

Keynote Address
by Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda
at The Fourth Meeting of the
Science and Technology in Society Forum

October 7, 2007

Honorable members of the Council,
Distinguished Participants,
My friends,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very much pleased to be here. I have known for some time that my friend Koji Omi has been tremendously keen on this. I am glad that I finally made it myself to join you. The only regret is I must rush back to Tokyo after this.

The dramatic progress of science and technology during the 20th Century made mass production possible. As a result, there is now a great abundance of convenient products available at affordable prices. Japan has in fact developed into a major economic power in a world that is characterized by the cycle of mass production and mass consumption.

Now, in this 21st Century, many developing countries across the globe are focusing their efforts on achieving economic development based on the same pattern. As the global population continues to grow, we are witnessing ceaseless expansion of the socio-economic system that perpetuates this pattern of mass production and mass consumption.

However, the development pattern that served us well during the 20th Century is coming to a dead end. We are gradually running out of the natural resources that are vital for manufacturing activities. Moreover, our precious global environment is increasingly being eroded by pollution from the waste that results from mass production and mass consumption.

No one nation alone can possibly tackle the challenges that we face in terms of natural resources and the environment. We all live on this Earth in a state of mutual cooperation. These challenges require all nations to join hands and, indeed, all the people on Earth to focus on the same objective.

Now is the time when we must break away from a society which favors mass production and mass consumption. In my view, we must develop a “new 21st Century system of production and consumption” that will be friendly to our global environment, and make the transition to a

sustainable society.

Japan has launched an initiative, called “Cool Earth 50”. We must cool down the earth, by reducing the emissions by 50%, by the year 2050, hence the name, Cool Earth 50.

This is a vision for our future generations to be realized by all of us, developed, as well as developing economies, especially major emitters. Most importantly, this is a vision to be realized by believing in science and technology.

The 20th Century science and technology gave us power to maximize all sorts of things. Now, they ought to become a great minimizing force. To minimize the emissions, the pace and tempo of global warming, and to minimize the use of fossil fuel.

I sincerely hope that you make the STS Forum a thriving conference, whose voices enlighten the world, whose presence provides an important node for the network of leaders in science and technology, business and politics the world over.

My own vision for my own country will be that Japan continues to be the nation where new inventions, technologies, above all new minds gather to generate new power, with which humanity will make the earth cooler, and the whole earth truly a sustainable environment.

Come July next year, I will be chairing the G8 Summit by the beautiful lake of Toya in Hokkaido. This will be an important occasion to think hard on how best to give life to the initiative, Cool Earth 50.

Last month, Japan launched its first lunar explorer Kaguya, also known as Selene, which successfully reached the moon’s orbit last week. Equipped with state-of-the-art high-definition cameras, Kaguya will send high resolution images of the Earth from the moon for the first time ever. I look forward to seeing a clear view of our beautiful, blue shining planet.

We must protect this beautiful planet and see to it that it is passed on to generations to come. We must fulfill this responsibility to our future generations.

If we look closely at the high resolution images of the Earth floating in the distance from the moon, we may be able to find our beautiful ancient capital of Kyoto.

As the leaves prepare to take on autumn colors, I wish you a very pleasant stay in Kyoto.

Thank you for your kind attention.