

**Statement by Mr. Yutaka SHODA,  
Vice-Minister for Global Environmental Affairs,  
Japan**

**Mr. President, distinguished participants, Executive Director of UNEP, I am Shoda Yutaka, Vice-Minister for Global Environmental Affairs of Japan. I would like to express my deep gratitude to everyone involved in making this Assembly possible in spite of the difficulties presented by the pandemic.**

**At the outset, let me echo several of my previous speakers in saying the following;**

**Russia's military actions in Ukraine constitute a serious violation of international law prohibiting use of force, and are a grave breach of the United Nations Charter. Japan condemns the actions in the strongest terms. Japan strongly urges Russia to cease the attack and withdraw its forces back to Russian territory immediately. Japan stands with Ukraine and its people, and will continue to make efforts to improve the situation in cooperation with the international community.**

**Coming back to the main theme, Japan fully supports the importance of the theme of this UNEA, "Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals."**

**With regards to plastic pollution in the marine environment and beyond, which is a concern as a threat to our ecosystems, our officials have discussed tirelessly since last week at the Open-Ended Committee of Permanent Representatives under the devoted efforts of the co-facilitators, and Japan, as one of the proponents of a draft resolution on this matter, has actively participated in the discussions with the aim to adopt an ambitious resolution to establish an Intergovernmental Negotiating**

**Committee for a new international legally binding instrument at this UNEA.**

**Japan is grateful to adopt this ambitious achievement, which we hope will be embraced by the widest possible number of countries.**

**Japan is ready to “beat plastic pollution” by both developing the international legally binding instrument and strengthening our political will through the continued work under Osaka Blue Ocean Vision and its framework.**

**The contributions from nature, gained through the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity, should be passed down to the future generations. For this purpose, we need to agree on the ambitious "Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework" at CBD COP15 in Kunming, which will direct us to halt biodiversity loss and reverse the trend, and ultimately to achieve the 2050 vision "living in harmony in nature" which was adopted at CBD COP10 in Nagoya.**

**Let me introduce our thoughts on the important elements for that achievement.**

**The first is to realize “30by30.”**

**In realizing 30by30, Other Effective area-based Conservation Measures will play the key role. Japan believes that it is important to operationalize the OECMs based on various local knowledge on the sustainable use of natural resources.**

**For this purpose, the Satoyama Initiative, which has been implementing**

**activities for biodiversity conservation and sustainable production with its 283 members around the world, can provide various suggestions to the OECMs.**

**The second is Nature-based Solutions. It is important to include Nature-based Solutions in the National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans and to implement them, to let the ecosystem fully demonstrate its functions such as climate change mitigation, adaptation, and disaster-risk reduction. Let us pass on the contributions from nature to the next generation.**

**Thank you very much.**