



## *Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations*

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Agenda Item 3: General debate  
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Madame Chair,

At the outset, I would like to express my congratulations to you and the respectable members of the bureau on this historic 50<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD). Since its first session held at Lake Success, New York in 1947, the Commission has played a pivotal role to raise awareness of population issues among all its member countries, and has acted for the well-being of the population of the entire world. Japan became a member of the Commission in 1957, shortly after joining the UN in 1956, and since then has continuously and actively participated in this endeavor in the spirit of international collaboration.

This year's theme: "Changing population age structures and sustainable development" is quite important as the process of global ageing advances and inter-generational relationship is becoming important more than ever.

Population ageing is quite notable in Japan, where one in every four people is aged 65 years and over; the highest proportion in the world. Population decline is a steady trend and the proportion of the elderly is estimated to rise as high as 40% by 2060. The speed of ageing in Japan has been very quick compared to the Western countries, and we need therefore to reform the social security system to adapt to the country's rapidly evolving population age structure.

At present, both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy in Japan are among the highest in the world, and they are both still rising. Universal coverage for both health insurance and pension were achieved in Japan as early as 1961, but since then it has been necessary to carry out countless reforms. In 2000, our long-term care insurance system was introduced through the integration of the public and private sectors of our medical care and

welfare systems. However, due to the increasing number of oldest-old, the cost of medical and long-term care is increasing, which poses enormous challenges to the sustainability of these systems.

The structure of the Japanese family and household is also changing. In 1970, 80% of our elderly were living with their children, but by 2015 this ratio had halved to 41%, while 18% of the elderly live alone and 35% live only with their spouse. The increasing number of single-person elderly households is a sign of the increased independence of the elderly, but once they come to the point of needing long

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