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## TOP STATEMENT

Kuraray issued the “Kuraray Report” instead of the conventional CSR report in May 2018. The report of the Group's CSR activities is enhanced on the “Kuraray Report” and our website. We hope these will help you understand the Group better.

A company is asked what value it can provide to society through its business activities. At the Kuraray Group, we respond to this question through demonstrating actions that are driven by our aspiration, “For people and the plant—to achieve what no one else can.” These words construct our mission as set out in Kuraray’s corporate statements and reflect the strong belief of our second-generation president Soichiro Ohara, “Any profit which a company might gain should be confined to those profits that come from technological innovation and from consideration of the social and economic benefits it brings to the entire nation.”

Looking toward celebrating its centennial in 2026, Kuraray has set the vision it aims to achieve along with the basic policy as outlined in the “Kuraray Vision 2026” long-term vision. Our outlook for 2026 indicates changes in the business environment, including major revisions to rules, laws and regulations, emergence of technological innovation and advancement in digitalization on the back of the implementation of information communication networks and AI. We also project an increase in the presence of emerging countries in the economic arena. On the other hand, we may face more environmental and social challenges, such as a shortage of water resources and food.

Under such circumstances, the Kuraray Group views that there will be increasing opportunities to apply technical capabilities in chemistry to resolve challenges and problems that might newly arise due to drastic changes that could occur in all types of industries. Meanwhile, we can project a heightening risk that borderless competition will intensify as companies from emerging countries and venture firms make their entries into the market. The Group recognizes the importance of projecting in advance the changes that might take place in the years ahead, making clear how the Group intends to develop as a business enterprise and then taking respective measures to seize opportunities while responding to risks.

Under those circumstances, we have established the “Kuraray Vision 2026” of being a “Specialty Chemical Company, growing sustainably by incorporating new foundational platforms into its own technologies.” And we launched the “PROUD 2020” medium-term management plan in 2018. The name of the plan “PROUD” carries our aspiration of becoming a company that all people surrounding the Kuraray Group can take pride in. It also reflects our wish to be a “safe and secure company” in which employees can work to be happy and for which “employees can take pride in working” and of being a “company which continues to grow sustainably by incorporating new foundational platforms into its own technologies.”

Kuraray provides products and services that contribute to resolving medium- to long-term



Representative Director  
and President  
Masaaki Ito

social problems, such as water and food shortages and environmental footprint. The Company hopes to improve the natural environment by not only adopting environmentally friendly production processes, thereby lowering the environmental footprint of its production activities, but also helping customers reduce their burden on the environment in their production activities.

In recent years businesses have been actively encouraged to contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted by the United Nations. It is my view that Kuraray already has been carrying out some of these initiatives. Going forward, I intend to make improvements in areas where we need to do more, while considering how the Company should disclose to the world the initiatives it has been taking.

Since it is our people who carry out corporate activities in an aim to resolve these social problems, it is very important to make use of human resources and invigorate our workforce. In our efforts to create a workplace in which each and every employee can “lead a better life,” we work to improve our operating efficiency and quality through pursuing workstyle reforms and enhance the work-life balance of employees. In addition, considering that there are still more places, including production sites, in which female workers can play active roles, we are reinforcing initiatives to put in place a working environment with improved schemes for encouraging the active participation of female employees. We believe these efforts will lead to increasing the number of women in managerial positions.

Meanwhile, given the M&A deals concluded in recent years, the ratio of foreign employees has exceeded 30% and we now have three foreign executive officers. We are establishing personnel systems and education programs to hire globally minded persons and we look forward to more actively appointing foreigners to senior managerial positions.

Through pursuing these initiatives, we will aim to realize our vision of being a “company that people can take pride in.” To do this, we need to nurture ethics, to raise awareness about compliance and quality improvement. In March 2017, Kuraray received a cease and desist order from the Fair Trade Commission in connection with competitive bidding on textile products purchased by the Acquisition, Technology and Logistics Agency of the Defense Ministry. Also, in February 2017, the Fair Trade Commission made an on-the-spot inspection of the Company in connection with the production and sale of active carbon used in water purification facilities and waste incinerators. We took this series of events seriously and sincerely and have implemented the necessary measures to ensure such incidents are never repeated and have been taking initiatives to ensure compliance. Meanwhile, with regards to quality, we are striving to “constantly develop and provide safe, high-quality products and services” as stated in our corporate statement and continue to take initiatives to step up quality management and quality assurance. We want to be a company with high ethical views that is trusted by society as a good corporate citizen.

From time to time, I share with the rest of the organization my wish to make the Kuraray Group a “safe and secure company,” “a company that people can take pride in” and “a company growing stably by incorporating new foundational platforms into its own technologies.” For the Kuraray Group to achieve sustainable growth, it is important to share this wish and to have it passed on from one person to another. The philosophy of Soichiro Ohara that any profit which a company might gain should come from its devotion to carrying out duties and providing value to society has been passed down through the generations to the present. With our intention to hand down this approach and the devotion of the Company to future generations as a commitment toward achieving sustainable growth, Kuraray will continue to meet the expectations of its stakeholders.

*Masaaki Ito*

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