

**High-Level Education Event**  
**Statement by Government of Japan**

Brussels, May 2, 2007

Excellencies,  
Chairperson Mr. Michel  
Distinguished Heads of the delegations  
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to emphasize how important this Forum is held in 2007 at the mid-point of the schedule towards the EFA goals. I commend the valuable initiatives taken by EC, UK and the World Bank in playing host to this event.

Based on our own experience, Japan values education as a fundamental of nation-building and prioritizes education in our ODA. Japan's ODA in education amounted to 4.8 billion US dollars for the period of 2000-2005, which made Japan the second largest contributor in education aid. Japan announced the Basic Education for Growth Initiative (BEGIN) on the occasion of the Kananaskis Summit in 2002, which identifies the priority areas of the Japan's education support as ensuring broader access, improving quality and enhancing management of education.

Examples of our endeavors in ensuring access include the combination of construction of school buildings and promotion of active participation of community residents including parents from its planning stage. Japan supports teacher training in 26 countries with a particular focus on science and mathematics to improve the quality of education. We also support in enhancing management by providing technical assistance in the development of education policies and local education planning. Recognizing the urgent needs in providing education opportunities for the adult illiterates, whose number amounts to one in five worldwide, Japan supports literacy education as well.

Japan strengthens its assistance through the Fast Track Initiative. We have been providing bilateral ODA as well as assistance through international organizations such as UNESCO, the leading agency of EFA. In addition, we formally announce the new contribution to FTI Catalytic Fund and FTI Education Program Development Fund. We are pledged to provide 1.2 million US dollars to the two funds of FTI respectively, and it amounts to 2.4 million US dollars in total.

Developing countries often find themselves in the similar constrains particularly in terms of capacity and resources. We reiterate the importance of their sharing the experience and knowledge through the South-South and Triangular Cooperation with the view to achieving effective development and enhancing ownership. Therefore, donor countries and organizations are encouraged to support the South-South and Triangular Cooperation. Japan will conduct a stocktaking study on South-South Cooperation as a contribution to FTI.

EFA-FTI acknowledges the four key gaps, which are finance, capacity, data and policy, to be tackled efficiently for the developing countries to meet the EFA goals. Enhanced ownership and commitment of the developing countries are crucial in the process and thus I believe the Forum should be very careful not to encourage aid dependency by claiming 'more, better and faster' aid with 'long-term predictability.' It is my sincere hope that all the sessions of the Forum become participatory and interactive, so that we can bring together our bright ideas to illuminate the path for the second-half of the EFA.