Ambassador Kitaoka's Speech
for
the High-level International Conference
on the Implementation of the International Decade for Action
“Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028”

20th June 2018

Dear H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, the Honorable President of the Republic of Tajikistan, and the Leader of the Nation,

Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It gives me a great honor to say a few words on behalf of the Government of Japan on this auspicious occasion of the opening of the “High-level International Conference on the Implementation of the International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development 2018-2028””.

In “the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs)”, which was adopted in 2015, the attainment of the goals related to water is one of the most important challenges.

In 2016, under the initiative of Tajikistan, United Nations’ General Assembly Resolution was adopted to make the years between 2018 and 2028 “International Decade for Action “Water for Sustainable Development””.

This has given a big momentum to the international society in addressing the water related issues.

Our country highly appreciate the contribution made by the Government of Tajikistan headed by the President Rahmon.

Japan has nurtured a tradition of rice production since her ancient
period, and has called herself “mizuho-no-kuni”, meaning a country cerebarated by benefit of rice.

Therefore, Japan has been continuously addressing flood control and irrigation.

Japan has experienced the economic development and urbanization, which have caused water related problems.

In order to overcome them, Japan has made serious efforts to reduce water disasters, coordinate limited water usage, and prevent pollution of rivers and oceans, from the viewpoint of both soft ware and hard ware.

Japan is so prone to water disasters because of her indigenous geography and climete, so she has accumulated much expertise on disaster prevention to be disseminated to the world, together with what she learned after the “Great East Japan Earthquake” in 2011.

Therefore, Japan has contributed to the adoption of “the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030”, known as “the Sendai Framework” at “the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction”, which was held in Sendai in 2015.

This has encouraged various countries’ efforts to make the disaster prevention their major policy goals.

The coming decade is indeed the “decade for action”, when necessary action shall be taken to accecalate addressing SDGs, which are related to water issues like “disaster prevention”, “health”, and “climate change”.

While focusing on the goals on water issues, we must not forget to pay our attention to the otner goals, addressng them in a comprehensive manner cooperating with every partner engaged in SDGs.

We recognize that the attainment of goals on water issues has particular importance for Tajikistan, which is so rich in water resources, but so prone to natural disasters caused by water at the same time.

From this point of view, Japan has accepted many trainees from
Tajikistan in the field of "water resources and disaster prevention", to share the Japanese expertise with them, and to create the Tajik human resources.

Japan has also conducted water related projects in Tajikistan like water supply system construction in order to improve water supply to all the local people in Tajikistan in a comprehensive manner.

Japan has launched "Central Asia plus Japan" dialogue in 2004. Through this framework, Japan, as a "catalyst", has encouraged regional cooperation to address the common agenda for the Central Asian countries.

In the Central Asia, water resources are located unevenly, which makes proper coordination among neighboring countries indispensable in order to materialize the sustainable usage of water resources.

In this regards, Japan welcomes the positive momentum towards regional cooperation in the Central Asia surging recently, which has led to the positive dialogues on water and energy issues.

Japan shall continue to cooperate closely with stakeholders on water issues like related countries and international organizations.

At the same time, Japan shall continue positive dialogues on major issues including disaster prevention, health, climate change, gender, education, and poverty with people concerned.

Japan is firmly determined that if the world could unanimously address and cooperate on water issues, that shall lead to the attainment of all the SDGs, which must make the basis for the peace and stability of the world.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.