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Japan announces Global Health Issues as a main agenda of TICAD IV and G8 Summit in 2008

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In a statement delivered at the International Symposium on PEOPLE-CENTRED HEALTH CARE: *REORIENTING HEALTH SYSTEMS IN THE 21ST CENTURY* in Tokyo on November 25, Mr. Masahiko Koumura, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, announced that Japan will take up and call for a stronger engagement of the international community in Global Health at the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) and the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit to be held in Japan in 2008.

Global Health Working Group of the 2008 Japan G8 Summit NGO Forum, a group of 13 Japanese NGOs including JOICFP advocating for making Global Health a main agenda along with Climate Change and Africa, welcomes today's development and expresses our willingness to participate in the policy formulation.

Minister Koumura's address is welcomed in the following points:

- At TICAD IV, Japan intends to take up the issue of health in Africa, and at the G8 Summit, the wider issue of Global Health,
- Japan invites civil society and all key stakeholders in developing a set of common framework for action shared by the international community,
- The address refers not only to development of health-related human resource that 2006 WHO Health Report points out as lacking more than 4 million in developing countries, but also to the retention of the health personnel.

We expect Japan's continuous leadership on Global Health in the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit as it did at the G8 Kyushu Okinawa Summit in 2000 that contributed to the development of global measures against infectious diseases.

In today's address, Minister Koumura stated the development of international framework for action on Global Health. We believe that, in order to materialize this Japan's initiative, it is essential to address the following issues:

1. 'International framework for action' should come up with concrete action plan to achieve international goals that have already been agreed such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The framework has to become itself a comprehensive strategy to strengthen existing international initiatives.
2. The framework needs to promote mutual intervention of 'disease-specific approach' and the health system strengthening, and should expand and strengthen the both approaches.
3. In formulating the framework for action, it is essential for G8 countries to increase ODA in order to procure financial resources necessary for achieving the goals. As the host government, Japan should decide to increase ODA.
4. The framework should address recruitment, stable employment, and prevention of brain drain of health personnel to achieve human resource retention.

About Global Health Working Group:

Global Health Working Group is an issue-based working group organized under the 2008 Japan G8 Summit NGO Forum, a civil platform organized by Japanese NGOs' broad coalition of about 100 NGOs for 2008 G8 Summit. Through advocacy activities, the Global Health working group aims to urge the G8 governments to make political and financial commitments to resolve health-related MDGs.