

Keynote Speech

by

H.E. Mr. Yasuhumi Tanahashi

Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy

(Introduction)

It is my great honor to give the opening remarks, at the very outset of the ministerial meeting of the Fifth Forum for Nuclear Cooperation In Asia (FNCA), on behalf of the organizing bodies and as the minister of Japan in charge of science policies including nuclear energy utilization for peaceful purposes.

It is also my pleasure to sincerely welcome delegates from Australia, People's Republic of China, Indonesia, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand.

My deepest gratitude also goes to the Government of Viet-Nam for co-organizing this meeting together with us and hosting it in this beautiful city of Hanoi.

(Fundamental Perception of FNCA)

Asia is one of the regions with the highest economic growth rate worldwide. It is my recognition that the FNCA framework, particularly the ministerial level meeting of such region, is a very effective mechanism to facilitate the promotion of socio-economic development of the region by means of proactive regional partnership in the safe and peaceful utilization of nuclear technology. Following are my sincere expectations to the FNCA activities and meetings.

Important elements in peaceful utilization of nuclear technology are, with due consideration to potential risks in radiation, to continuously secure safety assurance as well as to steadily promote the programs while obtaining the public understanding. Nuclear technology can contribute and is expanding its contribution to the well-being and upgraded quality of life in human communities as well as the development of scientific technologies. Its utilization forms vary from the use of radiation for medical, agricultural and industrial applications to the use in the form of energy.

(Radiation Utilization)

In the field of radiation utilization, lots of achievements have been obtained under the FNCA cooperation projects such as agricultural and medical applications. They are benefiting to enrich daily lives in the region. I am looking forward to continued and more extensive utilization of radiation potential under the collaboration of relevant countries for contributing to the upgrading of daily lives of increased number of people.

(Utilization of Nuclear Energy)

Coming to the field of energy utilization, it is of our awareness that the environment differs from one member country of FNCA to another. However, it is my belief that the importance of nuclear power is worldwide increasing in view of the global demand of combating with the global warming issue. In addition, the energy security is recognized as indispensable more widely than ever for the sustainable development of the Asian region, where the big economic growth is foreseen. A new three-year panel on the “Role of Nuclear Energy for Sustainable Development in Asia” has been initiated this year under the frame of FNCA. The Panel should continue in-depth elaboration for the role of nuclear power with the top priority on safety and the necessary cooperation among FNCA member countries.

(Peaceful Utilization of Nuclear Technology and Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons)

Non-proliferation regime of nuclear weapons is of critical importance in the peaceful utilization of nuclear energy. As the only nation, who experienced atomic bombs, Japan adheres to the “Three non-nuclear principles,” which are: No possession, No manufacturing, and No entry of nuclear weapons.” For the limited utilization of nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes, we have enacted the Atomic Energy Basic Law and we fully comply with all relevant international norms including the non-proliferation treaty of nuclear weapons. IAEA has conducted in June this year the full verification program under the comprehensive safeguards agreement as well as its additional protocol and officially confirmed that Japan has no indication of diverting nuclear materials under the safeguard mechanism to non-peaceful purposes or of possessing undeclared nuclear material or conducting nuclear activities. For effective and practical strengthening the non-proliferation regime, I do urge the soonest entry to the additional protocol of the IAEA safeguards agreement to those countries which have not concluded yet.

(Nuclear Safety)

Safety assurance is the utmost prerequisite in the promotion of peaceful utilization of nuclear technology. Japan is in close collaboration with other relevant countries in this field in various cooperation regimes. We will further strengthen these collaborations as well as commit ourselves with continued efforts in the domestic programs to assure nuclear safety.

(Security)

The need of intensifying the safety control of radioactive sources is being internationally stressed. This is because radioactive sources could be illicitly used as a means of terrorist attacks. IAEA adopted at its General Conference in September

2003 the “Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources”. Each country is requested to comply with this code of conduct for preventing the loss of radioactive sources or the terrorists’ abuse of them for the so-called dirty bombs. Japan has been strongly endorsing the code of conduct and expects every member country of FNCA to support it and fully observe the code.

(The ITER Project)

Concerning the nuclear fusion, which is believed as the highly potential future energy source, the international project of ITER, an experimental fusion reactor, is progressing. Japan is offering the site of Rokkasho in Aomori Prefecture for installing the ITER facility. We will continue our best effort to materialize the installation offer at this site. I believe it is very meaningful to have a research base for such most advanced international joint research and development in our Asian region.

(Political Dialogues)

FNCA has placed this year the theme of “Regional Cooperation of Human Resources Development for Nuclear Science and Technology in the Asian Region” as its keynote. Human resources are the indispensable ingredients of continued utilization of nuclear energy in each member country. I look forward to your fruitful discussions to work out the effective cooperation mechanism to this end.

Coming into the fifth year of existence, FNCA now approaches the time to review the past outcomes and to plan the future how to proceed. Coordinator Dr. Machi will follow me in presenting the overview of the past achievements of FNCA activities. I hope all of you hold creative discussions for the future based upon these achievements made so far.

If you allow me to express my own deliberation, such high level political dialogues on common issues among FNCA member countries as at this ministerial meeting are the productive instrument to pave the way to collaborate for problem solving and cooperation among us. While cooperation in specific topics will be further elaborated, it may be also necessary for the minister-level authorities to take initiative to deliberate and present the means of cooperation in such common issues as: Role of Nuclear Energy for the Sustainable Development Strategies; Human Resources Development; Nuclear Safety; Nuclear Science and Technologies; or Collaboration between FNCA and Other Relevant Organizations. I believe political dialogues should be intensified.

(Conclusion)

In concluding my remark, let me express my sincere hope that you hold fruitful discussions at this ministerial meeting, better cooperation be developed, nuclear activities in each member country be stimulated and contribute as its result to the

socio-economic development of the community in each country.

Thank you for your attention.