

Toward a Peaceful and Prosperous World

June 1, 2010

The severe reality facing the world today is one in which many people suffer from starvation, diseases, conflicts, climate change and natural disasters such as earthquakes, and are unable to live in dignity. The negative impact of the global economic and financial crisis remains serious among vulnerable segments in developing countries. This is the case particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, where the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) seems elusive.

In these circumstances, Japan believes that it is of great importance to consider the plight of people around the world as our own challenges and to work on assisting developing countries in order to make the concept of human security a reality. This idea has motivated this new administration from its very beginning to demonstrate our leadership in a variety of approaches toward global issues, including a new assistance package for Afghanistan and Pakistan, the “Hatoyama Initiative” to tackle climate change and emergency humanitarian relief for the earthquake in Haiti.

Although the international community, including Japan, has been actively engaging in international cooperation, we need to mobilize even broader development funds in order to meet the global challenges of development, a major example being the MDGs. As we have not fully recovered from the economic and financial crisis, we need to tap into new financial resources by promoting innovative financing mechanisms such as international solidarity levies in order to address global challenges, including poverty reduction and climate change.

The Leading Group on Innovative Financing for Development has taken the initiative in discussions concerning innovative financing mechanisms since its creation in 2006. It has expanded its membership year by year, and the number of member states has reached 60.

I realize that the Leading Group has developed this initiative into a global movement. There still remains, however, the need to evoke greater interest in this undertaking and to promote active engagement by a broader range of countries, if we are to substantially spread the idea of innovative financing. For this purpose, it would be beneficial to take an incremental approach, whereby we start with a small but global initiative and then expand it gradually through comprehensive discussions.

Thanks to the expectations of and the confidence in Japan expressed by all the members of the Leading Group, Japan is honored to serve as the President of the Leading Group after Chile. As the President, Japan is committed to fulfilling its duty by stirring interest in innovative financing at home and abroad and by contributing to its development. With this firm determination, Japan is preparing to host the eighth Plenary Meeting of the Leading Group.