

Address by Mr. Etsuro Honda,
Deputy Director-General, European Policy Division,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
at the Symposium “Climate Change and perspective for Japan-EU
Cooperation”
on January 23, Ljubljana

Thank you Mr. Chairman,
Dear Mr. Milic, Director-General of National Association of
Consulting Engineers, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of
Slovenia,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to address my opening remarks to you at this important symposium. I would like to join Mr. Kranjc in welcoming all the speakers from Europe and Japan, and distinguished audience from Slovenia and other European Partners.

I would like to express, on behalf of the Government of Japan, a deep gratitude to the Government of Slovenia, especially the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, for co-organising today's symposium. I would also like to thank the Slovenian Chamber of Industry and Commerce for providing us warm hospitality as well as logistical support for the symposium.

This Joint Symposium of Japan and the European Union has been successfully continued to hold six times since 2002. I reiterate it was foreseeing wisdom that both leaders agreed in the “Action Plan for Japan-EU Cooperation” in the year 2001 to enhance civil society links and exchanges at all levels of academic life. In order to promote this objective, the Government of Japan has annually held a joint symposium in cooperation with the EU on a variety of themes of common concerns.

The main theme of this symposium, “climate change”, is obviously the most pressing challenge which all mankind are facing with in today's world. Japan and EU are called more than ever to deepen

the cooperation in bringing swift and concerted international responses.

Last May, Japan announced an initiative called “Cool Earth 50” which sets a long-term target of cutting global emissions by half from the current level by 2050 as a common goal for the entire world.

With regard to the mid-term target for establishing an international framework beyond 2012, Japan proposed 3 principles. The first is that all major emitters must participate. The second is that the framework must be flexible and diverse. And finally, the thirdly, it must achieve compatibility between environmental protection and economic growth.

In this sense, Japan fully welcomes the agreement reached at the UN climate change conference in Bali to launch formal negotiations on a climate regime for the post-Kyoto Protocol period, which reflects basically our three principles mentioned in “Cool Earth 50.”

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Both Japan and the EU have sincerely committed themselves to implement the Kyoto Protocol and to tackle the reduction of GHG emissions. We are both seriously engaged in R&D on energy conservation, new energy and technologies curbing the GHG emissions. As partners sharing common values, we can learn from each others' experiences and should work together towards combating the global warming, which is a real challenge to the human security for all.

I also would like to recall that at the Japan-EU Summit on 5th June in Berlin, our leaders agreed on the long term goal of reducing the GHG emission by half or more by the year 2050. It is one of eminent examples that we could have successfully reached under the Japan-EU cooperation. In addition, Japan and the EU could contribute to a successful conclusion of the G8 Summit in Heiligendamm in that field. This year, Japan will host the G8

Hokkaido-Toyako Summit from 7th to 9th July. The climate change issue will surely be one of its main themes. I hope Japan and the EU will again closely cooperate for a successful outcome of the G8 Summit.

Today's symposium under the title "Climate change and perspective for Japan-EU Cooperation" will also be a contribution to deepening the Japan-EU dialogue. Since today's symposium is neither a place for negotiation nor a floor to exchange official standpoints, I hope we will be able to have all the more an open discussion and do frankly exchange the views from experts to experts.

In the first part, we will focus our exchanges on economic aspects of the climate change, including emissions trading system which is an interesting tool for emission's reduction. Even though Japan and the EU have different approach, I am sure we could learn a lot from each other.

In the second part, we discuss how we will enhance the prospect of an international climate regime beyond 2012. Today we will be vigorously discussing this topical theme at this timely juncture.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to all the speakers for their efforts and I hope today's symposium will be a considerable contribution toward strengthening the Japan-EU dialogue in academic fields.

Thank you!