

Opening Remarks



Speaker

Katsuei Hirasawa

Senior Deputy Minister of Cabinet Office

Summary

Japan has very few resources and can only rely on the brains of human beings, based upon science and technology. As the 21st century has been ushered in, we have entered into a period of declining population. On the other hand, on the global front, very serious issues such as environment, energy, population and food have become quite prevalent. In order for Japan to continue to grow, and for each person in Japan to have a thriving, safe and comfortable lifestyle, to enable the Japanese people to contribute to the challenges that face the world, we must create innovation that will bring about new vigor.

As you know, Prime Minister Abe, in the State of the Union address immediately after his appointment, came up with the concept of Innovation 25. He has appointed Dr. Kurokawa to chair the Strategy Council for Innovation 25. The Council has been formulating the Innovation 25 plan. This plan will take us through 2025, and its objective is to realize the future of Japan in which it is rich and full of hope. Studies have been underway on various

policies regarding R&D, reform of the social institutions, human resources development and other areas that would be important for short-term and mid-term measures in order to realize innovation, and the strategy was adopted by the government recently.

As the image of Japan in 2025, our objective of becoming a society that contributes to global challenges and to the world has been asserted. Last year, we held a conference in Kyoto and this year we are having yet another symposium here under the theme of global innovation. The concept of global development and innovation may sound quite new. However, as described in the declaration of the leaders at the G-8 summit that took place recently in Germany, in order to ensure prosperity of the world and sustainable development, innovation must be developed on a worldwide basis, and this has become a global consensus.

At this conference, we hope to discuss the latest measures that are being implemented in Japan to promote innovation and to learn about the various measures being taken in other countries. We also wish to discuss what is necessary for the assurance of global development innovation, for a thriving world and a sustainable society.

What can Japan do? What role can we play? We are to seek solutions from these perspectives. At this kind of international conference, where wisdom from around the world is gathered, it is wonderful that we are able to hold a serious discussion on global innovation.

This conference is being held under the collaboration of various entities representing industry, academia and the government. This kind of collaboration will enable diverse and yet united debate that will bring Japan as one. We truly hope that various proposals will come out of this conference and that they will be truly effective as policy proposals.