



JAPAN

Statement by Mr. Kazuo Sunaga,
Deputy Director-General, International Cooperation Bureau,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

At the Opening Session of the Bangladesh Development Forum
Dhaka, 15 February, 2010

H. E. Sheikh Hasina, Honorable Prime Minister of the People's Republic of Bangladesh,
H. E. Mr. Abul Maal Abdul Muhith, Honorable Finance Minister of the People's Republic of
Bangladesh,

Excellencies and distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is great honour for me to attend and make a statement on behalf of the Government of Japan at such an important conference, Bangladesh Development Forum. At the outset, I take this opportunity to congratulate the Government of Bangladesh on taking initiative in holding the BDF. The Government of Japan is fully aware of the importance of the forum as a platform of consultation between the Government of Bangladesh, and the development partners and civil society. I hope that in this forum, the GOB will show its strong political commitment to realize the Vision 2021 as well as the NSAPR-II (National Strategy for Accelerated Poverty Reduction II. I also appreciate the earnest supports and collective efforts made by the members of the LCG (Local Consultative Group) in the preparatory process of this Forum.

Bangladesh, a moderate Islamic and democratic country, has been playing an important role in addressing the various global development agenda. Bangladesh has been also making efforts to promote regional cooperation as the advocator of SAARC and the first ratifier of the CTBT and the NPT among the South Asian countries. With a view to achieving stability and economic development in the entire South Asia region, the stable social and economic development of Bangladesh is crucial. Considering those aspects, Japan has been extending its economic cooperation to Bangladesh and we have developed and maintained friendly relations since its independence.

Japan commends the Government of Bangladesh for its development efforts in order to achieve macroeconomic stability, sustainable economic growth, poverty reduction as well

as health and education MDGs. Japan welcomes the Government's strong commitment shown in the Vision 2021 and NSAPR-II. We are particularly supportive for its 5 priority areas and strategies focusing on pro-poor growth. We firmly believe that the Government of Bangladesh will implement these strategies timely with strong ownership and political leadership supported by a firm national consensus.

We also welcome the steady progress of the JCS (Bangladesh Joint Cooperative Strategy) process. It is highly appreciated that JCS action plan includes the monitoring and evaluation of the development results and the regular consultation process. It is necessary for us to continue this process.

We would like to emphasize that for the improvement of the living standard of the Bangladeshi people, the Government needs to continue its utmost efforts in various areas such as law and order, governance, basic social infrastructures and service deliveries. The Government's own resources and donor assistance are still not sufficient to fill the financial gap needed for the NSAPR-II. In order to fill the gap, the Government needs to remove obstacles for the promotion of foreign investments and private sector development.

Japan sets three pillars for the assistance toward Bangladesh, namely, (1) poverty reduction through economic growth, (2) social development with human security and (3) good governance. Based on this policy, the Government of Japan continues, together with other donor countries and international organizations, the assistance focusing on the basic social infrastructure development and social sector development, which has critical importance in this country.

Thank you very much.