

## 16. International Cooperation

Promotion of the formation of a gender-equal society is closely linked to efforts by the international community. The Basic Act for Gender-Equal Society upholds “international cooperation” as one of the basic principles for the formation of a gender-equal society.

Under this principle and the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality, various treaties such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and discussions at international conferences are being made widely known, and gender equality is moving forward in tandem with international movements to improve the status of women. In addition, efforts are being made to conduct ODA effectively by promoting gender mainstreaming.

### ■ Collaboration with the United Nations and Other International Organizations

#### The United Nations

Efforts are being made to actively introduce international regulations designed to improve the status of women, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the “Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,” and discussions by the UN Commission on the Status of Women.

In August 2011 a report on follow-up items (temporary special measures for amending the Civil Code and expanding women’s participation in society) was submitted based on the final opinions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning the sixth report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which was made public in August 2009. In November 2011 the committee’s opinions about the follow-up report were made public. As for temporary special measures, an evaluation was made that recommendations are being implemented, and it was recommended that results, etc. of the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality should be included in the next regular report. As for amending the Civil Code, an evaluation was made that recommendations are being partially implemented, and it was recommended that measures taken for a bill to amend the Civil Code should be reported within one year.

In February and March 2012, the 56<sup>th</sup> Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women was held at the United Nations headquarters, and a statement was issued by Ms. Hiroko HASHIMOTO, representative of Japan. At this session, a draft resolution on “gender equality and the empowerment of women in natural disasters” submitted by Japan was adopted. This resolution was submitted to the commission by Japan for the first time, and it coincided with the passing of one year since the Great East Japan Earthquake. It was submitted with the aims of sharing with other countries Japan’s disaster experiences and lessons concerning our tasks related to natural disasters and women, deepening the understanding of international society, and promoting disaster efforts that give better consideration to women.

Japan is also actively working to make other contributions through collaboration with UN Women, which was launched in January 2011 and of which Japan is one of its initial Executive Board Members.

#### APEC

In September 2011 a “Women and the Economy Summit (WES)” was held in San Francisco in United States as the first meeting for the government and the private sector to hold discussions in order to promote women’s economic empowerment in the APEC economy. Representatives of public and private entities in various economies and international organizations such as UN Women participated in this summit. From Japan, Senior Vice-Minister Ikko NAKATSUKA, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Joe NAKANO, and representatives from the private sector participated. Discussions were held on how to proceed in order to strengthen women’s participation in economic activities to contribute to economic growth, and the “San Francisco Declaration” was adopted.

In March 2012 Japan also hosted the APEC Leadership Forum on Women: Powerhouse for Economic Growth in Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture as a follow-up event to the summit.

Following the “Women and the Economy Summit (WES)” held in 2011, in June 2012 a “Women and the Economy Forum (WEF)” was held in St. Petersburg in Russia as a meeting for dialogue between the government and the private sector, including high-level policy dialogue on women and the economy conducted at the ministerial level, in order to promote women’s economic empowerment. From Japan, Minister of State for Gender Equality Masaharu NAKAGAWA and representatives from the private sector participated in this forum.

In 2010 Japan served as chair of APEC, and as a result three meetings related to women were held in Japan. The three meetings, held one after another, were the 15th Women Leaders Network (WLN) meeting held in Tokyo in September, the 8<sup>th</sup> Gender Focal Point Network (GFPN) meeting held in Ranzan-machi, Saitama Prefecture in September, and the Women's Entrepreneurship Summit (WES) meeting held in the City of Gifu in October. At the WLN meeting, proposals to be made to the APEC leaders and Cabinet members were adopted, and the importance of women's activeness in society in light of the proposals was reflected in reports of the results of high-level meetings, such as the declaration by the APEC leaders.



APEC2012 • Women and the Economy Forum (WEF)

### ASEAN + 3

ASEAN + 3 is ASEAN plus Japan, China and South Korea. ASEAN + 3 committee meetings about women have been held every year since 2009. In November 2011, the third meeting was held in Indonesia. Japan actively participates in these meetings.

## ■ International Cooperation

### Conducting ODA effectively through promotion of gender mainstreaming

Under the Initiative on Gender and Development (GAD) formulated in 2005, Japan has been providing support in the form of official development assistance (ODA) that focuses mainly on participating in the three fields of education, health, and economic and social activities. In addition, Japan is strengthening support for efforts intended to improve the status of women, such as gender equality in developing nations, while at the same time respecting such countries' ownership.

### The East Asia Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting

On the initiative of Japan, the first East Asia Gender Equality Ministerial Meeting was convened in Tokyo in 2006. The second meeting was held in New Delhi, India in 2007, followed by the third meeting in Seoul, South Korea in 2009 and by the fourth meeting in Siem Reap, Cambodia in 2011.

### International cooperation projects

Through collaboration with Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), international support is being promoted for main organizations in developing countries, through activities such as inviting trainees from other countries to Japan and sending experts to other countries.

### Collaboration with NGOs

In order to promote international exchanges and cooperation from the perspective of gender equality, effective exchanges, collaboration, and cooperation are being carried out with the governments of other countries, international organizations, local governments, and NGOs in Japan and other countries.

### PR activity

To introduce initiatives being undertaken in Japan for gender equality, the Cabinet Office produces information brochures in English for distribution to the governments of other countries and to international organizations etc.