

**Speech by H.E. Takenori SHIMIZU,
Ambassador of Japan to Mongolia,
at the 14th Ministerial Meeting on CAREC
(Ulan Bator, September 25, 2015)**

Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, let me express my gratitude to the CAREC Secretariat and the Government of Mongolia for organizing this conference. I would like to take this opportunity to stress CAREC's valuable role in providing a constructive platform for regional cooperation in Asian region since its founding.

Last year, we marked the 10th anniversary of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, that Japan and five Central Asian countries initiated in 2004. At the fifth Foreign Minister's Meeting held in July of last year in Bishkek, all ministers from 6 countries reached consensus on promoting practical cooperation in the framework of the Dialogue in next 10 years. Transportation and logistics, which is the main theme of this conference, is also designated as an important area of cooperation in our Dialogue.

Since 1997, when CAREC was established, the Japanese government, through JICA, has committed to a total amount of 9.5 billion USD in Japanese ODA loans and grant aids in the transportation sector, for construction and rehabilitation of roads, railways and airports for 10 CAREC member countries.

Furthermore, Japan, in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank, will provide Asia with innovative infrastructure financing at a scale of 110 billion USD in total over five years through "Partnership for Quality Infrastructure: Investment for Asia's Future" launched by Prime Minister Abe in May this year.

"Quality Infrastructure" may first sound costly, however, since it is easy to use and durable, as well as environmentally friendly and disaster resilient, "quality infrastructure" is indeed cost-effective in the long run. "Quality infrastructure" also contributes to enhancing connectivity among Asian countries, creating jobs for local people, increasing local skills and improving people's lives.

A good example of “Quality Infrastructure Investment” is Railway Fly-over “Sun Bridge” Project, which was completed here in Ulan Bator in 2013 by Japan’s grant aid. The “Sun Bridge” ensures smooth traffic between the capital’s southern new residential area and northern business district areas by overpassing a railway line which runs east to west across the capital. The project also applies Japanese high-tech for the elevated bridge to prevent a bridge collapse in case of a large earthquake. And such technology was transferred to Mongolian engineers and students by introducing Japanese construction skills through such events as seminars and site visits.

I would like to conclude my remarks by underscoring our commitment to improve connectivity in the region, develop bilateral relations with each country in Central Asia, and to promote regional cooperation through the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue.

Thank you very much.

(END)