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Your Excellency Mr. Antonio Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, distinguished participants, Good Afternoon. I have my overflowing passion for the ocean, however, I promise not to exceed the two minutes I have been given.

All life on our planet was born of the Mother Ocean. Yet, we are all aware that this Mother Ocean, the cradle of life, is being very seriously threatened through unregulated and unrestricted human activities. We, The Nippon Foundation, have always been aware of the silent screams of the Mother Ocean and started to take action from more than thirty years ago. One of our actions was the ocean governance capacity-building project together with the UN-DOALOS which has continued already for twenty years. All in all, we have trained sixteen hundred professionals from hundred and fifty countries who are capable of dealing with diverse ocean problems including the issues facing the island states.

Today, we are now planning three new initiatives. First, to expand and strengthen our UN-DOALOS program in order to specialize in training program focusing on administrative officers of the Small Island Developing States which are seriously impacted by the aggravating ocean environment. The second, to develop human resource program for young researchers of the SIDS and coastal communities, in collaboration with the University of Edinburgh. The third, to convene The Global Islands Summit. There are about fifty SIDS in the world, but unfortunately their voices are not being heard enough. The Nippon Foundation is planning to host this summit in Tokyo in 2024 in order to identify the challenges facing the SIDS and to be able to adopt necessary effective measures to counter them.

It is my strong belief that building a global coalition to support the determination of the inhabitants who are protecting their ocean by sharing their problems and knowledge is absolutely indispensable for solving the issues facing our global ocean.

Let us together think and act so that we can pass on our shared heritage, the Mother Ocean which is deeply intertwined with the survival of humankind, for thousand years into the future. Thank you.