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**Remarks by H.E. Mr. MIZUUCHI Ryuta,
Ambassador of Japan to Austria,
at the Opening Session of the Joint Symposium on Global Health
Kyoto University – University of Vienna
on 18th June 2024**

Rector Schütze, President Minato,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, let me express my sincere gratitude for the invitation to participate in the joint symposium between the University of Vienna and Kyoto University, focusing on global health for two days. Vienna University being the oldest university in Austria and my wife's alma mater, and Kyoto University my own alma mater, I am personally delighted to see this strategic partnership develop so vividly.

Throughout several discussions, Rector Schütze and I share the perception that academic exchanges between Japan and Austria should be expanded comprehensively. The University of Vienna and Kyoto University embody these aspirations, and I very much appreciate the close cooperation they foster in various fields. Last month, I had fruitful discussions with Rector Schütze and professors of various fields from the University of Vienna having connections with Japan at my residence. It was a very meaningful exchange of views on academic cooperation.

This year's symposium's topic "global health" has been also a major issue which the Japanese government has been working on to create international momentum through various conferences. We have been proactively contributing to human resources and infrastructure development in the Global South, particularly through our bilateral scheme in the health sector. The Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is an active player in many countries in this field. In 2022, Japan came up with its "global health strategy" and is stepping up its efforts globally.

Universal Health Coverage (UHC) first emerged as a major G7 issue at the Ise-Shima Summit in 2016. The importance of strengthening prevention, preparedness, and response

to future health crisis, as well as the significance of UHC, was also emphasized at last year's Hiroshima Summit. With the world having suffered greatly from the COVID-19 pandemic, this topic will be even more relevant in the future. I hope that the two universities will further strengthen their collaboration in this field as well.

Last week, the Austrian Federal Ministry of Labour and Economy hosted a round table for academic stakeholders in preparation for the Osaka Kansai Expo next year. Rector Schütze articulated quite a positive approach on the Expo with an idea using the Austrian pavilion as a platform to hold events of the University of Vienna on site. Given that the Expo will be held in Kansai, this will provide another opportunity for Kyoto University to join, and for both universities to further strengthen their partnership. I would be more than happy if that would happen.

One thing on which I wish to seek the support from both Universities is the possibility of a bilateral agreement on science and technology between Japan and Austria. As leading countries in Asia and Europe having many Nobel Prize laureates historically in physics, chemistry, and medicine, I consider that our bilateral relationship deserves such an agreement. It would contribute to even more active exchanges in academia between our two countries.

In concluding, I wish to extend to all of you my best wishes for a successful symposium and further development of the strategic partnership between the two Universities. Please be assured that the Embassy of Japan in Vienna will be always supportive in this regard.

Thank you very much.