

Habitat Istanbul + 5 Country Report

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Chapter 1 Shelter

1. Provide security of Tenure

Property rights, including land ownership rights, are guaranteed in the Japanese Constitution. When private property is used for public purposes, reasonable compensation is given. Also, men and women are treated equally under the law concerning inheritance rights, property ownership rights, etc.

2. Promote the right to adequate housing

In the declaration of the Second U.N. Conference on Human Settlements, the right to adequate housing is positioned as important component of the right to an adequate standard of living, which is proclaimed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other documents. And, Japan understands that the declaration reaffirmed that efforts should be made toward the realization of this goal and is developing related policies.

3. Provide equal access to land

Regarding Japan's land policy, in accordance with the Basic Land Act (put into effect in December 1989) and the Outline of Promoting Comprehensive Land Policies (cabinet decision in January 1991), Japan is conducting comprehensive promotion under such principles as "priority for public welfare relating to land." The restraint on land price increases in the so-called bubble period have had some effect, and some improvement has been seen in terms of affordability.

However, as land price formation proceeds through real demand, a new development of land policy, including the effective use of land, is strongly required in order to respond properly to the economic and social structural changes taking place in Japan, to build pleasant housing and residential environment, to promote attractive and safe community and local development, etc.

In these circumstances, the Land Policy Council submitted a report in November 1996 on "The Mode of Land Policy From Now On." As objectives for land policy from now on, this report cited realization of the principle of "from ownership to use," the building of pleasant housing and social capital, and the promotion of rational land use with the aim of creating affluent and safe community and local development.

In light of the report of the Land Policy Council, the government in February 1997 reached a cabinet decision on the New Outline of Promoting Comprehensive Land Policies, which indicated the basic guidelines for the land policy that the government should adopt. This new outline stated that the objective of land policy from now on should switch from the restraint on land prices until then to the promotion of rational land use through the effective use of land under the principle of "from ownership to use." At present the Japanese government is united in implementing comprehensive policies toward the realization of this goal.

4. Promote equal access to credit

In order to promote housing acquisition, and in order to respond to the nation's deep-rooted housing demand for loans from the Government Housing Loan Corporation, Japan

at present is planning 550,000 housing units with loans and is making efforts to revise the loan system in order to contribute to the formation of a good housing stock and to diversify methods of fund raising, such as the securitization of housing loan assets.

Also, the workers' property accumulation home ownership loan system provides housing loans to workers who engage in property accumulation savings with property accumulation savings as the financial source. Efforts are being made to improve this system by, for example, extending the period of repayment in the case of new housing that meets certain durability standards and relaxing conditions for secondhand housing, thereby further promoting housing acquisition.

Furthermore, regarding loans of the Pension Welfare Service Public Corporation, efforts are continuing to be made toward betterment in order to improve the welfare of insurees of welfare pension insurance, etc. by, for example, offering low-interest housing loans using the pension fund (reserves) and relaxing housing space conditions.

5. Promote access to basic services

In Japan, waterworks advanced steadily in urban areas from the nineteenth century, and efforts have been focused on diffusion in rural and mountainous villages since 1954. At present further efforts are being made toward the diffusion of water supplies so that all people can have access to safe water conveniently and safely. The water supply diffusion rate rose from 95.3% of the total population in 1993 to 96.3% in 1998, or about 121.78 million people, which means that almost all people can use tap water. Moreover, regarding water quality, safe water is supplied that conforms with the quality standards stipulated in the Water Supply Law.

Although the water supply has entered an age of high diffusion, however, in 1994 water stoppages and reductions occurred around the country because of water shortages, and in 1995 water supply facilities suffered enormous damage in the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. Also, regarding the quality of water supplies, raw water pollution occurs because of eutrophication, etc. in lakes and marshes, etc., which are the sources of tap water; trihalomethane occurs in the purification process; and in June 1996 there was an outbreak of mass infection caused by cryptosporidium in the water supply. So countermeasures against various chemical substances are necessary. The solution of these problems on the supply side and the quality side of water supply is an important issue for ensuring and further increasing the safety and reliability of tap water. Japan is making the following efforts to respond to this situation:

(a) Water supply side (renewal of old facilities, earthquake countermeasures, water shortage countermeasures)

At present Japan has entered a period of renewal of old facilities, and many water utility companies around the country are engaged in the rebuilding and renewal of water supply facilities. Learning from the lessons of the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in 1995, the Guidelines for Earthquake-resistant Engineering Methods for Water Supply Facilities were formulated in 1997. Through these guidelines, emergency countermeasures, such as emergency water supplies and restoration work, are being strengthened, and the building of earthquake-resistant facilities is being promoted. Also, as a countermeasure against water shortages, which have been occurring frequently in

recent years, such measures are being promoted as the construction of wide-area water supply facilities, which enable existing water sources to be used to the maximum, and the prevention of water shortages.

(b) Water quality side (preservation of water sources, water supply quality management, promotion of advanced water purification processing facilities)

In order to preserve the quality of water sources, quality preservation projects for water sources are being promoted on the basis of the Law Concerning the Promotion of Projects to Preserve Water Quality in Drinking Water. Also, on the basis of the Guidelines for Provisional Countermeasures Against Cryptosporidium in Tap Water, efforts are being made to promote preventive countermeasures. Dioxins and other substances were added to the list of items monitored in tap water in 1999. On the facility side, the construction of advanced water purification treatment facilities that employ ozone processing, activated charcoal processing, membrane processing, etc. is being promoted in order to process substances that it is difficult to eliminate through conventional treatment methods.

Chapter 2 Social Development and Eradication of Poverty

6. Provide equal opportunities for a healthy and safe Life

From the standpoint of ensuring the safety of daily life, Japan is promoting the construction of conditions in the local community that enable elderly people, etc. to lead anxiety-free lives in the full-fledged aged society in families and communities with which they are familiar and to enable people to raise children in the community in an anxiety-free environment.

(1) Formulation of Basic Environment Plan

At present Japanese cities are characterized by consumption and production patterns symbolized by the terms “mass production,” “mass consumption,” and “mass waste,” and the impact on the environment, natural resources, society, and economy extends not only to these inner cities themselves but also to suburbs, the regions, and even, farther afield, to foreign countries. In order to reform this economic and social system and lifestyle, Japan formulated the Basic Environment Plan in 1994 and has been implementing various measures on the basis of this plan. The Basic Environment Plan cites four targets: the realization of a cycle-oriented socioeconomic system that places little burden on the environment; ensuring the coexistence of nature and humankind; realization of the participation of all entities under the principle of fair role sharing; and the promotion of international efforts. Carrying on these ideas, a new Environment Basic Plan was formulated in December 2000 with the aim of responding to new issues and changes in social conditions. The new plan clarifies the present status and issues in fields that should be tackled in a priority manner, such as global warming countermeasures and waste and recycling countermeasures. It also aims to be a more effective plan by, for example, advocating a mechanism to strengthen inspections of the Basic Environment Plan.

(2) Large-scale disaster countermeasures

Taking account of the special characteristics of each region, the national land preservation

project, the urban development project, and measures to strengthen main transportation and communication functions and to ensure the safety of buildings, facilities, and utility functions are being implemented with the aim of building a disaster-resistant national land and communities. Also, various measures are being implemented, such as the construction of facilities and equipment, so that when a disaster does occur, emergency activities can be carried out smoothly and efficiently.

Local governments also have formulated five-year plans on the basis of the Earthquake Disaster Prevention Special Measures Act, and they are promoting the building of disaster-resistant regions, including the urgent implementation of construction work on necessary facilities, etc.

In particular, in the National Capital Region, efforts are continuing to ensure coverage through the dispersion of functions and the multilayering of basic facilities and the elimination of urban areas with a density of old wooden structures so as to reorganize the region's structure, which at present is fragile against earthquakes and other large-scale disasters. Efforts are being made to improve the safety of facilities relating to transportation, information, water, energy, etc. and to ensure disaster prevention centers, with the emphasis on linkage with citizen activities. Also, efforts are continuing to be made to ensure regional security.

(3) Sick building syndrome

As a consequence of the high level of density of housing, the diffusion of new building materials, etc., the number of cases of sick building syndrome caused by pollution from chemical substances in room air, etc. is on the rise. This syndrome produces a variety of symptoms, such as headaches, eye soreness, coughing, and discomfort.

However, since the actual situation, disease conditions, etc. are not clear, an analysis of the causes through surveys, studies, etc. is being promoted, and necessary countermeasures will be adopted. At present some countermeasures have actually begun, such as decisions on density levels for chemical substances in room air, the revision of standards for building materials, and advice on ways of living.

7. Promote social integration and support for disadvantaged groups

(1) In Japan, efforts are being made, with the utilization also of information and communication technology, to construct an environment in which job opportunities for elderly people, etc. are ensured and in which elderly people, etc. can participate easily in the local community through lifelong learning, sports, recreational activities, volunteer activities, etc. so that elderly people, etc. can participate actively in social activities in accordance with their zeal and can live healthy and meaningful lives. Also, efforts are being made to create various opportunities for exchange between the elderly and the young generation so that the abundant knowledge and experience that the elderly possess can be handed down to the next generation and to promote the social participation of the elderly. For this purpose, efforts are being made to promote the construction, etc. of core facilities for exchange, such as housing and residential land for multigenerational accommodation, parks, plazas, community centers, and sport and recreation facilities. Furthermore, efforts are being made to implement events for

exchange, supply information, and provide consultation.

(2) Individual values and lifestyles are diversifying, and the number of individuals who seek self-realization through activities by their own judgment is increasing. Also, as a result of the development of transportation and information and communication systems, the scope of activity of individuals, including women and the elderly, is widening spectacularly both in Japan and overseas, transcending the frameworks of regional and national borders. In particular, the diffusion of means of information and communication is increasing the ability of individuals to gather, save, and transmit information and expanding the social influence of individuals. Furthermore, as a consequence of this advance of the information society, the local community, which is the center of people's lives, is entering a new phase, and its format is being questioned.

In these circumstances, in order to realize a society in which the various entities that reside, etc. in Metropolitan Tokyo can raise the quality of their lives and activities, it is necessary in the building of Metropolitan Tokyo to positively incorporate the independent and autonomous activities of individuals, nonprofit organizations, etc. From this perspective, in order to further enhance these activities, efforts are being made to implement support for various measures, NPO activities, etc. to increase the freedom of choice of employment and housing and, especially for women, the elderly, etc., to eliminate factors obstructing free social activity. Furthermore, it is necessary to rebuild the significance of the local community, which is the main center of people's lives, in response to the information age.

(3) Regarding the banning of discriminatory and exclusionary practices in employment, in Japan Article 3 of the Labor Standards Law prohibits discriminatory treatment in wages, working hours, and other labor conditions for reason of a worker's nationality, creed, or social status. Also, Article 4 of the said law prohibits discriminatory treatment from men in wages for reason of a worker being a woman. Specific efforts are as follows:

(a) The Equal Employment Opportunity Law and other legislation were revised in June 1997 to ban discrimination against women at all stages of employment management, from job advertising and recruitment to mandatory retirement and dismissal. Consideration was given to the employment of female workers, including state assistance for positive action and the prevention of sexual harassment. Also, regulations on overtime work, holiday work, and late-night work by female workers were lifted. These changes went into full effect from April 1999. Efforts are being made to realize gender equality in the field of employment by, for example, spreading thorough information about the revised law and giving strict corrective guidance for violations of the law.

(b) Efforts are being made to ensure employment opportunities for elderly persons by (i) endeavoring to ensure jobs for the elderly through guidance and assistance to employers who, while carrying out the revision of skill development, wage and personnel systems, etc., raise their mandatory retirement age and introduce a continuous employment system; (ii) endeavoring to promote the reemployment of elderly persons, etc. through guidance and assistance to employers who extend assistance for the reemployment of middle-aged and elderly workers who have been unavoidably dismissed

and through the implementation of job introductions in public employment security offices, etc.; (iii) endeavoring to respond accurately to the diverse employment and work needs of the elderly through, for example, the promotion of self-employed businesses and short-hour jobs and expansion of the business of Employment Service Center for Older People.

(c) Under the basic principle of normalization and efforts to achieve the independence of disabled persons as workers, measures are being implemented relating to the employment of people with disabilities on the basis of the Law to Promote the Employment of Disabled Persons. Specifically, (i) employers are obligated to employ physically disabled or mentally disabled persons (in the case of private employers, disabled persons must account for at least 1.8% of the total full-time workforce); (ii) subsidies are paid through the management of disabled employment payments levied on employers who do not meet the legal employment ratio; and (iii) independence in working life is promoted through vocational rehabilitation. These and other measures are being adopted in a comprehensive manner in an effort to ensure employment stability.

The Disabled Employment Subcommittee comprises representatives of workers, representatives of employers, representatives of the disabled, and scholars. At present two physically disabled persons (a visually disabled person and a limb disabled person) are taking part in the subcommittee as representatives of the disabled.

(4) The objective of Japan's livelihood protection system is to guarantee a minimum standard of living for people who, even after utilizing their assets, work skills, etc., are in need and to promote their independence. In this system, private companies fulfill a role by, for example, operating facilities that needy people can enter and receive livelihood protection. Regarding types of protection, care assistance was newly established from April 1, 2000.

(5) For people who live outdoors on roads, in parks, on riverbanks, etc., Support Project for self-reliance of homeless people has been in operation since fiscal 2000 with the aim of providing these people with accommodation and food, offering medical examinations, livelihood counseling and guidance, etc., encouraging their desire to work, and supporting their independence through work by, for example, providing job counseling and introductions in close cooperation with public employment security offices so that these people as far as possible can lead independent lives in the local community.

8. Promote gender equality in human settlements development

(1) In Japan, a child-raising support system has been established so that people can raise children without anxiety in the local community and children themselves can grow up in a healthy manner. For this purpose, Japan is expanding such day-care services as infant day care and extended-time day care, the demand for which is expected to grow among users, and is endeavoring to construct day-care facilities and make kindergartens more flexible in order to respond to diverse day-care needs. Also, efforts are being made to establish and expand local child-raising support arrangements so that all child-raising households in the local community can receive child-raising counseling close at hand in day-care centers, etc. In addition, efforts are being made to construct local and safe

playgrounds and to promote the entrenchment of the child-care leave system and the shortening and greater flexibility of working hours so that parents can easily balance both child-raising and work.

(2) Regarding women, the elderly, etc., after endeavoring to respond to the various factors that obstruct their social activities, it is necessary to extend support for their free activities. In the Metropolitan Tokyo region in particular, there are many women who are not blessed with work opportunities because of child-raising, care, etc., despite the fact that they have high-level skills and experience and a desire to work. For this purpose, it is necessary to move forward with reforms of people's attitudes and the social structure so that men and women can participate in society from an equal standpoint. In particular, not only mothers but also the family and society as a whole must be aware of their responsibility to come together to raise the next generation.

In these circumstances, in order to reduce the time restrictions that arise in trying to balance social lives, such as a job, with family lives, such as child-raising, efforts are being made to promote the establishment of facilities to respond to diverse day-care needs and to promote the diversification of work patterns, such as "small office, home office" operators (SOHO) and teleworking, and tackle the various related problems that arise. Furthermore, efforts are being made to promote varied educational opportunities, including not only the acquisition of expert knowledge and skills but also work zeal enlightenment and entrepreneurial support in order to contribute to the realization of these diverse work patterns.

In addition, in order for women, who contribute in a major way to the vitalization of the agricultural, forestry, and fishery industries and rural, mountainous, and fishing village districts, to be active as important players in these areas, it is important to build an environment in which women can amply display their strengths. For this purpose, Article 26 of the Basic Law on Foodstuffs, Agriculture, and Rural Villages, which was enacted in July 1999, clearly advocates the promotion of women's participation. On the basis of this law, the government formulated the Guidelines for the Promotion of Joint Participation by Men and Women in Agricultural, Mountainous, and Rural Villages in November 1999 and is endeavoring to strengthen the formation of a society of joint participation by men and women through comprehensive support, efforts to develop measures, etc. Also, efforts are being made to promote the establishment of facilities to contribute to ensuring wage-earning work opportunities, etc. by reducing the burden of housework, including child-raising, on women; facilitating the participation of women in agricultural, forestry, and fishery management through the display of their skills; developing processed products, etc.

Furthermore, in order to assess the economic effects of housework, a study entitled "A Monetary Assessment of Unpaid Labor" was carried out from 1996 to 1998, and an estimate was made of the monetary value of unpaid labor in the household, such as housework, care and nursing, and child-raising.

Chapter 3 Environmental Management

9. Promote geographically balanced settlement structures

(1) In order to achieve a balanced housing structure, efforts are being made to promote a planned supply of residential land from a broad perspective on the basis of the Basic Guidelines Relating to Promotion of the Supply of Housing and Residential Land in Major Urban Areas. For this purpose, while endeavoring to achieve public-private cooperation, efforts are being made to promote residential land development in conjunction with railway construction; to promote prime residential land development in terms of greenery, scenery, and consideration for the elderly, etc.; to promote the conversion of agricultural land in urbanized areas to residential land in a planned manner; and to promote the utilization of fixed-term leases. In the regions, in order to promote the construction of settlement bases, efforts are being made to promote residential land development that contributes to the vitalization of the regions, while taking into account the individuality and diversity of the regions.

(2) Efforts have been made until now to solve the problems of large cities, such as rush-hour congestion, long commuting, and low housing standards. In order to increase the range of free choice regarding housing, efforts are being made to revitalize the living space by, for example, the supply of housing befitting residence in a large city center and constructing livelihood-related facilities and, taking into account the characteristics of each region, to promote the construction of a comfortable housing environment.

10. Manage supply and demand for water in an effective manner

The characteristics of tap water, Industrial water, and Agricultural water are as follows:

Although the used volume of tap water continues on an upward trend, the rate of increase has slowed down. The used volume of industrial water continues to increase, but because of a rise in the retrieval rate, the water supply remains almost level. The used volume of agricultural water is almost level.

The volume of water supplied in Japan amounts to 16.15 billion cubic meters a year in total, which is the equivalent of about 380 liters per capita per day. The price of water is about ¥30 per cubic meter at the minimum. In urban areas, where prices are high because of water supply shortages and the high level of water purification processing, the highest price is about 10 times that figure, or about ¥300 per cubic meter.

Also, in order to respond properly to new water demand, efforts have been made to promote water resource development, such as dams and embankments, in a planned manner.

In addition, especially with regard to regions that require water urgently as a consequence of industrial development, the increase of the urban population, etc., the Basic Plan for Water Resources Development has been formulated to ensure the supply of water, and water resources are being developed on the basis of this plan.

Furthermore, in the construction of Water resources development and management facilities, environmental assessment is conducted on the basis of the Environmental Impact Assessment Law, etc., various environmental preservation measures are implemented, and efforts are made to reduce the impact on the ecosystem.

From now on, for sustainable development in the twenty-first century, the building of a

healthy water cycle system is an important issue. For this purpose, it is necessary to realize a safe and pleasant life and sound production activities and to make efforts to achieve harmony between people's activities and the water cycle system, for example by ensuring water functions that contribute to environmental preservation.

11. Reduce urban pollution

Japan experienced serious environmental pollution as a result of industrial development and urban expansion in the 1960s. Environmental legislation was established in response to this situation, and efforts were made to implement specific measures and reduce urban environmental pollution through the setting of environmental standards. Although certain results were achieved, such as the reduction of sulfur oxides, the slowdown of land subsidence, and the reduction of water pollution, no fundamental solutions have been seen in such environmental problems as the urban traffic pollution problem, the problem of enclosed water areas, the waste problem, and the problems of soil and underground water pollution. In addition, several new problems have emerged, such as the emission of greenhouse gases caused by urban activities, the emission of dioxin gases, and the circulation of endocrine disrupters (so-called environmental hormones), so no end can be seen to countermeasures.

(1) Atmospheric pollution

Regarding nitrogen dioxide and suspended particulate matter, the achievement of environmental standards remains at a low level, especially in major urban areas.

As nitrogen oxide countermeasures, with regard to boilers and other soot and smoke emitting facilities that emit smoke, as stipulated in the Air Pollution Control Law, there are regulations on emissions by type of facility and scale (the concentration of nitrogen oxides in emitted gas should be 60 – 1,200 ppm), and regular revisions have been made to strengthen emission standards, add new regulations, introduce total volume restrictions, etc. Also, regarding nitrogen oxides emitted by automobiles, in addition to the gradual strengthening of simple regulations, the Law on Special Measures Relating to the Reduction of the Total Volume of Nitrogen Oxides Emitted by Automobiles in Specified Regions, Etc. (hereafter called the Automobile NOx Law) was enacted in 1992, and efforts have been made to reduce the amount of nitrogen oxides emitted by automobiles, especially in large urban areas.

Regarding suspended particulate matter, countermeasures have been adopted for particulate matter emitted from automobiles, and simple regulations have been gradually strengthened. Since the achievement of environmental standards for these substances remains low, however, efforts are being made to bolster regulations. For example, the strengthening of regulations on the exhaust gases of diesel vehicles has been brought forward from 2007 to 2005, and the sulfur content of light oil will be reduced from the current level of 500 ppm to 50 ppm by 2004. Efforts are also being made to promote comprehensive countermeasures for automobile exhaust gas, including revision of the Automobile NOx Law (adding particulate matter to the list of substances covered by the law, etc.). In addition, local governments are also formulating their own countermeasures. For example, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government has moved to prohibit the driving of

diesel vehicles.

Regarding spike tire powder in snowy and cold regions, since there was concern about not only deterioration of the living environment but also the impact on human health, the Studded Tires Regulation Law was promulgated in 1990, and in principle the use of spike tires was prohibited in designated regions.

Regarding sulfur oxides, various countermeasures have been adopted, such as the removal of sulfur from heavy oil and the installment of antisulfur devices for smoke, and a high achievement rate is being maintained for environmental standards.

Also, there is concern about the health impact of long-term exposure to harmful chemical substances. In January 1997, on the basis of the Air Pollution Control Law, benzene, trichloroethylene, and tetrachloroethylene were registered as designated substances (of harmful air pollution substances, those substances of which the emission and scattering must be urgently restrained in order to prevent damage to human health), and designated substance emission facilities were stipulated. In February of the same year designated substance control standard and environmental standards based on Article 16 of the Basic Environment Law were set.

Regarding dioxin gases, with the exception of coplanar PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl), these were added to the list of designated substances in August 1997, and designated substance emission facilities were stipulated. Furthermore, with regard to dioxin gases (including coplanar PCB), specified facilities subject to regulation were designated in December 1999 and environmental standards were set, also in December 1999, on the basis of the Law on Special Measures for Dioxin Countermeasures.

Regarding noise and vibration, in recent years the ratio of complaints about neighborhood noise, such late-night and other business noise, megaphone noise, and livelihood noise caused by automobiles, plants, construction work, airplanes, and railways, including the Shinkansen, has been on the rise. Various environmental standards have been set in response to this situation.

Regarding bad odors, complaints were on the rise, but then the number of complaints in fiscal 1999 declined a little from fiscal 1998. On the basis of the Bad Odor Prevention Law, Japan places regulations on specific bad odor substances and also makes efforts for the smooth enforcement of regulations on the bad odor index through the olfaction measuring method (the method of measuring bad odors using people's sense of smell). This olfactory measurement is conducted by inspectors who by law are certified through state qualifications.

In Japan, efforts are being made to implement continuous monitoring of precipitation, inland water, and the soil and vegetation system, to develop forecast models for various impacts, etc., and to improve comprehensive surveys and research on precipitation, air pollution substances, soil and vegetation, etc. in regions where there is said to be a relationship between acid rain and the degeneration of trees, through the Acid Deposition Survey PhaseI(fiscal 1983 – 87), the Acid Deposition Survey PhaseII (fiscal 1988 – 92), the Acid Deposition Survey PhaseIII(fiscal 1993 – 97), and the Acid Deposition Survey PhaseIV(from fiscal 1998). Studies are also being conducted on the analysis of catchment areas and the calculation of critical loads. Internationally, the East Asia Acid Rain Monitoring Network began full-scale operations in 2001.

(2) Water pollution

Regarding water quality, from the perspective of protecting human health, Environmental Quality Standards have been set for 26 categories substance (as of December 2000), and from the perspective of preserving the living environment, fixing multiple indicators have been set according to the purpose of use of the water. Various measures have been adopted with the aim of ensuring the strict observance of these standards. With regard to enclosed water areas, such as inland bays, inland seas, lakes, and reservoirs, which pose a major problem as an environmental burden in urban settlements, the problem is that environmental standards are not being achieved because cities are located on river basins, the pollution load is high, the polluted water easily accumulates remaining still, and purification is not making progress. For this reason, measures have been adopted for lakes and marshes through the Law Concerning Special Measures for Preservation of Lake Water Quality. Also, of the enclosed water areas, total pollutant load control on chemical oxygen demand (COD), nitrogen, and phosphorus are being implemented in Tokyo Bay, Ise Bay, and the Seto Inland Sea, which are surrounded by such large cities as Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka. In addition, one of the principal causes of water pollution in enclosed water areas is the discharge of effluents from domestic activities. Although local governments are making efforts to deal with this situation through comprehensive domestic effluents countermeasures based on the Water Pollution Control Law, the construction of public sewerage systems, and the installment of private sewerage system, little progress has been made. The revised Private Sewerage System Law will go into effect from April 1, 2001, as a result of which, when installing flush toilets with public sewerage system, at the same time people will be obligated to process miscellaneous waste water in the public sewerage system.

It is also important to ensure a sound water cycle. Bearing in mind the fact that water forms a cycle system in river basin units, Japan has taken note that various problems are occurring as a result of human activities, especially urbanization, has understood the water environment as the whole picture of water quality, water quantity, aquatic life, and waterside districts, and has declared a comprehensive approach toward the sound water environment of river basins as a whole, including also underground water. On the basis of discussions among related ministries and agencies, this concept has begun to be embodied into specific policies.

Furthermore, regarding water pollution caused by dioxins, water quality environmental standards and effluent standards have been set and specified facilities have been designated on the basis of the Law on Special Measures for Dioxin Countermeasures, which went into effect in January 2000.

(3) Soil pollution

Regarding soil pollution, from the perspective of recharging groundwater and purifying water quality, and also from the perspective of preserving the function of food production, Environmental Quality Standards have been set for a total of 25 substances (as of December 2000). These standards are used as yardsticks for use in determining whether soil pollution exists and for use when enacting remedial measures.

In recent years the number of so-called "urban" (non-agricultural) type soil pollution discovered has been rapidly increasing mainly due to urban redevelopment of sites such as those of former factories or research institutes. Many of these cases accompany with the contamination of groundwater by volatile organic compounds, such as trichloroethylene, or are pollution by such heavy metals as lead, arsenic, etc. For this reason, Surveys and Countermeasure Guidelines for Soil and Groundwater Contamination have been formulated and widely notified to local governments and businesses, etc., and support is being given to efforts toward measures for the preservation of the soil environment.

Regarding soil pollution caused by dioxins, efforts are being made to formulate necessary countermeasures on the basis of the Law Concerning Special Measures against Dioxins.

(4) Land subsidence

Land subsidence caused by the excessive pumping up of underground water in cities and surrounding areas was a serious problem in the 1960s, but then the situation eased thanks to regulations limiting the extraction of underground water, and both land subsidence areas and the degree of subsidence declined. However, once it has subsided, the level of land will not return, so much of the low land in such major cities as Tokyo, Nagoya, and Osaka lies below sea level and faces danger from high tides and floods.

(5) Waste disposal

Waste disposal in Japan is conducted on the basis of the Waste Disposal Law. Regarding the disposal of household garbage and human waste, municipalities (cities, towns, and villages) take responsibility. Prefectures (including Metropolitan Tokyo) provide necessary technical assistance to municipalities, and the state provides necessary technical and financial assistance to municipalities and prefectures. Regarding the disposal of industrial waste, etc., such as cinders, slime, and waste oil, which are produced as a result of business activities, it is stipulated that the businesses that produce the waste should take responsibility.

Looking at the discharge and disposal of waste in fiscal 1997, we see that the total amount of ordinary waste was 51.20 million tons. Disposal methods consisted of incineration (78%), direct landfill (9%), and smashing, sorting, and making compost (11%). The total amount of industrial waste was approximately 415 million tons. Disposal methods consisted of incineration and other forms of intermediate disposal (73%), direct reuse (19%), and direct landfill (8%).

Recently the situation surrounding waste disposal has become increasingly harsh. As a result of the diversification of lifestyles and changes in consumption attitudes, the amount of garbage discharged has increased sharply, and the types of garbage have become varied, too. Also, it is becoming more difficult year by year to ensure final disposal sites and other waste disposal facilities, so the situation surrounding waste processing has become extremely serious.

In these circumstances, with regard to container and packaging waste, which accounts for 60% of the total volume of ordinary waste, the Container and Package Recycling Law

was enacted in June 1995 to promote recycling through appropriate role sharing by consumers, municipalities, and businesses. Under this law, a mechanism has been incorporated into the social system whereby economic merits can be gained from the reduction of containers and packaging, and steps are being taken to greatly reduce the volume of waste, for example by restraining the use of excessive packaging, etc. and promoting a switch to recyclable materials.

Regarding the processing of household waste water, important issues are promotion of the hygienic processing of human waste (in fiscal 1997, the ratio of flush toilets using sewers and purification tanks was 78.9%, and the ratio of hygienic processing through facilities for scooped-up human waste was 96.0%) and of the processing of household miscellaneous waste water in order to preserve water quality. In particular, joint processing purification tanks, which can be installed in each household and used to process both human waste and miscellaneous waste water, are an extremely effective means of dealing with household waste water, especially in regions with scattered housing. Therefore, the state and local governments provide financial support for this purpose.

Also, in order to fundamentally improve the economic society and lifestyle of mass production, mass consumption, and mass waste, the Basic Law for Establishing the Recycling-based Society, which stipulates the basic framework for the comprehensive and planned promotion of waste disposal and recycling measures, was enacted in May 2000, and at the same time the Waste Disposal Law, the Law on Promotion of the Effective Use of Resources, the Food Recycling Law, the Building Recycling Law, and the Law on Promoting Green Purchasing, were integrated. Through the unified operation of these laws and the already enacted Container and Packaging Recycle Law and Household Electric Appliance Recycle Law, a situation will be realized in which, first, the discharge of waste, etc. will be restrained, and second, as far as possible discharged waste, etc. will be reused as a resource and finally waste that really cannot be used will be properly and thoroughly disposed of. Through this legislation, efforts will be made to implement effective waste disposal and recycling measures toward the formation of a cycle society in which the consumption of natural resources will be restrained and the load on the environment reduced.

12. Prevent disasters and rebuild settlements

The following disaster prevention and reconstruction measures have been adopted in Japan:

(a) Ensuring the earthquake resistance of facilities, etc. and relieving dense urban areas
Two types of earthquake-resistance standards have been established for public facilities and other facilities.

Standard 1: Serious functional disabilities will not occur in the event of an earthquake measurable on the Japanese scale striking once or twice during use.

Standard 2: There will be no danger to human life even in a stronger earthquake.

On the basis of these standards, renovations are being carried out in a planned manner on each type of public facility. And on the basis of the Five-year Plan for

Emergency Earthquake Disaster Prevention Projects, efforts are being made to promote the establishment of disaster-prevention facilities in areas where it is judged that serious damage might occur from an earthquake.

*The renovation of private buildings to make them earthquake resistant and the relief of dense urban areas are being further promoted.

(b) Implementation of practical disaster-prevention drills, disaster-prevention drills with citizen participation, and disaster-prevention drills organized by disaster-prevention organizations

*The implementation of comprehensive disaster-prevention drills with the participation of active units of the three Self-Defense Forces (ground, maritime, and air), the police, and the fire service is being promoted.

*The implementation of disaster-prevention drills with citizen participation, which promote a proper response by residents in the event of a disaster, and disaster-prevention drills organized by independent disaster-prevention organizations and disaster-prevention volunteers is being promoted.

(c) Establishment of environment toward volunteer activities to enable a fine-tuned response to individual resident needs

*The Law to Promote Specified Nonprofit Activities (NPO Law) has been enacted.

*Support is given to volunteer activities in normal times, such as the fostering of volunteer leaders.

(d) Upgrading of information-gathering system relating to the scale and state of damage so as to make a speedy initial response

*The system of gathering information by airplanes, etc. and sharing this information among related ministries and agencies is being strengthened.

*The Early Estimate System (EES) has been established to promptly estimate the scale of damage caused by earthquake.

*The Emergency Measures Support System (EMS) is being developed to formulate a plan for emergency countermeasures.

(e) Strengthening of rapid response system for the transportation of the injured and the emergency transportation of personnel and materials

*Helicopters and heliports for fire fighting and disaster prevention are being established, and core hospitals in the event of disaster are being designated.

*The Medical Transportation Action Program has been formulated to transport seriously injured persons outside the disaster area at the time of large-scale earthquake disaster in the southern Kanto region.

(f) Wide-area support system

*Support agreements have been concluded by all prefectures in Japan, and a wide-area support system has been established at the national level.

*In order to respond over a wide area and speedily to a large-scale disaster that occurs

in Japan, the police have promoted the formation of Inter-Prefectural Emergency Rescue Units in prefectural police forces throughout the country. And fire services have promoted the formation of emergency fire-fighting assistance units as a speedy support system by fire-prevention organizations throughout the country.

13. Promote effective and environmentally sound transportation systems

(1) In order to build an environment-friendly transportation system, it is necessary to restrain the emission of carbon dioxide in the transportation sector and, in the construction of basic facilities for transportation, etc., to make efforts to improve the living environment by, for example, preserving the natural environment, preventing air pollution by nitrogen oxides, suspended particulate matter, etc., and preventing noise. For this purpose, Japan is endeavoring to build a transportation system that strengthens linkage among the various means of transportation, places little burden on the environment as a whole, and makes use of the characteristics of each means of transportation, on the basic principle of expanding the use of means of transportation that have excellent fuel efficiency and place little burden on the environment, through energy conservation, the reduction of pollution, appropriate competition, and free choice by the user in each transportation sector.

Specifically, efforts are being made to promote transportation policy, such as road construction to contribute to the elimination and alleviation of congestion, the policy of transportation demand management (TDM) to facilitate the rationalization and standardization of automobile use, and promotion of the intelligent transport system (ITS); to popularize low-pollution vehicles, such as fuel-efficient cars and electric cars; to build an environment toward promotion of the safe and rational use of automobiles; and to promote the establishment and use of public means of transportation, such as railways and buses.

Also, efforts are being made to promote the efficiency of distribution by building joint collection and delivery systems, constructing temporary parking facilities, etc. for the disposal of goods, integrating roads and wide-area distribution centers, constructing harbors with terminals, etc. that can handle container ships, etc., and constructing facilities that can respond to complex and integrated transportation, such as the operation of freight trains on passenger routes. In addition, efforts are being made to promote a broad response, including promoting efforts by the people, such as environment-friendly driving methods, a change to walking or cycling instead of short-distance automobile use, etc.

Furthermore, especially in business core cities, etc., efforts are being made in the process of nurturing and construction to bring workplaces and homes closer together. In this task, efforts are being made to promote the construction and use of public means of transportation, including introduction of new transportation systems, so as not to invite an increase in automobile traffic and to promote TDM policies.

(2) In view of the fact that distribution plays an important role in supporting national life and industry, the government in April 1997 approved, in a cabinet decision, an outline of comprehensive measures that related ministries and agencies would cooperate in formulating (Comprehensive Distribution Policy Outline), in order to improve distribution

services, reduce distribution costs, tackle environmental problems relating to distribution, etc.

In accordance with the Comprehensive Distribution Policy Outline, the government is making efforts to implement a comprehensive distribution policy, to be fulfilled mainly by 2001, and has cited the following three goals as targets to be achieved:

(i) To provide the most convenient and attractive distribution services in the Asia-Pacific region.

(ii) To provide these distribution services at a cost level that does not impede industrial location competitiveness.

(iii) To respond to energy problems, environmental problems, transportation safety, etc. in distribution.

Also, the outline indicates policy efforts toward cross-sectional issues in the promotion of a comprehensive distribution policy and toward issues in the sectors of inner-city distribution, inter-regional distribution, and international distribution.

Furthermore, bearing in mind the necessity of implementing a comprehensive policy relating to distribution in an organically cooperative manner, efforts are being made to build a policy implementation setup through the cooperation of related ministries in order to develop measures and efforts through cooperation among related ministries and agencies, local governments, distribution businesses, and owners.

Bearing in mind the spirit of the Comprehensive Distribution Policy Outline, related ministries and agencies are cooperating in a comprehensive manner to improve the quality of distribution services by facilitating smoother road traffic in cities through TDM, the construction of ring roads, etc.; implement measures that contribute toward reducing the environmental burden; realize complex and integrated transportation, such as the construction of access roads to ports, railways, and airports and of wide-area distribution centers; promote measures that contribute toward reducing the environmental burden; etc.

In the implementation of these measures, the government has set the following figures as specific targets of efforts and, in cooperation with local governments and the private sector, is making the utmost efforts to realize these targets.

(a) Increase the loading ratio of trucks to a level of about 50% by the beginning of the twenty-first century.

(b) Improve the morning and evening speed of traffic in densely populated areas of the three major cities to 25 kph by the beginning of the twenty-first century.

(c) Increase the ratio of population living within a half-day return distance by land transportation to domestic trade terminals able to handle complex and integrated transportation to about 90% by the beginning of the twenty-first century.

(d) Regarding imported container freight transported by sea, to shorten the time required from entering a port to leaving the container yard from the current four or five days to about two days by fiscal 2001, and to reduce Japan's total export and import container land transportation costs by about 30% compared with if the present situation continued by the beginning of the twenty-first century.

(e) Increase the palletizable ratio from the present level of about 20% of the total to about 30% of the total by increasing the palletization ratio of palletizable freight from the

current level of about 70% to about 90% by fiscal 2001, etc.

(3) The problem of global warming caused by the increase of greenhouse gases such as CO₂ due to the increased consumption of fossil fuels has attracted worldwide attention. In the Kyoto Protocol, which was adopted at the third session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1997, Japan pledged to reduce its emission of greenhouse gases by 6% from 2008 to 2012 in comparison to 1990.

In the transport sector, CO₂ emissions account for about 20% of the national total, and about 90% of CO₂ emissions from transport comes from automobiles. As Japanese automobile ownership increases rapidly (about 74 million vehicles as of 1999), there is urgent need to adopt various measures, in particular, concerning how to deal with automobiles, from the perspective of global environmental problems and urban environmental problems. Further, in urban transport, as environmental problems arising from the automobile-centered transportation system become increasingly serious, it is necessary to positively adopt various policies for the shift from automobiles to the public transportation system, for the promotion of walking or cycling and for the efficiency of logistics by increasing the load ratio of trucks, in order to improve the urban environment.

14. Support mechanisms to prepare and implement local environmental plans and local Agenda 21 Initiatives

(1) The formulation and implementation of local environment plans

In Japan, the Basic Environment Law was enacted in 1993, and on the basis of this law the Basic Environment Plan was adopted by cabinet decision in 1994. Since then moves to establish basic environmental ordinances have been spreading among local governments also with the aim of promoting environmental administration from a comprehensive standpoint, and the formulation of comprehensive local environment plans based on these ordinances has been making progress.

The government also, after establishing a forum for the exchange of opinions and information among officials in charge of environmental plans, has been extending technical support for the formulation of comprehensive local environment plans and indicators. In addition, the government implements subsidies for the promotion of the Basic Environment Plan to support pioneering and creative projects by local governments to achieve the goals of the plan. Furthermore, in order to support the environmental administration of local governments through the supply of information, the government has been providing information on the state of formulation of environment plans by local governments, etc. on the Internet since June 1, 1999 (<<http://www.e-plan.eic.or.jp>> Japanese only).

(2) Formulation of Local Agenda 21 action plans

In the Agenda 21 action plan agreed at the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, Chapter 7 cites the promotion of sustainable human settlements, and Chapter 28 on local governments calls for the strengthened role of local governments relating to sustainable development and the formulation of Local Agenda 21 action plans. For this purpose, in order to support efforts in local governments toward the formulation of

Local Agenda 21 action plans, the government is compiling Guidelines for Local Agenda 21 Formulation. Also, workshops will be held in Thailand and South Korea in 2001 for the popularization of Local Agenda 21 plans.

Chapter 4 Economic Development

15. Strengthen small and micro-enterprises, particularly those developed by women

Recently the number of women in Japan aiming to become entrepreneurs is increasing, but these women have a lack of the necessary knowledge and experience compared with men, so they face quite a few difficulties. Therefore, in the Josei to Shigoto no Miraikan (Hall of the Future for Women and Work), which opened in January 2000 as a facility for the comprehensive development of projects to positively support women at work, various forms of support are provided for women who aspire to become entrepreneurs, such as the holding of entrepreneur seminars, business startup counseling by experts, entrepreneur exchange gatherings, etc., and entrepreneur support programs are implemented, such as the supply of information on support organizations.

Also, regarding such efforts as vocational training by small and medium-sized companies, etc., substantial subsidies are provided to employers who conducted vocational training in a planned manner to cover operating, tuition, and other expenses.

Furthermore, with the aim of building a vibrant economic society, a system of low-interest loans has been established for women and elderly entrepreneurs so as to actively promote business startups by a variety of people, including women and elderly persons. In addition, the focus in this system is placed on the production activity aspect and employment creation aspect of women and the elderly, so even women and the elderly are able to easily receive financial support through special exemption of the collateral requirement.

16. Encourage public-private sector partnerships and stimulate productive employment opportunities

(1) Promotion of public-private partnership

In order to promote the public-private partnership in Japan, the Law Regarding to Promote Provision of Public Facilities and Other Related Services by Use of Private Capital and Other Resources (PFI Law) was enacted in July 1999 and put into force in September of that year. This law aims to build efficient and effective social capital by adopting measures, etc. to promote the construction, maintenance, and management of public facilities, etc. utilizing private-sector funds, management know-how, and technical skills. At present Implementation Outline, which are the first step in private finance initiative (PFI) projects, are being compiled and publicized in more than 10 local governments, so PFI projects are making headway.

(2) Stimulus of job opportunities

In Japan, the Equal Employment Opportunity Law was revised in June 1997, and discrimination against women was prohibited in job advertising and recruitment. Also, discriminatory treatment of men and women with regard to wages is prohibited by Article 4

of the Labor Standards Law. From now on too, efforts will be made to ensure thorough observance of the law.

Regarding efforts relating to at-home work, etc., efforts are being made to popularize teleworking in companies under rational labor management by establishing the Telework Counseling Experience Center, supplying forums for counseling related to the introduction of teleworking, etc.

Furthermore, efforts are being made to expand the employment and work opportunities of disabled persons by (i) applying the employment ratio system to disabled persons who have employment relations and engage in at-home work, etc.; (ii) providing subsidies in cases where employers assign or commission persons to provide necessary guidance and assistance to seriously disabled persons who work at home, etc.; (iii) conducting practical research relating to the employment of seriously disabled persons through the utilization of satellite offices, compiling a manual on the employment management of disabled persons who work at home, etc.

In addition, regarding at-home work, in which many women are engaged, since many problems arise concerning contracts, such as the obscurity of contract conditions, for its healthy development the Guidelines for the Rational Implementation of At-Home Work were compiled in June 2000 as the minimum rules that employers who request at-home work should observe when concluding contracts, and efforts are being made toward making them widely known and understood.

In order to improve the working conditions and ensure the livelihood stability of persons who engage in home work, in which only the person himself/herself and members of his or her family living together engage in the manufacture, processing, etc. of products using goods received from the consignor as parts or materials, various measures are being adopted for these people on the basis of the Home Work Labor Law, such as the issue of home work labor handbooks, decisions on a minimum wage, ensuring the payment of wages, and ensuring health and safety. Also, enlightenment activities are being conducted to prevent damage from so-called bogus home work.

Chapter 5 Governance

17. Promote decentralization and strengthen local authorities

In Japan, structural reforms are being called for in a wide range of fields, and various reforms are progressing in such areas as electoral system reform, deregulation, and reorganization of the central government apparatus. Amid a situation in which the centralized administrative system is suffering from system fatigue and is unable to respond to the new issues of the times, such as the realization of richly individualistic regional communities, the promotion of decentralization has become an important issue.

In 1995 the government stipulated the principle of decentralization and the mechanism for its promotion and enacted the Decentralization Promotion Law, which advocates the promotion of decentralization in a comprehensive and planned manner.

Also, in May 1998 the government adopted the Decentralization Promotion Plan in a cabinet decision, and after that, regarding items that were cited in this plan as requiring legislative revision, the Comprehensive Law on Decentralization, consisting of 475

revisions to related legislation, was enacted in the ordinary session of the Diet in 1999.

These revisions through the decentralization omnibus law included, first of all, in the Local Autonomy Law, the stipulation that local governments should play a broad role in the independent and comprehensive implementation of administration at the community level. At the same time, it was stated clearly that the central government should give priority to work that only the central government can carry out, such as diplomacy, defense, and the setting of national minimum standards, and adopt a principle of subsidiarity, by which administration that is close to the daily lives of residents should be left to the local government.

Furthermore, regarding the central government's general control over local governments, a fundamental revision was carried out from the perspective of respect for the independence of local governments and various measures were adopted, such as keeping central government control to the minimum necessary both quantitatively and qualitatively, stipulating procedural rules for control, and strengthening the transparency of control. Also, it was decided to establish a neutral organization to handle disputes between the central government and local governments.

In addition, it was decided to take measures to newly transfer authorities of the central government to prefectures and authorities of prefectures to municipalities, to expand measures for the promotion of municipal mergers, to activate local government assemblies, etc.

In response to these reforms, it is hoped that from now on local governments, in opening up a new age, will take advantage of their own individuality and positively develop policies in a spirit of self-decision and self-responsibility.

18. Encourage and support Participation and civic engagement

(1) NPO activities

In Japan, the Law on the Promotion of Specified Nonprofit Activities (NPO Law) was enacted in 1998 with the aim of supporting the activities of nonprofit organizations (NPOs). In local community development also, much is expected of the role of NPOs as parent organizations for the participation of residents as well as the administration. NPO activities relating to local community development cover a wide range, including safety patrols and other anticrime activities, projects for the activation of central urban districts, and projects to realize symbiosis with the environment.

Furthermore, in response to the increasing awareness of residents in the need for participation in local community development, it is important for local governments to play a central role in establishing systems for resident participation in community development and consensus-making. In particular, regarding land use and base construction for community development, it is necessary for the central government and local governments to establish a setup for widely soliciting the opinions of residents from the planning stage. At such times, in order to enable the responsible participation of residents, efforts are being made to build a mechanism for supplying information on such issues as basic investment effects, necessary funds and burdens, impact on the environment, the degree of disaster danger in the community, etc.

(2) Revision of the Code of Civil Procedure

A new Code of Civil Procedure was enacted in June 1996 and went into effect from January 1, 1998.

In the new Code of Civil Procedure, efforts have been made to expand the Appointed party system. (The Appointed party system is a system in which, in lawsuits involving multiple parties, representatives (Appointed Parties) are selected from the multiple parties with common interests and granted the right to conduct litigation on their behalf. These representatives (Appointed Parties) then conduct litigation as the party concerned acting on behalf of all the Appointees.)

Under the old code, Appointed parties were allowed to conduct litigation only when (a) the persons with common interests choose an Appointed party before filing a suit and the Appointed party files the suit or the suit is filed against the Appointed party, or (b) after pendency of a suit, the persons who are parties in that suit with common interests choose an Appointed party and withdraw from the suit. Under the new code, it has further become possible for a person who is not a party concerned in a pending suit to choose parties in the suit as Appointed parties. As a result, for example, when multiple consumers are the victims of a fraudulent business, etc., by using an Appointed party and granting the right to conduct litigation to some representatives (Appointed Parties) beforehand, it has become possible to litigate a compensation claim. Also, when some parties have already filed a compensation suit, it has become possible to litigate by granting these parties the right to conduct litigation. So opportunities to receive legal aid have been widened.

19. Ensure transparent, accountable, and efficient governance of towns, cities and metropolitan areas

In Japan, the Administrative Procedure Law was put into effect on October 1, 1994, with the aim of endeavoring to ensure fairness, improve transparency, and protect the rights and interests of citizens in administrative management. Under this law, not only the central government but also local governments are required to make efforts to adopt necessary measures, such as the establishment of administrative procedure ordinances.

The ratio of municipalities that had established administrative procedure ordinances, etc. stood at only 10% of the total as of April 1, 1996, but this figure then rose to 74% at the end of March 1997 and 98% at the end of March 2000, meaning that almost all local governments now have established ordinances, etc.

Regarding information disclosure, at the central government level the Information Disclosure Law was enacted in 1999 and will be put into effect from April 2001. Many local governments also have already established information disclosure ordinances, etc. with the aim of disclosing information and official documents relating to administrative management, and moves toward the establishment of such ordinances have become even more lively in recent years. The ratio of municipalities that have established information disclosure ordinances, etc. rose from 9% of the total in 1996 to 42% of the total in 2000, which means that almost half of local governments are implementing information disclosure on the basis of ordinances, etc.

Chapter 6 International Cooperation

20. Enhance international cooperation and partnerships

As principles to provide Official Development Assistance (ODA), Japan states in its ODA Charter that, in addition to making efforts to pursue environmental conservation and development in tandem, it pays full attention to efforts for promoting democratization and the situation regarding the securing of basic human rights and freedom in developing countries, and it makes clear its position of emphasizing the environment and international peace from the perspective of maintaining and strengthening international peace and stability.

To reduce poverty and promote social development in developing countries, Japan provides support in the areas of basic education, health and medical care, and water supply and the others, and supports social infrastructure, such as the construction and improvement of roads, waterworks, and telecommunication networks through ODA.

In technical cooperation, Japan has promoted human resource development, through such means as transferring Japanese technologies and know-how through dispatching Japanese experts and receiving trainees from developing countries.

Also, in response to such challenges as poverty, environmental degradation, infectious diseases, the outflow of refugees, children in conflicts, and anti-personnel landmines, which are becoming increasingly serious against the background of the advance of globalization and the frequent outbreak of regional conflicts in recent years, Japan has positioned the concept of Human Security, as one of the pillars in its foreign policy to promote cooperation among international organizations, national governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), etc., particularly emphasizing the perspective of individual human beings. Japan established the Trust Fund for Human Security in the United Nations in March 1999 and is making efforts toward a new phase of development cooperation.

Also, Japan has announced an initiative called the Partnership for Democratic Development (PDD), out of recognition that promoting good governance is essential for effective promotion of stability and urban development in developing countries, and is providing cooperation for the protection and promotion of democratization and human rights, centered on the establishment of legal and judicial systems through technical cooperation and the training of judicial, administrative, and police personnel, as well as extending support through technical and financial cooperation for the establishment of electoral systems and the implementation of elections.

In order to achieve goals in the wide range of fields cited in the Habitat Agenda, Japan places importance on cooperation with NGOs engaged in well-tuned direct assistance for the people in developing countries and provides support for NGO development cooperation activities through the NGO Subsidy Framework and the Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Projects.

In addition, the local government and local companies have been supporting, the activities of the Asia-Pacific office of the United Nations Center for Human Settlements (Habitat), which opened in Fukuoka in August 1997. In cooperation with that center, they collect, analyze, and disseminate information relating to human settlements.

Furthermore, as an effort of the Asia-Pacific region, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific 2000, held in Kitakyushu in September 2000 adopted the Kitakyushu Initiative. This initiative aims to improve the urban environment in the Asia-Pacific region by sharing and replicating on the successful experience of Kitakyushu in overcoming the environmental pollution. As the conference's host country, Japan will actively implement this initiative and make efforts to improve the urban environment in this region.

Chapter 7 Future Action and Initiative

(1) Shelter development

As well as promotion of the Eighth Five-year Plan for Housing Construction, based on the pillars of maintaining and managing a good quality housing stock that can be used for a long time and circulating it in the market, efforts are being made to utilize the housing tax system, build highly durable housing, promote reform, and energize the secondhand and rental housing markets.

Also, through cooperation between housing policy and major urban policy and the setting of common targets, etc., efforts are being made to develop measures in a concentrated manner and to make commuting times shorter and more comfortable.

Furthermore, in order to build pleasant and attractive urban spaces, efforts are being made to promote community development in which people can get around by walking, to promote the integrated implementation of community development and riverside construction, to construct waterside space through the utilization of sewer facilities and processed water, to construct attractive waterfronts where citizens can come into contact with nature, such as the sea and rivers, close at hand, to resuscitate the natural environment, such as tidelands, to cultivate a richly verdant living environment through the preservation and creation of local greenery, to blend public facilities with the surrounding environment, to increase roadside trees, to lay cables underground, to build street lights, etc.

(2) Sustainable urban development

Efforts are being made to promote regional construction so as to realize a sustainable society that puts emphasis on reducing the environmental burden, restoring the natural cycle, and improving the health and comfort of individuals and to create a lifestyle befitting this objective. For this purpose, it is necessary to make efforts in the implementation of projects relating to regional construction to cooperate with various plans relating to environmental preservation, to appropriately implement environmental impact assessments, etc., and to adopt various measures to preserve and create water and greenery (harmony of urban, agricultural, and natural land use; preservation and resuscitation of the natural environment; preservation and creation of green belts; preservation and restoration of the water environment and water cycle) and to reduce the environmental burden (energy conservation, etc.; formation of a transport system that places little burden on the environment; resource cycle and recycling).

(3) Capacity building and institutional development

In the three main metropolitan regions (the National Capital Region, Kinki, and Chubu regions), the National Capital Region Development Plan, the Kinki Region Construction Plan and the Chubu Region Construction Plan will be formulated relating to medium-term development construction in response to newly compiled basic plans for the three regions. Also, in response to changes in economic and social conditions in recent years, such as the declining birthrate and aging of the population, studies will be conducted on major urban policy in the twenty-first century.

(4) International cooperation

From now on also, through its ODA, Japan will provide support centered on the fields of basic education, health and medical care, and water supply to reduce poverty and promote social development in developing countries and also will extend support for social infrastructure in those countries, such as the building of roads and waterworks. Also, efforts will be made to promote human resource development, such as the transmission of Japanese technology and know-how, etc. through the dispatch of experts to developing countries and the acceptance of trainees from developing countries.

Also, in response to such problems as poverty, environmental degradation, infectious diseases, the outflow of refugees, children in conflicts, and anti-personnel landmines, which are becoming increasingly serious against the background of the advance of globalization and the frequent outbreak of regional conflicts in recent years, Japan has positioned the concept of Human Security, which places the focus on the individual and calls for the strengthening of cooperation among international organizations, national governments, NGOs, etc., as one of the pillars in its foreign policy. Japan established the Trust Fund for Human Security in the United Nations in March 1999 and is making efforts toward a new phase of development cooperation.