

**STATEMENT OF MR. SHINJI INOUE, MINISTER FOR THE WORLD EXPO 2025 OF JAPAN**

President, Secretary General, Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, let me begin by expressing my sincere gratitude for the formal registration of the Osaka-Kansai Expo. I am honoured and humbled by all the confidence and trust the BIE places in Japan for this historic event. As our Registration Dossier explains, with a view to successfully hosting our memorable national project, Japan has taken a whole of government approach, establishing the Headquarters for the Expo chaired by the Prime Minister. As the vice-chair of the Headquarters and the Minister responsible for the Expo, I will spare no effort to lead my government and Japanese people in our common endeavor to achieve this goal.

I am now with the BIE Flag, which you have just handed over to me virtually. Japan will carry through this flag with great pride and honour. I had every intention to receive the flag in person. Unfortunately, the current situation does not allow me to do so. We are in the middle of the pandemic and people around the world are suffering from the spread of deadly disease and resulting economic downturn. Many people are losing their lives, their jobs, opportunities to improve themselves, and human interactions with their loved ones and friends. I have no doubt we will eventually rise above this extraordinary challenge. But we must look beyond post COVID-19 and envision a resilient and sustainable society for lives of future generation. That's why I believe the theme of the Expo is particularly pertinent today; "Designing Future Society for Our Lives" and "Saving Lives, Empowering Lives, and Connecting Lives". As a showcase in the post-COVID world, this Expo will provide a tremendous opportunity for the global community to design, experiment and demonstrate possible future society that would save our lives, empower our lives and connect our lives for years to come.

President, Secretary General, Distinguished Delegates,

In concluding, once again, I would like to thank the BIE and its members for granting the registration. Japan wholeheartedly welcomes your active participation and looks forward to working closely together with all of you to bring about the successful Osaka-Kansai Expo in Japan.

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