

Thank you Madam Chair / Mr. Chair,

Civil society appreciates that Japan has more meaningfully engaged with stakeholder processes since its last two VNRs. Japan now stands at a crossroads between sustainability and unsustainability. A timely and decisive choice must be made:

We therefore ask: What first concrete strategies will Japan adopt to formalize a genuine transformation toward a sustainable social system for the future?

Civil society has called on the Government of Japan time and again to provide useful, disaggregated data that can uncover patterns of [inequalities regarding gender, income, disabilities], protection of human rights, and the marginalization of peoples indigenous or otherwise. So far, however, these fragmented efforts have stayed largely siloed within individual ministries. One thing missing is a comprehensive strategy anchored in a shared and inclusive vision for society. Without it, Japan cannot hope to handle the actual scale and complexity of the inequalities it faces.

Even the Sustainable Development Goals we felt confident in achieving--such as education, health care, and social welfare--now confront mounting structural pressures. Demographic decline, rapid ageing, and compounding fiscal fears reveal the weak points we must address. What we assumed to be durable is proving brittle. Day by day the younger generations grow more uncertain about the future and feel increasingly marginalized.

We thus urge the Government of Japan to move beyond the current rhetoric and instead make the SDGs the primary driver of policy and practice. Universal human rights must be guaranteed for each person. Our path forward must be shaped by democracy and the values of diversity, equity, and inclusion. Social transformation can only take root when we work together.

Japan's future lies in renewed multilateralism and must revitalize the established international cooperation on sustainable and just footing—one that secures lasting stability and development that leaves no one behind.