

Opening Remarks by the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan
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UNGA side event on Public-Private Sector Collaboration to Address AMR
07:45-09:30, September 21, 2016

Co-hosted by UNAIDS, UK and BD

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New York, the United States of America

Excellencies, Distinguished delegates and Guests, Ladies and Gentleman,

It is my greatest pleasure to be here with you in the morning of this very epoch day for UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting on Antimicrobial Resistance, and is my deepest honour to say a few words as we open this side event with champions of AMR including Lord Jim O'Neill, Dame Sally Davies, and Dr. Thomas Frieden, as well as distinguished leaders in the fight against AMR.

As we start our discussion on this historic day, allow me to reflect upon our journey that took us all the way here in New York.

The World Health Assembly last year adopted a resolution regarding the AMR global action plan. It has called for each member state to make a national action plan within two years. I have seen numerous member states shifted up their gears to accelerate the pace of tackling AMR.

The momentum of the G7 countries has also been accelerated. German presidency last year placed AMR as one of the highest global political agenda, and with the strong recommendation by Secretary Hunt of UK, the torch was succeeded to our presidency this year.

Regional movement was enhanced as well. In Asian region, for example, Japan convened, in collaboration with two WHO regional offices in Asia, a Health Ministers' Meeting on AMR inviting Asia-Pacific countries to Tokyo this April. We also attended a regional forum on AMR such as one in India this February to share our challenges and good practices.

Japan has been tackling this issue domestically based on our national action plan, as well as globally through putting AMR as one of the main agenda during

Japan's G7 presidency; Niigata Agriculture Ministers' Meeting in April, Ise-Shima Summit in May and Kobe Health Ministers' Meeting, which I had the privilege of chairing last week. Japan together with G7 members has sent a strong political message to the world toward today's High-level Meeting on AMR.

Ladies and Gentleman, the UN General Assembly High-Level Meeting will undoubtedly mark another milestone for further acceleration in our fight against AMR. To save the future generations from the threat of AMR, we definitely need to continue and enhance our commitment. The global public-private partnership will play one of the most important roles in this prolonged battle and I would like to share two major points.

First, we need to pursue appropriate use of antimicrobials, while assuring access to necessary healthcare especially in developing countries. We recognize there are still many people without access to essential antimicrobials, whereas antimicrobials are sold over-the-counter without prescription in many developing countries. To properly control antimicrobial sales and promote appropriate use of antimicrobials in private clinical settings, we need to enhance the collaboration among multisectoral players such as governments, pharmaceutical companies, medical professionals and, of course, patients.

Second, regarding the promotion of R&D on AMR, we have to overcome the market failure in developing new antimicrobials, which have been stagnated for several decades for expected low profitability. R&D on AMR requires substantial investment, as well as effective measure to overcome market failure. To this end, Japan has been supporting R&D of antimicrobials through research grants for promising projects. In addition, Global Health Innovative Technology Fund (GHIT), a public-private partnership fund among the Japanese Government, private sectors, and philanthropies was created in 2013. GHIT incentivizes research and development projects of promising agents. They are strictly monitored by experts, so that successful outcome is more likely.

Today, I look forward to proactive discussions among distinguished speakers and panelists for effective collaboration across the public and private sectors to address AMR. Japan continues to commit to fighting against AMR in close partnership with you all.

Thank you for your kind attention.