

**70th Session of the UNHCR Executive Committee**  
**Statement by Ambassador Ken OKANIWA**  
**Permanent Mission of Japan in Geneva**  
**Palais des Nations, Geneva (7th to 11th October 2019)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, Japan expresses its sincere respect to High Commissioner Grandi and his staff for supporting refugees and displaced persons around the world.

Japan has followed with great interest the developments regarding organizational reform. We look forward to a smooth organizational transition with clearer lines of authority and accountability. We also encourage UNHCR to maintain its cooperative relationship with member states both in Geneva and in the field.

Japan appreciates UNHCR's proactive approach to systematizing its risk management. We encourage UNHCR to continue engaging in such endeavors with both other UN agencies and implementing partners.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan welcomes UNCHR's work to address the statelessness issue. An issue of great concern to us all. Such people are in vulnerable situations and require assistance. As a major donor, Japan supports UNCHR's engagement both to eliminate statelessness and to provide assistance to the vulnerable.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan welcomes the recent agreement to establish the Syrian Constitutional Committee. We strongly hope that the committee will make substantial progress in the political process. At the same time, there are still about 11.7 million displaced persons who require support. Their repatriation must be safe, voluntary, dignified and informed. We must not forget the need for supporting the neighboring host countries. Japan will continue to provide support to all Syrians facing difficulties regardless of current place of residence.

Japan pays tribute to Bangladesh for its generosity in continuing to host displaced persons from Rakhine State. In July this year, the then Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Taro Kono, made a visit to Bangladesh and Myanmar, which included his second visit to Cox's Bazar. He raised the issue of repatriation in the high level discussions on various occasions. Japan has been strongly encouraging the parties concerned to prepare the ground for repatriation in collaboration with the UN. Japan will continue to engage with relevant stakeholders to support people in vulnerable situations.

Mr Chairman,

In August this year, Japan held the Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 7). At the conference, the importance of long-term development and durable solutions to strengthen the self-reliance and resilience of displaced populations and host communities was stressed. The side event co-hosted by JICA, the AU and UNHCR highlighted the importance of preventing forced displacement and the private sector's role in addressing displacement issues. I would like to thank High Commissioner Grandi for his contribution.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan appreciates UNHCR's efforts to organize the Global Refugee Forum. Japan has long been a leading country in promoting the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus approach and will co-sponsor this approach for the Forum. While the involvement of development actors in humanitarian situations has gained wider acceptance, there continues to be a need to further broaden our perspective and address the root causes of forced displacement so as to prevent reoccurrence or occurrence of conflicts.

Japan takes a comprehensive approach to addressing crisis situations. In addition to providing humanitarian aid, we assist vulnerable communities through basic infrastructure projects for host communities in collaboration with host governments. We also support programmes for promoting social cohesion through, for example vocational training for both refugees and host communities. Each situation is different, so there is no uniform approach. We hope, nevertheless, to share our experience and knowledge gained over many years and contribute to the success of the Forum.

Thank you.