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OECD Public Governance Ministerial Meeting
Helsinki, Finland – 28 October 2015

(Introduction)

The Chair, OECD members. I am pleased to attend this meeting and to serve as a vice chair for the first time. In this role I will continue Japan's mission to faithfully contribute to the development of the OECD and the world economy.

We are now making strong progress towards the future. 2020 will be the year of the Olympics and Paralympics in Tokyo. During this momentous event we will build on previous Olympics experiences and aim to achieve our own 'personal best'. The recent success of Japan's national rugby team has encouraged and inspired the Japanese people. We will bring their spirit of tenacity and determination as we prepare to host the 2019 Rugby World Cup.

The theme of this meeting is 'inclusive growth'. In Japan, regional disparities in economic growth are opportunity for greater inclusiveness. We believe regional revitalization is critical for our prosperity and we are now tackling for economic recovery of each region. We are promoting new initiatives to allow people to work where and when they choose, for example using ICT to facilitate satellite offices and telework. Inclusiveness means building societies in which every citizen can actively participate and contribute, regardless of age, gender, region or other differences. Promoting the dynamic engagement of all of Japan's citizens is the most important issue for the Abe administration.

Japan is becoming an aging society, with one in four people now aged 65 or over. Many countries are now facing similar challenges in terms of aging population. Japan offers solutions to this challenge. The average lifespan for men in Japan is now over 80. Ours is a country of health and longevity, and our aging society need not be an obstacle to innovation and dynamism. For example, this year, the the Nobel Prize for Medicine was awarded to Japan's Satoshi Omura, aged 80. Our continuing ability to innovate gives us confidence and a sense of pride in Japan's future. Japan hopes to contribute to the world, as the first country to experience these significant challenges.



(Regulatory Reform)

Regulatory reform is indispensable for inclusive growth. Speaking of Abenomics, regulatory reform is considered as one of the most important elements. Working with organizations and experts, such as the Regulatory Reform Council, which supervise the regulatory process, we have tackled long-standing challenges through bold reforms, including an overhaul of the agricultural, energy and medical sectors to reduce the power of previously strong vested interests.

(My Number system)

Last month, the 2015 E-leaders meeting took place in Tokyo. We were honored to welcome Deputy Secretary-General Kiviniemi. At the end of the meeting, we issued the E-leaders Tokyo Statement on “fostering a data-driven public sector”. Data is a critical tool to help government implement policies based on the public sector’s and individual citizens’ needs.

Working in cooperation with the private sector, our data-driven public sector facilitates a closer understanding of what people need and when. However, allowing private organizations access to data can entail risk. We shared our recognition and concern over this issue with participating nations during the meeting.

Japan is now introducing the Social Security and Tax Number system (nicknamed as “My Number”). We continue to make progress in utilizing ICT in order to enhance public sector efficiency, improve convenience and realize a more impartial administration.

As the relevant Minister, I am determined to work on latent security risks with a view to reliably implementing this project and putting minds at ease.

Furthermore, Japan re-examined the law with regards to the use of personal data gathered by private firms. Here, it is important to point out that Japan has an independent supervisory authority, named the “Personal Information Protection Commission”, which oversees operations and ensures the protection of personal information.



(ICT)

I believe Data in the public sector can resolve global issue and contribute to inclusive growth.

Let's look at an example.

Here in Finland, it is of course a country which lies in the Arctic Circle. However, through the effects of Global climate change, recently this North Pole region is undergoing rapid change in its environment.

Under these regional circumstances, Japan's National Institute for Communications and Technology (NICT) is already using Big Data applications. NICT has established North Pole radar observation equipment that observes and analyzes every variety of observable data on geomagnetic space environment in this region. It then uses this information to predict the communications status of satellite communications frequencies used in Arctic Ocean ship routes.

(Closing)

Finland is a country that has a proven track record of overcoming difficulties, and is continuing to grow vigorously. Finland is a model in the field of education, women's empowerment and ICT. Perhaps one secret of Finland's success is its tenaciousness, or "SISU".

I believe Japan and all of us should keep up with its Finnish counterparts. I hope that today we deepen our discussion of how to build sustainable, smart and inclusive societies in which all citizens can be dynamically engaged.

Thank you very much for your attention.