

Statement by H.E. Mr. Hirofumi Nakasone
Minister for Foreign Affairs
At the Opening Session of the Japan-OSCE Conference

June 10, 2009

Your Excellency Mr. de Brichambaut, Secretary General of the OSCE,
Distinguished delegates from the OSCE participating States and the Partners
for Cooperation,
And representatives of international organizations,

Today at the opening of the Japan-OSCE Conference I would like to address you on behalf of the Government of Japan. First of all, I would like to express my warmest welcome to the delegates from all countries and international organizations attending this Conference. I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to the OSCE, the co-host of this Conference, especially Greece, this year's Chairman of the OSCE, Finland, the Chairman of the Asian Contact Group, and the Secretary General and also all the staff, for their help in the preparation of the conference.

The OSCE is a pioneer that has been engaged in comprehensive security, encompassing politico-military, economic and environmental aspects and human dimensions of security, for a long time. We can learn lessons from this European postwar history that such an approach leads to the stability of the region and improvement of its security environment.

Under today's international security circumstances, terrorism and proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) have become common global security threats. At the same time, security issues also include ensuring the safety of complex networks of international energy transport and supporting democratic and human rights consolidation.

The OSCE decided to strengthen relationship with its partners and is engaged actively in the stability of Afghanistan. Today's security of the OSCE is not just from "Vancouver to Vladivostok" anymore, but is indivisible from security of the entire world. The international community is now required, more than ever, to work together to address various and global security challenges.

With such recognition, Japan, as the most longstanding partner, has cooperated with the OSCE in a broad range of areas. Japan promotes various dialogues with the OSCE including through its participation in the OSCE Ministerial Council. This Japan-OSCE conference is the third of its kind. Japan also actively takes part in OSCE election monitoring missions and other efforts in order to support the democratization process.

Regarding Afghanistan, the region of our common interest, Japan has provided 300 million dollars for the preparations of the Presidential election and for the assistance for the police and other fields this March. Contribution

to the OSCE's Afghanistan projects amounting to 2.72 million Euros is a part of this. Our support to the OSCE makes it possible to strengthen custom and border control capacity between Afghanistan and Tajikistan, Kyrgyz and Turkmenistan. Japan strongly hopes that these projects will be carried out smoothly and contribute to the peace and security of the region surrounding Afghanistan.

On the other hand, there are still many security problems in Asia and that throws a shadow over the great potential of the region. Needless to say, the security environment of Asia is increasing in its severity. The launch of missiles and the nuclear test by North Korea is totally unacceptable, as it constitutes a grave challenge to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) regime and seriously undermines the peace and security of Northeast Asia as well as the international community. Now the UN Security Council is consulting toward the adoption of a new resolution. Japan, in close collaboration with the international community, continues to urge North Korea to take concrete action conducive to the comprehensive resolution of outstanding issues of concern, including the abduction, nuclear and missile issues, obtaining the understanding and cooperation of the OSCE participating States. At the same time, the international community needs to pay particular attention to the increase of China's defense spending and modernization of its nuclear arms, of which it is lacking transparency.

This Conference will be a very meaningful opportunity to promote mutual understanding and cooperation on security issues between the OSCE and Asia.

In the 2-day Conference, we will discuss on the overall theme "Sharing Knowledge and Experiences between the OSCE participating States and Asian Partners for Co-operation to Address Common Challenges" which consists of three sessions on "Enhancing confidence building by military transparency", "Energy security dialogue" and "Civil society development, including media". From Japan, experts with deep insights in each field will participate in the discussions. I expect that various experiences, knowledge and ways of thinking will be introduced from both Asia and the OSCE to contribute to a meaningful and constructive exchange of opinions. Moreover, I hope that this Conference will lead to a promotion of exchanges in the security field between Asia and Europe, and strengthen the cooperative relationship.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.