

## **MC(Ohto)**

Ladies and Gentlemen, I'd like to thank you for joining us for this Second International Symposium on Strategies for Regional and International Collaboration in Science and Technology. My name is Norio Ohto, Director at the Takeda Foundation, and I will be serving as MC at this symposium. This is the second international symposium on strategies for international collaboration in science and technology. The First Symposium was held in May at this venue where we introduced the Asia Research Area concept that will serve as a platform for Japan and Asia to collaborate in science and technology. The Asia Research Area concept includes funding for cross-border collaborative research in Asia, regional building of human capacity, and the sharing and utilization of regional research infrastructure to boost the competitive research capacity of the region. At the end of May of this year, a trilateral summit was held on Cheju Island involving Japan, China, and South Korea where an agreement was reached to promote international collaboration among the three nations similar to the ARA concept. This initiative proposed by the Japanese government has since moved forward. Today we would like to share the progress thus made, and to introduce the activities of social entrepreneurs active with counterparts in Asia. We are delivering this symposium with the support of the Ministry of Education, Sports, Science and Technology, the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Trade, the Cabinet Office, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I would like to take this opportunity to extend our heartfelt gratitude for this support.

Ladies and Gentlemen, representing our co-sponsors, we would like to invite Mr. Katsuyoshi Asahioka, Director of the Board of the Engineering Academy of Japan to give us some opening remarks. The Engineering Academy of Japan is an organization comprising leading academics who have come together to contribute to the advancement of engineering, science and technology, and is a body also responsible for making policy proposals. Mr. Asahioka also serves as the Vice Chairman of the Committee on Technology Policy, the core committee responsible for policy proposals. Mr. Asahioka, please.

## **Mr. Asahioka**

Thank you very much for the kind introduction. I am Katsuyoshi Asahioka, Director of the Board of the Engineering Academy of Japan. I would like to thank you all for joining us today despite your busy schedules at this year end.

Representing the co-sponsors, I would like to present some opening remarks. This serves as the Second International Symposium on Strategies for Regional and International Collaboration in Science and Technology as we work toward the co-creation of innovation in Asia. We will be engaging in a panel discussion as well as citing some examples of concrete progress that has been made. In 2008, the world was overcome by a financial crisis triggered by the Lehman Crisis, and this world economic crisis has had far-reaching consequences on the actual state of the economy. This is not restricted to Japan, but also the rest of the world. As we look back on the changes that have taken place in the last year, the progress has been phenomenal. First and foremost, the emerging nations in the Asian region have been able to overcome the economic crisis, and have now landed on a route to economic growth. In Japan, as you are well aware through coverage in the media, we have been exposed to a variety of indicators, for example, GDP, rankings of international competitiveness, as well as rankings of universities, that suggest a decline in the influence of Japan in international society. This indicates that, indeed, Japan has been facing a critical situation. Japan has made investments in Asia as well as in the development of human resource capacity. We have a history of collaborating with our Asian counterparts. However, looking back on the year just passed, we find that China is at the fore, and also that there is an enhancement in the sophistication of the industrial capacity and economic structure of Asia as a whole. The creation of the East Asian Science and Innovation Area has been proposed by Japanese government to be able to address issues related to infrastructure, as well as energy, resources, the environment, and the effects of aging populations together with our Asian counterparts. These are issues that not only Japan confronts, but, indeed, have become universal issues. The roles to be played by science and technology in overcoming these problems will become more pronounced. Looking at the industrial community, we are exposed by the appreciation of the yen, and in response, many industries have been moving the manufacturing bases offshore. There is about 36 trillion yen worth of investment that has been moved offshore, which translates roughly to about 7% of the GDP. There is also competition for outstanding human resources that has become intense. Of course, we find that at home, here in Japan, the issue of employment is a very serious one. Recently, new social infrastructure businesses including a smart city represented by the smart grid water, renewable energy, traffic, and urban development are becoming major industries that mount up to 40 trillion

dollars in business, and developing Asian countries are now becoming the center of these businesses. Then we see new innovations such as the rise of 3-D television, mobile handsets utilizing 3-D technology, and e-books. As we are seeing increased sophistication in industries Asia-wide, it seems that the general trend has been exposed to dramatic changes. And as we look toward the future, I believe that the trend will not change, and we can expect to see liquidity in human resources. Recently, we also see the importance rare metals and energy, which points out the need for energy diplomacy and science and technology diplomacy. It is important to integrate the economy and science and technology into our diplomatic endeavors. We will reach a crossroads in the next year where we must integrate our forces in order to compete. The coming two or three years will, indeed, be a test for Japan as the sense of crisis becomes diluted here in Japan. The issues are not limited to science and technology: we will also need to address innovation policies and face the need of securing outstanding human resources. At the outset of the symposium we will discuss the importance of science and technology diplomacy as a vision for Japan. As Asia is actively trying to incorporate technology from Japan, the question is whether Japan will be able to respond, not merely by dispensing technology, but also be able to leverage and utilize science and technology for future development. In the second half of this symposium we will see several examples of co-creation of innovation in Asia. Since the presence of Japan has been diluting, the question is how we will be able to respond to issues of global importance, as well as issues specific to Asia. I hope that the panel discussion will allow a very active and productive discussion that will allow us to pave the way for the future so that we will be able to seek resolutions for the issues that we face. Thank you very much for your kind attention.