

World Health Summit 2023 – Opening Ceremony Video Speech Keizo Takemi, Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan

Good Morning, Good Afternoon, and Good Evening to everyone attending the World Health Summit. I am Keizo Takemi, Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan.

This is the first time I have participated in this event since I was appointed as Minister. I hoped to visit Berlin in person to exchange views with everyone gathered there, but please allow me to participate virtually at this time.

To the World Health Summit, which I have participated in several times, I would like to express my sincere respect for your vital role as the important platform for global health. I would like to express my deepest gratitude for Dr. Axel Pries, the President of the World Health Summit, and all the people involved.

In 2020, the entire world was threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are reminded of how important it is to strengthen the health system in ordinary times to prevent, prepare for and respond to health emergencies like a pandemic.

From the experiences of this pandemic it is important to establish the way to build PPR to health crises into the health care system during the peace time. In the context of linkage between the local and global, we acknowledge that lessons for/of human society that we must address the challenges we faced in the field of health care.

Based on the awareness of these issues, this year's G7 health minister's meeting in Nagasaki under the theme of „Working Together for a Healthier Future“ discussed the direction that the global community should take in the Post-COVID-19-Era with contribution to achieving more resilient, equitable and sustainable UHC as one of the main agendas. Based on the outcome in Nagasaki, the G7 summit in Hiroshima also delivered a strong message at the leader's level. Especially the G7 formulated the G7 global plan for UHC action agenda which outlines the actions that the G7 should take towards achieving UHC in the entire world.

In the three years of the COVID-19 pandemic the world has been overwhelmed by the crisis response and the political momentum for achieving UHC has unfortunately declined.

However, the UHC high level meeting was held during the UN assembly high level week. This is an excellent opportunity to rebuild the momentum for achieving the UHC worldwide.

In this context, I have great expectation for the timely holding of the WHS.

In addition, I have consistently promoted the idea that strengthening health financing is essential for achieving UHC. Based on this idea, as the G20 presidency in 2019, Japan convened the G20 joint finance and health ministers meeting for the first time. Furthermore, this year's G7 outcome documents indicated the importance of a global hub function, including for financing, knowledge management, and human resources on the UHC. We believe that such a hub will

be able to accelerate efforts for achieving UHC in the entire world. Japan will also promote our efforts including health financing for contributing to achieve the Universal Health Coverage.

Finally, there are existing schemes, such as research & development by the CEPI and Gavi, the clinical trial network for WHO and regulatory harmonization, the establishment of mass production systems for pharmaceuticals and medical devices in each region of the world, the last mile effort of delivering systems and Primary Health Care including preventive services such as immunization.

Then, we should utilize the existing financial approach to collaborate with each other. Under such increasing geopolitical concerns and conflicts, reforming the financial scheme is vital. We should be practical and take such soft governance approach to design the global health architecture.

I expect our discussions at the World Health Summit will build and improve the momentum for global health and everyone gathered here today will further promote each efforts and collaboration.

Thank you!