

### **PANEL 3: SOUTH ASIA AND CENTRAL ASIA**

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MR. TABATA: Okay. Good afternoon. My name is Tabata from the Slavic Research Center. I specialize in the Russian economy and am now serving as a chief project leader of the big program financed by the Ministry of Education of Japan, entitled “Comparative Research on Major Regional Powers in Eurasia.”

This project will compare Russia, China, India, and other regional powers in Eurasia in various aspects, including political, economic, historical, and cultural aspects.

The detail of this project is explained in this leaflet placed on the table at the entrance.

So please take it.

In this context, I’m glad to come here to meet American specialists in this field, and especially happy to chair this session, which deals with international relations in important parts in Eurasia; that is, Central and South Asia.

Now I'd like to introduce our distinguished speakers of this panel. Two speakers from the Brookings Institution -- Dr. Johannes Linn and Steven Cohen.

And from our side Tomohiko Uyama from the Slavic Research Center and Osamu Yoshida from Hiroshima University.

Both of these two professors are important members of the project I mentioned.

So, first, Uyama-san? And you have 10, maximum 12 minutes.

MR. UYAMA: Okay.

Thank you. I have to begin my speech with an unpleasant statement. U.S. policy toward Central Asia in recent years can hardly be called successful.

Its call for democracy has failed to produce tangible results. The governments of Central Asia remain autocratic, and even the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan, which many Americans initially hailed as a move toward democracy, led to the formation of the Bakiev administration, which proved to be more authoritarian than the previous Akayev administration.

Uzbekistan evicted the U.S. military base in Khanabad in 2005, and Kyrgyzstan also decided to close the U.S. base near Bishkek this year. The latter case is especially alarming, as the decision was taken not because of U.S. criticism of autocracy, as was the case with Uzbekistan, but because of the Kyrgyz citizens' disappointment at the lack of economic benefit of the base and anger over the behavior of U.S. military service members.

In fact, when the base was opened in 2001, some in Central Asia predicted that there could be a situation similar to that in Okinawa. Although U.S. soldiers did not

commit such serious crimes in Kyrgyzstan as they do in Okinawa, the result proved even worse in a sense. While in Okinawa, the U.S. bases are a part of life, whether people like it or not, in Kyrgyzstan Americans are regarded as aliens who do not bring any benefits.

A decline in the image of the U.S. in Central Asia began as early as the 1990s, when the U.S. call for democracy was dismissed for its inconsistencies and double standards. The war in Iraq further exacerbated the U.S. image. In recent years, I have repeatedly heard from American scholars who visit Central Asia that they are received with negative attitude. This concerns not only authorities' harassments, but also ordinary people in Central Asia who call the Americans imperialists. This is a tragedy that was almost unthinkable in the early 1990s, when Central Asians admired the West as civilized countries. And this is undoubtedly a result of the failure of the U.S. policy during the past 15 years, and especially under the Bush administration.

By saying this, I don't intend to underestimate the tremendous efforts made by Americans in various spheres -- various spheres of aid, especially education. I and other Japanese specialists on Central Asia have evaluated the aid programs conducted by USAID and other U.S. institutions as more wide-ranged and effective than Japanese programs, involving a large number of American volunteers and local activists. The American University of Central Asia, in Kyrgyzstan, is regarded as the best university in the country. And thus, the American efforts can contribute to fostering civil society in Central Asia, and mutual understanding between the peoples of Central Asia and the United States in the long run. But this does not compensate for the negative image of the U.S. at the present moment. Some people in Central Asia even say that local activists who cooperate with U.S. institutions are either wasting grant money or working as spies.

In contrast to the United States, Japan does not place a great emphasis on the democratization of Central Asia, although it does refer to the need for democratization in number of official documents. Some Japanese diplomats have even demonstrated their sympathy with authoritarian presidents, such as Karimov, an attitude I have repeatedly criticized; while others have sought to promote dialogue rather than making simple accusations on political issues. The Central Asia Plus Japan Dialogue was launched in 2004.

Regardless of whether the Japanese government's attitude should be interpreted as cynicism or pragmatism, it is certain that Japan has aimed at contributing to the economic development of Central Asia through ODA rather than engaging in a sort of Great Game or imposing its own values. Japan is praised for helping Central Asian countries without excessive ambition, and its image among the Central Asians as a country with a rich tradition and high technology is definitely positive although its presence remains low-key because of the small scale of investment and trade. Japan's aid policy is also sometimes regarded as haphazard and ineffective.

Generally speaking, both U.S. policy and Japan's policy toward Central Asia have their positive and negative sides. But it is essential that the two countries have played different roles and provided a complementary choice of partners for Central Asia.

However, there have been some worrisome tendencies in recent years. First, Japanese officials began to speak about universal values, which is, in effect, very close to American values, as manifested by the idea of an arc of freedom and prosperity proposed by the then Foreign Minister Aso Taro. He's now prime minister. Although

this idea is little known in Central Asia, there is a tendency among local experts to view Japan as a U.S. proxy. This is beneficial neither to Japan nor the United States.

Second, Japan and the United States have increasingly connected their Central Asian policy with Afghanistan. Especially some people in Japan expect that the development of transportation between the two regions will improve their economies and open them to the Western world. This does not always harmonize well with the Central Asian nations' intention to give priority to security over economic contacts with Afghanistan.

Generally, in Japan, the views of officials and academics sometimes are significantly different, although, of course, views inside the two circles also vary. When the war erupted in Georgia last year, it was totally evident for those who knew the South Ossetian and Abkhazian problems and the domestic political situation in Georgia that Saakashvili bears the primary responsibility for the war, which is vastly unpopular in Georgia itself. And it was very embarrassing for us to see the Japanese and U.S. governments supporting Georgia -- supporting the Georgian government in a one-sided manner.

What can academics do in this situation? Central Asian studies have made tremendous progress in Japan and the United States during the past 20 years. And academics have acquired experience in cooperation and dialogue with the people of Central Asia. In both countries, governmental circles often take it for granted that it is good for Central Asian countries to rid themselves of the Soviet legacy and to distance themselves from Russia. But academics, especially historians, understand that the Soviet past continues to frame the Central Asians' world view for better or worse. For the most

part, Central Asians consider the Soviet period to be a model for relative stability, are proud of having been once a part of a superpower, and see Russia as a familiar partner. Academics in Japan and the United States can recommend that their governments be mindful of Central Asians' pride and treat them differently from Afghanistan and other underdeveloped countries.

The Japanese and Westerners have a prejudice that Central Asia is an unstable region. But, in reality, the Central Asian countries since their independence had never been a source of serious threat to the outside world, despite sporadic incidents of local significance such as the Tajik Civil War. A stable Central Asia in the heart of Eurasia is an invaluable asset for the world's security, and outside forces should not try to radically change the situation in this region.

Japan and the United States also have to avoid confrontation with Russia and China over Central Asia. Although political relations between Russia and the Central Asian countries are not always smooth and their interests may differ, they are based on mutual trust as former compatriots. Every opinion poll conducted in Central Asia indicates that Russia's image is more positive than any other country, despite some Russians' contemptuous attitude toward Central Asians and in spite of the fact that Central Asian migrant workers are harassed and even killed in Russia. Japan and the United States cannot match this level of trust. And it would be useless for the two countries to weaken Russia's position in this region. It would be also unwise to oppose China's presence in this region when Central Asians have a high expectation to China as a new neighbor and rising economic power, and, at the same time, they are ready to prevent possible China's negative impact themselves -- Central Asians themselves.

While Japan and China have a number of problems with each other, the two countries constitute a single region that will serve as one of the locomotives of the development of the world for the decades to come and are obliged to expand the possible positive influence of East Asia on surrounding regions, including Central Asia. It is essential to extend prosperity and cooperation, not confrontation, in East Asia to Central Asia. For more details about my idea of Central Asia as a part of a broader East Asia, please read this book, “Japan’s Silk Road Diplomacy: Paving the Road Ahead,” published by the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute [here](#).

In conclusion, I think that Japan and the U.S. can further exchange their views on Central Asia and learn from each other. Japan can learn more consistent and strategic thinking from the U.S., while the U.S. can learn from Japan a more humble and respectful attitude to the Central Asians, recognizing that the U.S. has unfortunately so far failed to acquire trust among the Central Asians. Both countries should further promote dialogue with Central Asian countries without imposing their values on them. But, at the same time, I want to emphasize that division of labor is very important, as Minister Shinoda suggested. Japan should continue to focus on development of Central Asia, while the United States should concentrate on preventing the instability in Afghanistan from spreading to Central Asia and also nurturing civil society in Central Asia.

The two countries should avoid making their stance identical in relation to Central Asia in particular and to world politics in general. Too much similar policy would only contribute to a conspiracy theory that the Americans dictate everything. We have to be different from each other. An increased presence of Japan in Central Asia, and

the world, as a country that behaves differently from the U.S., and is not rejected as a U.S. proxy, but shares basic values and interests with the U.S. as a democracy and developed economy would ultimately benefit U.S. goals as well.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. TABATA: Thank you very much. Dr. Linn?

MR. LINN: Thank you very much. It's a great pleasure to be here and join this illustrious group and discussion on this particular moment on Central Asia, which is an area I've long been interested in, which, for somebody who grew up in Europe and now lives in the United States, is maybe a bit unexpected, just as I think one could say it's a little unexpected the U.S. and Japan would have a great interest in Central Asia. But the fact is it's there. I'm interested. Japan and the U.S. obviously have an interest in Central Asia. So let's explore what are these dimensions of common knowledge, maybe differences of interest by Japan and the U.S.

Let me say, however, first of all, that I have much that I could agree with that Professor Uyama was saying, and, in fact, in the end we'll end up in very similar places.

I want to talk about five points very briefly. First of all, a few words about the Eurasian economic integration process, where Central Asia, in my view, is at the core; secondly, reflect a little bit on the interests of Japan and the U.S.; thirdly, talk a bit about the presence and engagements, as well as the constraints, that both countries face in Central Asia; the fourth point a few thoughts about the major risks that the region and its partners face; and finally, what might be topics for joint engagement, complementary



engagement, by the U.S. and Japan in the region. These are the five points I want to briefly cover.

Now let me start with the Eurasian economic integration topic, which is, I think, quite similar to what Professor Uyama mentioned. From my perspective, economic integration process that the Eurasian supercontinent -- and I include here all of Europe and all of Asia -- now faces since the opening up of China and the breakup of the Soviet Union is, in fact, I think a defining element of the sort of completion, if you wish, of the globalization process in the first half of the 21st century. What we see is a rapid integration in the energy field, trade and transport, capital investment, migration, environmental issues, tourism, and also, of course, negative areas, such as drugs, terrorism, and so on across the whole supercontinent of Europe and Central Asia. As I said, in this sense, there's a catch-up in terms of the globalization process, which, up to that point for about 200, 300 years, had been mostly transoceanic and now, I think, is becoming for Eurasia a transcontinental integration process.

Now Central Asia is right at the center of this process of economic integration as a potential transit hub that could facilitate the integration process, but also, of course, if it were to be unstable, if it were to be an area of failed states, could become quite a disruption to this integration process. Of course, Central Asia has important natural and human resources, which are important to many of the players around it, although I would say, in the end that is probably from a long-term perspective less important than this central location and potential for an effective transit or disruptive force. So this is my sort of sense of the Eurasian integration process, economic

integration process, and the role that Central Asia can, and I believe will, play in this context.

Against that backdrop, let me turn to the interests of various players, in particular Japan and the U.S., in this -- in Central Asia. Now the Eurasian integration process and the role of Central Asia is of critical importance for its immediate -- for Central Asia's -- immediate neighbors, especially Russia, China, India, and Iran, and more indirectly to the European Union. All of them are -- and I should be, and I think are -- interested from the long-term perspective in a stable, prosperous, and well-connected hub of Central Asia in the long-term, and all of them are interested in access to the natural resources and, to some extent, Russia, of course, especially access to the human resources in the short- and medium-term.

Now let's be clear: Japan and the U.S. are more distant, and, to them, the -- their interest in Central Asia is more secondary. But still, as Professor Uyama pointed out, for them also, for the U.S. and for Japan, a stable, successful, prosperous Central Asia at the hub of this integration process of Eurasia also is of important concern and significance. Specifically, for Japan, I think, they, of course -- you didn't mention this -- but I think I've often heard about it and seen it as a link to Central Asia based on certain cultural and historical interests. There is, of course, interest in, although somewhat indirectly perhaps, access to Central Asian resources. There's access to Central Asian markets and through Central Asia to the rest of Eurasian markets. And I think there may also be an interest in limiting the drug trafficking through Central Asia that, at least, indirectly reaches probably also Japan.

For the U.S., the interests are somewhat different. There is very importantly and I think at this point probably primarily access to Afghanistan. There is, of course, the broader issue of limiting the spread of violence, terrorism, drugs, and the prevalence of failed states. There is also playing into the picture now the limitation on the spreading influence in the region and beyond of Iran. There is an indirect, but nonetheless, it's there, and interest in the natural resource base of Central Asia. And there is, of course, pervasive -- that you stressed very much -- an interest in the independence and in the democracy and human rights situation in Central Asia, which particular was stressed by -- also by the previous administration in this country.

Now against those interests, what are some of the limits on the presence and engagement by Japan and the U.S.? And these limits are actually from both sides, I would argue -- from the sides of Japan and the U.S., on the one hand, and from the side of Central Asia, on the other hand. The reality is, for reasons that I think may be obvious, is that for both Japan and the U.S., at least it's my impression, Central Asia is low on the list of national priorities. It's there, but it's not pervasive, not at the top. So I think one has to realize, for somebody like us who are interested in Central Asia, that, you know, on a Friday afternoon there are not that many people in the room. If we talked about Iraq or the global economic crisis right now, there would be, I can assure you, with such brilliant people at the table here, there'd be a lot more people in this room.

So let's be realistic. From the Japanese -- and maybe you disagree -- and the U.S. side -- but I've been to Japan; I've talked about Central Asia in Japan quite a few times -- yeah, you find people interested, but it's not right there on the top 10, let's say. There's actually, therefore, limited attention, limited financial engagement. You know,

in the aid business compared to Africa, Central Asia, even in the aid business, ranks right -- quite low. There's limited private investment, although there is some. There's probably more Japanese -- I haven't looked at the figures recently -- than there is U.S. And frankly, their engagement is sporadic. At the political level, that's at least my impression of the Central Asia plus Japan Initiative. It's, you know, it's there, but it's not terribly consistent or effective, I would argue. And, of course, the same, as you pointed out, maybe with spades applies to U.S. engagement in Central Asia.

Now that's the sort of the Japanese-U.S. side of this coin. On the other hand, of course, there's limited receptivity on the Central Asian perspective, and you've stressed as Professor Uyama. The governments are mostly interested in Japan and the U.S. as a sort of way to balance the big neighbors as part of their multilateral foreign policy. The publics pay little attention to either Japan or the U.S., as surveys would indicate. As you pointed out, Russia is way up there; next in line is China. And the negatives prevail, as you pointed out, in Kyrgyzstan, for sure, on the U.S. Regional organizations, which you didn't mention -- there are a number of regional organizations -- the SCO, Euroses, ECHO, CAREC. Japan and the U.S. are not represented in any of them. So, by definition, they are already, in that sense, although all the organizations are quite weak, one could argue. But the U.S. and Japan are not represented.

So why should one worry? I mean, if it's low on your priority, sort of our priorities, it is low on the Central Asian priority, why worry? Well -- and this is the fourth point -- there's some major risks. Of course, first of all, the spillover from Afghanistan and Pakistan to Central Asia and the destabilization that could come of it, with a destabilization and possibly of the -- or through relationships between China and

Russia with more failed states -- fundamentalism and whatever spreading. That, of course, is of concern, I think, to all, including, of course, the further spreading of drug trafficking and so on.

Then there is right now a major problem in Central Asia, which is sometimes referred to as the compound crisis. There is a major crisis of water, energy, food, and now the global economic crisis that has hit -- is hitting Central Asia very severely, which could result in social conflicts. The reflow of migrants from Russia is a particular severe problem, but there are other major issues. And there is around the water issue, there is a potential -- rising potential -- for interstate conflict between upstream and downstream countries in Central Asia -- Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, on the one hand, and especially Uzbekistan, but possibly also Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan on the other hand.

Now you rightly pointed out that, over the last 15 years, Central Asia has been free of conflict, largely free of conflict, with the exception of the Tajik Civil War, despite some of the sources of tension. And that's very encouraging and very important. However, those of us who worry about the water and energy tensions, I think, also worry that this could unfortunately not be sustained into the future; that, indeed, conflict, interstate conflict, is possible.

Finally, of course, there's always potential for conflict over succession of the autocrats that remain in power. And there are now also worries about whether Russia and China, in fact, increasingly exerting control over the resources of the region, which might, therefore, exclude other and sort of competitive access, if you wish, by the international community, including Japan and the U.S., to the natural resources.

So those are the concerns that one currently has and I think a potential for an increasing -- increasing risks facing the region, which indirectly could spillover and create difficulties for Japan and the U.S., despite a great distance from Central Asia. Now if we take all of this into consideration -- I now come to closure -- what can Japan and the U.S. do together? Professor Uyama stressed the sort of a sense the division of labor. I will perhaps stress more what together they might consider wanting to achieve.

First of all, I think both could do more now and in the immediate future to shore up the vulnerable countries against the compound crisis that I mentioned with more financial assistance, remembering that it's not only Africa that matters when you look at the aid and aid distribution. I think Central Asia deserves much more attention from the aid community.

Second, I think this is the time where diplomatic efforts are needed to limit the risks of an interstate conflict over water resources. And I believe Japan and the U.S., together with the EU, Russia, and China, should be sure that all players in the region, especially Uzbekistan, understand that the threshold in terms of international patience with any conflict over this resource is very, very significant so that whatever can be done to limit the risk of conflict is being done.

A third area would be support -- to support actually an adjustment to the water and energy crisis by, in the short-term, helping Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan respond to what is a very severe energy crisis in the winters in particular; in the long-term support access to hydro resources and access to multiple power markets region; and in the long-term deal with what is going to be increasingly a problem, namely the results of climate change that will affect the region very severely.

The fourth area is to support investments and improvements in the transport and trade area. And here there is a regional organization called CAREC, Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation Forum, which includes eight Central Asian countries, including China, as well as six international organizations. They'll be a partnership forum organized that is planning to bring in all countries interested in Central Asian transport and trade. And I hope Japan and the U.S. will play a very active role in this.

The fifth area is to both I think can support good governance, reforms, and particular civil society development.

And finally, I think the U.S. in particular could contribute tremendously to the long-term stability and success of Central Asia by finding ways, however they might be found, to bring about a peaceful resolution to the Afghan and Pakistan conflicts and violence, because that is, in a sense, the single most biggest risk I think for things going bad in Central Asia.

So I think overall, my sense is that there are a number of areas, very practical areas, where Japan and the U.S. can and should actually work together. I think your concern about Japan being seen as a proxy is an issue, but I think it's an issue that can be managed.

Thank you.

(Applause)

MR. TABATA: Thank you very much. Now we are going to the second part, to South Asia. Professor Yoshida?

MR. YOSHIDA: Thank you, Professor Tabata.

We have a very small community of South Asia specialist in Japan, and particularly small is the researchers on politics and international relations of this region. And we got very little attention by the public or anybody until 1998, when the two powers, India and Pakistan, exploded nuclear devices. And we are all of a sudden invited by the media to make comments on nuclear issues or the bilateral issues of this region. We were also invited by the academic community as a whole to speak on issues of the region and the nuclear problems. And since I was in Hiroshima, even at that time, so that Hiroshima itself was very much affected by the new development in the nuclear bomb field, so that I was also involved in very many kind of this development.

And but, I still remember the remarks made by our then Prime Minister Hashimoto saying that we Japanese didn't give much attention or much understanding about the Kashmir issues for the two powers in South Asia. And this was the position of the Japanese at that time, and partly this was the sake of our disability to explain the situation in South Asia to the Japanese public. And we -- yes -- Kashmir matters, but we should explain more about the complexities of the South Asian situation and many other problems. But anyway, that was the position of the Japanese audience at that time, and we know that India and Pakistan have been playing a zero-sum game due to these very big problems.

And what was most important for us as a researcher of South Asia was the -- especially research on politics of South Asia -- was the matters of the legitimacy for these two states, especially for Pakistan. And for that purpose, India and Pakistan have been playing a zero-sum game since the very beginning of their existence as independent states. So -- and particularly Pakistan as an inferior rival sought for the additional boost



in this rivalry in various ways and first from the United States, then from China, and finally through the nuclear devices and so on and so forth.

So the -- this kind of zero-sum game was a very common phenomenon in South Asia. But this situation changed drastically after 9/11, I mean 2001. That was due to the U.S. military presence in Pakistan during the Afghanistan war, and then in Afghanistan other occupying force. So this brought a very big change in the security situation in South Asia. In other words, India's security concern has been significantly reduced at the expense of Pakistan's internal stability. I mean, there's a -- it was probably the first time that India could see the United States as a credible partner, and India's security could be kept by the existence of U.S. military force which could control the situation and particularly in a nuclear situation in Pakistan.

So this is a very fundamental change in the security situation in South Asia. And after that, Indian relations with the United States became very much decisive, and no other power could play somewhat different roles in this region. This is the point.

So this is a real beginning of the U.S.-India partnership. And so there's very little room for other powers to play roles in this region, because of the very strong and crucial relations between the two powers in this region.

So there's a -- but this -- I just say because the Japan has a -- now has a very limited role to play in South Asia, and because of this new development in the region. Japan had some special role before 9/11 or maybe in the 1980s particularly. And Japan was important in the 1980s and the situation of the various elements, including the second oil shock and the Soviet-Afghan war. And all those elements pressed India to start to moderate economic reform in the 1980s. And since that was still in a Cold War

time so there's a -- and India could not get credibility from the United States. So that's a -- just kind of moderate economic reform should be started without major U.S. involvement. So then Japan came into the picture and started some economic relations with India. You know that Japan's automobile industries came into action in South Asia - - that is, Suzuki and motor car companies started production in smaller cars there. So that in such a way, Japan contributed to modernizing India's manufacturing capacity in the context of the 1980s, that is in the final years of the Cold War.

But this position of Japan as a contributor in modernizing India's manufacturing was taken over after the '91 reform, which was, again, placed by the external factors of the Gulf War -- I mean, the Gulf crisis and then the Gulf War. So the - - India's import figures are shown right now, and you can see that from 1991 -- well, still, Japanese contributions to India's imports was very much stable, while the others, and especially the United States figure, was -- going up very swift. So after the 1991 reform, emphasis was shifted from manufacturing to service and investment. So Japan's role in India's economic reform was very much limited during the 1990s and up to right now. And while Japan didn't stop any presence in India but continued active in its comparative strengths that was established in the 1980s.

So there is some different ways that Japan pursued after '91 reform and others, including the United States, did to involve in the Indian economic development. So these two parallel roles was there in India, and but much of the attention was given -- paid to the new tendencies in Indian economic reform. But what we are now seeing is that the -- these new trends were also resisted by the popular and democratic ways, especially expressed in the 2004 general elections. And now we -- India is going through

new general elections, and we do not know the results right now. But probably -- again, very new developments will take place.

Why the Japan -- the Japanese effort was more to create a mass-based society probably in the longer run so that's kind of two different developments in political economies in India was going -- is going on right now and Japan may have so far contributed to the more real based development.

So that -- in the political field, between India and Japan, no real political or strategic partnership has emerged yet. But the -- so that a -- it is no matching with U.S.-India or U.S.-Japan relations. But so far, our foreign office or our government is emphasizing the common democratic values to unite these two democracies in Asia. But this didn't make very good progress. I don't -- I do not say that India and Japan will not come together for this, but what I would like to say is democracy didn't bring very similar things to the two countries. But the democratic system brought two different stages of development in these two countries.

And we are probably in the near future facing some similar problems that India has so far faced. But we also could have created a mass-based society so far. So these two issues should have converged into bring the newly democratically stable societies based on popular participation in the political process. So that we can show the real strategic or political partners with common democratic values. But this is not yet the time for this kind of democratic development.

So there's a -- we can expect a truly complementary trilateral democratic alliance in the future, but for this we have to probably continue the efforts of strengthen

the socio-economic situation in India, as well as our own effort to function more of the -- our own democracies in the near future.

So finally, I just touched upon the Pakistan-Afghanistan issues. Very little we can do so far as military operations are given priority right now. But, as I told you, that it was a zero sum game situation, and the present stability in India was at the expense of Pakistan's internal stability. So there's -- Pakistan's internal stability should be restored before American disengagement. This is part of the point -- and then the economic rehabilitation with Japan playing a substantial role. This might be very much opportunistic, but I think that such kind of a conference that was organized by Japanese government in last April should have been organized maybe 20 years before so that we could have more possibility at that time. But it was only 10 years after that the Prime Minister Hashimoto realized that we didn't have much attention to the situation and problems in South Asia so that we could not expect at that time to start that kind of things. But now we have to start with these kinds of things, and then we can have very much complementary roles, I mean, in promoting democracy in South Asia, together with the United States.

Thank you very much.

(Applause)

MR. TABATA: Thank you very much. So the last speaker. Yeah. Okay.

MR. COHEN: *Konnichiwa*. I want to use the podium. This way, I will speak more briefly.

I'd like to bring you some good news and some bad news. Do you want the good news first or the bad news first? We should take a vote.

First, let me thank the organizers, especially Richard, for inviting me. I spent a wonderful year in Tokyo in 1973 and learned a great deal about not only Japan, Japanese societies, and Japanese universities, where I taught, but also about Japan's role in Asia, the U.S.-Japan alliance, and I learned a little bit about China, because at Keio there were some excellent China specialists. So I go back to Japan whenever I can, and I met Professor Yoshida I think in 2003 in Tokyo at a U.N. conference.

I think I'll give you the good news first. Or do you want the bad news first? The good news is that the United States has an administration which is open and receptive not only to Americans, but to other governments and other people. That is, it is looking very hard for ideas, people, new approaches, as we make our way in the world. I think it's eight of our colleagues in foreign-policy studies are now in the administration or will be in the administration. And that's just Brookings. And I know I'm at another National Academy of Science committee where three of my colleagues are in the administration serving in various positions. So, in a sense, we've never had a better opportunity as scholars to influence policy of the United States.

That's the good news.

The bad news is that, as they came into office and as they were read into the material, they discovered that in South Asia, in Pakistan in particular, things were much worse than they had thought. And it was President Obama who raised the Pakistan issue first in the campaign. In one of the primaries, the whole discussion between the candidates -- I think it was the Republican primary -- was about Pakistan. And I thought this was bizarre. Why Pakistan? And they really didn't know what they were talking about, but Obama had introduced the issue, and arguing that Afghanistan was the most

important place in the world for American interests, and Pakistan was, therefore, also important.

When they came to office, they discovered that it was Pakistan that was more important than Afghanistan. We could lose in Afghanistan without any serious setback, although I think we will probably win. But in Pakistan, I think you have the possibility of an event which would be unequaled since the end of World War II; in other words, on the scale of the defeat of Germany and Japan in 1945. Not only is Pakistan an unstable state in many, many ways -- I don't go into the details -- but it also has right now at least a hundred nuclear weapons, and, by the time I finish talking, perhaps they'll have 105. In other words, it is going to open up a new clue to a new production line to supplement its uranium production line, with the assistance of the Chinese, I might add. So the projection is that they could have 150 or so within five years. And the numbers will keep on growing like that.

There is, in fact, a nuclear arms race on in South Asia between India and Pakistan, although I don't know that the Indians are aware that they're in it. I could talk about India separately, but certainly the Pakistanis believe that nuclear weapons are -- preserve their state like no other device, and, therefore, the more nuclear weapons they acquire, the better off they'll be, which is a totally false argument, but that's their problem. But it's also ours.

I think there are many areas where the United States and Japan can cooperate regarding South Asia. And I could go down the list in terms of economic development, cooperation at sea, counter-piracy operations, the expansion of the four-nation naval cooperation -- Australia, the United States, China, Japan and India -- as a

result of the tsunami. But I think that the nuclear issue is central. And every time I've been lecturing or giving talks to people on Pakistan, since I wrote my Pakistan book in 2004, I warn my audiences that you will be less happy -- you will be more unhappy when you leave than when you came in. In other words, from the time I finished that book, five years ago to the present, things have gotten steadily worse, and they've reached a crisis state five year -- four years ago, and I think we're going to see one crisis after another in Pakistan. And this, of course, should affect Japan directly. It does affect Japan directly, and I know Japanese officials are very concerned about this.

There are many ways in which Pakistan could be a problem in terms of its nuclear capability, let alone its other problems. But there are really I think three or four are the most important.

Here there's been an obsession, as you -- as those who've been in the U.S. for the past couple of days know, with the Taliban somehow getting hold of a few Pakistani nuclear weapons and running off with them. That, I think, is the least likely possibility. The Taliban are -- is a name that is given to an assortment of Pakistani groups -- Islamic radicals of different kinds. They have no technical skills whatsoever. If you gave them a nuclear weapon, they wouldn't know what to do with it. In fact, they couldn't. There's no way they could deliver it, although five years from now I might have to change that judgment.

More likely is the theft of a nuclear weapon not by a Taliban but by a more educated, informed Pakistani with an inside job. And, in fact, there have been two cases where civilians have taken nuclear technology out of the system and tried to sell it to others or give it to others. One was A.Q. Khan. And the other was a Pakistani nuclear

scientist working in one of the weapons labs who had a contact with Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda. So looking ahead, there could be more. Again, that's hard to predict. Low probability. There's not much Japan could do about it. There's not much we can do about it, except to hold the Pakistanis responsible for what happens.

Thirdly, I think -- and really more likely and perhaps equally troublesome -- would be a Pakistani decision to do what they've always been able to do, but the political incentive might be growing; that is, to share their nuclear technology with another country, officially and openly. And that is by doing what we did, the Americans did in Europe, and that is to loan or loan our nuclear capability to other states -- the United States-based nuclear weapons and nuclear-capable airplanes and ships all around the world during the Cold War. What's to prevent Pakistan from doing the same with Saudi Arabia, should Iran get nuclear weapons? Nothing. In fact, the Pakistanis would be warded for it. They would feel -- you know, they would regard this as an act of Islamic solidarity, and I think the Saudis would need that kind of umbrella should the Iranians go nuclear, which is a possibility, but not a certainty.

Finally, there's a prospect which is perhaps even most likely of another India-Pakistan crisis which could escalate to a nuclear war. In the bookstore, right behind you, there's a book called *Four Crises and Peace Process*, which I wrote with an Indian and a Pakistani colleague. And we looked at the role of nuclear weapons in all the four India-Pakistan crises since 1987. And except for the first one, which actually triggered a nuclear arms race, the other three did feature nuclear threats, nuclear movements, unknown or shady nuclear arrangements within each country, and a suspicion in each country that the other was preparing a nuclear attack. Fortunately, all four crises were



defused, but the fifth crisis could have happened last December or a year ago December after the attacks in Mumbai, and I would predict with certainty that there will be more India-Pakistan crises. So, therefore, this is the landscape we're looking at. And I'm only looking at the nuclear landscape, not other aspects of Pakistan as a troubled and troublesome state.

Now what can Japan and the U.S. do? I think there are actually a number of steps we could take which would improve our security and lessen the risk of nuclear proliferation and nuclear war in South Asia. Some of these run counter to widespread assumptions about nuclear proliferation, but let me go through a couple of these steps, and we can discuss them in the Q&A.

First of all, I think that we should not take too seriously the proposal for global nuclear disarmament as proposed by the gang of four, because I think it's idealistic, it's nice, but it has no relevance at all to a region like Pakistan or South Asia, none whatsoever. From an Indian point of view, from an Israeli point of view, from a Pakistani point of view, and maybe from a -- certainly from a North Korean point of view and Iranian point of view, nuclear weapons protect the existence of the state. That's especially true of Pakistan and Israel, probably true of North Korea, it protects the existence of the regime, and, therefore, any talk about global disarmament is nice, but forget about it. It's irrelevant to their security concerns. They will not give up their nuclear programs willingly, and we certainly can't force them to do that for fear of retaliation. So I think the first step towards wisdom, which is definitely going to be opposed by this administration, I would add, would be don't take too seriously the gang of four that's plying for global nuclear disarmament unless you have built into it a

systematic approach to the nuclear weapons states or the possible nuclear weapons states addressing their security problems. And, otherwise, it's just a waste of time. It's nice, but it's a waste of time.

Secondly, I think we should offer Pakistan the same kind of nuclear deal that we offered India, and this, I know, would be opposed by the Japanese government, absolutely. But it's been talked about here, and I think that if you cannot stop a country from going nuclear, if they do go nuclear, it's better to have them in a halfway house that is not part of the NPT, but not outside the NPT, where they accept most of the restraints and the conditions of being a nuclear weapons state as defined by the NPT; and, therefore, are half in the tent rather than completely out of the tent. Now about a month ago, Jim Steinberg, Deputy Secretary of State and our former boss, stood at this platform and actually welcomed the -- I won't say he welcomed -- he acknowledged the India nuclear program and urged the Indians in a sense to be -- to follow NPT guidelines, even though legally they cannot be members of the NPT. This, I think, would rub up against Japanese policy. I've talked to Japanese officials who are very much against the Bush plan to -- the Bush U.S.-India nuclear deal. But I think it's better to have somebody halfway in the house than completely outside the house.

So that's a second strategy.

Thirdly, I think that we should recognize the U.S.-India nuclear deal as a done deal. We should not try to go back and try to twist the Indians' arms. We should complete it, and, in a sense, allow them to develop civilian nuclear power under the auspices of this international framework. Again, the Japanese government is ambivalent

about this, but, on the other hand, it's better to have an open, verified Indian nuclear system than one that's completely closed.

Finally, I think there is a lot that the United States and Japan can do together in terms of integrating South Asia, as Professor Yoshida said. This is the least integrated region in the world. There's virtually no travel and transit between India and Afghanistan, except through Iran. India and Pakistan have no significant trade with each other. It's a region on the verge of crisis. Two of its members are nuclear weapons states. China abuts it. China is a new clear weapon state. And I think that the U.S. and Japan have a common interest here in addressing the lack of integration of South Asia. This can be accomplished, in part, by supporting rail, road transport agreements, and especially work on water resources, ensuring water resources. So this is -- while I would regard the situation in South Asia, especially the nuclear aspect as grave, I think there are positive steps that the United States and Japan can take together to help resolve it.

Thank you.

(Applause.)

MR. TABATA: So now, I'd like to open the floor, so any comments, questions are welcomed.

QUESTION: Yeah. Chia Chen, freelance correspondent. Mr. Cohen, really when you say the bad news, I think that's very good news, because when you realize the problem, that's good news. And so now the critical thing is a safer Pakistan and one way is your neighbor, Mr. Yoshida has said disengage Afghanistan. But is that politically feasible, because now the war Afghanistan is Obama war. And another thing

is this: to have Pakistan and India willing to be friends and not enemies. So could you comment on how to do this, too? And is this politically feasible or not? Thank you.

MR. TABATA: I'd like to collect questions. Okay.

QUESTION: Hi. Mike Billington from the EIR. Professor Uyama, I'm sure you know that the so-called Rainbow Revolutions -- the Orange Revolution and the Rose Revolution and so forth -- in Georgia and Ukraine and also several in Central Asia were run and financed lock, stock and barrel by George Soros and by his friend Lord Malloch-Brown, who's now the British foreign office official responsible for Asia. But they're very proud of it. That's not hidden. They brag about putting Saakashvili in power and they were directly involved in Central Asia. Now this was all done under the banner of democracy, but I would argue strongly that they're not so much concerned with democracy as old-fashioned British imperial destabilizations and so forth. And I would ask, as you may know, George Soros is also the world's pre-eminent sponsor of legalizing drugs. And I'd like you to comment both on that role, how Japan and how you see that, and also how you think this drug issue is related to these destabilizations that go on?

QUESTION: Just a question to Steven Cohen. In your opinion, how would India be disposed to the same kind of nuclear deal for Pakistan as the U.S. extended to India itself?

MR. TABATA: Other questions. If not, then, Professor Cohen.

MR. COHEN: Let me take the last question first, then? We don't know how they would respond. The Bush administration was told that this was an idea they should try and they refused to do it because they were so interested in getting on India's

good side that they didn't want to bring in Pakistan. The irony is that the policy of de-hyphenation, which is what they called it, of treating India in one category, treating Pakistan in another category, when we went ahead with an Indian -- with the U.S.-Indian nuclear deal, which I supported, that was proof to the Pakistanis that we had chosen India once and for all over Pakistan and that the Pakistanis would not be treated fairly.

Now the alternative would have been a criteria-based agreement, like the Millennium Challenge Accounts. We had to meet a certain set of criteria, and then you are eligible for additional assistance. I think we could have had four or five criteria for any state -- or any of the three states -- Israel, Pakistan, and India -- or in India. And they would have met the criteria, fine. If they didn't meet them, they would know exactly where they stood. So I think if we announced that we had a criteria-based system; that is, reveal your past bad actions, in a sense, be truthful about the past, demonstrate that you have a comprehensive good system of control over your nuclear weapons and nuclear establishment, abide by NPT restrictions in terms of transferring nuclear technology and so forth, India would meet the cut and Pakistan would probably not. But at least they would know where they stood. And I've talked to Pakistanis about it. If we had offered them this kind of deal, you know, the deep anti-Americanism which persists in Pakistan would not be there. I think the Indians would accept it now. They might not have then but they accept it now, because they got a very good deal, in fact, a really great deal.

In terms of your question, sir, I think that Afghanistan will be Obama's war. You're right. But I think that there's a pretty good chance that we could win it, at least militarily. Actually, in this room, a lot of things happen in this room, President Karzai stood up here and gave a talk, and I was not impressed by him at all. But I think

that the U.S. military understands how to fight counter-insurgency wars now. And we're putting the kind of resources into Afghanistan which we never put in before. So I think there's a better than even chance we'll do well militarily in Afghanistan. The Pakistanis may see this and what the reaction will be I don't know. But I think we have to persuade them that we are in this for the duration, which most people estimate between five and six years. So I think this will be Obama's war. How he does in it will affect his presidency and whether he gets a second term or not. But I think it's important to demonstrate to the Pakistanis that we are serious about this.

The problem is how much influence there is between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and Pakistan and Afghanistan. The Pakistan intelligence agencies are fighting both sides of the war. That is, they support us in many important ways, but they also are supporting the Taliban in Afghanistan. But they realize now that the Taliban actually are turning against Pakistan itself. So the hope is that they will come to their senses and begin to take their own Taliban threat seriously. But I worked for George Schultz for a number of years, and George Schultz told me once, he said, "Hope is not a policy." That is, we have to have policies to deal with these threats and these eventualities. So I would say prepare for the worst, also. Hope for the best, but prepare for the worst because there's no guarantee that we'll have victory in Afghanistan or that Pakistan won't collapse.

MR. UYAMA: Thank you very much for your question. I studied the Tulip Revolution in Kyrgyzstan, and, together with my colleagues who are specialized in Ukrainian and Georgian politics, I wrote a booklet in Japanese on comparative analysis of the color revolutions. I took interviews from people in Kyrgyzstan, both Kyrgyz and

foreign activists, and I am aware that American and European NGO activists and diplomats were very proud of having contributed to the so-called democratic revolution. But this event -- this incident was caused primarily by a combination of various local factors, including the Kyrgyzstan people's dissatisfaction with Askar Akayev and his family, and fights among various local politicians and groups of people. And those Kyrgyz people who are active in NGOs and contributed to this revolution, they quickly disappeared from the political scene after that revolution. So here, we can observe a perception gap between Central Asian people and foreign activists and diplomats. Foreign people tend to see change in government as a move toward democracy. But, in reality, it is deeply immersed in local context, where fierce fights among various factions are constantly lit.

So I personally support promotion of democracy in Central Asia, but I think we have to be very, very careful what foreign initiatives can be perceived by local people and what results these initiatives can bring about. It maybe -- it can bring opposite results from that was expected. Thank you.

QUESTION: (Off mike, follow up question) (Inaudible)

MR. UYAMA: In Kyrgyzstan? Well, I know that there are many rumors that some people who are so-called drug kings contributed their money to various groups of politicians. But, well, I don't think that the single drug issue had a great meaning in this process. The point is that there are many sources of -- many illegal or partly illegal sources of money in Kyrgyzstan, and politicians, both pro-Akayev and anti-Akayev, they freely distributed this money to poor people. And these poor people were mobilized through demonstrations and various half violent acts.

MR. LINN: Maybe just on the drug issue in the connection with the preparation of the Human Development Report for Central Asia by UNDP, we looked at the challenge that drug trade and transit represents for Central Asia as a principal -- not the only -- but a principal transit route. What became clear to us at the time is there's no simple answer to the problem. As long as, however, as long as you either don't control the supply side -- and this, if anything, has gotten worse since then -- or you do something on the demand side, whatever it is, to stop the demand or legalize and decriminalize, the answer is alone cannot be to try to stop the transition and to put the burden on Central Asian countries to be sort of the plug that seals this problem. It's simply unrealistic. And as long as supply and demand problems continue at the rate they are proceeding now, Central Asia is, in many ways, an unwitting victim of this entire process.

So my view of this, not being an expert in this business, but my view is that there is legitimate debate to be had. How and what balance of dealing with the supply and the demand problem is the right approach. So I -- you know, you have obviously your own view, but what to do on the demand side. But certainly without either demand and or supply constraints, Central Asia will continue facing huge problems and the criminalization of the countries resulting from the transit and the increasing also local use and even cultivation that is -- comes along with this is a very, very serious problem.

MR. TABATA: Are there any questions? Oh, okay.

QUESTION: Keiko Iizuka, current CNAPS Fellow from Japan, and my question goes to Dr. Cohen.



You quite explicitly slashed the effectiveness of President Obama's proposition for a nuclear-free world. But having said that, is there any area in which Japan or the U.S.-Japan Alliance could contribute to avoid the further complication of the nuclear rivalry or competition between India and Pakistan?

QUESTION: I guess my comment is addressed to everyone on the panel. I think that all of you said, when speaking about slightly different areas, that there was an important role for Japan ODA to play in building infrastructure to tie together Central Asia and I think I heard it for Pakistan and India as well. And, of course, those are linked by Afghanistan. So are you all saying that Japanese ODA can really build a new core of Eurasia, that's Central Asia plus South Asia? I'm not even sure what to call this new region, but maybe someone can come up with a name.

QUESTION: I'm Peter Rutland from Wesleyan University. It seemed to be a consistent theme today that the strategic arguments trumped always the economic arguments. So, as soon as people started talking about nuclear weapons leakage or something, that gets all the attention. And the long-term building of economic prosperity is less attractive as an urgent issue. And obviously, this maps onto the partnership of Japan and the United States that that imbalance, focusing always, at the end of the day, on the strategic issues favors the U.S. and leaves Japan rather in the sidelines. So specifically making that point with regard to Central Asia, I'd just like to ask Mr. Linn what he sees as possible ways to turn that around, to get the U.S. to look at Central Asia from a long-term economic development perspective rather than just as a transit route to Afghanistan; and whether that long-term development can take place without the cooperation of Russia and China.

QUESTION: I raised a question this morning. This is (inaudible) Wen from Global Times. Thanks very much for the -- for this very good panel right now. One reads from your political perspective I think Japan may be more practical to play more role in the -- with the neighbors, like the North Korea, even China, rather than, I mean, go even pretty far to the South Asia. I think that the India as one of the kind of recent power in Asia is may -- for the Afghanistan; also the Pakistan may play more a role there. I just want you get the comments on that a little bit more. Thank you.

QUESTION: My name is Hao Zheng from CNAPS Brookings here. I have a very quick question about the relationship between the SCO or Shanghai Cooperation Organization, between this organization and Japan or Japan plus USA., because, you know, I have heard a lot of voice from Japan that they want to join this organization. But the problem is maybe the SCO want to know that what -- for what real proposal, for what reason that Japan want to join this organization and what kind of contribution they can make if the SCO accept them? Thank you.

MR. TABATA: Okay. Now, I'd like to give all the panelists one and half minutes to answer questions. Okay. Professor Cohen, first.

MR. COHEN: What can Japan do? I think in the case of -- I didn't use the term development aid -- but there may be opportunities in Pakistan, for example, specific projects such as metros or subways transit, which you know what you're going to get for your money. And this would do more to improve the image not only of Japan, but the West than just about anything else; in other words, help Pakistanis in their everyday life.

I think the most important thing Japan can do in terms -- is really to keep the Alliance tight. Nuclear weapons -- especially in the case of dealing with the proliferation of nuclear weapons -- nuclear weapons have now formed a chain of the way from North Korea to Israel. There is a link -- all these systems are linked and inter-linked. Japan does not want to be part of that change, certainly, so it must remain in the U.S. Alliance or in alliance with the United States and work with the United States in developing plans, strategies, and diplomatic activities, which will make it unnecessary for other countries to start transferring and sharing nuclear weapons. So preemptive diplomacy, I think, is important, not simply recalling the memories of Hiroshima and so forth, but really working with the Americans and other countries -- the Europeans -- to develop practical, workable arms-control programs, not simply -- and I'm in favor of the gang of four in terms of global disarmament. But that doesn't cut it on the ground in Pakistan, India, or, say, North Korea. So I think working with other countries for practical diplomatic purposes and using its economic leverage as a way -- as a factor here.

MR. YOSHIDA: So, yes. Maybe the ODAs can play some role, but not just the ODA, but the ODA with some other economic activities on the part of Japan together to work for the more involvement of those particular states and globalized economies. So there's a -- Japan could play some very globalizing role in giving economic cooperation with those countries. And I think that South Asia can be the places that can use Japanese economical cooperation more effectively than any -- than other, I mean, neighboring countries to Japan since didn't have much of a very politically negative history in the past. And also I think there's a -- South Asia, so far, had a very

strong political influence from the United States. Maybe the United States is too powerful a factor in this region so that there's some replacement by Japan as a rather independent or different element to suppress more roles in this particular region. So that there's a -- this very long -- the zero-sum game will be played somewhat differently.

MR. LINN: On the question of how and whether Japan can contribute to the regional integration through infrastructure investments. The short answer is yes. And it has already invested quite a bit in this regard. Interesting enough, the U.S. has contributed also through not so much infrastructure investment, but through support for trade, customs, and trade facilitation, which actually, when you put them together, are very helpful.

Now each of them are too small. The U.S. program on the one side, on trade facilitation, and the Japan investments in infrastructure are too small to make a difference on their own. And indeed, there are other aid organizations, whether the EU, the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, and so on who are all also active in these areas. So the trick is now to actually find a way for these various entities and organizations to work together and I mentioned early on the CAREC, Central Asia Economic Regional Cooperation Program, which is actually led by ADB, which is the -- the largest shareholders are actually Japan and the U.S., if I'm not mistaken, and strongly supported by the World Bank, also again, the U.S. and Japan are the largest shareholders. So it would only be natural that in this forthcoming forum, partnership forum, where CAREC is hoping to attract Japanese-U.S. participation -- by the way, also Russian and Iranian participation, Indian participation, and so on -- that actually one finds together to support a CAREC program on regional trade, transport, and trade facilitation that I

believe is a very strong, potentially strong, program that's well articulated, with very specific projects and programs, and very importantly, a monitoring of costs and time reductions along the corridors that will actually give everybody a sense of whether progress is being made. So I think there's an opportunity here for the U.S., Japan, and the countries of the region, as well as the international organizations, to work together.

The last comment is on the U.S. -- how to shift the U.S. focus from sort of more geopolitics and maybe also more from the democratization, human rights to more the economic issues. While some balance, I think, between those is obviously among those goals is important, but I would agree that the economic dimension had been, I think, neglected -- the development dimension. Here the fundamental problem that I see relates to the continued fragmentation of the U.S. foreign assistance framework and system where it is very difficult, especially in countries that are somewhat remote and low on the priority pole, as I mentioned early on, to actually get a systemic, systematic approach of U.S. foreign assistance. And then what happens is if you have multiple agencies doing a bit here, do a bit there in the development area, but you have a strong Defense Department or strong State Department set of objectives, then they tend to take the precedence. And so, unfortunately, until the U.S. administration really decides to reform the foreign assistance approach and framework, which is apparently not in the works right now, it's -- I don't have a lot of hope that the U.S. foreign assistance approach in Central Asia will be changed too much and get more of a sense of priority relative to some of the other objectives, which is, I think, it's unfortunate, but that may be the reality.

MR. UYAMA: I also think that Japan, the United States, other countries, and international institutions have contributed and have more to contribute to economic development in Central Asia. But I also think that Central Asian economies have been too much busy in reacting to foreign initiatives and world economic situations. After the fall of the Soviet Union, they had to adapt to the changing situations of transition economy and had to think to what extent to accept conditions of IMF, the World Bank, and so on. And later, some countries, and especially Kazakhstan, could -- was able to make use of the high price of oil in the world market; and could not develop other economic sectors. And they are also busy in accepting and rejecting various proposals from foreign aid institutions and investors. Now when Central Asian economies and the world economy as well is in crisis, I think this is -- this can be a good opportunity for Central Asians themselves to develop strategies for their economic growth.

And about the SCO. As far as I know, almost no one in Japan proposes for Japan to join the SCO as a member. But there are some proposals about interaction between the SCO and Japan, and Professor Iwashita is one of the proponents of this idea. And the important point is to avoid confrontation between the SCO and other regional initiatives. When the Central Asia plus Japan dialogue was launched in 2004, some Russian media reported that this is a reaction to the SCO; the Japanese want to hinder the development of SCO, and so on. But, as far as I know, there is no such intention from the Japanese side. And it would be beneficial if the SCO and the Central Asian and Japan dialogue and the other initiatives can interact, cooperate with each other.

MR. TABATA: Thank you very much. I'd like to close this session. I'd like to thank all the paper presenters and the audience. Thank you very much.

(Applause)