

Opening Ceremony Speech at the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Meeting  
of the STS *forum*

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As founder and chairman of the Science and Technology in Society Forum, I am greatly honored to hereby declare our sixth annual meeting open.

First, I would like to convey my deepest appreciation for the participation of over 800 persons in different fields from 86 countries, regions and international organizations.

I would also like to thank the sponsors and other organizations that have made it possible to hold this forum.

We have discussed the “Lights and Shadows of Science and Technology” since the inaugural meeting of this forum.

At the annual meeting of the U.S. National Academy of Sciences in April this year, President Barack Obama said, “Science is more essential for our prosperity, our security, our health, our environment, and our quality of life than it has ever been before.” I believe that President Obama’s remark is exactly what we mean by the “lights” of science and technology.

On the other hand, science and technology has brought about problems such as global warming,

ethical concerns in the bio-sciences, information security issues in ICT and the risk of nuclear proliferation. These are the “shadows” of science and technology.

We must develop the “lights” and control the “shadows” of science and technology.

This December, COP 15, the United Nations Climate Change Conference, will be held in Copenhagen to discuss a concrete post-Kyoto Protocol framework. At the STS *forum*, we have repeatedly stressed the necessity of establishing a new framework in which all the countries of the world, including the United States, China and India, will participate. We strongly hope that such a new framework will be agreed upon at COP 15.

From the beginning of this forum five years ago, we have been stressing the need for more support for developing countries through science and technology from the developed countries, in addition to their financial power, to contribute to the growth and progress of developing countries. We welcome that Japan and other countries have adopted science and technology diplomacy toward developing countries.

At the STS *forum*, we have discussed science and technology problems based on the awareness that science and technology is not an issue for scientists and engineers alone. Given that science and technology has such a strong impact on the future of humanity, everyone should think of it as their own problem rather than leaving the subject to professional scientists.

At the same time, we also recognized that the problems related to science and technology cannot be solved by one or two countries alone; international cooperation and system harmonization are essential. We should discuss the common issues together at the global level.

Last year, the world economy was thrown into unprecedented turmoil, which affected science and technology investment. However, we should realize that science and technology plays a key role in economic growth over the medium to long term and that we must keep investing in science and technology.

As an alternative to fossil fuels, we should promote the use of nuclear energy under strict conditions of nuclear safeguards, safety and security. The increased risk of nuclear proliferation has become

a crucial issue for the future of humankind. It is vital for us to address this issue with human wisdom and take decisive steps to prevent proliferation in order to enjoy the benefits of science and technology.

The world is facing the H1N1 influenza pandemic, and we must make every effort to fight against this and other infectious diseases through measures such as more effective development and distribution of vaccines. A new international system might be needed to consider and enforce these measures.

From the viewpoints of energy and the environment, the development of alternative energy for transportation, such as electric vehicles and fuel cell vehicles, is a very important issue from the long-term perspective. This issue has

been added to the forum's program this year.

Other new themes on the program are space and marine science and technology, in recognition that promoting research in these frontier areas is important. We have also included the topics of cloud computing and research on iPS.

This year, we held a Regional Climate Change Conference as an adjunct session of the *STS forum*. This is the first conference to discuss climate change issues on a regional basis, and the output of the conference will be reported at tomorrow's session.

I believe the *STS forum* is a platform for people of different backgrounds from all over the world to gather and discuss, on an equal footing, how to deal with science and technology from the

viewpoint of the future of humankind.

Therefore, this forum is not a gathering where professional scientists lecture to convey their knowledge to an audience. It is an opportunity for participants to frankly discuss science and technology issues in relation to the future of humankind as individuals rather than as representatives of an organization or a nation. As I have said in previous years, national boundaries are merely lines on a map: we are here to think about the issues as members of humankind. In our discussions, we should keep in mind that science and technology is one of the keys to resolving the problems brought about by science and technology itself.

The STS *forum* is an opportunity to deepen our human network and is also a venue for us to share

our aspirations.

Let us be ambitious about finding ways to create a prosperous, secure, and sustainable future for humankind. With the human network and mutual understanding which we have been building at this forum, we can move the world toward a bright future.

I have high expectations that our frank and active exchange of views over the next few days will contribute to the prosperity of humankind.

Thank you.

## Introduction of Deputy Prime Minister Kan

I am honored now to introduce Mr. Naoto Kan, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy, who is here to address the STS *forum* as the representative of the Japanese government.

Mr. Kan, who has a science and technology background, graciously accepted to speak to us today despite a very heavy schedule. This is proof that the new government is eager to promote science and technology and support the STS *forum*.

Mr. Kan must return to Tokyo immediately after his speech, but this meant a six-hour round-trip from Tokyo. We sincerely appreciate his presence here today.

Please welcome Deputy Prime Minister Kan.