



**UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE OF LEGAL AFFAIRS**

**United Nations - The Nippon Foundation Fellowship Programme 2017  
Alumni Meeting**

**Statements**

**By**

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Under-Secretary-General for Legal Affairs  
and United Nations Legal Counsel

10:00 am to 1:00 pm, Conference Room 11  
United Nations Headquarters, New York  
7 June 2017

**United Nations – Nippon Foundation Alumni High-level Event**

Item 1. Opening

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my sincere pleasure to welcome you all to the United Nations for the very special occasion of the 2017 Meeting of the Alumni of the United Nations – The Nippon Foundation Fellowship Programme.

At the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to Chairman Sasakawa and the Nippon Foundation for the continued dedication and cooperation in providing developing States with capacity-building and assistance.

I also would like to express my gratitude to the academic partners of the Programme - the Professors, researchers and numerous Academic institutions - who over the



years have shared our vision and common responsibility to assist developing States in the sustainable governance of the ocean.

These enduring partnerships are testament to the dedication of all involved, and continue to make a very tangible difference to oceans and coastal management.

I also recognize the Alumni of our Fellowship Programme for their leadership and contribution to implementing solutions to the plethora of challenges faced by the ocean. Thank you for travelling from countries all around the world to join us this week. I am pleased to also recognize representatives of Member States whose ocean professionals have received one or more awards under the Fellowship Programme. Your participation in this event is highly appreciated as an important recognition of the contribution of the Fellowship Programme to ocean affairs and the law of the sea in your country.

I would also like to thank the Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, for organizing this event, which is a testament to the successful on-going collaboration between the United Nations, through the Office of Legal Affairs, Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea, and the Nippon Foundation.

Since 2004, the United Nations and the Nippon Foundation have shared a common vision on the central importance of human capacity development in securing a sustainable and peaceful future for the oceans, through the Fellowship Programme.

To date, the Programme has awarded 130 fellowships and 3 strategic fellowships to individuals from 75 States and its positive impact has been recognized on an annual basis by the United Nations General Assembly in its resolution on oceans and the law of the sea.

This Programme is in its 13th year and remains a cornerstone in capacity-building on the global stage. On behalf of the United Nations, I am very proud to be a part of this vision and to have had the opportunity to witness so many outstanding results.

Having so many Alumni here today is truly remarkable. I have been honored to have met many of you over the years here in New York and in Tokyo at the first Global Alumni Meeting. I commend all of you for the work that you have done, the journeys that you have embarked on, and the milestones that you continue to cross. Your work is a shining example of how each individual can contribute to effective ocean



governance, including through the implementation of legal and policy frameworks, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Through your work crossing many sectors and in so many different places, you are bringing the Sustainable Development Goals to life. Your efforts are contributing not only to the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14, but also to the achievement of other goals. Through your contribution to placing ocean-related issues at the center of law and policy-making and planning, you are increasing the effectiveness of development overall. In different ways, you are improving educational opportunities, ensuring food security and livelihoods, gender equality, and adapting to climate change.

I want to thank you for your leadership and for contributing to a brighter and sustainable future for future generations. Indeed, I understand that youth representatives are here with us today. I welcome you to this event and invite you to join the discussions this morning with a view to finding ways to enhance youth participation and engagement to ensure the sustainability of the ocean.

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Based on our shared vision that human resources development for developing States in the field of ocean affairs and the law of the sea and related disciplines is essential to building effective frameworks in conformity with internationally agreed instruments and targets, including the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, we will be pleased to announce later this morning a new phase of our partnership with the Nippon Foundation, which will focus on building additional human capacity for ocean governance.

I am confident that by continuing to work together, we can make a real impact towards the conservation and sustainable use of our oceans and their resources in a participatory and peaceful way.

As we move forward into a new phase of the partnership between our organizations, we reaffirm our continued commitment towards the building of human capacities in



ocean affairs and the law of the sea, so as to ensure that developing States may derive benefits therefrom in a peaceful and sustainable manner.

Thank you.

Item 2. “United Nations – The Nippon Foundation Sustainable Ocean Programme”  
– announcement

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my honour to join Chairman Sasakawa to announce a new “Sustainable Ocean Programme” in the context of the longstanding partnership between the United Nations and the Nippon Foundation.

The need for integrated ocean governance frameworks, as well as integrated, interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approaches and enhanced cooperation, coordination and policy coherence at all levels, are underlined in the draft “Call for Action” currently under negotiation for adoption at the High-level United Nations Conference to support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

Aware of that need and based on our shared vision that human resources development for developing States in the field of ocean affairs and the law of the sea and related disciplines is essential to building effective frameworks at all scales, across all sectors and in conformity with international law, especially the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, and the commitments in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in particular Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14, we are pleased to announce that starting in 2018, this new Programme will be implemented with the goal to build capacities to reinforce ocean governance through the following activities:

1. The enhancement of the United Nations – Nippon Foundation Fellowship Programme;
2. The delivery of thematic capacity assistance to mid-level ocean professionals with solid background in ocean affairs and the law of the sea and demonstrated need for in-depth training in specific thematic areas;



3. The delivery of critical capacity assistance to Government officials from developing States, in particular small islands developing States, with limited background in ocean affairs and the law of the sea filling key positions with identified strategic needs; and

4. The delivery of training activities in the conservation and sustainable use of marine biodiversity beyond national jurisdiction for individuals from developing States involved in the on-going negotiations process and/or in the subsequent implementation of outcomes.

The Programme will focus on building a multidimensional understanding and adaptable approach to ocean governance across many sectors, at all levels and in conformity with internationally agreed principles and targets. This will contribute to promoting order and stability in the oceans and seas, which is the foundation of sustainable development.

On behalf of the United Nations, I am excited by the prospects of this new Programme, which provides us with opportunities to advance our capacity-building efforts in a way that is ambitious and meaningful.

Once again, I am deeply grateful to the Nippon Foundation for their innovation and commitment to oceans and sustainable development.

It is my hope that the United Nations – Nippon Foundation “Sustainable Ocean Programme” will serve as a model for the cooperation and collaboration needed to realize the SDGs, and the specific targets and indicators of conservation and sustainable use under SDG14. By building on such a solid foundation, we can continue to learn and to produce exceptional outcomes, for present and future generations.

Thank you.

[Chairman Sasakawa is introduced again, and gives his remarks. Together you move to a designated table to sign a letter of announcement of the new “Sustainable Ocean Programme”.]