

**Speech as Chair of the Opening Plenary Session  
Third Annual Meeting of the STS *forum*  
September 10, 2006, Kyoto, Japan**

**Koji Omi  
Member  
House of Representatives, Japan**

Chief Cabinet Secretary Abe representing the Japanese government, Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the board members of the Science and Technology in Society *forum*, I am greatly honored to hereby declare our third annual meeting open. We have in attendance over 600 figures in different fields, including 32(P) ministers in charge of science and technology, from more than 60 countries and regions.

I would like to express my deep appreciation to the sponsors, various organizations and their staffs that have made it possible to hold this forum. I would also like to take this opportunity to announce that we have created a non-profit organization, which began operating in April this year, to manage the *forum*.

Today, I think that progress in science and technology has made us feel as if humankind can control the globe at will. It is true that science and technology has become highly developed. However, when we ponder new developments in science and technology, we need to see both the benefits and the risks.

The rapid progress of science and technology has brought prosperity and enriched our quality of life. It has also provided us with solutions to overcome many problems we have faced. At the same time, however, the advancement of science and technology raises ethical, safety and environmental issues. We call these the lights and shadows of science and technology.

Humans must live in harmony with nature and with the laws of the universe. We should keep in mind that we are part of the universe. In this regard, we must all learn to use science and technology to our best advantage while overcoming its negative aspects.

The means for doing so do exist. The challenge is to apply them, and to apply them in a coherent way. That is why a gathering like the STS *forum* is of vital importance.

This forum is not a gathering where professional scientists convey their knowledge to an audience. Rather, it is an opportunity for real dialogue among people of different backgrounds and from different fields. The questions raised by science and technology have an impact on all of us, whoever we are and wherever we live. We want people to start thinking about science and technology issues as their own, as responsible individuals concerned about the future of humankind.

During the last two STS *forums*, we have seen increasing synergies among participants, be they scientists, business leaders, policymakers or others. I believe that since the first STS *forum* gathering in 2004, the concept of the forum has become more firmly established.

This time, we have many discussion themes, ranging from sustainability and economic growth, ICT, and intellectual property, to standards for research activities, capacity building, infectious diseases, and food and water supplies. It is very important to solve these issues for the future of humankind.

I believe that we are witnessing the beginning of a new movement. This forum must continue to offer opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds to meet, discuss and come up with creative solutions for sustainable development that will be respectful of nature.

We have no option. We must succeed. Our survival is at stake.

Thank you.

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*“Closing Speech”* for Opening Ceremony at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of the STS *forum*  
September 10, 2006, Kyoto, Japan

Thank you very much for your valuable presentations.

We are here to discuss how to deal with science and technology issues for the prosperity of mankind. Developments in science and technology can threaten our very existence, but the key to solving such problems also lies in science and technology itself. In order to seek effective answers, we must, during this forum, set aside differences of nationality, race and culture, and learn to think of ourselves as inhabitants of this planet.

I sincerely hope that the discussions over the coming three days will be stimulating, and that your experience here in Kyoto will be a memorable one.

Thank you.