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Statement by Japanese Government

Thank you, Chair, Thank you, Director-General and Distinguished Delegates, I am Miyazaki Masahisa, State Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan. It is my great honor and privilege to deliver this statement today on behalf of the Government of Japan.

First, I would like to thank Director-General for putting together a comprehensive and ambitious report. Japan has already announced its intention to participate in the Global Coalition for Social Justice invited by Director-General, and has a pleasure of taking a role in the Coordinating Group. To achieve significant results, Japan will continue to support the initiative.

As noted in the report, the ILO has been working on protecting workers' rights for more than one hundred years. Japan has been a member state of the ILO since the organization's establishment

and has taken on a great responsibility for the administration of the ILO for a long time as a member of the Governing Body. We have also been proactively involved in ILO activities as the third largest financial contributor, while we share the values with the ILO.

The Asia-Pacific region is a critical area that has the largest number of workers in the world, and I am honored that Japan plays a significant part to making decent work a reality in the region. As stated in the report, different approaches need to be taken according to the changes in the times such as technological advances and demographic shifts. Japan will continue to make its utmost efforts by closely working together with the ILO.

As many of you are aware, Japan is facing a rapidly ageing population and a declining birthrate. About 30 percent of the population is 65 years old or older, and our society is significantly influenced by the demographic shifts.

In such a situation, the government of Japan believes that it is important to make sure that people with different characteristics can contribute their share as members of the labor market according to their wishes and capabilities regardless of gender, age and other factors. And to maintain an adequate workforce as the country's population declines, our government is making various policy efforts.

For instance, companies are required to ensure their employees employment opportunities until age 65. Also, businesses must make efforts to secure opportunities for their employees to work until they reach 70. These provisions aim to create and maintain an environment for older adults to be able to work regardless of their age.

Furthermore, Japan is stepping up policies supporting children and child-rearing to address the population decrease.

In terms of labor and employment policies, the government is

promoting various initiatives so that both men and women can balance work and parenting. Such initiatives include reducing long working hours, encouraging male workers to take childcare leave, and promoting flexible work arrangements for workers with young children.

Meanwhile, we are also implementing policies to boost the income of young people by strengthening support for workers participating in education and training programs.

Being able to work is a blessing. We are creating a society in which the older adults can have a job according to their hope just like the younger generation. At the same time, the government is implementing policies to deal with population decline in the labor and employment area. As one of the fastest aging nations in the world, Japan is willing to continue to share its policy efforts with other members. I'd like you to utilize Japan's experience of success and failure when making policies in your own countries.

Within the country, the Japanese government attaches importance to dialogues with workers, workers' organizations, and employers' organizations. Outside the country, we make every effort to deepen mutual understanding with each country by discussions and colloquies.

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I commit that Japan will, with leadership, cope with any challenges in the world of work, which the ILO has identified.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.