

**Speech by H. E. Ms. MIYOSHI Mari,
Ambassador of Japan in charge of Arctic Affairs
at the Arctic Circle 2019
Opening Session
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His Excellency Mr. Grímsson, Chairman of the Arctic Circle,
Her Excellency Ms. Alfreðsdóttir, Minister of Education, Science and
Culture of Iceland,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Good afternoon.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to
Chairman Grímsson for giving me the opportunity for delivering a speech.
I'm hereby honored to announce that Japan will organize the next Arctic
Science Ministerial Meeting, ASM3 in Tokyo, on 21st and 22nd November
2020 with our co-organizing partner, Iceland, the Chair of Arctic Council.

As some of you on the floor may remember, last year, on the occasion
of the Arctic Circle 2018, Mr. KONO Taro, former Minister of Foreign
Affairs of Japan held an opening remarks which encouraged us to consider
what an “Ideal Arctic” for all of us can look like. According to Mr. KONO,
it has three basic elements:

First, clarifying the mechanism of environmental changes in the
Arctic.

Second, pursuing sustainable economic activities in the Arctic, while
respecting the ecosystem and the life of indigenous peoples.

Third, but not the least, ensuring “the rule of law.”

In order to promote further efforts of the Government, since last
autumn the Advisory Council for the National Headquarters for Ocean
Policy has discussed Japan's arctic policy and made the final report on June
2019. This report recommends the Government to promote an organic
harmony of the three main pillars of Japan's Arctic Policy:

- 1) Research and Development,
- 2) International Cooperation, and
- 3) Sustainable Use.

It also recommends to develop the Ice Navigation Support System, to promote research and development on an Arctic research vessel with icebreaker capability, and so on.

The report also describes the ASM3 as one of the most important political events that is supposed to be prepared as a cross-government initiative.

The main theme of the Arctic Science Ministerial Meeting is to promote international cooperation on research and development. In ASM3, we would like to deepen the discussion how to encourage further cooperation on these fields.

In 2015 Japan's national flagship project "Arctic Challenge for Sustainability" (ArCS) has been launched. The National Institute of Polar Research (NIPR), Japan Agency for Marine-Earth Science and Technology (JAMSTEC) and Hokkaido University are the key players in ArCS. ArCS contributes to clarifying the climate changes and environmental effects in the Arctic and to improving projections, environmental assessment and the life of community in the Arctic.

Another example of our efforts is the Arctic Data archive System, which Japan has been operating since 2012. This system allows all of us to get an access to multiple observational and model simulation datasets, which are collected and analyzed by Japanese scientists. Japan considers every observation data shall be recognized common property for everyone in the Arctic.

At the same time it is worth focusing on the relationship between indigenous peoples and modern scientific research in the Arctic. Let me introduce some successful cases how Japanese researchers have been working together with indigenous peoples and how they have fed back the research results to the local residents.

One of the ArCS' research units has been surveying glacier and ice sheet changes in Qaanaaq, a northwestern Greenland village. The researchers constantly organize workshops to feed back their results to the local people. The more they are informed of the exact depth of sea water, the more likely they presume where the halibut habitats are.

In East Siberia Japanese cultural anthropologists have carried out field surveys into the traditional culture of indigenous peoples for 30 years. It is about a decade ago that the research on climate change was launched in cooperation with natural scientists, since then the mechanism of thawing permafrost has gradually been explored as well as its social influence. The researchers have shared the results with the local community through workshops and exhibitions in schools or public facilities so that they can prepare against national disasters occurred by climate change.

Another project is that the government of Japan will invite about 15 students of Alaskan indigenous groups to Japan in December, this year. The Government will arrange for them some guide tours to a small-scale waste disposal facility or a recycling facility as well as a meeting with Ainu, indigenous people in Hokkaido in Japan.

As I mentioned above, there is a variety of research projects which can have direct, positive influence on the daily life of indigenous peoples. Taking advantage of the occasion of the ASM3, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan would like to organize a side event where indigenous peoples and researchers can discuss how to utilize the results of scientific research to improve the life of indigenous peoples.

Japan continues to make an active contribution to realize an "Ideal Arctic" for all of us with our advantage, the scientific research. From this point of view, the ASM3 will be of great significance as an international high-level meeting.

In Japan, on the 1st of May has just begun the new era, Reiwa-era, which means beautiful harmony. It has been followed by a variety of big international events: G20 Osaka in June, the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD7) Yokohama in August. Next year Japan will host the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, then will come our ASM3 Tokyo in November 2020, making the finale of a series of international events that Japan hosts. We are waiting for the delegations from all the partner countries and indigenous peoples' groups. Please save the date. See you in 2020 in Tokyo.

Thank you for your attention.