

Closing Session Speech
5th Annual Meeting of the STS *forum*
October 7, 2008, Kyoto, Japan

Koji OMI
Member, House of Representatives, Japan
Founder and Chairman, STS *forum*

Your Imperial Highness the Crown Prince;
Excellencies, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen:

As chairman of the STS *forum*, I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all of you for your great contributions in making this year's *forum* very successful. I was very encouraged by how participants thought of the issues as their own and offered constructive opinions and profound insights on the future of humankind. The major subject we discussed at this *forum* was "Harmony with Nature." The statement distributed to you, which was agreed upon by Council members, describes the broad outlines of the discussions we have had.

Harmony with nature is the most important challenge for humankind. We agreed on the need to establish a new international framework which replaces the Kyoto Protocol, in which all countries, including the U.S., China and India, will participate. We welcomed the G8 leaders' shared view of seeking to adopt a global target for reducing global emissions of greenhouse gases.

Rapid progress in energy efficiency and clean alternative energy development are indispensable, in view of the expected increase in global energy needs and of environmental concerns. This year, our discussions focused on nuclear power. We believe that nuclear power, under strict conditions of safeguards, safety and security, is crucially important for solving environmental and energy problems.

Bio-fuel has been developed as one of the alternatives to fossil fuels, but its potentially adverse effects on food supplies and the environment should be recognized. Therefore, second-generation technologies for bio-fuels from non-food sources need to be developed.

Given the growing number of the hungry and an unstable food supply, both GMO and non-GMO research should be promoted by paying attention to safety while continuing to make efforts to gain public acceptance.

Significant progress in genome research is making personalized medicine possible. Meanwhile,

international standards for privacy protection are needed.

The further development of ICT will help solve global environment, education and health issues and contribute to business innovation. We must, however, ensure that concerns over the security, privacy and use of personal data are met.

The intellectual property system is essential for innovation, and we underlined the significance of establishing a pro-innovation global intellectual property infrastructure.

We have been recommending joint research in science and technology between developing and developed countries to mobilize and empower the human resources of developing countries. As a result of our initiative, the Japanese government has begun a new policy of science and technology diplomacy, which we welcome.

Direct dialogue between political leaders and scientists should be encouraged. Policymakers should convey the needs of society to scientists and properly reflect accumulated scientific knowledge in their policies. Scientists should make efforts to communicate their knowledge to policymakers and the general public in plain language. This is an area where the media can play a significant role in aiding communication.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Up until the 20th century, the Earth was infinite for our economic activities and our needs. But in the 21st century, it has become finite for mankind. For the sake of humankind's future survival, we must change our economic behavior and daily life to reflect that the Earth is finite. We should not forget that humankind is part of nature. We must thoroughly understand the lights and shadows of science and technology and try our utmost to accumulate knowledge and understanding and use them wisely, in order to survive and prosper according to the principle of harmony with nature.

The *forum* has been very helpful for deepening ties of friendship and expanding our human network. Exchanging views with the distinguished participants in this meeting made it possible for us to learn about the latest developments in science and technology. All of these achievements, I believe, highlight the significance of holding this *forum*.

The lights and shadows of science and technology have a great impact on humankind. Based on the idea that we share a common destiny on Earth, it is important for everyone, regardless of race or nationality, and beyond borders that are merely lines on a map, to consider these issues as their own. In accordance with this philosophy, we will continue the work of the STS *forum*.

This forum is not a mere conference but a movement for world leaders in various fields to ensure the survival and prosperity of humankind. It is an opportunity for us to work together toward this end, and I have high aspirations that we can live in harmony with nature and create a bright future for the generations to come.

I would like to express my deep appreciation for the support of sponsors, various organizations and their staffs that have made this forum a success.

Finally, on behalf of the members of STS *forum* I would like to say that it is our great honor to conclude this year's STS *forum* in the presence of His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince.

Let me announce that we have reserved this venue for the first Sunday to Tuesday in October for the coming 10 years. Our next Annual Meeting will take place here in Kyoto from Sunday, October 4 to Tuesday, October 6, 2009. I look forward to all of us gathering here again to discuss science and technology from the perspective of the future of humankind.

Thank you.