

**General Statement under Item 2 by H.E. Mr. Osamu YAMANAKA**  
**Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the UN**

at the 2024 First Regular Session of the **UNICEF Executive Board**

Tuesday 6 February @CR1, UNHQ

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, and all the other Bureau members on your successful nominations. We look forward to collaborating closely with the Bureau and the other Board members throughout 2024 to make UNICEF more efficient and impactful in pursuing its noble mission of protecting and promoting children's rights around the world.

Japan highly appreciates the significant efforts taken by UNICEF and its staff under the able leadership of Executive Director Russell, particularly in this difficult time of compounding global challenges. UNICEF's activities are more relevant than ever, as progress to achieve the SDGs, including those related to children, is regrettably in peril.

In this context, Japan believes that the holistic approach of human security is key to achieving the SDGs, and UNICEF's activities in the field are in line with this concept. Therefore, there is significant room for Japan and UNICEF to further strengthen our existing partnership.

As the international community faces complex and emerging crises, we have seen growing interest and support for human security, which is evidenced by the Secretary-General's Report on human security, which was released two weeks ago for the first time in ten years. We welcome the Report and we look forward to having discussions on the report at the General Assembly.

Mr. President,

Japan has been making various efforts in close cooperation with UNICEF in the field of health. To achieve universal health coverage and protect children's lives, it is necessary to enhance equitable access to health care, including

vaccines. For example, towards polio eradication, Japan announced last month its support to Pakistan through UNICEF to provide vaccinations to approximately 19 million children. Building on the experience of COVID-19, Japan also contributes to the ongoing global discussion on equitable access to medical countermeasures (MCMs) including through the MCM Delivery Partnership (MCDP). Japan has taken the lead in developing the Issue Papers in close collaboration with the MCDP Working Group members particularly UNICEF. In this regard, we greatly appreciate UNICEF's extensive expertise and partnership in this area.

Mr. President,

Despite the very difficult economic and financial situation in our country, the Government of Japan's commitment to contribute to UNICEF's activities remains unwavering. This year, we will continue to coordinate with UNICEF on the implementation of various projects in the field in such areas as health, water and hygiene, nutrition, education, and social protection, to support vulnerable children around the world.

Finally, Japan's commitment is not limited to the government's efforts: the Japan Committee for UNICEF is deeply involved in supporting UNICEF, particularly through its contributions to UNICEF's regular resources. Japan's Parliamentary League for UNICEF is also very active, especially in making policy recommendations to the Government. As such, both public and private sectors in Japan will continue to support UNICEF to accomplish its mission to leave no child behind.

Thank you.