

## **Delegation from Japan**

### ***Position Paper for the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women***

The topics on the agenda of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) are Eliminating Child, Early, and Forced Marriage by 2030 and Supporting the Involvement of Women in Governance and Decision-Making. Japan is looking forward to coalescing with the fellow Member States in addressing these matters at the upcoming conference.

#### **I. Eliminating Child, Early, and Forced Marriage by 2030**

UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet warns that “Worldwide, women and girls continue to suffer violence inside and outside of their homes, often at the hands of intimate partners or persons they think they can trust. Violence against women and girls cuts across boundaries of age, race, culture, wealth and geography. It takes place in peacetime and during conflicts and crises”. Having a say in whom you spend your life with is part of Article 16 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) which shouldn’t be taken for granted. Even today millions of children are robbed of their rights and forced to endure this violation. One in every five girls is being married off before they reach the age of majority. Japan strongly reprobates all forms of violence against women and girls. With deep concern regarding the continuous disregard of the UDHR which hinders the full development of potential and bars them from taking their rightful place in society as equals to boys and men.

Japan pledges their support to UN Women in order to eliminate Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (CEFM) by 2030. Japan notes the importance to address and eradicate the harmful practice of CEFM in order to be able to tackle various goals set in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Moreover, important have been the major contributions made by civil society, like women’s and community-based organizations as well as feminist groups and human rights defenders. These organizations have been and still are promoting awareness of CEFM and continuous help victims through empowering them as well as providing them with a way out of their unhealthy home lives. Victims of CEFM not only have to deal with physical violence but often as well with oppression, harassment and intimidation.

Japan urges all member states to develop and implement educational programs in order to raise awareness of the destructive practice of CEFM and prevent the emergence of a new generation of abusers. These courses should be matched to the capabilities of the age groups that are being educated in order to convey the concepts of consent as well as the respect of boundaries and opinions, and a sense of unacceptable behaviour in regard to the interaction with the other sex. Japan also calls upon all States to take immediate and effective action to respond to all infractions of the UDHR. It is important to show a zero-tolerance-policy in order to eliminate this violation once and for all. In this case procedures have to be put in place to effectively investigate, stop, persecute and prosecute infractions. Lastly all member states should make a public stand in order to convey the importance of condemning this malicious treatment of the innocent.

#### **II. Supporting the Involvement of Women in Governance and Decision-Making**

The equal, full and effective participation of both women and men is one of the essential factors for a healthy society. Japan has always been recognizing and promoting the role females occupy in their communities and professional lives. 74% of all Japanese women between the ages of 25 and 64 are part of the workforce. While it is not yet satisfactory enough Japan has already overtaken countries like the USA in terms of the integration of females. The country is proud to announce that in the last 6 years 2.9 Million Women joined the workforce. Japan’s goal is to provide women the chance to get into higher leadership positions through provision of support and educational training.

With Japan’s goal of building a society in which women shine firmly in mind the country has been striving for great successes not only nationally but internationally. Through close cooperation between civil societies and various Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) Japan has been empowering girls and women across borders. Another instance to further the valuable contributions women make, Japan has also initiated programs like the World Assembly for Women (WAW!) which celebrated its 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday earlier this year. Through a combination of speeches by role models and world leaders alike as well as

practical workshops women are being provided an educational experience on their possibilities to reach their full potential.

Japan stresses the importance of having women in Governance and Decision-Making positions. Therefore, Japan recommends the international community and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to provide incentives in order to strengthen the importance with which countries view the topic. The desired results would be not only a stronger implementation of gender equality policies but also specific training and agendas supporting women. In this regard the member states should reinforce each other through the exchange of professionals to provide the required knowledge and skillsets for these educational programs. This will additionally add a global perspective and therefore provide advantages to these women. Other considerations should find ways to lighten the burden women carry in their everyday lives. It is a worldwide occurrence that women are the ones who mostly take care of children. Consequently, the necessity of childcare programs and capacity arises. Only if women are not held back anymore, they will be free to pursue careers of their own. Japan recommends the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to conduct studies on how to effectively structure and implement these childcare programs regarding the member states current situation and specific needs. Furthermore, Japan strongly believes in providing women the chance to further strive to educate themselves while on childcare leave. In today's technical and automated world, it is easy to lose touch with all the changes that can happen in a single year. Thus, Japan advocates the provision of "back-to-work" courses women can take to prepare for their return into the working world. Lastly, to track the progress all member states make Japan wants to encourage Status on Women (CSW) as well as UN Women to continue their monitoring and lobbying regarding the progress of equality.