cooperation with the international community, particularly UN Women and other partners.

Japan is determined to do its utmost in collaboration with the members of the United Nations to overcome the crisis and build back better for a world full of hope.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.