

**STATEMENT BY Ms. ONISHI, on behalf of  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Japan to the OSCE  
Permanent Council, OSCE**

**Report by the Head of the OSCE Mission in Kosovo**

**19<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

Mr. Chair,

First of all, we would like to offer our condolences to our Asian Partner colleagues from Afghanistan and to the bereaved families of those who lost their lives due to the multiple earthquakes in western Afghanistan.

On 17th October, Japan decided to provide 3 million US dollars in emergency grant assistance among others in the areas of food and health through international organisations, in addition to the assistance in amount of 1.46 million US dollars provided through Japanese NGOs.

The Government of Japan intends to implement this assistance promptly and to continue its efforts to support the Afghan people and to improve the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan.

Concerning the comprehensive report by Ambassador Michael Davenport, OSCE Head of Mission in Kosovo, we took note with interest of his report regarding the major developments and his activities in support of Kosovo's political, institutional and security developments.

His mission's continuing engagement across the core elements of his mandate is essential for developing a democratic and multi-ethnic society in Kosovo. We wish to hereby extend to you, Excellency, our appreciation in this regard.

Ambassador Mizuuchi, Ambassador to Kosovo visited Prishtina from October 2-4. According to his report two positive developments were found regarding the bilateral relations between Japan and Kosovo, namely the signing of a letter of intent for the academic exchange between Japanese and Kosovar Universities,

and the inauguration ceremony of the "Shinzo Abe Park" dedicated by the Mayor of Prishtina to Japan's late former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo.

This shows a clear, resolute commitment by Japan to the development of Kosovo in the areas of nation building, national unity and reconciliation with neighboring countries, and an appreciative response by the Republic of Kosovo to this end.

Despite a number of challenges facing the Kosovar government and people, we were delighted to witness considerable progress in nation building over the last 15 years since the country's independence. Young dynamic political leaders like the Mayor of Prishtina seem to be emerging, which we found to be a very positive trend.

We had fruitful discussions with President Osmani, Prime Minister Kurti and other political leaders. All of them referred to the incident that had occurred in the northern region of Kosovo a week before, raised concern and mentioned a planned attack by its neighbor which, we believe, needs full investigation concerning its background and the plot per se.

The overall response by these political leaders was, as far as we could see, relatively self-restrained. We expressed our appreciation for this self-restraint to prevent overreaction and further escalation.

It is worth noting that during Ambassador Mizuuchi's visit, several initiatives were under way for the promotion of ethnic reconciliation and national unity, among others, one initiated by the Mayor of Prishtina.

He is promoting the reconstruction of a concert hall with the assistance of a Japanese architect to be also used for sport activities for people regardless of their ethnic background.

He is also attempting to promote freedom of movement between Prishtina and the Serbian-dominated municipality of Gračanica (グラニツァ) by facilitating public bus transportation. Ambassador Mizuuchi encouraged him to remain committed to striving towards this goal, as Japan certainly welcomes such initiatives.

Under its G7 presidency this year, Japan is following closely and with great concern the recent escalation of tensions in northern Kosovo, and urges both Kosovo and Serbia to prevent further violence and promote mutual dialogue.

Japan also urges both sides to remain committed to the Belgrade-Prishtina Dialogue mediated by Mr. Lajčák, EU Special Representative, and to properly and in good faith fulfill their respective obligations under the Agreement and its Implementing Annex on a path to the normalization between Kosovo and Serbia, which were reached in Brussels and Ohrid(オフリド), respectively, within the framework of said Dialogue.

Together with the international community, we will support the proper and faithful implementation of said process.

Thank you very much.