Science and Technology in Society *forum*
3rd Annual Meeting
September 12, 2006 (Embargo until 12:00 noon)
Kyoto, Japan

STATEMENT

1. The 3rd Annual Meeting of the Science and Technology in Society forum was held from September 10 to 12, with the participation of approximately 600 leading scientists, policymakers, business executives and opinion leaders from 70 countries, regions and international organizations. Chief Cabinet Secretary Shinzo Abe, representing the Japanese government, noted the importance of dialogue and cooperation among science, business and politics, and of bringing together knowledge, wealth and power to contribute to society. Stimulating discussions and exchanges of views on the lights and shadows of science and technology took place from the standpoint of the future of humankind. The main points of the discussions were as follows.

2. It is critical for humankind to achieve sustainable development by striking a good balance between economic activity and environment protection. We recognized the importance of acting on climate change and agreed on the need to reduce greenhouse gases but want to go beyond the Kyoto Protocol, for a new, practical and effective framework in which all countries, including the United States, China and India, will participate.

3. We believe it is necessary to make rapid progress in energy efficiency, and to further develop alternative energy sources. We also recognized that the use of nuclear fission power, under strict conditions of safety and non-proliferation, must play an increasingly important role. Furthermore, it is essential to invest in developing and implementing nuclear fusion power for the future.

4. The life sciences, particularly in the post-genome era, raise many opportunities and challenges related to protection of intellectual property, data sharing and ethics. We feel it is important to increase funds for basic research and to maintain incentives for academic and private research and to establish common international rules or standards that will enable researchers in all countries to collaborate in their research activities.

5. We recognized that developing vaccines and medical therapies against infectious diseases such as AIDS, avian flu, malaria and tuberculosis is vital for mankind's future and requires urgent action. In addition, we need infrastructure for distribution of medicines and information exchange, as well as preparedness for future pandemic outbreaks.

6. We acknowledged that crop production must be increased to feed the growing human population. Science should be employed to enhance food security, particularly in the developing world, where many people face food and water shortages. We also shared a common view on the necessity of making water technologies, including water purification and desalinization, available.

7. We reached a consensus that further development of Information and Communications Technology or ICT is necessary, to build a thriving future for humankind. We agreed that the current open global network has great value from the standpoint of building a knowledge-based society. Reducing the vulnerabilities of networks and ensuring privacy are also of vital importance. We believe that access to scientific information is so critical that it must be as complete as possible.

8. Since science and technology are essential for the effective socio-economic advancement of the developing countries, we acknowledge the importance of more international science and technology collaboration in the form of joint research and capacity building. Appropriate development assistance resources should be allocated for this purpose.

9. Many participants also supported the idea of beginning discussions to establish a global, integrated system of intellectual property rights.

10. Universities, in addition to their primary role of educating students, should play an important role in contributing to economic development by promoting innovation through business - academia collaboration. Therefore, we reached a consensus on the need for improving the research environment and promoting system reforms in universities. We also agreed on the importance of encouraging the full and equal integration of female researchers in the field of science and technology.

11. We shared the view that new breakthroughs in science and technology, for example nanotechnology, biotechnology, and ICT, will be so significant that they should be used effectively for the benefit of humankind.

12. We also noted that policy-makers and people working in the media play an important role in encouraging general scientific literacy. Reinforcing math and science education is also vital.

13. Although these issues are not easy to solve in the short term, we acknowledged that we should not give up our efforts to address these challenges. It is true that science and technology have become so advanced that we are prone to feel as if humankind can control the globe at will. We need to think seriously about what humankind and the globe should be like in 50 or even 100 years from now. Science and technology should not control humankind; humankind should control science and technology. It is important for all people, not only professional scientists but also legislators, business leaders and opinion makers, to think of science and technology issues as their own. We acknowledged that the forum serves as an important venue where people, regardless of race, nationality and culture, exchange views on how to deal with science and technology issues from the long-range perspective of humankind.

14. We also agreed to hold the next STS forum in Kyoto from October 7 to 9, 2007. We look forward for all to join us then to pursue our endeavors to understand the lights and shadows of science and technology as we seek to harness new knowledge for a better future of humankind in harmony with nature.

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