

Statement by Ambassador Ishikawa Hiroshi at  
the UN Global Cooling Pledge Assembly 2026

17 September 2026

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning to you all. It is my great pleasure to join you here at the Global Cooling Pledge Assembly 2026. I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to all those who made this assembly possible.

During my almost four years serving here, I have met hundreds of Singaporean citizens who have visited Japan more than one time every year, and some of them were surprised to know that Japan's summer was far more intolerable than Singapore's.

Indeed, extreme heat is very much a shared, global challenge, and Japan is certainly not immune. Temperature records have been broken almost every year in recent times: 2025 was Japan's hottest summer on record, with temperatures hitting 40°C or higher on nine separate days. This year has been just as brutal – we have already seen ten days at 40°C or above, the most ever recorded. Every year, tens of thousands of people are rushed to hospital because of heatstroke, with older residents most affected, and we are also seeing real pressure on farming, and on worker productivity.

Turning to this region, Southeast Asia is projected to see explosive growth in air conditioning demand as urbanisation and construction accelerate. That means facing two risks simultaneously – rising electricity demand and increasing GHG emissions.

In light of these realities, sustainable cooling is essential both to protecting lives from extreme heat and to mitigating global warming, and these are challenges Japan has already addressed and provided solutions for.

Japan has real technological strengths to offer here, covering both active and passive cooling. On the active side, companies like Daikin are global leaders in high-efficiency inverter technology, combined with a strong capacity for lifecycle refrigerant management, to deliver thermally

comfortable and climate-friendly cooling. They have also introduced Energy Recovery Ventilators, or ERVs, which mitigate indoor humidity – a feature especially useful in Southeast Asia.

On the passive side, we have excellent technologies such as thermal insulation glass and window frames, as well as reflective surfaces that make lower indoor surface temperatures secure thermal comfort. In this regard, companies like SPACECOOL, a Japanese start-up, are pioneers in radiative cooling materials that emit heat into space.

Japan supports the transfer of such advanced, low-carbon, energy-efficient technologies and knowledge to Southeast Asian and other countries through frameworks like the Joint Crediting Mechanism, a bilateral carbon credit system, and through official development assistance.

Japan hopes to work with partners globally for further implementation of the Global Cooling Pledge in order to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. Building on this, at COP31 this November in Antalya, Turkey, we will co-host a session with UNEP and the Cool Coalition at the Japan Pavilion to share Japan's initiatives for materialising the Global Cooling Pledge to the world. We welcome all the participants to join and discuss sustainable cooling.

To conclude, I express my sincere hope that every one of you in this assembly will continue to confront this challenge with integrity, deepen our discussions, and forge practical solutions together. I am confident that, if we do so through cross-border and cross-sectoral cooperation, we can surely build societies that are resilient to extreme heat, protecting the most vulnerable and ensuring sustainable prosperity for all.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.