

**Tokyo Peacebuilders Symposium 2008**  
**“Peacebuilding Experience and Knowledge from Asia to the World”**

UN House, Tokyo, March 24

Co-organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan  
and the United Nations University

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Thank you very much for your warm introduction.

I feel tremendously honoured to make a speech, a commencement speech.

You can't tell how I rejoice, as a Mother of this project, to see these young men and women, about to break their own paths.

It is because as Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs, I was most fortunate to make my humble contribution. In January 2006, it was I who organized a study group in Ministry to discuss a project, that would later culminate in the launching of the HPC, or the Hiroshima Peacebuilders Center.

As a long time proponent of peacebuilding diplomacy, I encouraged, supported, and more precisely, *pressured* them hard and that, ladies and gentlemen, was what I meant by my contribution.

In addition to this, I am delighted to see that this symposium is held at the United Nations University where I served as a visiting professor for nearly 5 years from 2001 to 2005.

I am a dreamer.

And as they say if you dream a dream, you must dream a big dream, because sky is the only limit.

My dream, if I may say, has started to come true, here, and now.

But of course it is only a beginning.

Down the road, say, in ten years time, I would love to see tens, hundreds of women and men, from Japan and from the rest of Asia, will have worked in the troubled spots.

It would be even better, if they could look around and find that all of them are from the same mould like the HPC.

I also dream

that one day there will be a world-wide network connecting such institutes as the HPC where a set of wisdom, knowledge, and experiences standardised, and fit for the enhancement of the Peace Keeping, as well as the Peace Building Operations is being taught.

Why shouldn't I envisage that Japan will play a pivotal role in that network of peacebuilding education.

That, I think, is a noble goal to pursue.

Indeed, nothing is timelier than witnessing the HPC Class of 2008 making their commencement, for this year, the year 2008, means a lot for Japan.

There is TICAD IV.

G8 Summit in Hokkaido-Toyako will follow.

Africa will appear large in both of those important meetings.

And in Africa, you know that we must concentrate whatever we can on building, and then consolidating peace.

Now is the time, for Japan to engrave a hallmark in its banner as a peace-loving nation that it can also be a peace-fostering nation, a nation of peacebuilders.

And you are the pioneers, I should say to the Japanese members of the Class of 2008, who must tell your friends and your family members that as civilians you can still make a huge difference in building peace in helping consolidate peace, and in making the peacebuilding effort a really, seamless process, thereby enhancing your nation's reputation even more.

That I can say exactly the same to other members of the Class of 2008 goes without saying.

You all, in short, must be proud of yourselves.

And you will be prouder still of yourselves, if you continue to devote your tremendous energy on helping build peace.

Once again,

my hearty congratulations to you, the Class of 2008, for completing your course, and to the members all involved in making this noble attempt a commendable success.

In closing, I would like to end with a quote

**Aristotle, a Greek philosopher,**

**“It is more difficult to organize peace than to win a war; but the fruits of victory will be lost if the peace is not well organized”**

Thank you very much, indeed.