

The speech of Minister Suzuki at the World Bank's event on Universal
Health Coverage (UHC)
(April 18,2024)

First of all, I would like to thank President Banga and Director-General Tedros for a very insightful discussion. It is my great honor to make a short statement on Japan's efforts to promote UHC.

Japan has long been emphasizing the critical importance of UHC as a foundation for human capital development and sustainable growth. Japan has also been advocating that finance-health collaboration is essential to achieve UHC. For this reason, Japan hosted the first "G20 Joint Finance Health Ministers Meeting" in 2019 at the margin of the G20 Osaka Summit. In this context, I am pleased today to see various stakeholders, including finance and health experts, meeting to discuss UHC.

Japan has been closely working with the World Bank and the WHO in supporting developing countries towards the achievement of UHC, including through financial contributions to technical assistance in this area. In order to further accelerate our efforts, I am delighted to announce today that Japan, together with the Bank and the WHO, will establish a "UHC Knowledge Hub" in Japan in 2025. The Hub will support knowledge sharing on UHC as well as capacity building for finance and health authorities. It will leverage the expertise of the Bank and the WHO, while drawing on Japan's experience, such as our efforts to maintain quality UHC amid an aging and declining population.

At the Bank, the discussion on IDA21 is ongoing. IDA plays a crucial role in mainstreaming UHC in low-income countries. It is imperative to help them secure adequate financing resources for a well-functioning healthcare system. Japan expects that IDA21 maintains UHC as one of the policy priorities.

Today, I look forward to a lively debate about the challenges and policy efforts to achieve UHC in each country. Building on today's discussion, Japan will continue to help step-up efforts to promote UHC across the world. Thank you.