



**Statement by Dr. Nobuko Kurosaki  
Alternate Representative of Japan**

**Item 56(a): Advancement of women**

**Item 56(b): Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on  
Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly**

**Third Committee**

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Mr. Chairperson,

Japan remains strongly convinced that progress for women is progress for all, and that the principles contained in the internationally agreed instruments, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, must be observed as the basis for action. To that end, my government has been actively engaged at both the national and international levels in promoting a gender-equal society. Allow me to share some of Japan's experiences, especially in its efforts to eliminate violence against women, achieve gender equality and advance the status of women in society.

Mr. Chairperson,

Japan has put much effort into fighting the problem of violence against women, which is a serious violation of human rights. For example, Japan recently amended the Act on the Prevention of Spousal Violence and the Protection of Victims, which came into force in January 2008. The revised law expands the scope of protection for victims such as requiring municipalities to establish Spousal Violence Counseling and Support Centers. It also strengthens protection by enhancing the scope of restraining orders not only for the victims, but also for their relatives.

Mr. Chairperson,

The phenomenon of violence against women in conflict situations remains pervasive,



and the international community needs to tackle this issue in a comprehensive and concerted manner. We highly commend the Security Council for reaffirming its political commitment in this area by adopting its resolution 1820 in June this year following its first adoption in 2000 of SCR 1325 on women, peace and security. We are pleased that the new resolution calls on the international community to take concrete actions. As a demonstration of its strong support, Japan joined co-sponsor of the resolution together with 51 other countries.

To prevent conflicts from recurring in post-conflict situations, it is important that women and men participate as equals in the decision-making of negotiation of peace agreements, and that they both be provided with a peace education. Integrating a gender perspective into national legislation, policy and structure is likewise necessary for societies to be rebuilt. Women should not be viewed merely as victims of conflicts, but be seen as a principal role player in the peace-building. Japan has provided support and making contribution in this area to a number of countries around the world, such as the DRC, Liberia, Eritrea and Afghanistan.

Mr. Chairperson,

Japan highly commends the Secretary-General's campaign to end violence against women, and it also commends the inter-agency campaign led by the Deputy Secretary-General to end Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). The Government of Japan strongly supports such initiatives and will be an active participant.

Many Member States have already joined at the ministerial level the well-known campaign by UNIFEM (United Nations Development Fund for Women) entitled Say NO to Violence against Women. In Japan, every year from 12 through 25 November, we have conducted the Campaign to Eliminate Violence against Women in order to raise public awareness on this issue. Now Japan, too, is preparing to sign at the ministerial level onto UNIFEM's campaign, and it is very much looking forward to working closely with international community to intensify both campaigns and make greater progress towards eliminating violence against women everywhere in the world.

Mr. Chairperson,

The year 2009 marks the tenth anniversary of the enactment of the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society in Japan; we are ready to move on to the next stage of efforts to realize a gender-equal society. For Example, Japan has declared 2008 as the first year of a drive to achieve a Work-Life Balance, and changing working styles is the first priority. We are now working to help both women and men achieve their desire to balance their work, their private

lives and their social activities by strengthening the social infrastructure that supports child-raising, for example, through child-care services.

To realize that goal, in late 2007 the Council of Executives of Public and private Sectors formulated the Charter for a Work-Life Balance and the Action Policy for Promoting Work-Life Balance with specific numerical targets. We set 10 percent as the targeted rate for paternity leave, 80 percent as the targeted rate for maternity leave and 55 percent as the targeted job persistency rate for women after and just before they give birth to their first child by the year 2017.

Learning from the good practices of other countries, Japan continually strives to strengthen its efforts to raise the necessary social momentum, assist companies in the efforts they are making in this area, and actively provide guidance on ways to shorten working hours, so that a work-life balance is realized through attainment of the targeted goals of the guidelines.

Mr. Chairperson,

In order to address the gender issue, which cuts across all UN activities, including those relating to elimination of violence against women, gender equality and advancing the status of women, coordination and strategic partnership within the UN system is essential. Japan reaffirms its commitment to active contributions to the ongoing discussion on how the UN can promote its policy and programmes in the area in a more coherent, efficient and effective manner.

Mr. Chairperson,

As social conventions, the social system and social policies are frequently formulated from the viewpoint of men, there is still much to be done to promote gender mainstreaming throughout society. As we stand this year at the mid-point in our efforts to achieve the MDGs, the Government of Japan wishes to assure that it will work continuously with international society, international organizations, and civil society, including NGOs, to achieve further advances in the status and well-being of women.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson