**UPR of the Republic of Korea - Statement of Japan**

**Check against delivery**

**Mr. Kansuke Nagaoka**

**Minister, The Permanent Mission of Japan**

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Thank you, Mr. President.

Japan notes with interest that the Republic of Korea’s new Administration places importance on human rights policy and upholds policy tasks such as prohibiting discrimination, reinforcing freedom of expression and the independence of the press, labor rights and education. Japan welcomes the establishment of the OHCHR Seoul Office and **recommends** that the Government continue supporting its work.

We take note of the concerns expressed by the Human Rights Committee about the increasing use of criminal defamation laws to prosecute persons who criticized government actions, and about the harsh sentences handed down in such cases.

Japan welcomes the ROK Government’s efforts to follow up on the previous UPR recommendation on peaceful protests. At the same time, we take note of the concerns expressed by the Human Rights Committee and others on peaceful assembly and protests, including those by journalists and human rights defenders. We **recommend** that the Government continue to make efforts on this matter.

Japan values the ROK Government’s efforts to address gender discrimination and ensure equal employment opportunities. While we commend the work of the Government to prevent sexual and domestic violence based on the previous UPR recommendations, we also **recommend** that the Government make further efforts in these areas as pointed out by the relevant treaty bodies.

I thank you, Mr. President.