

73rd Session of the UN General Assembly

UN High-level Meeting on TB

Statement by Minister Kato

26 September, 2018

- Madame President, UN Secretary-General, distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen. I am truly honored to be here and have this opportunity to make a statement at this meeting.
- Even now, TB is killing each year more than 1.6 million precious lives worldwide. In a world where global interaction is progressing, TB is not a problem of one country, but a global issue to be tackled in cooperation internationally. This High-level Meeting is an opportunity to reaffirm our global commitment towards eradicating TB.
- In Japan, since 1930s to 40s, TB infected many citizens and became the No.1 cause of death. Even a famous Haiku poet Shiki Masaoka died from TB at a young age, though he created many outstanding Haiku poems despite being affected by the disease. Later on, both the government and the private sector undertook measures against TB, and owing to that, Japan was able to decrease the mortality of TB by a quarter in 10 years. It was an unprecedented accomplishment in the world.
- Vaccination and health check-ups in communities as well as technical advancement in the TB treatment contributed to this success. In addition to this, the introduction of universal coverage by the national health insurance system and allocation of public funds for TB treatment greatly improved access to medical services and reduced the self-burden. This could be regarded as one successful example of the practice of Universal Health Coverage in Japan.
- For over 50 years, as a country with those experiences, Japan has continuously given support to the international TB countermeasures, placing high priority on human resource development. In recent years, Japan has established the philosophy of “Ensuring human security,” and has been providing financial and technical support to tackle TB through the international organizations.
- At the G7 Ise-Shima Summit in 2016, we pledged 800 million dollars for the 5th replenishment of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and

Malaria. The next replenishment is scheduled next year. I hope that with this High-Level Meeting, the international commitment will further increase to address TB.

- Japan has contributed significantly to the international efforts to fight TB, including the development of diagnostics and medication against multidrug-resistant TB. We would like to continue to work with other countries in tackling TB, in conjunction with health system strengthening, which is needed to complete the long-term TB treatment.
- Japan will highlight the outcomes of this meeting to a series of international conferences such as the G20 summit in Japan, TICAD 7, and other occasions such as the next UHC High-Level Meeting and the first-ever Ministerial Meeting on SDGs next year.
- I hope that a fruitful discussion will be held at this meeting and TB measures in each country will be strengthened.
- Thank you very much for your attention.