

JAPAN'S THREE PROMISES FOR REALIZING THE VISION OF THE UN CHARTER

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On September 20, 2022, Prime Minister Kishida delivered his address at the General Debate of the 77th session of the United Nations General Assembly. To demonstrate Japan's strong commitment to the UN and to multilateralism, he expressed the country's determination to 1) reform the UN, including the Security Council, and strengthen the UN's own functions, including disarmament and non-proliferation; 2) realize a UN that promotes the rule of law in the international community; and 3) promote efforts based on the concept of human security in the new era.

Mme. President, Excellencies,
We stand at a historic watershed moment.

Seventy-seven years have passed since the establishment of the United Nations, yet we are still witnessing the devastation in Ukraine and around the world. What would the founders of the United Nations, who were determined to not repeat the scourge of the World Wars, think if they saw the challenges to the international order that we are facing?

We have all gathered here at this Assembly because we stand with the fundamental vision and principles

of the UN Charter. The realization of an international community where all Member States unite to maintain peace and security, and where all people can enjoy the economic and social development – isn't this what we are aiming for?

It is an imperative to maintain the international order where the rule of law is firmly established. The United Nations has been playing a central role in the development of such an international order.

However, we see today its foundations being gravely shaken. Russia's aggression against Ukraine is an act that

tramples on the vision and principles of the UN Charter. What is crucial is for any and all countries to be under the rule of law – not the rule by force, which we absolutely cannot allow.

The United Nations does not exist solely for the benefit of the great powers. The United Nations exists for the entire international community, founded on the principle of the sovereign equality of all Member States. It exists to fulfill the claims of not just the powerful and the loud states but also of the voices that are often unheard but are equally legitimate.

Especially at a time when the existing international order is being tested around the world, now is the time to return to the vision and principles of the UN Charter and mobilize our strength and wisdom to ensure an international order based on the rule of law. To achieve this, we must reform the United Nations and strengthen its functions. Former Secretary-General Hammarskjöld, who was killed in the line of duty while attempting to mediate a ceasefire amid the Congo Crisis, said, "It is our responsibility to remedy any flaws there may be in [the institutions of the UN]." In order to realize a world that the UN Charter aspires to, we must tackle head-on the strengthening of the UN's functions.

To demonstrate Japan's strong commitment to the United Nations as well as to multilateralism, I hereby declare Japan's determination to realize the vision of the United Nations. They are,

First, the reform of the United Nations, including the Security Council, to return to the vision and principles of the UN Charter, with the strengthening of the UN's own functions, including disarmament and non-proliferation.

Second, the realization of a United Nations that promotes the rule of law in the international community.

Third, the promotion of efforts based on the concept of human security in the new era.

Mme. President, Excellencies,

We must face the fact that the credibility of the United Nations is at stake due to the aggression against Ukraine by Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council. We, the Member States of the UN, must act to restore this Organization's credibility.

Frequently, debates about the dysfunctionality of the Security Council have been pointed out. We have debated about this issue for almost over thirty years. But what is truly needed now is not a discussion for the sake

of discussion, but actions toward reform. Even amongst the Permanent Member States of the Security Council, there are some countries that have shown a willingness to embrace reform. But there can be "No reform without negotiation." The various positions cannot be compromised or converge without any negotiation. The time has come to start text-based negotiations to reform the Security Council. The Summit of the Future in 2024 is an excellent opportunity to broadly review the nature of the UN. By all means, let us gather a wide range of wisdom, including from experts, and build momentum.

Faced with the crisis of the international order caused by Russia's aggression, the General Assembly adopted a resolution condemning Russia in the strongest terms with an overwhelming majority. At that time, the UN was a beacon in the dark night, clearly indicating the direction in which the international community should go. The General Assembly proved to be the sole universal organ that represents all Member States, pointing us in the direction of the international community's just cause.

Japan is determined not only to reform the Security Council, but also to work earnestly to further revitalize the General Assembly and to push the UN so it can pursue an even greater role in the maintenance of peace and security. Japan will also continue to support the Secretary-General as he oversees the activities of this Organization.

Threatening the use of nuclear weapons, as Russia has done, let alone the actual use of nuclear weapons, is a serious threat to the peace and security of the international community, and is absolutely unacceptable.

As a prime minister from Hiroshima, I am immensely dedicated to the realization of a world without nuclear weapons driven by the sentiments from the hibakusha. Last month, the sole opposition by Russia blocked the unity and concerted efforts by the international community to reach consensus on an outcome document that would maintain and strengthen the NPT regime, which is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

This caused me great dismay, just as it did for the overwhelming majority of the Member States. I, however, refuse to relent. Because we are only one country away from adopting the draft final outcome document by consensus. I believe this document represents a new foundation for the international community to proceed with realistic engagements on nuclear disarmament in the

Prime Minister Kishida delivering a general debate speech at the United Nations General Assembly in New York. As this was the first such in-person meeting in three years, the Japanese prime minister attended the assembly himself. With the international community finding itself at a historical watershed, Kishida expressed Japan's determination to realize the principles of the UN.



future. As the only nation to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan has a unique historic role and we renew our resolve to realize “a world without nuclear weapons.” We will continue to make realistic efforts to achieve this goal. We must ensure that Nagasaki remains the last place to suffer an atomic bombing.

This is the 20th year since the Japan-North Korea Pyongyang Declaration which was signed by Prime Minister Koizumi and Chairman of the National Defense Commission Kim Jong-il. Japan’s policy remains unchanged. Japan seeks to normalize its relationship with North Korea, in accordance with the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration, through comprehensively resolving the outstanding issues of concern such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues, as well as settlement of the unfortunate past. Japan is prepared to engage in dialogue on matters of mutual concern. I am determined to meet with President Kim Jong-un without any conditions and will miss no opportunity to take actions with all my dedication.

Japan has also made long-term contributions in the field of peacebuilding. Japan first participated in a full-scale peacekeeping mission in Cambodia in 1992. Thirty years later, many Cambodian personnel wearing blue helmets are protecting the peace and future of places such as Mali, Central African Republic, and Lebanon. Then Lieutenant Colonel Teav Chanrithy was one of those who was deployed to Lebanon after Japan’s peacekeeping training. Since then, he has been active as a peacebuilder, mentoring younger generations at the PKO training center for the Cambodian Armed Forces.

The torch of peace created through Japan’s contributions to peacekeeping operations will be borne beyond generations and across borders. Japan supports it.

Mme. President, Excellencies,

Next, Japan is fully committed to the realization of a United Nations that promotes the rule of law in the international community.

The rule of law is not reserved for one particular State or region. We need to remind ourselves that the rule of law is especially important for vulnerable nations.

Strengthening the rule of law based on international law will, in the long run, benefit all States and lead to sustainable growth and sound development of the international community.

Based on this belief, Japan has been playing an active

role in various fields in cooperation with other countries, including efforts towards the realization of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific.”

In 1970, overcoming serious divisions among Member States at the time and with persistent dialogue, the General Assembly adopted the “Friendly Relations Declaration.” This Declaration, the fruit of our predecessors’ wisdom, serves as a foundation from which the basic principles for the promotion of the rule of law are drawn.

The following basic principles for States emerge from this declaration: first, break away from “rule by force” and pursue “rule of law” through observing international law in good faith; second, in this regard, do not allow any attempts to change the status quo of territories and areas by force or coercion; and third, to cooperate with one another against serious violations of the principles of the UN Charter.

We are convinced that these basic principles serve as the basis to hold an increasingly divided international community together while ensuring respect for human rights and achieving sustainable development.

From next January, Japan will serve as a non-permanent member of the Security Council. By listening not only to the big voices but also being attentive to the small voices, we intend to take action to strengthen the rule of law in the international community.

Mme. President, Excellencies,

Japan will strengthen efforts based on the concept of human security in the new era.

People deserve to enjoy a high-quality life, free from anxiety and fear. The concept of human security has not changed, but now, we are standing at a historical watershed moment, and facing a new challenge. Today,

A refugee from South Sudan who had received training in rice cultivation from the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in Uganda teaches the techniques he learned to grow rice to his fellow refugees. JICA, in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), has taught rice cultivation to refugees and their host communities with the aim of achieving stability within the region.

TAKESHI KUNO/JICA



in addition to global pandemics, the use of force and coercion against other countries, food and energy insecurity, inflation and climate change are all interconnected and threaten the safety of people now more than ever, further exacerbating poverty and disease.

The Sustainable Development Goals aim for a society in which no one is left behind, and their achievement requires the realization of human security in the new era. In doing so, the key is to enhance the resilience of individuals, societies, and nations to cope with the changes and challenges specific to our times.

The Adjumani District in Uganda is facing difficult and complicated issues such as the increasing influx of refugees from neighboring countries, and rising costs due to the situation in Ukraine, which is just one example of the difficult and complex challenges that the world is facing today.

Moini Fred, an administrator from Adjumani, learned through JICA training, how to incorporate the views of both refugees and his compatriots in running his District. Despite its own economic difficulties, Adjumani District continues to provide administrative services as well as support to refugees, and Mr. Fred is working hard to build a cohesive community free of ethnicity- or nationality-based tensions.

With a shaking international order and people’s anxiety growing, Japan will work with the United Nations to realize human security in the new era, including initiatives through the UN Trust Fund for Human Security. In addition, Japan will also continue to invest generously in people.

At TICAD 8 (the 8th Tokyo International Conference on African Development) in August this year, I announced the investment of US\$30 billion in Africa as the sum of public and private financial contributions over the next three years, with an emphasis on “investment in people.” Japan will also focus on human resource development and capacity-building in other parts of the world. Based on my conviction that education is the foundation of peace, I will assume the position as an “Education Champion” and I will promote cooperation through human resource development based on the outcome of the UN Transforming Education Summit.

The COVID-19 pandemic has also illustrated the importance of human health and efforts to protect people from diseases. Japan has provided a total of



Prime Minister Kishida participating online in the 8th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8), held in August 2022. At the conference, he announced that Japan is going to invest 30 billion U.S. dollars in public and private financial contribution over the next three years.

approximately US\$5 billion to support the COVID-19 response, including vaccine-related assistance through COVAX and other programs. Japan has also decided to contribute up to US\$1.08 billion to the Global Fund over the next three years. Japan will continue to take a leading role in strengthening the global health architecture and achieving universal health coverage (UHC) in the post-COVID-19 era, toward the G7 Summit that I will chair next year.

Japan is also steadily contributing to the creation of a world where people can enjoy a high quality life in a safe environment. Our emergency assistance and support to strengthen the resilience of food systems to ensure food security, as well as our role in the development of international standards and norms in the field of information and telecommunications through the efforts at the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and other organizations, are just a few examples. In order to promote these efforts, Japan will also revise its “Development Cooperation Charter,” which articulates the basic policy of our development cooperation policies.

I support Secretary-General Guterres’s leadership in presenting “Our Common Agenda” as a response to the current and future challenges facing the international community. As history experiences this dramatic change, Japan will continue to support suffering people around the world under the concept of the human security in the new era. Japan will work together with the UN and other Member States towards the maintenance of peace and stability underpinned by an international order based on the rule of law.

Mme. President, Excellencies,

It is precisely because we stand at a watershed moment in history that Japan continues to have strong expectations for the United Nations. Times change, but one thing remains the same: the vision and the principles of the UN. With this conviction, I am determined to work with everyone to strengthen the UN.

Thank you very much for your kind attention. ●