

Remarks by H.E. Dr. Toshiya Hoshino  
Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations  
At the event “2018 World Down Syndrome Day Conference”  
21 March 2018

Thank you, Madam Chair and Excellencies,  
Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to Down Syndrome International for taking the initiative to organize today’s conference.

Japan is honored to be a co-sponsor, together with Poland and other missions here in New York to the United Nations.

It is very encouraging to hear so much news on the circumstances surrounding persons with Down syndrome these days. I’m particularly pleased to share the panel with Ms. Collette Divitto this morning.

I have already met her through YouTube and news videos, and I’m very much impressed by her talent, entrepreneurship, success, dream and vision. She is an example of the potential and also the future of persons with Down syndrome.

I think that the participation of persons with Down syndrome in the workplace has had a positive impact on many workplaces by providing diverse views and abilities.

However, we have to admit there are still various problems to be solved in order to realize the full social inclusion of all persons, including persons with Down syndrome. So today’s panel discussion “What I bring to the workplace,” with the participation of employers,

employees, experts and persons with Down syndrome is very timely and constructive. I expect today's discussion will contribute to the full social inclusion of persons with Down syndrome.

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce that in Japan, the first Japan Congress of Down Syndrome was held last November, initiated by Japan Down Syndrome Society. This congress was the first nation-wide and comprehensive attempt to discuss the circumstances surrounding persons with Down syndrome. There were many subpanels focused on specific themes such as medical issues, the workplace, education and welfare assistance. In the subpanels on the workplace, discussions were held in order to share and discuss good practices in the workplace.

To achieve an inclusive society, raising awareness of Down syndrome is crucially important. In Tokyo, a kick-off event for World Down Syndrome Day was held under the theme of "What I bring to my community" on February the 12<sup>th</sup>. More than 30 events aimed at raising awareness on World Down Syndrome Day are taking place all over Japan.

The Government of Japan will continue its efforts to realize a society in which every individual, including persons with Down syndrome, plays an active role and lives a fruitful and fulfilling life.

I thank you very much for your kind attention, and happy World Down Syndrome Day.