



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

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We welcome this year's theme, "Ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages," as it provides us with an opportunity to reflect on health and well-being in a post-COVID world.

Japan continues to experience low fertility and population ageing, with a total fertility rate in 2023 of 1.20, life expectancies at birth of 81.09 years for men and 87.14 years for women, and a proportion of people aged 65 or older of 29.1%, the highest level in the world. Due to a decline in marriages and changes in the behavior of young people caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, the rate and number of births are at their lowest levels ever life expectancy at birth declined in the second year of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, after many years of continuous increase, and although it increased again slightly in 2023, it has yet to return to its pre-COVID levels.

While the proportion of older persons is rising overall, some municipalities, facing a general trend of population decline, have started to experience a decrease in the number of older persons. There are numerous challenges to overcome, including securing the health and long-term care workforce and maintaining the sustainability of service provision. The government is working to promote the health and well-being of its citizens through continuous reforms of the health and long-term care insurance system, and has launched the 8th Medical Care Plan and the Third-term Health Japan 21.

In preparation for future pandemics, the Japan Institute for Health Security (JIHS) was established this April, merging two existing organizations: the National Institute of

Infectious Diseases and the National Center for Global Health and Medicine. JIHS aims to strengthen the country's foundation for protecting people from health crises by collecting and analyzing information on infectious diseases, promoting research and development, streamlining healthcare provision and health workforce development, and fostering international cooperation.

Health and population have been important issues since Japan joined the Colombo Plan and began international cooperation 70 years ago. We launched the Japan's Strategy for Global Health Diplomacy in 2013, Basic Design for Peace and Health in 2015, and Global Health Strategy in 2022, and have been working tirelessly to improve population health at the global level. Our Healthcare Policy stipulated by a Cabinet Decision this February incorporates the Global Health Strategy along with the Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative and the Africa Health and Wellbeing Initiative aiming for their integrated promotion.

Japan has been working on various programs to achieve universal health coverage (UHC) globally. This year, in collaboration with the World Health Organization, World Bank, and other partners, we will establish a UHC Knowledge Hub in Japan to collect and share knowledge on universal health coverage (UHC) and develop human resources, serving as an international platform for the advancement of UHC.

Having the world's highest level of ageing, Japan is sharing its experiences, including both successes and failures, with the rest of the world while promoting the United Nations Decade for Healthy Ageing (2021-2030), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2020.

Health issues have many perspectives, ranging from sexual and reproductive health to long-term care for older persons throughout the life course. While advancing measures in our own country, we are committed to supporting global initiatives that improve health and well-being in response to changing population dynamics.

Thank you.