

## Message from the Minister for Foreign Affairs

2009 was a year in which Japan underwent an enormous transformation brought about by a change of government. When I assumed the office of Foreign Minister, I emphasized that I considered this occasion to be a great opportunity and that I intended to pursue foreign policy based on the understanding and trust of the Japanese people. Towards this end, I have placed premium on three principles; first, understand the reality on the ground; second, in policy consideration, always return to the basics; and third, communicate to the public in plain and clear language. This newly published *Diplomatic Bluebook 2010* is intended to record accurately the international situation surrounding Japan and the path Japan's diplomatic efforts have taken in 2009 and to account for it to the public in plain language.

The international community embarks on new era of cooperation. Nevertheless, we face a wide range of global challenges which the international community needs to tackle collectively. These include nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, climate change, piracy, terrorism, the recovery of the global economy and aid to developing countries. Now more than ever, Japan is called on to act proactively and to present initiatives, and thereby to respond to international expectations. As the world is becoming multipolar, one of Japan's vital responsibilities is to actively engage itself in restructuring an international mechanism for formulating agreement. Furthermore, in order to play a meaningful role in the international community, Japan needs to cooperate with regional and international agencies as well as on bilateral basis. Japan will continue to develop active foreign policy in 2010 by tackling various challenges which the international community is facing.

In this year's *Diplomatic Bluebook*, Chapter 1, titled "International Situation and Japanese Diplomacy in 2009," reviews the international situation and Japan's diplomatic efforts in the year 2009. Chapter 2, "Regional Diplomacy," and Chapter 3, "Japan's Foreign Policy in Major Global Issues," record diplomatic activities and the international situation in 2009. Chapter 4, "Japanese Diplomacy Open to the Public," addresses the topic of Japanese nationals and Japanese companies active around the world and the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to support them as well as the Ministry's activities to enhance diplomatic capacity comprehensively, including its partnership with local authorities and the strengthening of its diplomatic implementation structures.

In this new era of international cooperation, I am determined to develop, with fully committed efforts of the Ministry, foreign policy that inspires people to have hope for the future. I hope this *Diplomatic Bluebook* would be on assistance in giving a lucid explanation about international situation and Japan's foreign policy, and thereby to in realizing a dynamic foreign policy supported by the understanding and trust of the nation.

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