

The 3rd US-Japan Global Health Dialogue

Minister KATO's Special Remarks

28 September, 2018

1. Introduction

- Dear colleagues of CSIS, NAM and JCIE, I would like to thank all of you for inviting me here today. This May, I had a chance to talk with Secretary Azar in Washington DC, and we had a fruitful discussion on global health issues including health security. Since then, I was very much looking forward to this meeting to meet him again as well as many other influential US global health leaders. When I met Secretary on Wednesday in New York, I learned that he has other commitment in Tennessee yesterday, so I would like to thank Secretary Azar to come back all the way for this dialogue.
- I learned that this is the 3rd US-Japan Global Health Dialogue. I would like to congratulate all concerned for continuing the dialogue that has developed over the years between Japan and US, who are the two major leaders in global health.

2. Regarding Global Health Security

- Regarding global health security, the Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo in May and another outbreak started in August which is still ongoing reminded us of the

necessity of strengthening our capacity to prepare for and respond to such public health emergencies.
- Unlike the Ebola outbreak in 2014, we have new financial mechanisms, such as WHO's CFE and World Bank's PEF in place. Japan, together with the G7 members, has advocated establishing these mechanisms at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit and at the G7 Kobe Health Ministers Meeting. It is valuable for US and Japanese experts to discuss issues such as,

- Whether such new financial mechanisms worked sufficiently enough during the latest Ebola outbreaks.
 - For stable and effective mobilization of both CFE and PEF.
 - How can we secure financial resources and how should we re-consider the criteria for mobilizing resources from both CFE and PEF?
- Moreover, as the cross-boundary threat of infectious diseases increases with the progress of globalization, we need to strengthen the core capacities through implementation of International Health Regulations (IHR).
 - Especially, in case of public health emergencies, quick detection and reporting to WHO by each country is imperative. If there are factors that obstruct this process, we need to unravel them and take proper actions. The sooner the reports arrive, the faster we can respond to the emergencies. So it is essential to inform all countries concerned that quick reporting will benefit themselves in the long run. We need to emphasize this message in the global health arena.
 - Today, I am looking forward to having an active discussion between Japanese and American experts on health security issues, including the points I just laid out.

3. Regarding Health System Strengthening

- The other topic of this day is strengthening of the health system. I am convinced that building a resilient, sustainable, and comprehensive health system will better prepare us for public health emergencies. Japan has experienced many natural disasters this year. In July, my hometown Okayama suffered from the record-breaking heavy rainfall, and many residents were forced to evacuate. Also, three weeks ago, an earthquake of magnitude 6.7 struck Hokkaido and many medical institutions were affected by the island-wide power outage. Earthquake struck not only Japan but also other Asian regions; and we suffer from damages caused by typhoons every year. I also know that the United States was recently struck by Hurricane Florence. I would like to express my sincere condolences to those who suffered and paid heavy prices.
- In Japan, major hospitals are designated as Core Disaster Medical

Hospitals to take initial responses during a disaster, and transportation systems capable of moving patients from the affected areas are in place. Furthermore, a system for dispatching physicians and public health nurses from the unaffected to the affected areas enable us to provide adequate medical care and health services to the people in need.

- Getting prepared for specific types of disasters is important, but building a flexible health system which is capable of providing appropriate health care services despite all types of hazards during peace time is even more important. I would appreciate if experts could discuss how to build a robust and resilient health care system today.

5. In Conclusion

- Throughout today's dialogue, I hope experts from both Japan and the US will exchange constructive opinions on any and every related points of view and enjoy a fruitful discussion. Thank you very much for your kind attention.