

ヨルダン大学 第1回 JICA チェア 北岡理事長 スピーチ
2020年11月18日(木) 20:00~21:00

Good afternoon.

It is my pleasure to join the seminar on “the Modernization of Japan,” which is hosted by the University of Jordan today.

First of all, it is a great honor for me to have Her Royal Highness Princess Raiyah join us today. I am delighted that her presence gives an enormous significance to this seminar. Princess Raiyah is a historian who has a deep understanding of Japanese history, culture and society. The relationship between Princess Raiyah and JICA started in 2010, when she worked at the JICA Headquarters in Tokyo. During her stay in Japan, Princess Raiyah experienced the Great-East Earthquake and Tsunami on March 11, 2011. After the disaster, she visited devastated areas and schools many times and raised the spirits of the suffered people, especially school-children. We are grateful for her friendship and dedication to Japan.

My gratitude also extends to

- Her Excellency Ms. Lina Annab, Ambassador to Japan,
 - Dr. Adel-Karim Al Qudah, President of the University of Jordan, as well as
 - Dr. Ahmad Majdoubeh, vice president for the Humanities Faculties,
 - Dr. Yousef Abu Amrieh, Dean of the School of Foreign Languages,
 - Dr. Andrea Pressello, Associate Professor of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies, and
 - the staff of the University of Jordan
- for their support.

I also would like to show my sincere appreciation for
His Excellency, Dr. Jafar Hassan and Ms. Shifa Haddad,
who will be joining the 2nd and 3rd seminar as a speaker,
in addition to all faculty staff from the University of Jordan and
the Ministry of Higher Education.

One of the most significant similarities between Jordan and Japan is people's respect to the Royal and Imperial families. The two families' close relationship connects the two countries even closer. I had an honor to meet with His Majesty King Abdullah II four times. I will explain the further details later, but this seminar is originated from the discussion with His Majesty.

I myself have been a professor. One of my Japanese student married a Jordanian, and now resides in Amman. She updates me about Jordan occasionally.

The world now faces the common crisis of COVID-19. Jordan has been managing this COVID-19 crisis well, yet I share your concern on the recent spike of the pandemic. I sincerely hope that the pandemic will not significantly affect the lives and livelihoods of Jordanian so much, and that the situations will improve soon.

Let me briefly talk about JICA and its relationship with Jordan. JICA is the implementing agency of Japanese ODA and works with 150 countries around the world. We have collaborated with the Government of Jordan and various institutions for Jordan's socioeconomic development since 1974.

Jordan has been playing a key role in the stability of the region throughout history. In that connection, the development and prosperity of Jordan are most important to the region and the world, which is why we consider Jordan a key partner.

JICA has extended loans and grants to diverse programs in Jordan worth nearly 3 billion US dollars. More than 3,000 Jordanians have participated in JICA training programs, held in Japan, Jordan and neighboring countries. We deploy volunteers to communities all over Jordan. Among them, 26 JICA volunteers taught the Japanese language at the University of Jordan in the past. I know some of today's participants learned Japanese from them.

Today, I am very pleased to announce that we are starting a new chapter in our partnership between Jordan and JICA, which is the launch of this seminar.

Let me explain background and purpose of this seminar.

While there are almost 200 countries across the world today, many of them are not economically prosperous and do not have democratic systems nor political freedoms. To the contrary, Japan is the first and best example that has modernized from a non-Western background. One of the unique things was that as Japan modernized and built itself into a free, prosperous, and peace-loving democracy based on the rule of law, it also never let go of its own traditions and culture. Given this experience, I believe Japan can serve as a very good model for modern development.

Japan, however, also made the terrible mistake of going to war in 1941. Japan pursued to rebuild the nation by committing herself to peace, democracy and the rule of law. With the support from the international community and the free trade system, Japan achieved the rapid economic reconstruction.

Additionally, after World War II, Asian countries have now achieved surprising economic and political development. Japan's ODA has played a significant role in this process and Japan sought to deepen its relationship with our neighboring countries. Based on these experiences, Japan continues to actively extend its

ODA to support other regions of the world.

By sharing these experiences and lessons learned from its own development and cooperation with partner countries, I believe Japan can serve as a leader in development studies and contribute to global sustainable development efforts.

In 2018, JICA, in partnership with various universities in Japan, launched the JICA Development Studies Program. This program provides young leaders from partner countries an opportunity to learn Japan's development experience while pursuing the graduate studies in their respective fields. The DVDs entitled "Seven Chapters on Japanese Modernization," which we will share with you in this seminar, was created last year as part of this program. Additionally, to further provide opportunities for partner countries to learn about Japan's development experience, JICA created the "JICA Program for Japanese studies," or "JICA Chair," in collaboration with leading universities in partner countries.

The idea of this seminar came to my mind during my previous meeting with His Majesty King Abdullah II in November 2018 when we discussed about sharing unique development experiences of Japan. During the meeting, I introduced JICA Development Studies Program and the "Seven Chapters on Japanese Modernization." Then, His Majesty enthusiastically responded, saying that he would like to broadcast the videos in Jordan and would spare no efforts to add Arabic subtitle. With his positive response, I came to think that the knowledge and experiences articulated in the videos were worth spreading and this is the very beginning of the JICA Chair. After two years, I am happy to announce that this seminar hosted by the University of Jordan is the memorable first activity in the Middle East under the JICA Chair program.

JICA's vision is "Leading the World with Trust." We believe forging trust between countries is more critical than ever during this unprecedented time. With trust at

the core of our cooperation, JICA implements its programs with partner countries under the basis of mutual understanding and respect – not from the viewpoint of aid or assistance. JICA, alongside its partners, like Jordan, will seek to forge trust across the world. By so doing, we hope to establish a free, peaceful and prosperous world where people can dream of a better future and realize their diverse potential.

Through this seminar, I hope you will learn about Japan's modernization history and our approach to development cooperation. After the seminar, I hope you will be able to share your understanding of Japan with others.

Finally, I hope that this seminar will be continued for years to come. And I also hope that you will contribute to strengthening our countries' relationship and work toward enhancing Jordan's cooperation to neighboring countries. All of you can be the bridge to a brighter global future.

Thank you.