

Statement by Ambassador Tetsuya Kimura
At the 2022 First Regular Session of the UNICEF Executive Board

8 February 2022 (3 mins)

Thank you, Mr. President,

At the outset, Japan would like to express our warm congratulations to you, Mr. President, and other bureau members on your elections.

Japan would also like to congratulate Ms. Russel on her appointment as the new Executive Director of UNICEF. Please rest assured that Japan will continue to support UNICEF's activities under your leadership. We look forward to further advancing our co-operation.

As many children are placed in a more difficult situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we need to tackle economic, social, and environmental challenges comprehensively. We should also redouble our efforts to achieve universal health coverage to protect the most vulnerable children and respond effectively to any future crisis. In this regard, UNICEF's role is more important than ever.

Against this backdrop, last year, Japan contributed 328 million US dollars to UNICEF and assisted 91 countries in the Asia-Pacific, Middle Eastern, and African regions to address the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on children. Last December, Japan decided to contribute an additional 38 million US dollars to UNICEF to strengthen Primary Health Care (PHC) capacities, promote infection control and vaccination among young people, and improve water and sanitation in schools, among other projects.

Last December, Japan hosted the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021. I would like to express our sincere gratitude to former UNICEF Executive Director Ms. Fore for her long-standing support to its preparations, strong message and commitments at the Summit to lead global efforts to tackle malnutrition in children. I would like to acknowledge UNICEF's contribution to helping countries to make their commitments through providing in-country technical assistance. As an outcome of the Summit, the Tokyo Compact on Global Nutrition for Growth, which shows a direction for the

international society to improve nutrition, was issued with the endorsement of 215 stakeholders, and about 400 commitments from various stakeholders are listed on the Compact.

As the international community is facing multifaceted and intersecting crises, the concept of human security, which aims to take a comprehensive view by focusing on the protection and empowerment of individuals on the ground, is useful to recover and rebuild a green, resilient, and inclusive future. In this context, I would like to hear from Executive Director Russel on how a view to protecting and empowering children on the ground will be reflected in your future plans.

Finally, Japan is deeply committed to its close cooperative relationship with UNICEF and stands ready to actively support its activities.

I thank you.