

SPEECH

*By*

H.E. Ms. Yoriko KAWAGUCHI  
Special Advisor to Prime Minister

of

JAPAN

at

High-Level Segment of the International Meeting  
to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action  
for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

14 January 2005, Mauritius

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Mr. President,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to open my speech by mourning for those who lost their lives and conveying my sincere condolences to the bereaved by the tsunami disasters that struck the coastal countries surrounding the Indian Ocean last December. I wish to express my heartfelt sympathy to the victims who are still suffering from food shortage and many other difficulties. As Japan has also been through various natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis and typhoons, we feel a keen sense of sympathy to the loss and damage caused by disasters this time. As emergency relief assistance, Japan has committed to extending grant aid of US\$500 million. In addition, Japan will promote cooperation for a tsunami early warning mechanism for the Indian Ocean and will propose that a special session on this subject be convened at the United Nations World Conference on Disaster Reduction to be held from 18 to 22 January in Kobe, Japan, to discuss a concrete framework and ways of cooperation including training and holding seminars.

A. Japan's approach to Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Mr. President,

In order to hand down the better earth to our children together with people in small island developing states (SIDS), what should we do now? SIDS may be small in terms of their lands and population, but the well-being of those living there weighs as much as our happiness does. However, SIDS are most susceptible to the influences of global warming and extremely vulnerable to natural disasters. Japan is also an island nation consisting of more than 6,800 isles and we have similar experiences. We would like to utilize such expertise in our cooperation with SIDS.

B. Nation-buildings of SIDS

Mr. President

SIDS are characterized by the challenges deriving from both smallness and extensiveness. Conditions such as smallness in lands, population and market; size, as well as lands scattered in the ocean and the remoteness from large market may require different approach to nation-building from others. Moreover, the circumstances of one island country are different from those of another, and SIDS should not be treated in a uniform manner.

The cornerstone of nation-building lies in vitality of communities, and the source of such vitality is the empowerment of each individual. I believe that, there are unique means that SIDS can take more advantage than non-SIDS states -- the improvement; of "distance learning", "traveling medical service" and promotion of e-Government to overcome geographical challenges. In economic activities, SIDS could present a model to the world on the modalities for sustainable development boosting eco-tourism by making use of the natural environment. From these points of view, Japan has been providing assistance to SIDS and promoting policy dialogues with them.

### **C. Japan's approach to global issues**

Mr. President;

One of the most serious challenges facing SIDS is sea level rise. I believe that not only the world-wide efforts to comply with the Kyoto Protocol which will enter into force on 16 February, but also action-oriented commitment to the post-Kyoto framework is necessary. That is precisely why Japan, a provider of one-sixth of the world's ODA, allocates about 35% of its ODA to various fields of environmental protection, such as waste management, conservation of corals and mangroves, global warming and disaster management.

Waste disposal is another grave environmental concern for SIDS. For SIDS, it is extremely important how to deal with domestic waste as well as waste from tourism. To improve this backdrop, for example, Japan has helped Pacific Islands Forum to produce a master plan for waste management and provided support; for waste disposal facilities for the Pacific region.

The issue of water and sanitation is also very serious in developing countries.

In particular, it is crucial for people in SIDS with limited resources to secure safe water. As a former Prime Minister of Japan is the chair of UN Secretary Generals Advisory Board on Water and Sanitation, Japan will make contribution. by actively presenting suggestions through the Committee on this issue. In terms of ODA, between 1999 and 2001, Japan has borne one billion dollars, which represents one-third of the total sum of water-related ODA in the world. To island states, we have extended assistance for the improvement of water supply facilities as well as measures to control water pollution such as the treatment of domestic wastewater.

**On the occasion of World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe, Japan will launch the "Initiative for Disaster Reduction through ODA" to enhance the effort for building disaster-resilient society and economy. I hope the discussion at this Conference will trigger global efforts to reinforce disaster reduction measures in SIDS.**

D. Closing remarks

Mr. President,

Japan values today's meeting as an opportunity to build a new ground to attract international attention to SIDS, whereby giving a new momentum for efforts to tackle the challenges to SIDS.

Japan currently puts forward the concept of "human security" in the international arena. The essence of this idea is "protection and empowerment". Vulnerable SIDS deserve international protection, but the bottom line is that SIDS should achieve development by themselves, and Japan will spare no effort in assisting capacity building for SIDS. I am quite certain that efforts towards the realization of "human security" will contribute to minimize the damage and casualty from tsunami and other disasters. I assure you that Japan shall be a friend indeed to the SIDS people in need.

Thank you very much for your kind **attention**.

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