

ESCAP/Asian and Pacific Conference on Gender Equality and Women's  
Empowerment: Beijing+20 Review  
Country Statement Draft by Ms. Hashimoto, Head of the Delegation of Japan

Mr./Ms. Chairperson,

This year, Japan has conducted the review on the efforts we made, and discussed with the civil society, and considered what should be done in the days ahead, as the 20-year anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+20) is fast approaching.

Japan has implemented policies and measures in a comprehensive and systematic manner based on the Third Basic Plan for Gender Equality which was decided in December 2010. For instance, we made great progress in introducing legislation and formulating plans on domestic violence, protection of youth from sexual and violent information, and countermeasures against human trafficking, with the aim to eradicate violence against women. Japan is currently formulating the Forth Basic Plan for Gender Equality in order to further promote the policy.

Concurrently, Japan is strengthening its efforts nationally and internationally for gender mainstreaming, under Prime Minister Abe's strong initiative, with the catch phrase of 'A Society where Women Shine.'

Women's participation in society is becoming more important and urgent than ever, as Japan is turning into a "super-aged society." Especially, it is indispensable to create an environment which enables women to balance work and child-rearing in Japan, where 60 % of women quit their jobs after giving birth to the first child. There is another challenging issue in Japan that fewer women take on leadership positions in the political and economic field. In fact, in Japan, there are still a number of men who virtue devoting their entire life to work. However, it has been expected that, women's presence in the workforce and their participation in decision making would encourage changes in working styles, consequently leading to improved productivity.

The government of Japan is currently in full force with cooperation between public and private sectors to achieve the goal of women in leadership positions to 30% by 2020. A new legislation has been just submitted to the Diet to oblige companies to formulate and publicize action plans for promoting women's active participation in the workplace.

“Spread ‘the society where women shine’ to the world” was the Prime Minister Abe’s statement, who promised assistance at the UN general assembly last year with focus on prevention of armed conflict, women’s participation in peace-building and women’s empowerment.

In addition, with experiences from Great East Japan earthquake, Japan makes more efforts for women’s active roles to be taken while the occurrence of a natural disaster. Also, Japan works with civil society organizations for formulating the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, implementing the UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

Women are the people not only to be protected but also to be empowered, so that it connects to empowerment of family, community and then to the entire society.

Japan hosted an international symposium called World Assembly for Women, WAW!, in September and discussed on women’s active social and economic participation with top leaders who gathered from all over the world. I myself also participated in the symposium and re-acknowledged that there exists still a pile of issues necessary to be tackled in the field of society, economy, politics and all others and that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is shared its value with women in the world as a norm of action.

Mr./Ms. Chairperson,

I think that sharing information and experiences on the efforts made till now and deciding the regional issues are very meaningful for Asian and Pacific region including Japan. As a CSW member, Japan will do the best to make the outcome of this meeting useful for the world review at CSW in March next year.