First Arab States Regional High-Level Forum of Directors-General for Development Cooperation
Opening Remarks by Mr. Akihiko KOENUMA, Director General of Middle East and Europe Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency

Introduction
It’s a great pleasure for me to have the opportunity to give the opening remarks of the First Arab States Regional High-Level Forum of Directors-General for Development Cooperation on behalf of the JICA, Japan International Cooperation Agency.

First of all, I’d like to express my gratitude to the Government of the States of Qatar for kindly hosting the First Arab States Regional South-South Development Expo including this High-Level Forum. Without your strong commitment and substantial support, we would not have such a successful Expo.

I’d also like to appreciate the Arab states countries for their showing a keen interest in having this Expo in their region. In the history of the South-South Cooperation Expo, this is the first one held at the regional level. I strongly believe that this regional expo will present concrete solutions which would fit to the situations and needs of this region.

JICA and South-South Cooperation
Let me tell you why Japan puts emphasize on South-South Cooperation in development cooperation. As you may know, Japan joined the Colombo Plan in 1954 and began providing technical assistance to other countries while it was still undergoing postwar reconstruction and receiving financial assistance from other donor
countries. This means that Japan was an ex-recipient country with experience of being “a provider of South-South cooperation.” In addition, JICA understand well the importance and effectiveness of the South-South cooperation for the better results as well as regional integration, through its experience of executing development cooperation in collaborating with other partner countries which has been enhanced through Japan’s assistance.

In this context, JICA makes the effort not only to make effective use of this approach in its implementation, but also to promote South-South Cooperation and disseminate good practices of this type of cooperation in the international community, especially in collaboration with UN Office for South-South Cooperation. One example is this South-South Cooperation Development Expo, for which JICA has co-organized the High-Level Forum since 2008. This Forum is a great opportunity where people in the high-level position from national government, bilateral / multilateral organizations, and UN agencies can exchange their views and experiences on this topic, which we believe would boost this type of cooperation in the world.

**JICA’s Assistance in the Arab States region (in relation to South-South Cooperation)**

JICA has a lot of experience of South-South Cooperation especially in the Arab regions.

At the moment, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan and Iran are hosting training courses for other regions such as Sub-Sahara Africa and Afghanistan in various fields such as healthcare, agriculture and water resources management. More than 4,000 people have participated in South-South training program held in the Arab region so far. Let me show you one example from Morocco. In Morocco, JICA had conducted Technical Cooperation Project of Operation and Maintenance of road sector. Utilizing the advantage of wide-spread usage of French in Morocco and knowledge and skills they have acquired through the project with JICA, IFEER, the executing agency of road maintenance in Morocco, hosted training courses for Francophone Sub-Saharan African countries. Participants were gathered from 22 countries. There are great needs of road
maintenance among Sub-Saharan African countries, and the training course held in Morocco designed by JICA and IFEER to meet those needs. It is a good example of JICA's practice to encourage the former recipient country to disseminate their assets accumulated through the project with JICA and customized to Morocco through their actual experience in their everyday work. Conducting such training courses to other countries enables Morocco to play further important role as a donor country. Other than this, we have a lot of examples to share, so we will highly appreciate the opportunity afterwards to have presentation on our activities.

Closing
Lastly, I'd like to express my gratitude to the co-organizer of this Forum, UN Office for South-South Cooperation and UNDP Regional Office for Arab States for preparing and executing this important event with us. I strongly believe that this High-level Forum will contribute to the promotion of South-South Cooperation and to the realization of the better development results for the Arab states region. Taking this opportunity, I would like to express JICA's strong will to continue our efforts to promote the South-South Cooperation.

Thank you.