**UNESCO**

**Country: Japan**

**Delegate: Emily Yu**

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### Topic 1: Governance and its Effects on Education

Japan believes that education is a necessary human right, which is of great importance for constructing a more accepting and modern society. In order to be effective, education must be provided for a lifelong basis and with a long-term perspective[[1]](#footnote-1). However, the rights of education of over 124 million children were interrupted by various economic, cultural, or security reasons in 2013[[2]](#footnote-2). Japan’s mission is to create an international society where children can be educated without any fear or threat, in particular to girls, areas of conflict, and to those in poverty[[3]](#footnote-3).

Many countries which have yet to recognize the importance of gender equality in educational opportunity are preventing over 31 million girls of primary school age and 32 million girls of lower secondary age from achieving as much as their male counterparts[[4]](#footnote-4). Japan has focused notably on providing education for girls by building middle schools for girls in Tanzania, where early marriage and pregnancy prevent the completion of their education, as well as providing assistance in establishing girls’ dormitories for middle and high schools in Nepal and Malawi. Japan continuously moves towards a goal of improving the global completion rate of middle and high school for female students[[5]](#footnote-5).

Humanitarian assistance for refugees and internally displaced persons is an important pillar of Japan’s international contributions[[6]](#footnote-6). Conflict often deprives children of the time and environment needed for healthy development, which as a result, often causes trauma and severe damage of their mental health and well-being. In this context, Japan provides active support through United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), contributing over six million dollars since 2013 for the reintegration of child soldiers and the protection and empowerment of children in armed conflict throughout Africa, the Middle East, and Asia[[7]](#footnote-7).

Japan would like to commend the progress made by the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary General for Children and Armed Conflict, such as the release of more than 115 000 child soldiers from militaries and armed groups. However, the challenge of releasing child soldiers arises in the continuous international effort needed in their rehabilitation and encouraging governments to condemn the usage of child soldiers[[8]](#footnote-8). In addition, Japan intends to continue seeking solutions by maintaining close cooperation with relevant international organizations and NGOs, and extending support to Japanese NGOs engaged in humanitarian assistance[[9]](#footnote-9). Since December 9th of 2003, Japan has been a signatory of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), a recognized international legal instrument aiming to prevent and remove corruption[[10]](#footnote-10). Furthermore, in 2000, Japan enacted the Law on the Promotion of Human Rights Education and Human Rights Awareness-Raising (LPHREA), to direct national and local governments in recognizing issues of education for those facing discrimination and prejudice[[11]](#footnote-11).

The effects of poverty lead to lifelong struggles to pursue a greater range of job opportunities and to break the cycle of poverty[[12]](#footnote-12). In recent years, Japan has additionally been faced with the social issue of children suffering from relative poverty. In response, a national policy designed to combat child poverty was instituted in August 2014, utilizing educational support, job assistance for guardians, and continued research to undermine the roots of child poverty. Japan encourages governments to implement sufficient administrative services for families in need and comprehensive support such as employment and childcare assistance, in order to provide every child with an education[[13]](#footnote-13).

In this era of globalization and diversification, education is pertinent in fostering understanding among different people and cultures, thereby advancing international peace and cooperation. Japan has led a strong commitment to promote the education of children through cooperation with other states and civil society.

### Topic 2: Preservation of World Heritage Sites

World heritage sites are a symbol of historic cultural heritage, which promote increased interest in national culture. Through this, foster national pride can be fostered and business encouraged through tourism. Despite the benefits, many developing nations struggle with securing the necessary budget for appropriate preservation and renovation, as some heritage sites are not suitably preserved for tourism and future conservation. Like Japan’s Official Development Assistance White Paper 2008 stated: “As cultural heritage is indispensable for local communities as well as the whole international community, the matter should be regarded as an issue for the world.”[[14]](#footnote-14)

Japan has been a major financial contributor to the committee by creating two Funds-in-Trust which preserve tangible cultural heritage and promote the national cultural recognition of heritage sites. It aims to preserve and restore monuments, sites, and archeological remains of historical or artistic value. In developing countries, Japan recognizes that numerous sites threaten to vanish or deteriorate irreversibly due to the lack of means and human resources to ensure their restoration and maintenance. Japan encourages the cooperation of all nations in league with UENSCO to contribute to financial support for assistance in restoration, and organizing training workshops focused on transferring artifacts in areas of danger and knowledge of maintenance[[15]](#footnote-15).

Japan has played a large economic role by contributing to the preservation of 44 world heritage sites, namely the preservation of the archaeological site of Angkor in Cambodia and the conservation of the Bamiyan Site in Afghanistan[[16]](#footnote-16). Its economic grants have been given through Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation of the World Cultural Heritage, created in 1989 and one of the few financial aids specifically aimed at global cultural maintenance. Its total contributions amounted to over $50 million US by 2004. In addition to preserving and renovating cultural heritable, the fund is involved in arranging necessary experts and equipment, preliminary investigations, and human resources development[[17]](#footnote-17). Furthermore, Japan has set up the Japan Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation and Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage within UNESCO to support and promote global oral heritage and traditions, finance concrete preservation and promotion projects aimed at creating inventories, create audio-visual documents, organize workshops and shows for the public, research seminars, and more. Since 2008, Japan has contributed $12.57 million US to this fund[[18]](#footnote-18).

Enjoying a rich historical and religious heritage, Japan has long been aware of the importance to protect natural and cultural heritage. It has made various efforts for cultural promotion and historic sties preservation in developing countries by utilizing their Funds-In-Trust for the Preservation of World Cultural Heritage as well as for the Preservation and Promotion of the Intangible Cultural Heritage. With the cooperation of UNESCO, Japan emphasizes further international financial contribution and focus on assisting developing nations knowledge to support global heritage sites.

### Topic 3: Supporting and Accomplishing Education 2030

Acting as the vice-chair of the Drafting Group for the Incheon Declaration for Education 2030, Japan fully supports its goal in improving education for all individuals by mobilizing all countries and partners around the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on education[[19]](#footnote-19). It requests UNESCO to play a larger leading role, with clear priorities, in coordinating all stakeholders to achieve Education 2030[[20]](#footnote-20).

Noting that country-ownership is central to achieving the outlined goals in Education 2030 with full respect for diverse country context and priorities, Japan recognizes that the 4-6% benchmark of Gross Domestic Product or 15-20% of total public expenditure on education is only an “expression of the aspiration of all participants in this meeting rather than of any international target”, as stated by Kuni Sato, a representative of Japan in UNESCO. As a result, more focus on reshaping local and national sectors in order for all 184 UNESCO member states to meet this goal is to be a focus of Japan[[21]](#footnote-21).

With the adoption of the adoption of this agenda, Japan has announced its new strategy on education cooperation, “Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth”. Serving as a foundation to establish mechanisms in maintaining resilient education systems, it aims to support efforts in the education sector through experiences and knowledge with a range of partners from civil society and the private sector[[22]](#footnote-22). Japan urges all other member states to follow its role in implementing their own policies to promote Education 2030 or through decentralizing education functions to more local levels, a concept promoted by Koichiro Matsuura, the Director-General of UNESCO from 1999 to 2005[[23]](#footnote-23).

Japan reiterates the committee’s determination to tackle the implementation of the Incheon Declaration in Education 2030, and firmly believes that achieving the goals of Education for Sustainable Development will play a major role in setting the direction of global education for the coming 15 years. We expect all countries to recognize that education is essential for the success of the Sustainable Development Goals and Education 2030 should be promoted to its utmost to improve global education and lifelong learning.

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