

Statement by Mr. UENO Atsushi
Assistant Minister and Director-General for International Cooperation
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
On the occasion of Global Compact on Refugees – High Level Officials Meeting
Wednesday, 15 December 2021

Mr. High Commissioner,
Distinguished colleagues,

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those who worked to organize today's meeting, especially to the colleagues of UNHCR and the Government of Switzerland who played a crucial role.

It is timely to hold this meeting, particularly when the number of refugees and forcibly displaced persons in the world is projected to reach a record high of 84 million. I hope this meeting will provide an opportunity to review the progress of the pledges made at the first GRF and deepen discussions on issues that require further support for the next GRF.

The first thing I would like to report about Japan is that the success of the refugee teams at the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Tokyo has raised public awareness of issues surrounding refugees and their protection. Their participation in the Tokyo Games once again demonstrated to the world that the participation of refugees in sports events can promote physical and mental care, social acceptance and peaceful coexistence with the host society.

I want to express my gratitude again to all those involved in making the refugee teams' participation in the Tokyo 2020 Games possible, and to High Commissioner Grandi for his active involvement in the Games, including his participation in the opening ceremony and warm encouragement he sent to the refugee teams.

Japan is working to achieve the goals of the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR), based on the belief that supporting refugees and resolving various issues faced by them is essential for promoting peace, enhancing conflict prevention, and realizing human security. To alleviate the burden on host communities and support the self-reliance of refugees, Japan is promoting projects based on the humanitarian-development-peace nexus approach in partnership with UNHCR and other international organizations and NGOs. Specifically, these projects have been successful in Uganda, Zambia, Sierra Leone, and other countries.

In addition, Japan is extending the scholarship program that accepts Syrian students to Japan and is also promoting the acceptance of refugees settled in third countries.

One area that needs further support for the next GRF is the realization of equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines. Japan, along with other countries, has led the establishment of the COVAX Facility, pledged a total of US\$1 billion to the Facility, and has provided approximately 30 million doses of vaccines so far. Japan will provide up to approximately 60 million doses of vaccine in total.

Japan understands that climate change is one of the factors that lead to unwanted migration, and recognizes the importance of addressing this issue. At the COP26, Japan announced to double its assistance in climate adaptation over the next five years up to 2025, and to

provide 14.8 billion dollars in public and private assistance, including adaptation assistance.

Japan will continue to support the GCR to achieve its goals in cooperation with the UNHCR and other partners.

Thank you very much for your attention.