

Statement by H.E. Mr. Kentaro Sonoura
State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
at the 5th World Government Summit
on February 12, 2017

Your Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, President of UAE,
Your Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and
Prime Minister of UAE,
Your Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi
and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces,
Ministers, Distinguished Colleagues and Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the Fifth World Government Summit, and we thank UAE for selecting Japan as the guest country of this summit. We deeply respect the efforts of UAE to build an open society -- a society that does not rely exclusively on oil, but one that has established itself as a hub of business in the region.

The unceasing efforts of UAE have built a level of prosperity that has garnered the world's admiration. We respect the achievements of UAE and we laud your stance on diversity. You have built a tolerant and multicultural society. Your commitment to the environment, public safety, public health and medical care, human development, and good governance are examples to governments around the world.

For "Shaping Future Governments," which is the main theme of this summit, we should ask what the most important role for governments is. I think that it is investment in the future, especially, investment in education and innovation.

The Japanese education system is unique in its emphasis on civic responsibility. This shared civic responsibility is based on self-discipline and mutual cooperation. Our respect for discipline and cooperation is a tradition deeply held by the Japanese people. This tradition originates from the Samurai ethos whose virtues include "courage," "justice," "propriety," "honor," and "loyalty" as well as from Confucianism that teaches devotion to parents, family and friends. To reinforce these traditional values, which are deeply rooted in our society, our government, for example, encourages students to clean their schools because it is a space they share. Doing so creates a sense of ownership. In addition the government includes morals and ethics, like respect for the elderly, in the curriculum. Furthermore, physical training in schools also keeps students healthy and teaches them the value of

cooperation, which is an indispensable part of innovation particularly in the fields of science and technology.

This Japanese-style education that respects self-discipline and mutual cooperation has been introduced in a number of countries. For instance, in UAE, at the initiative of His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi, some UAE students study at the Japanese School in Abu Dhabi.

It is also significant to provide educational opportunities for all citizens. By the eighteenth century, Japanese society had established an inclusive learning system where not only rich but also poor children, including girls, had access to basic education such as reading, writing and arithmetic. Following our defeat in the Second World War, Japan once again became one of the world's main economic players. Despite the disruption of the Second World War, Japan maintained the principle of inclusive education. I am convinced it was one of the reasons for the rapid recovery from the war and its aftermath. This so-called "miracle" was thanks to the Government of Japan's emphasis on education for all. Today, our government still attaches the highest priority to providing equal opportunity for all citizens and is expanding scholarships so that everyone can realize their dreams, regardless of the material wealth of their upbringing.

However, pushing self-discipline alone never makes students want to study. Education should stimulate intellectual curiosity as it is the motive for learning and begets innovation. This leads me to my second point. The government should create a legal and social environment that fosters innovation. In other words, there should be no legal or social barriers that hinder the intellectual curiosity of inventors. I am very proud that Japan has produced 16 Nobel Prize winners in the field of science in this century. In addition, in 2015, His Highness Sheikh Mohamed bin Rashid presented an award to Dr. Hiroshi Ishiguro, a professor from Osaka University in Japan, for his work on developing a humanoid robot.

In order to utilize a nation's talent, the government must dismantle barriers that interfere with innovation through steps such as increasing research and development investment and implementing regulatory reform. I would like to introduce a few examples.

Firstly, Japan will accelerate the development of new drugs and treatment methods by utilizing big data to analyze massive amounts of medical information while protecting personal information.

Secondly, the Government of Japan established specially designated areas where the private sector could freely conduct research and tests for automated driving

powered by artificial intelligence, AI. The spread of automated driving will lead to a safer society with less traffic accidents.

Thirdly, we are working on the promotion of a hydrogen energy society. Hydrogen energy is critical for energy security and helps address global warming by reducing emissions. Regulatory reform will soon clear the way for the development of a robust hydrogen industry. The world's first-ever hydrogen bus, nationwide hydrogen stations, and in Kobe city, for the first time in Japan, electricity supplied by hydrogen power generation will all be the hallmarks of this hydrogen energy society.

Last year, the world was captivated by advances in AI, and the Internet of Things, or IoT, both of which are part of the so-called Fourth Industrial Revolution. Leading this revolution through promoting industrial applications of IoT, big data, AI and robotics are the core of the growth strategy of the Government of Japan. New business models and services tailored to individuals will be created as a result of IoT and robots. All factories and shops will be connected through IoT, enabling zero inventory and instantaneous order-made production. This could represent a game-changer for industry and economic growth. For this to be realized, the Government of Japan has already established a special unit for new technology and started development of human resources, including the introduction of computer programming education in the primary and secondary schools.

In conclusion, the role of government is to invest in our people's future by promoting education and innovation. In order to tackle future obstacles, government will accelerate investment in new technology. At the same time, government should boldly conduct regulatory reforms to clear a path to shine for the best of the new talent who were raised by an inclusive education system.

In Dubai, we have the biggest Japanese business community in this region. I would be delighted if the government and companies of Japan both contribute the success of this Summit as well as prosperity of people in the region.

Thank you very much.