

Welcome Remarks by H.E. Mr. Taro Kono,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
at the reception for CULCON Next Generation
Task Force FORUM in Tokyo

Mr. Harry A. Hill, the U.S. Panel Chair,
Mr. Ryozi Kato, the Japan Panel Chair,
Distinguished participants and guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the participants and guests who have gathered here.

My personal encounter with the U.S. goes back to my days as a student in the 1980's. I studied at Georgetown University, where I belonged to a seminar taught by Dr. Madeleine Albright, Former Secretary of State. I still remember those days when I was absorbed in discussions with peer students.

The Japan-U.S. alliance is the cornerstone of global and regional prosperity and stability. It is an alliance based on the universal value shared between the two nations.

CULCON has made remarkable achievements by providing ideas to the two nations. One highlight of its achievements is in the Annex of U.S.-Japan Joint Statement in 2014, which endorsed the goal proposed by CULCON to double the number of student exchanges by 2020.

While CULCON has led this robust bilateral relation, we need to pass on such achievements to the next generation. Our urgent task is to foster younger leaders.

CULCON Next Generation Task Force is therefore encouraged to enlarge its human network and to provide concrete suggestions for measures to be taken. Japan will strengthen our commitment to CULCON and its Next Generation Task Force.

As Foreign Minister, I will spare no effort to further advance Japan-U.S. relations and CULCON. Thank you.