

Address & Guest Speech

Address by H.I.H. the Crown Prince

Opening Ceremony, October 15, 2015

I am delighted that the Global Environmental Action (GEA) International Conference 2015 is being held with so many experts from Japan and overseas participating.

Global warming is an ongoing real-world problem. For instance, it has been indicated that the continual emission of greenhouse gases will lead to further warming and to longterm changes in the climate system, and will increase the potential for serious, far-reaching, irreversible impacts on people and ecosystems.

Under these circumstances, with a theme of “Policies and Measures to Cope with Climate Change and towards a Sustainable Society,” this year’s conference is an invaluable opportunity to bring together the world’s wisdom for sustainable development. In June 2012, twenty years after the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development was once again held in Rio de Janeiro, and consensus was reached by 188 member states on “The Future We Want,” a document that depicted a course for our sustainable future. Moreover, in September this year, the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development” was adopted by the United Nations, and a decision was reached on new global Sustainable Development Goals for the next fifteen years. What matters now are the actions each and every one of us take toward the sustainable future for which we aspire.

I understand that experts in a variety of fields have been invited to this conference to engage in discussion related to climate change measures, including on the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable development goals and the roles played by academics and researchers.

I expect that in this conference lively discussions will be conducted and a message will be delivered to people around the world, in pursuit of a future in which we, our descendants, and all living things can enjoy the blessings of the global environment forever. I also hope that concrete initiatives for the creation of sustainable societies will be further promoted.

Thank you.

Shinzo Abe

Prime Minister, Japan

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Honored by the presence of Their Imperial Highnesses the Crown Prince and Crown Princess, I would like to say a few words on this occasion of the GEA International Conference 2015.

This conference arose under the leadership of former Prime Minister, Noboru Takeshita, a quarter of a century ago. World leaders had gathered in Tokyo to ensure success for the upcoming Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

At the United Nations last month, world leaders adopted the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” New goals for action to combat climate change, energy and the development of high-quality infrastructure were included in the Agenda. For our world to be sustainable, combating climate change is an action that cannot be sidestepped. This recognition was shared with the leaders in attendance.

The forthcoming COP21 will be held in Paris at the end of this year. Climate change is advancing on a global scale, and so must be addressed on a global scale. I share this sense of crisis together with leaders of developed countries and island countries alike. Japan will do its utmost to help put together a new international framework in Paris, which is fair and effective and in which “all countries participate.”

Japan will contribute to the global reduction of greenhouse gases, leveraging our strength in outstanding low-carbon technologies.

In Japan, we have set an ambitious goal to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 26 percent by fiscal 2030, which is on par with international targets. Underpinning the buildup to this target is energy mix. We will realize the three essential elements of “reducing electricity costs,” “increasing the degree of energy self-sufficiency to above the levels before the Great East Japan Earthquake,” and “reducing greenhouse gas emissions on a comparable level to the United States and Europe.”

Innovation is the key to combating global warming. Last week, an international conference called ICEF (Innovation for Cool Earth Forum) was held in Tokyo. Leveraging networks of global leaders in industry, academia and government will generate concrete action for innovation.

Japan’s outstanding low-carbon technologies will be actively transferred to developing countries. For this purpose, we have developed a Bilateral Offset Credit Mechanism, and are implementing specific projects. The number of partner countries has reached 15 in Asia, Africa, Central and South America and Oceania. By also combining financial assistance for each country, Japan will provide comprehensive support to improve the capacity of developing countries in addressing climate change.

Next year, Japan will host the G7 Summit, and we will invite world leaders to Ise-Shima. The vast, rich waters of Shima lead from the Pacific Ocean to the Indian Ocean. Cherishing the ideas and hopes of the many countries in Asia and Africa, as the host country, Japan will engage in frank discussions with the world leaders for the sake of global peace and prosperity.

We will also use this precious opportunity for participants to indulge in Japan's traditions, culture and beautiful nature, including at the Ise Jingu shrine. Our aim is to make this an occasion to communicate the wonder of Japan's *furusato* (hometowns) to the world.

The Earth provides for the *furusato* of people all over the world. It is our duty to hand down a beautiful planet to future generations.

In conclusion, with this purpose in mind, I look forward to this conference producing much fruitful discussion. Thank you.