

JAPAN

**JAPAN NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION FOR THE
UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR HUMAN
RIGHTS EDUCATION**

Japan's National Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education

In December 1994, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming the ten-year period from 1995 to 2004 as the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education.

In response to this resolution, the Government of Japan established Headquarters for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education on 15 March 1995 by Cabinet Decision, with a view to ensuring close coordination and cooperation among relevant administrative organizations and to promoting comprehensive and effective measures for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education.

The Headquarters held its first meeting on 18 March 1996 when it confirmed that the Government of Japan would actively deal with the issue. Subsequently, the ministries and agencies concerned elaborated national measures and announced Japan's National Plan of Action (midterm report) for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education on 6 December 1996.

The Headquarters further improved the midterm report having fully taken into consideration the opinions of various organizations and individuals; whereupon Japan's National Plan of Action for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education was duly formulated.

The Headquarters will work toward active promotion of human rights education through implementation of the measures in this National Plan of Action, and thus desires a truly affluent society, where human rights of every individual are fully respected from a global perspective.

("Human rights education" is defined in the Plan of Action for United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education as "training, dissemination and information efforts aimed at the building of universal culture of human rights through the imparting of knowledge and skills and the molding of attitudes.")

I. Basic Understanding

1. After the Cold War, as East-West confrontation disappeared, serious problems such as regional conflicts, gross violation of human rights and refugee issues emerged. On the other hand, however, the collapse of East-West confrontation enabled the international community as a whole to engage in discussion and thus gave impetus to the issue of human rights.

In 1993, the World Conference on Human Rights was timely held in Vienna, on the

45th anniversary of the World Declaration of Human Rights, to evaluate past achievements on human rights, discuss current problems and find ways toward future progress. This conference was a significant event in that it confirmed that all human rights are universal and that the promotion and protection of all human rights is a legitimate concern of the international community. Moreover, it emphasized the importance of human rights education. Thereafter, the United Nations enhanced its efforts for human rights by establishing the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in 1994, who is to coordinate human rights issues comprehensively. Further, a resolution proclaiming the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education was adopted at the 49th session of the United Nations General Assembly in December 1994. Moreover, at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in September 1995 in Beijing, women's rights were explicitly identified as human rights, and the importance of human rights education was reaffirmed. These events served to focus international attention on human rights issues.

For the promotion and protection of human rights, every individual has to understand the meaning of human rights and be fully aware of the importance of respecting human rights. In this regard, human rights education is a substantial challenge that the international community as a whole should tackle.

2. In promoting human rights education, the following understanding, indicated in the Report of the Council on the Policy of Regional Improvement on 17 May 1996, as well as the above mentioned international trend should constitute the basic principles:

"In this century, mankind has experienced the scourge of world war twice, and has learned the irreplaceable value of peace. However, despite the desire for peace shared by the people in the world, regional conflicts still arise and have claimed vast numbers of victims even after the Cold War. Confrontation, prejudice and discrimination between races and peoples seem to have lurked behind these conflicts. —

Under these circumstances, mankind has learned a significant lesson: There are no human rights without peace; no peace without human rights. Nowadays, it has been increasingly recognized that respect for human rights is a premise for peace. In this regard, the 21st century can be called "The Century of Human Rights."

Japan, as a member of the international community, has joined a number of international human rights instruments, such as the International Covenant on Civil and

Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. In addition, Japan has recently ratified the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which has long been an issue of concern for Japan. As we approach the Century of Human Rights, it is vital for Japan, as a peace-loving state, to play an active role in the internationally concerted efforts to accord full respect for the human rights of every individual and to eliminate discrimination of any kind.

3. Turning to the domestic situation in Japan, we still find various human rights problems. With the rapid globalization and disappearance of national borders, it is an urgent imperative to widely develop a "mind for living together" among the people to embrace multiple cultures and vast diversity. For this purpose, we should further enhance human rights education along with various awareness-raising activities. We should also enhance human rights education and awareness-raising in certain areas where the need for stronger protection of human rights has become evident along with a more complex society and where rising awareness of human rights among the people has revealed and diversified values. The United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, in light of the circumstances of Japan, calls for the creation of a universal culture of human rights, through forging a common recognition on the indivisibility and the interdependency of all human rights and through further promoting respect for human rights. This is of great importance indeed.

4. Japan's National Plan of Action, based on respect for human rights provided in the Constitution and international human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, is aimed at disseminating the idea and the value of human rights and establishing a universal culture of human rights. To this goal, the Plan of Action provides education, training, public information, and information activities at every possible opportunity.

In promoting human rights education, the Government of Japan will reinforce measures for people engaging in particular occupations that are closely related to human rights. In implementing the Plan, the Government of Japan will also actively deal with such vital areas as women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, the *Dowa* problem, the *Ainu* people, foreigners, people with infectious diseases such as HIV, and people released from prison.

5. Furthermore, Japan should play an active role in human rights in the international community. In particular, international fora addressing human rights issues, such as the United Nations, are important. For this purpose as well as others, we should promote global awareness of human rights through deepening concern for human rights situations in other countries and regions, considering the close relations between Japanese people and people in other countries. When implementing the Plan, it is also necessary to work closely with the international community, in particular, with the countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

6. To promote human rights, every individual in every country should think more of human rights and cultivate sincere respect for other people's values. For this purpose, local public entities and non-governmental organizations as well as the Government of Japan are to play a significant role.

Local public entities and non-governmental organizations are expected to make various efforts in line with the Plan of Action in their respective field. The Government of Japan, in implementing this Plan, will pay careful attention to measures and opinions from the above bodies. To spread human rights education to all levels nationwide, the Government of Japan will publicize the purpose of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights in various ways.

II. Promotion of Human Rights Education at Every Possible Opportunity

1. Promotion of Human Rights Education in School Education

The Constitution of Japan, the Fundamentals of Education Act, the two International Covenants on Human Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child will be the basis for the promotion of human rights education. In primary and secondary education, the Government will further advocate respect for human rights toward infants and among school children, taking into account that various human rights problems still remain. While in higher education, respect for human rights should be firmly recognized and further developed by each student.

In particular, the Government of Japan will actively :

- (1) promote respect for human rights, in primary and secondary education, through the whole

educational system with specific subjects, moral education and special activities, in light of the physical and mental development of each student and individual personality; in education for infants, awaken and cultivate respect for human rights toward them according to their development characteristics;

(2) improve and consolidate the instruction guidance of human rights education both in content and methods, through practical research and by means of other materials produced by specially designated educational institutions; for this purpose, urge local public entities and schools to make further efforts to respond to their specific situations; moreover, support human rights education at schools through provision of information and various training programs; and

(3) encourage institutions for higher education to consider further efforts for human rights education and advocacy.

2. Promotion of Human Rights Education in Adult Education

Also in adult education, the Constitution and the Fundamentals of Education Act have been the basis for the promotion of respect for human rights. The Government of Japan, as ever, will keep on promoting human rights education through various measures for lifelong learning, taking into account the Report of the Council on Lifelong Learning (July 1992), which recognized human rights as a major current issue of concern.

In particular, the Government of Japan will:

(1) establish courses and lectures at community centers and other social education facilities and encourage volunteer activities; enhance opportunities for the public to learn human rights through encouraging open-to-the-public lectures at colleges and universities;

(2) implement projects aimed at comprehensive promotion of human rights study activities;

(3) promote education to eliminate illiteracy, and expand learning opportunities for persons with disabilities; and,

(4) introduce and strengthen training programs for leaders of human rights study, prepare related materials, enhance public information, and reinforce consultation.

3. Promotion of Human Rights Education in Private Enterprises and the General Public

The Government of Japan also promotes human rights education and advocacy to disseminate and encourage respect for human rights. To further promote respect for human rights, the Government of Japan, in particular, will continue to;

- (1) carry out research and study measures to remedy victims of human rights violation cases;
- (2) carry out research and study methodologies of human rights education in the general public, develop human rights education programs, produce manuals, brochures, teaching materials and other materials for the protection of human rights, and thus advance effective advocacy;
- (3) disseminate the ideas of the United Nations human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and make use of mass media, and, in particular, for the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, carry out various events, including a ceremony;
- (4) train leaders of human rights education, including Civil Liberties Commissioners, and make active use of volunteer personnel;
- (5) consolidate and coordinate public information on human rights and make it accessible to the general public;
- (6) disseminate and promote respect for human rights through reinforcement of a system of human rights counselling;
- (7) actively support activities at the Center for Human Rights Affairs aimed at the support and promotion of human rights education and advocacy, in concert with the ministries and agencies concerned; and,
- (8) instruct and give guidance to private enterprises to establish fair recruit systems to ensure equal employment opportunities.

4. Promotion of Human Rights Education for People Engaged in Particular Occupations
To promote human rights education, we have to enhance measures for people engaged in particular occupations closely related to human rights.

Accordingly, the Government of Japan will improve and strengthen human rights education for those people engaged in certain occupations as follows:

(1) Public Prosecutors Office Personnel

The Government will enhance human rights education for prosecutors and prosecutor's assistant offices through various training activities so that human rights are fully respected in the area of criminal prosecution.

(2) Personnel of Correctional Facilities and Rehabilitation Services

a. With a view to ensuring the human rights of inmates in prisons, detention houses, juvenile training schools and juvenile classification homes, the Government will enhance human rights education for the personnel of correctional facilities through various training programs and otherwise guide the supervisors of those facilities.

b. With a view to ensuring human rights of probationers, inmates in correctional facilities such as prisons and juvenile training schools and the people concerned such as guardians, the Government will enhance and fully implement human rights education for volunteer probation officers and for the personnel engaged in rehabilitation services through various training programs.

(3) Immigration Management Personnel

The Government will enhance human rights education for immigration inspectors and immigration control officers through various training schemes, with a view to ensure human rights of inmates of detention houses and foreigners subject to immigration and residence examination.

(4) Teachers and Adult Education Personnel

The Government will further promote awareness among personnel for social education such as school teachers and adult education managers, through various training schemes and the use of related materials.

(5) Medical Treatment Personnel

The Government will enhance human rights education at schools and training institutions for people providing medical treatment such as doctors, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, physical therapists and occupational therapists.

(6) Social Welfare Personnel

The Government of Japan will enhance :

- a. human rights training for social welfare commissioners and child commissioners,
- b. human rights training for in-home care providers and the personnel of welfare facilities regarding children, older persons, and persons with disabilities,
- c. educational training for the personnel of social welfare facilities and certified care workers with a view to disseminate and raise awareness of human rights, and,
- d. education on human rights of children at training facilities for child welfare personnel such as training facilities for kindergarden teachers.

(7) Maritime Safety Officers

To instill in Maritime Safety Officers engaged in law enforcement a sincere respect for human rights, the Government will enhance and improve human rights education for students at the relevant educational institutions, such as the College of Maritime Safety, and otherwise provide human rights education in various classes.

(8) Labor Administration Personnel

The Government will further enrich awareness and sensitivity for human rights among the personnel in the Labour Standard Supervising Office and the Public Employment Security Offices through various training schemes.

(9) Fire Department Personnel

The Government will introduce human rights education for fire department personnel at the College of Fire Fighting.

(10) Police Officers

The Government will enhance educational training at police departments/stations and police schools at each stage, to ensure that the police fully respect human rights in performing their duties. In the educational training, emphasis will be placed on improving occupational ethics based on the "police officers' creed", assuring appropriate reception of citizens, and respecting human rights of suspects, detainees, victims and other people concerned.

(11) Uniformed Personnel of the Self-Defense Forces

The Government will promote human rights education in each curriculum at National Defense Academy, Officer Candidate School of each self-defense force and other schools.

(12) Public Service Officials

The Government will enhance human rights education for all public service officials in each training scheme to ensure that all officials correctly understand human rights problems and cope with these issues properly in their respective competence.

(13) Mass Media

The Government will encourage people engaged in mass media to make voluntary efforts toward human rights education, taking into account the significant influence that they have on human rights problems.

III. Measures for Important Issues

When promoting human rights education, the Government of Japan recognizes the following as important issues: women, children, older persons, persons with disabilities, the *Dowa* problem, the *Ainu* people, foreigners, people with infectious diseases, and people released from prison after completing their term of sentence. For these issues, the Government will approach problems with a universal perspective including equality under the law and dignity of the individual, in addition, it will pay special attention to the unique points of each issue.

I. Women

In December 1979, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was adopted at the 34th session of the United Nations General Assembly. The human rights of women and its significance have drawn more and more attention in recent

international conferences.

The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, adopted in the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in June 1993, stressed equality between women and men and human rights of women; in particular, the elimination of violence against women. Subsequently in December, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women was adopted at the 48th session of the General Assembly. Furthermore, human rights of women were re-emphasized in the succeeding conferences such as the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, International Conference on Population and Development and World Summit for Social Development.

The Beijing Declaration, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in September 1995, proclaimed that women's rights are human rights. The Platform for Action, on the other hand, enumerated twelve critical areas of concern such as "Women and health," "Violence against women," "Human rights of women," "Women and the media," and "The girl-child" with proposals for concrete actions.

While in Japan, in July 1996, the Council of Gender Equality submitted its report, the "Vision of Gender Equality - Creating New Values for the 21st Century." In the following December, the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality formulated the "Plan for Gender Equality 2000 - National Plan of Action for Promotion of a Gender-Equal Society by the Year 2000".

Based on these trends and the Plan for Gender Equality, the Government of Japan will:

- (1) further promote measures to create a gender-equal society, with the leadership of the Headquarters for the Promotion of Gender Equality;
- (2) lead the efforts to extend the participation of women in political decision-making processes, and call on private enterprises and other organizations to cooperate in developing a social atmosphere for advancement of women;
- (3) extend advocacy and public relations nationwide through various media and occasions such as Human Rights Week and Women's Week, to review customs and social systems and to reform awareness for human rights, with a view toward gender equality; make efforts to

disseminate domestic laws closely related to women's rights and international documents concerned such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women;

(4) enhance social awareness to guarantee equal opportunity and treatment of men and women in employment and build on projects and a facility to actively support women's participation in society, especially in employment;

(5) engage in advocacy for improvement of the status of women and women's further participation in decision-making processes both at home and in the local community with men as partners, to realize a society where women as well as men can fully participate in activating agriculture, forestry, fisheries and in stimulating rural areas;

(6) control those crimes strictly to eliminate all forms of violence against women such as sex crimes, prostitution and domestic violence; with a view to protecting human rights of women victims, provide necessary systems, including an interview scheme in which a victim can stipulate the sex of the interviewing police officer, and enhance training for personnel in charge of interview and consultation;

(7) enhance human rights education for personnel in charge of immigration control to protect human rights of foreign women;

(8) encourage mass media's voluntary efforts to respect human rights of women in their expression, to employ more women in decision-making processes, and to improve current situations where human rights of women are violated by commercialization of sex and violent expression;

(9) enhance education and learning to promote gender equality in every field of society including home, school and local community, and promote participation of women in social activities through learning and activity;

(10) contribute to the Trust Fund for Elimination of Violence against Women, which was established under Japan's initiative within the United Nations Development Fund for Women

(UNFEM); and,

(11) enhance and strengthen educational activities as well as counselling to raise awareness for human rights, with a view to prevent violation of the human rights of women.

2. Children

Local public entities, non-governmental organizations, schools and families as well as the Government should act in concert to ensure sincere respect and protection of the human rights of infants, children and students. In these efforts, they should respect the Japanese Constitution, which holds respect for fundamental human rights as a basic principle, laws and regulations based on the Constitution such as the Fundamentals of Education Act and the Child Welfare Law, and international instruments such as the two International Covenants on Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

In particular, the Government of Japan will continue to:

(1) disseminate the purposes and the contents of the Convention on the Rights of the Child so that the human rights of every infant, child and student are fully respected in educational instructions and school management; at the same time, enlarge opportunities for adult education through establishing courses and lectures at public institutions such as community centers to realize the ideas and principles of the Convention;

(2) further promote the heretofore solid efforts to address the problem of "bullying," a serious concern which may affect the rights of children and students; for this purpose, promote various measures including education to respect the individual child and student and foster their personal development, enhancement of training for teachers, establishment of educational consultation systems, coordination among families, schools and local communities, and promotion of various out-of school activities;

(3) raise awareness of the human rights of children and promote comprehensive measures to deal with grave problems affecting the sound development of children such as bullying and child abuse;

(4) with a view to saving and protecting child victims of crime, provide counseling and other support for them and strengthen control on crimes which cause damage to child welfare;

(5) actively address the issue of commercial and sexual exploitation of children such as child prostitution, child pornography and trafficking in children, which are common challenges for the international society;

(6) enhance and strengthen the system of Civil Liberties Commissioners for the Rights of the Child to protect the human rights of children and reinforce the system of human rights consultation including telephone counseling; and

(7) practice appropriate nurturing in accordance with the mental and physical development of children and circumstances of their families and their community to "nurture the spirit to respect human rights," which is expressed in the guidelines for center-based day-care.

3. Older Persons

Older persons should be supported so that they may live comfortable and self-reliant lives. Moreover, as important members of the aging society, they should be able to actively participate in various social activities, bringing their experience and capacity into full play.

Taking the above into consideration, the Government of Japan will:

(1) promote welfare education in schools, especially in social studies, ethics, and special activities, taking account of the situation of current aging society;

(2) systematically enhance learning opportunities for older persons and prepare social conditions for them to actively participate in social activities making use of their prominent knowledge and experiences;

(3) enhance opportunities for inter-generational communication to deepen mutual understanding and a sense of solidarity between older persons and the other generations;

(4) raise awareness and deepen understanding among the general public about welfare for older persons through activities and events on Respect-for-the-Aged Day;

(5) support older persons in rural areas, where older populations increase more rapidly than urban areas, so that they can actively participate in the society throughout their lives from the mental, physical, economical, and social dimension;

(6) engage in advocacy to fully establish sixty as the retirement age, to promote continuous employment and to ensure diversified forms of employment and working opportunities, with a view to realizing a society where the elderly can continue working until sixty-five years of age with their long cultivated knowledge and experience; and,

(7) increase public awareness of human rights and reinforce human rights consultation to prevent cruel treatment and other violations of the human rights of the elderly.

4. Persons with Disabilities

Under the philosophy of "rehabilitation" aimed at vindicating full rights of persons with disabilities at all stages of their lives and "normalization" aimed at achieving a society in which people with disabilities can live on an equality with other people, the Government of Japan, in particular, will continue to:

(1) promote the self-reliant capacities and social participation of persons with disabilities, and raise public awareness to realize the philosophy of "normalization," pursuing "full participation and equal rights" of persons with disabilities through advocacy and public relations activities including the Day, and the Week, for Persons with Disabilities;

(2) promote the following measures to facilitate the understanding and recognition of children with disabilities: educational exchange programs and lecture courses at elementary and secondary schools and in local communities, preparation and distribution of instructive materials for elementary and secondary school teachers, and advocacy programs for guardians and people engaging in school education;

(3) disseminate the philosophy of normalization based on activities such as Regional Mental Health and Welfare Management Promotion Program to eliminate discrimination and prejudice against persons with mental disabilities; train designated physician of mental health, and counselor for mental health and welfare for the protection of the human rights of persons with

mental disabilities;

(4) promote the Month of Promotion of Employment of Persons with Disabilities to facilitate social participation and occupational independence for persons with disabilities, organize the National Conference on Employment Promotion of Persons with Disabilities and the Tournament of Technical Skills of Persons with Disabilities, publicize information booklets, and promote public awareness, especially among business managers; an

(5) promote advocacy for respect for human rights to eliminate discrimination and prejudice against persons with disabilities, and enhance human rights counselling.

5. The *Dowa* problem

In eliminating psychological discrimination with regard to the *Dowa* problem, the Government of Japan will respect the Report of the Council on the Policy of Regional Improvement (17 May 1996), consult past achievements in social integration education and advocacy, and incorporate past achievements into human rights education and advocacy for the advancement of the fundamental human rights of every individual. Recognizing the *Dowa* problem as an important element in these efforts and the particular contents of this problem, and also taking current international trends and efforts into consideration, the Government of Japan will continue to:

(1) reconstruct and promote education and advocacy for the elimination of psychological discrimination concerning the *Dowa* problem into the following human rights education and advocacy projects, based on the "Basic Measures for the Future targeted at an early resolution of the *Dowa* problem", a Cabinet Decision on 17 May 1996; in particular, promote educational projects with concerted efforts of schools, families and local communities to encourage students' incentive for higher education and to improve their learning skills;

- a. projects to advocate human rights,
- b. projects to educate managers of small businesses,
- c. projects to educate and instruct employers,
- d. regional projects for general promotion of education,
- e. projects to designate schools to conduct research on human rights education,

- f. projects for the general promotion of human rights education, and
- g. projects to disseminate and encourage respect for human rights;

(2) promote comprehensive efforts at *Rimpokan*, an open-to-the-public community center for human rights advocacy and social welfare activities, to enable it to serve as a focal point for people-to-people communication in the community based on the Report of the Council on the Policy of Regional Improvement (17 May 1996);

(3) attach importance to the promotion of the self-reliant capacities of the *Dowa* people in future education and advocacy, eliminate pseudo-actions purportedly on behalf of the *Dowa* problems, and ensure conditions that enable free exchange of views on the *Dowa* problem; and in addition, ensure the neutrality of education.

6. The *Ainu* People

Taking into account that it is vital in the efforts for the *Ainu* people to disseminate better understanding and knowledge of the history, culture, tradition and the current situation of the *Ainu* people as an ethnic group and to deepen respect for their human rights among the general public, the Government of Japan will:

(1) promote the *Ainu* culture and disseminate and advocate for the *Ainu* tradition and culture among the general public, with respect to the purposes of report, "The Round Table on the Policy for the *Ainu* People," considering the present state of their tradition and culture, which are the source of their pride; in addition, respect the Law for the Promotion of the *Ainu* Culture and for the Dissemination and Advocacy for the Traditions and Culture of the *Ainu*;

(2) further strengthen training programs for social science teachers to promote human rights-centered education (the issue of human rights of the *Ainu* people is taught in social studies in school education)

(3) take note of the studies conducted at various institution for higher education on the language and culture of the *Ainu*;

(4) promote activities at *Seikatsukan*, a center for the improvement of and advocacy for the

quality of the *Ainu* people's lives; and,

(5) reinforce human rights counselling and enhance advocacy for an increased public awareness of human rights, with a view to prevent violations of the human rights of the *Ainu* people.

7. Foreigners

Recently, with the rapidly increasing exchange of people and materials between Japan and foreign countries, a variety of human rights problems regarding foreigners have emerged. To eliminate discrimination and prejudice against foreigners, the Government of Japan, in particular, will continue to:

(1) reinforce human rights counselling for foreigners to solve human rights problem regarding foreigners;

(2) promote advocacy to eliminate discrimination against foreigners; and,

(3) promote advocacy to eradicate harassment and discrimination against foreign residents.

8. People with HIV and Other Infectious Diseases

(1) AIDS Patients and People Infected with HIV

The Government of Japan will continue to:

a. eliminate prejudice and discrimination against AIDS patients and people infected with HIV, and promote education and advocacy for an increased understanding of these individuals through various public information activities such as the World AIDS Day and distributing pamphlets on AIDS;

b. promote education on AIDS, develop educational materials and eliminate prejudice and discrimination against AIDS patients and people infected with HIV through providing students with accurate knowledge according to each development stage;

c. enhance learning opportunities for better understanding of AIDS to avoid misunderstanding and prejudice against AIDS patients and people infected with HIV; and,

thus assist the Center for Human Rights in promoting human rights education projects for developing countries;

3. further promote its assistance to developing countries for human rights education;

4. organize an international symposium on human rights annually, consider the adoption of human rights education as one of the main themes in the symposium, and in 1998, the 50th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, consider adopting the Declaration as the main issue for discussion; and,

5. report this National Plan of Action of Japan to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

V. Implementation of the Plan

1. To implement this Plan of Action, the Government of Japan, with the Headquarters for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education as the focal point, will promote comprehensive measures with close coordination among relevant ministries and agencies. At the same time, each ministry and agency should pay careful attention to the Plan of Action in implementing the respective measures. The Government will also make efforts to disseminate the purposes of the United Nations Decade for Human Rights in various ways. Furthermore, in implementing the Plan, the Government will consider a more comprehensive and effective arrangement to promote human rights education and advocacy. This includes the coordination issue in the Government as a whole.

2. When implementing the Plan of Action, the Government will take into consideration the results of discussions of the Council for Human Rights Promotion, which was established in the Ministry of Justice based on the Law of Promotion of Measures for Human Rights Protection. The Council is supposed to research and consider basic elements for the comprehensive promotion of education and advocacy, which will enhance respect for human rights among the general public.

3. Local public entities, other public institutions and non-governmental organizations should play a major role in eliminating various kinds of discrimination and in promoting respect for the

d. disseminate accurate knowledge about AIDS to eliminate discrimination in the workplace against AIDS patients and people infected with HIV, which are caused by a misunderstanding of AIDS.

(2) People with Hansen's Disease

The Law for the Prevention of Hansen's Disease was abolished in 1996. In addition, the Government of Japan will disseminate accurate knowledge about Hansen's disease through reference centers and public information materials to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against people with Hansen's disease.

9. People Released from Prison after Completing their Term of Sentence

The Government of Japan will promote advocacy to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against people released after completing the term of their sentence and to help their reintegration in the society.

10. The Other

In addition to the measures mentioned above, the Government of Japan will continue to promote efforts for other issues as well to eliminate prejudice and discrimination and to advance and encourage respect for human rights.

IV. International Co-operation

Japan should play an active role also in international co-operation for human rights education. When promoting co-operation, if appropriate, Japan will work closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Center for Human Rights, and other relevant international institutions.

In particular, the Government of Japan will continue to :

1. actively contribute to the efforts concerning the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education taken by the United Nations General Assembly and the Commission on Human Rights;

2. contribute to human rights-related funds such as the Voluntary Fund for Advisory Services and Technical Assistance in the Field of Human Rights, established in the United Nations and

human rights of every individual. Therefore, the Government will pay attention to the measures and opinions of these groups and expect these groups to develop voluntary activities in accordance with the purposes of the Plan.

4. The Government of Japan will review the Plan of Action periodically and the result will be reflected in the future implementation of the plan, and will revise the Plan itself when necessary.

