



**Statement by H.E. Ambassador ISHIKANE Kimihiro,  
Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations,  
at the United Nations Security Council Arria Formula Meeting  
on the Peace Process in Afghanistan  
20 November 2020**

Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to thank Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, Afghanistan, Finland, Norway, and Qatar for their initiative to convene today's meeting. International solidarity is what we need now more than ever to advance the efforts to achieve a permanent settlement to the decades-long conflict in Afghanistan.

Since the start of intra-Afghan negotiations on 12 September, representatives from the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban have discussed parameters for formal negotiations. Japan strongly hopes that the terms of reference for negotiations will soon be agreed so the parties can proceed to discuss issues of priority for the people of Afghanistan.

Although the peace process may need to advance step by step, we cannot tolerate the unremitting sacrifices due to the hostilities on the ground. Japan is strongly concerned about the continuing violence, particularly the high numbers of civilian casualties including among women and children, and urges all parties to the conflict to implement an immediate and sustained ceasefire to put an end to the suffering of the people of Afghanistan.

In a few days, we will meet in Geneva to review and renew the cooperative partnership between the Government of Afghanistan and the international community. Japan strongly hopes that the Geneva Conference will be successful in reaffirming and renewing the commitment to long-term cooperation for the reconstruction, development and stability of Afghanistan based on a solid and sustained partnership.

Japan has actively supported the reconstruction and development efforts in Afghanistan with total assistance amounting to more than 6.8 billion US dollars

over the past 19 years. Two distinguished Japanese individuals, Madam OGATA Sadako and Dr. NAKAMURA Tetsu, who both passed away last year, were passionate supporters of reconstruction, peace and stability in Afghanistan. With their invaluable dedication in mind, Japan remains committed to supporting Afghanistan throughout the post-peace settlement period.

Let us recall that a durable peace is a long-cherished wish of all the Afghan people inside and outside Afghanistan. A stable Afghanistan is essential for regional and global stability. A secure Afghanistan can draw much more investment into the country.

Before concluding, Japan renews its call for both the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and the Taliban to seize this historic opportunity and work together to tackle ongoing challenges, including the COVID-19 pandemic, reconstruction of the country, and the fight against corruption.

I thank you.