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To the press and those who it may concern:

Promoting actions to achieve UHC in 2020
-Prince Mahidol Award Conference (PMAC) 2020 / UHC Forum 2020 and
Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2020-

Japan has communicated the importance of promoting universal health coverage (UHC) and led the discussion on this topic at international fora including United Nations meetings, G7, and G20.

In 2020, the “Prince Mahidol Award Conference (PMAC) 2020 / UHC Forum 2020” held from January 31 through February 2 in Bangkok and the “Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2020” held in December in Tokyo to further promote actions to achieve UHC. On December 12, 2019, in the joint op-ed published on Washington Post, Prime Minister Abe and World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General Dr. Tedros stated that “In 2015, world leaders committed to achieving universal health coverage by 2030 as part of the Sustainable Development Goals. With just 10 years remaining, the Universal Health Coverage Forum in Bangkok in January and the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit in December 2020 offer a vital opportunity to elicit concrete actions.”

The UHC Forum is where governments and related international organizations regularly come together to discuss measures to achieve UHC. The first meeting, UHC Forum 2017, was held in Tokyo in 2017, and the Tokyo Declaration on UHC was adopted as a commitment to accelerate efforts to achieve UHC by 2030 which contributed to the adoption of the political declaration for the UN High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage. The second meeting, UHC Forum 2020, will be held jointly with the PMAC, which is held annually by the Kingdom of Thailand, and there will be discussions on building primary health care (PHC)-based health system, strengthening health financing, and investing in innovation in

medical technology.

The Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit is where a wide range of stakeholders gather and present their own commitments, and has been held since the 2012 Olympics. At this year's summit held in Tokyo, in addition to the traditional themes such as hunger and undernutrition, diverse agenda will be discussed including overnutrition, “double burden of malnutrition” where undernutrition and overnutrition coexist in the same country, access to food, and food production.

Prime Minister Mr. Abe has introduced Japan's effort to achieve UHC “Japan achieved UHC with the introduction of our national health insurance system in 1961. This achievement has enabled all Japanese citizens to enjoy affordable and quality health services and has provided a foundation for Japan's social and economic development in the postwar period and for a healthy ageing society. Building on Japan's experiences in UHC, I have emphasized the importance of achieving UHC all across the world.” This effort was welcomed by WHO Director-General Dr. Tedros “Countries like Japan have shown that universal health coverage is not only possible, it pays long-term dividends for the prosperity and stability of nations. Many countries are now following Japan's lead”.

However, half of the world's population still lacks access to basic health services, and it is necessary to accelerate efforts to achieve the goal of realizing UHC by 2030 reaffirmed by national leaders at the UN High-Level Meeting on Universal Health Coverage in September 2019.

Utilizing the occasion of UHC Forum 2020 and Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2020, it is important for stakeholders such as governments, private organizations and international organizations to exchange knowledge on good practices and confirm their commitment for the future to achieve UHC. As mentioned in the joint article, Japan would like to express that achieving UHC requires sustainable health financing, countries' ownership of their health systems, and collaboration with multiple fields beyond health.

*Universal health coverage means that all people have access to the health services including health promotion, prevention, treatment, rehabilitation, and palliative care without financial hardship.

[For details of PMAC 2020 / UHC Forum 2020]

PMAC 2020 / UHC Forum 2020 website

<https://pmac2020.com/site>

[For details of Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2020]

<https://nutritionforgrowth.org/>

[For details of the Washington Post joint op-ed]

Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare press release (December 13, 2019) (Japanese)

https://www.mhlw.go.jp/stf/newpage_08382.html

Washington Post website

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/all-nations-should-have-universal-health-care/2019/12/12/9594269c-1c47-11ea-8d58-5ac3600967a1_story.html