

Japan Education Forum for Sustainable Development Goals (15th JEF for SDGs)

Time and Date: 10:00am–05:00pm, Thursday, March 8, 2018

Venue: Assembly Hall, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Tokyo

Opening Address

Mr. Iwao Horii, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs

Iwao Horii

Today, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your participation in the JEF for SDGs, Japan Education Forum for Sustainable Development Goals. Under the theme “Quality of Education for SDGs: the realities and challenges of education policy”, I hope that this will give you an opportunity to deepen discussion on improving the quality of education, and identifying education policy challenges both in Japan and in developing countries.

In order to nurture children’s competencies to be a creator of sustainable society, it is essential to provide quality education. To that end, we need to hand over a society filled with hope to the younger generation, and we need to create a healthy educational environment.

Towards the achievement of SDG4, in September 2015, Japan formulated the “Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth” as one of its thematic policies under the Development Cooperation Charter. Under this Strategy, Japan focuses on three priority areas. Our first focus is on education cooperation to achieve quality learning. We provide support for each individual to enhance their potential and capacities through acquiring necessary knowledge and skills. Our second focus is on cooperation for industrial, science and technology human resource development, and education for sustainable development. We will assist individuals to acquire necessary scientific knowledge and skills to facilitate industrial development and sustainable economic and social development. Thirdly, in order to realize these efforts, we will establish and expand the international and regional network for education cooperation. Towards achieving SDG4, we will disseminate our initiatives in education cooperation in the international community, as well as strengthen cooperation with international organizations such as UNICEF, UNESCO and Global Partnership for Education. Also, we will strengthen public-private partnerships in education and take on an “all-Japan” approach.

At the United Nations High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York last July, Japan announced its commitment to provide approximately 1 billion dollars of assistance by 2018, focusing on children and youth, particularly in the areas of education and gender equality.

Moreover, the “SDG Action Plan 2018”, which was decided at the 4th meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters held last December, clearly articulated “the empowerment of next generations and women” as one of its pillars to achieve the SDGs. Japan puts great emphasis on nurturing future leaders of the SDGs, and we stand ready to lead international cooperation in education.

In closing, I would like to express my sincere hope that this forum will be a fruitful one. Thank you very much for your attention.