

Japan; item 2

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To: Duangjai Pattanarudee <pattanarudee@un.org>;

The Government of Japan (GOJ) established in May 2016 “SDGs Promotion Headquarters” to effectively achieve the SDGs. “SDGs Promotion Headquarters”, which is headed by Prime Minister, ensures a whole-of-government approach to take a lead in implementing the SDGs both domestically and internationally.

Although gender equality has more or less been achieved in Japan as far as laws and legislations are concerned, however, in reality, women's participation in the policy- and decision-making processes remains insufficient. Female employment has increased in Japan and the proportion of female workers is almost the same levels as seen in many Western countries. On the other hand, although the proportion of women in managerial positions is increasing slightly, as of 2016 it remains at a low level (13.0%)—significantly lower than levels in many Asian countries such as Singapore and the Philippines.

In this connection, I would like to touch upon a few measures the Government has taken to promote concrete actions by private and public sectors in Japan.

The Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace was adopted by the Parliament in 2016, based on following principles, which are ;1) to provide actively and exploit opportunities to hire and to promote women, 2)to improve an environment where women and men can balance work and family life, and 3) to respect woman's choice with regard to her balance between work and family life.

Under the act, Government agencies, local government and private sector corporations with more than 300 employees, are obliged, under the guidelines by the national government, to collect and analyze the data on issues of gender and employment, including 1) rates of female employees newly hired, 2)gender gap about years of continuous employment, 3)working hours, and 4)rates of female managers.

These entities are also obliged to 1) devise and disclose action plans to improve gender equality with concrete objectives and measures based on these analyses , and 2) to announce the data regarding women's participation and advancement.

The national government certifies the private sector which makes a good practice.

In addition, Under Article 20 of the Act on Promotion of Women's Participation and Advancement in the Workplace, Guidelines for Utilization of Public Procurement and Subsidies Toward the Promotion of Women's Advancement was decided by the Cabinet.

Under the guideline, certain corporations promoting measures such as work-life balance, receive additional evaluation points in the government procurements conducted under the overall-greatest-value evaluation method and the competitive proposal evaluation method.

You can find other initiatives taken as well as progress made in White Paper on Gender Equality annually published by the Cabinet.

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