

Closing Remarks

by

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at

Public Seminar on “Challenges Ahead for United Nations Peacebuilders:
Lessons from the Field and the New UN Peacebuilding Architecture”

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Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me first express my sincere appreciation for your participation in today's seminar.

As one of the co-organizers, it was my pleasure that we had fruitful and lively discussions with the panelists and the commentators. The presentations on the outcomes of the first annual Peacebuilding Community of Practice Workshop as well as the reports on field experiences in peacebuilding highlighted present and future challenges the United Nations peacebuilders are facing.

I hope that you deepened the understanding of peacebuilding activities by the United Nations through the valuable comments made by Ambassador Oshima and Professor Hasegawa based on their broad experiences.

I believe that the lessons learnt from the workshop held in Hiroshima were fully shared with many people through today's seminar. Also, it was significant that such workshop was held in the city well-known as a symbol of peace.

On this occasion, I would like to briefly explain Japan's recent contributions to global peacebuilding efforts.

Prime Minister Fukuda stated in his policy speech to the Diet in January this year that Japan would play a responsible role as a “Peace Fostering Nation” to contribute to peace and prosperity of the world. When UN

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon visited Japan last month, Prime Minister announced a number of concrete actions as a “Peace Fostering Nation,” including decision to dispatch Self-Defense Forces’ personnel to the Headquarters of the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). At the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit, Japan took the initiative as chair to strengthen G8 efforts for peacebuilding. The G8 leaders demonstrated in the Leaders Declaration their strong will to further improve their efforts in peacebuilding and to enhance the capacity of peacebuilding worldwide in three interlinking areas, namely, military, police and civilians, by 2010. In addition, Japan has been serving as Chair of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), and also making various financial contributions, including one to the UN Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

In order to enhance contributions in the area of human resources, it is extremely important to develop human resources with practical capacities needed in the field. We launched a Pilot Program for Human Resource Development in Asia for Peacebuilding last September, which has been managed by the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center (HPC). The first course was completed last March, and the second course will start next month. We plan to develop this program beyond the next fiscal year so that Japan could make further contribution in this field.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation once again for your participation today. I believe that UN Peacebuilders and young people who are willing to work in the field of peacebuilding were able to build and develop close network between them through this seminar. Japan will always stand side by side with those who are willing to make contributions to peacebuilding.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.