

Japan's statement under Agenda Item 5  
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Thank you, Mr. Vice-President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election as the vice-president. Moreover, I would like to express my deep gratitude to the Secretariat for its efforts to organize this Congress despite the global spread of COVID-19.

Mr. Vice-President,

The topic before us is “Multidimensional approaches to promoting the rule of law.”

In order to realize a safe and secure society, the rule of law must prevail in all corners of society. To this end, it is essential that a culture of lawfulness permeates throughout society, where citizens trust and respect the law and its

enforcement. Let me illustrate this point based on Japan's experience.

In 2009, Japan introduced new criminal trial procedures, called the "*Saiban-in* system," where citizens form a panel with professional judges to adjudicate certain serious criminal cases. This aimed at raising public understanding of, and trust in, the criminal justice system.

A survey showed 95 percent of those who have joined *Saiban-in* panels expressed favorable views on their participation in criminal trials. Other data indicates that the public perception of criminal trials has also improved significantly.

Japan's Supreme Court also pointed out that the *Saibain-in* system "aims to achieve criminal trials in which citizens' perspectives and common sense and the expertise of legal

professionals constantly interact with each other, and therefore deepen mutual understanding and gain synergies.”

The success of the *Saiban-in* system can be attributed in part to a culture of lawfulness that has existed among the general public in Japan through education and social life. Furthermore, through the experience of participating in a criminal trial, the public’s trust in crime prevention and criminal justice has become stronger and, consequently, a culture of lawfulness among citizens has been further reinforced.

Mr. Vice-President,

As manifested in this agenda item, in order to achieve a society where the rule of law prevails, a multi-dimensional and long-lasting

approach is needed. Japan's experience with public participation in criminal trials is one approach.

I would like to conclude my statement by calling upon policymakers and practitioners of Member States to work tirelessly to promote the rule of law.

Thank you.