

Speech by the Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan  
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The Side Event on Antimicrobial Resistance  
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Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.

At the outset, I express my sincere appreciation to Dr. Piyasakol Sakolsatayadorn, the Minister of Public Health of Thailand and Dr. Thomas Frieden, Director of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for co-hosting this event. I would also like to show my sincere respect to Dame Sally Davies for leading the global agenda of AMR.

I welcome the active discussions at the High-Level Meeting on AMR this morning, having many participants from the Member States and the international society. Japan has been putting AMR on the political table during our G7 presidency this year succeeded from Germany. Throughout the G7 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting in April, Ise-Shima Summit in May and the Kobe Health Ministers' Meeting a week ago, we have been increasing our political momentum toward this High-Level Meeting, and I am glad to have the moment today.

Needless to say, most of the infectious diseases newly emerged in the 21st century are zoonotic diseases affecting both humans and animals, and AMR is no exception. We know that AMR in animals can transmit to humans and vice versa. Therefore, "One Health" approach is a crucially important concept for our successful fight against AMR.

At this historic day, I would like to share Japan's efforts to promote "One Health" approach, on our comprehensive, multi-sectoral national action plan on AMR.

First, I would like to stress the importance of setting concrete outcome indicators. Japan has set numerical targets of the resistant strains rate both in humans and animals by 2020. We also set targets of antimicrobial use in

order to ensure appropriate use of antimicrobials for humans in clinical settings. We plan to reduce the use of all oral antibiotics in 2020 to two-thirds of the level in 2013.

Second, we promote “One Health” surveillance in order to conduct the risk assessment collaboratively. For over 15 years, Japan has deployed surveillance to monitor AMR in humans and animals, making these data comparable since 2013. To tackle AMR, we need to capture the whole picture of antimicrobial use, and to this end, we are further developing comprehensive “One Health” surveillance systems which monitor trends of antimicrobial resistant strains in human, animal, fish, food, and the environment.

Third, we place international cooperation as one of the integral components of the national action plan. In April, Japan hosted the “Tokyo Meeting of Health Ministers on Antimicrobial Resistance in Asia” in collaboration with two WHO Regional Offices in Asia. We launched “Asian-Pacific One Health Initiative on AMR” and agreed on concrete actions including strengthening monitoring network and surveillance systems. As one of the “leading countries” of the AMR Action Package in Global Health Security Agenda, Japan will take the leadership and further advance technical cooperation to build surveillance and laboratory capacities to prevent the spread of AMR, especially in Asia.

Reducing AMR requires the political will to adopt new policies, including controlling the use of antibiotics in human and animal health. In many countries, antibiotics can still be purchased in markets and shops without prescription or involvement of health professionals or veterinarians. Appropriate and prudent use of antibiotics should be encouraged, especially in countries with large populations and livestock, to preserve worldwide antibiotic efficacy. Coordinated efforts and actions are a priority in regions and global community.

Taking advantage of the collective wisdom we now share in this room, I am confident that this meeting accelerates efforts to prevent AMR and save future generations from drug resistant infections. Japan will continue to work closely with other countries, UN agencies, civil society, and all of you to be at the forefront of the global action on AMR.

Thank you for your kind attention.