



Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

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Statement by H.E. Mr. Jun Yamazaki
Ambassador, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations
At the Forty-fifth Session of the United Nations Commission
on Population and Development

24 April, 2012

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to extend my warmest congratulations to you, Ambassador Hasan Kleib, on your election as Chairman of the 45th Session of the Commission on Population and Development. I wish you success in chairing this body this year. My congratulations also go to the newly elected Vice-chairmen. And I would like to thank Ambassador Brian Bowler for his excellent work as Chair over the past year.

Mr. Chairman,

First allow me to express our sincere appreciation for the strong sense of solidarity extended to the Government and the people of Japan as well as the immediate outpour of support to us from over 160 countries and regions and more than 40 international organizations in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake last year. Japan is steadily recovering from the disaster and both the Government and the people of Japan attach great importance to this effort.

Mr. Chairman,

There remain many unsolved issues regarding population and development such as the high rate of unplanned pregnancies, high infant mortality, and the increase in cases of HIV/AIDS. Furthermore, the gap between developing and developed countries on these issues has been widening. Countermeasures to mitigate these issues are urgently needed.

Given this situation, we find it quite appropriate that the theme of the 45th session of the Commission is 'Adolescents and youth'. Though adolescence is generally thought of as one of the healthiest and most vital periods in a person's life, it is also an age characterized by major physiological changes, at which time people begin to engage in sexual activity for the first time and health risks with life-threatening consequences become suddenly prominent.

In Japan, studies have shown that number of cases of HIV/AIDS as a proportion of the total reported cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) has been increasing over time. Furthermore it has also been shown that the proportion of adolescents and youth among all patients diagnosed with sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, is larger than any other age group. For these reasons, the Government of Japan considers it important to promote countermeasures against sexually transmitted diseases among the younger generation. For example, we have implemented awareness-raising activities in cooperation with educational institutions and parents, and have tried to increase access to medical care by disseminating medical information about HIV/AIDS as well as by increasing HIV/AIDS testing and counselling.

Mr. Chairman,

The Government of Japan has been promoting various countermeasures to specific problems relating to children and young people. The goals of these measures include eradicating smoking and drinking among minors, decreasing unplanned pregnancies and abortions, reducing sexually transmitted diseases and preventing and treating anorexia and other eating disorders. To this end, in April 2010, Japan enacted the "Act on Promotion of Development and Support for Children and Young People" in order to promote policies that support children and young people. Furthermore, the Government set out the "Vision for Children and Young People" in July of that year to implement that law.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan has been putting the experiences we have had in our own country as well as in our interactions with our international partners to good use by actively participating in international cooperation in the field of health, based on a Human Security approach. The notion of Human Security seeks to achieve a society in which every individual is protected from want and fear, and is able to realize his or her individual abilities with dignity. But such a society cannot be realized without improving the health conditions that are so central to our very existence. At this moment, there are around 1.6 billion adolescents and youth in the world out of the 7 billion people. We have been putting forward the issue of securing their health not only because it is essential for realizing Human Security, but also because it is one of the most important elements by which we can achieve the millennium development goals (MDGs) as well as the sustainable developing goals (SDGs).

Mr. Chairman,

Through the global health initiative promoted by the Government of Japan, we are providing effective support packages based on scientific evidence that aim at improving maternal health and decreasing the incidence of three of the world most prominent infectious diseases: AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. We have been supporting the activities of the United Nations Population Funds (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) for more than 40 years. We also decided to provide support amounting to 5 billion USD in the field of health over 5 years starting from 2011, including as much as 800 million USD in support for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. We are currently planning to contribute actively to resolve various health related problems which adolescents and youths face including HIV/AIDS, pregnancy and premature birth through these support. Furthermore, the Government of Japan has also decided to advocate EMBRACE (Ensure Mothers and Babies Regular Access to Care), which is a package of effective interventions focused not only on delivering integrated services from pre-pregnancy to childhood, but also on providing high-quality services to improve the outcomes of health care, and to promote 'Universal Coverage', in which we try to achieve access to health services when required for all people including adolescents and youth.

Through these policies, the Government of Japan intends to further promote comprehensive measures to improve health conditions for all, including adolescents and youth, in cooperation and coordination with other development partners.

Finally, securing safe learning environment is extremely important for the growth of adolescents and youths. Under its Education Cooperation Policy 2011-2015, Government of Japan intends to promote the 'School for All' model, which provides quality education for all children and youth by comprehensively improving the learning environment, including school facilities, school health care and access to safe water, in cooperation with schools, communities and the educational administrations. The Government of Japan will provide US\$ 3.5 billion in the field of education over five years from 2011. Through this contribution, Japan is aiming to help create quality educational environment for at least 7 million children, which in turn is to realize Human Security through educational cooperation.

Thank you very much.