

Initial Remarks by Kaoru Nemoto (UN Information Center in Tokyo)

Warm greetings from United Nations Information Centre in Tokyo.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Sophia University for organizing today's symposium during the university's UN Weeks, which has become a flagship initiative of Sophia since 2014.

I would like to thank Chancellor Sakuma and President Terumichi for their leadership in promoting the UN Weeks.

Earlier this month, Unicef published an alarming report indicating one in every Seven of those between age of 10 and 19 are facing mental health challenges. COVID-19 pandemic has contributed a lot.

Last month at the UN, the top idol group BTS sent a message of encouragement to all young people around the world.

They challenged their generation being called "the covid lost generation", by saying that "a more appropriate name would be **the 'welcome' generation** because instead of fearing change, this generation says "welcome" and keeps pushing ahead"

I hope today's symposium would provide us with encouragements to deliver on the promises of the SDGs. We have only 9 years left, and we need to join our forces together to push.

I count on your energy and activism.