



experience in public health, having successfully improved maternal and child health in the years following World War Two, so health is a field to which Japan should make international contributions.

Furthermore, this year marks the halfway point for achievement of the millennium development goals (MDGs), which were agreed to at the United Nations in 2000. Of the eight MDGs, three (reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, and fighting communicable diseases) relate to health, which is why Japan chose to emphasize global health at this year's summit.

There were also some challenges that are difficult to deal with. The G8 countries have already made various commitments to global health, and one could say that rather than making new commitments, now is the time to fulfill existing commitments.

One group that has been the focus of attention in the health discussions surrounding the G8 Summit is a group of health experts known as the Takemi Working Group. Keizo Takemi, former senior vice minister for health, labor, and welfare, leads the group, which consists of representatives from each of the government ministries working on the summit, experts in medicine and public health, and leaders of NGOs that work in developing countries. This group, bringing together opinions from a wide range of experts, has produced a report on their work.

It seems that this kind of group that brings together experts' knowledge with political purposes to offer prescriptions for dealing with global challenges is a tool that will continue to be used in future summits.