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Recipients :.....SPD.....
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The Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva presents its compliments to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights and, with reference to the latter's note verbale REFERENCE: 2010DSLO dated 5 February 2010, has the honour to transmit herewith the answers to the questionnaire on good practices related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation from the Government of Japan according to Human Rights Council Resolution 7/22.

The Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights the assurances of its highest consideration.

Geneva, 25 June 2010

Enclosure mentioned.



Reply to the Questionnaire

‘Good Practices’ related to access to safe drinking water and sanitation

(The Government of Japan)

Description of the practice

Although it is difficult to describe a good practice from “a human rights perspective” under Japan’s stable situation, the government of Japan describes examples as follows in accordance with the ten defined criteria.

1. How does the practice meet the criterion of availability?

As water is essential to people’s lives, it is necessary to ensure safe and stable supply of water. The total volume of water needed is approximately 16 billion cubic meters per year and Japan has the high level of water supply coverage of 97.4% (as of March 2008). In order to supply safe water to all citizens, however, it is an urgent issue to supply water to those in uncovered areas. In addition, efforts are being made to realize the “Waterworks Vision”, which was formulated in June 2004 and revised in July 2008, so that safe and high quality water can be stably supplied in the future through coping with issues such as the full implementation of water quality management, measures against disasters including earthquakes, and improved managerial bases. In addition, it is recommended that water suppliers formulate a “Local Waterworks Vision”.

2. How does the practice meet the criterion of accessibility?

Please refer to the answers to the question 1.

3. How does the practice meet the criterion of affordability?

Please refer to the answers to the question 1.

In this connection, fees of water differ by every water-supply corporation administering a water service business. That is because the expense of water-supply varies, depending on the distance from the water-source, the quality of raw water, and the installation time of the water service.

4. How does the practice meet the criterion of quality/safety?

- Water works

Water utility companies which are authorized under the Water Works Act supply water that meets the standards for drinking water quality set forth in the same act. As of the end of Fiscal Year 2007, 97.4% of Japan’s population was supplied with such water.