

The 13th Round Table Meeting
(15-16 March, 2017, Thimphu)
Statement by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Mr. Chairman, H.E. Lyonpo Damcho Dorji, Minister for Foreign Affairs,
Kingdom of Bhutan,

Mr. Chairman, H.E. Haoliang Xu, UN Assistant Secretary-General, UNDP
Assistant Administrator and Regional Director, Asia and the Pacific,

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honor to be given an opportunity to address the audience on behalf of the Government of Japan at this 13th Round Table Meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere respects to the Royal Government of Bhutan for its strong ownership aiming at further promotion of the 11th Five Year Plan.

The last year marked the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Bhutan. The two countries have enjoyed historically cordial and friendly relations with wide-variety and multi-layered interactions. These include high-level visits between the Japanese Imperial Family and the Bhutanese Royal Family as well as grass-roots exchanges in various fields. Japan began its economic cooperation to Bhutan with the dispatch of an agricultural expert, late Mr. Keiji Nishioka, who was bestowed the title of "Dasho" by His Majesty the King of Bhutan for his life-long contribution to the development of agriculture in Bhutan. Since then, successful results of our economic cooperation have been witnessed, particularly in the agriculture and rural development sectors. Moreover, Japan, as one of the major donors, has supported the self-reliant efforts of Bhutan for the progress and consolidation of democracy, elevation of living-standards, and other socio-economic development.

Mr. Chairmen,

With regard to the current 11th Five Year Plan, Japan has continuously supported Bhutan's development endeavors focusing on areas such as agriculture and rural development and infrastructure development. For this end, in the area of agriculture and rural development, Japan has recently extended a grant aid for improvement of machinery and equipment for the construction of rural agricultural road in Bhutan (up to approx. 9.67 million US dollars), and for promotion of modernisation and improvement of productivity in agricultural sector through providing power tillers which are suited to cultivate mountainous areas of Bhutan (up to approx. 2.5 million US dollars). In the area of economic infrastructure development, Japan has extended a grant aid for reconstruction of bridges on National Highway No.4 aiming at stable transportation by improving capacity and safety of those bridges (up to approx. 215.6 million US dollars). Last but not least, Japan has extended a grant aid for providing diagnostic equipment to the national and referral hospitals in Bhutan with a view to improving diagnostic capacity and accessibility to medical services in rural areas (up to approx. 5.51 million US dollars), which are targeted in the 11th five year plan.

Japan will continue to support Bhutan's efforts according to the 11th Five Year Plan and hopes that Bhutan will make the most of our economic cooperation under Bhutan's ownership, in order to enhance living standard of the people of Bhutan.

Mr. Chairmen and distinguished colleagues,

Having high regard for Bhutan's national development plan based on the basic principles of Gross National Happiness, Japan will continue to support Bhutan in addressing remaining development needs, and be ready to provide its full support to Bhutan's endeavors toward self-reliant development.

Japan hopes that Bhutan will steadily implement the 11th Five Year Plan in coordination with its development partners, based on the proactive discussions held during these two days towards goals of Bhutan 2020 and the next 12th Five Year plan.

Thank you for your attention.