

Lecture on Japan's Foreign Policy
on November 18, 2014
at Far East & South East Asia Area Study Center, University of Sindh

Good Morning and Assalam Alaikum,

I am very pleased to be given the opportunity to speak on Japan's Foreign Policy today.

(Overview of bilateral relations)

Before talking about the topic, I would like to touch upon the Japan-Pakistan relationship. Japan and Pakistan have always had a friendly relation throughout the last 62 years. Japan and Pakistan established diplomatic relations in April 1952. Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan paid a visit to Pakistan in January 1962 as then Crown Prince and Princess. In November 1992, Their Imperial Highness Prince Akishino, the second son of the Emperor and Princess visited Pakistan.

(Japan's foreign policy)

Now I would like to speak on Japan's foreign policy. Japan's current foreign policy is centered on the basic policy of "Proactive Contributor to Peace", based on the principle of international cooperation. Japan has consistently followed the path of a peace-loving nation since the end of World War II and has built up trust within the international community. Japan as a "Proactive Contributor to Peace" will contribute even more proactively in securing peace, stability and prosperity of the international community, while achieving its own security and the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region.

In December 2013, Japan's first National Security Strategy (NSS) was adopted. The NSS sets out Japan's fundamental policies concerning diplomacy and defense in relation to national security, and presents the contents of the policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" to the people of Japan and the international community. Under these fundamental policies, Japan will both protect its national interests and conduct proactive and effective diplomacy that fulfills the country's responsibilities commensurate with its position in the international community.

Since the inauguration of the current administration led by Prime Minister Abe, Japan has pursued a strategic foreign policy that "Takes a Panoramic Perspective of the World Map," upholding universal values such as freedom, democracy, respect of fundamental human rights, and the rule of law. Since taking office in December 2012, Prime Minister Abe has been actively engaged in this strategic foreign policy, and he already visited 49 countries, which is the most for any Japanese prime minister.

(About South Asian Region including Pakistan)

Now I will talk about Japan's Relations with South Asian Region. South Asia is becoming increasingly important in the international arena with its large population of approximately 1.6 billion, its geopolitical importance, and the continued high rates of economic growth enjoyed by many countries in the region. Japan will further strengthen the economic relationships with South Asian countries with which it traditionally has friendly and cooperative relations. Moreover, Japan will continue its cooperation for each country's efforts such as establishing national reconciliation and democratization.

As for Pakistan, Japan has dispatched an election observation mission at the time of general election in May last year and I was also a member of the mission. Our observation was that Pakistan successfully held general election in a democratic way and the Government was transferred democratically. And Japan will continue to encourage Pakistan's positive effort and cooperate with it to promote the peace and

stability of the region and the entire international community.

(Towards a society where women shine)

The realization of a society in which women shine— by reaching their full potential—is an important issue not only for the further growth of the Japanese economy, but also for the dynamism of the international community. To date, Japan has built a track record in the support of women in developing countries. Prime Minister Abe put forward three pillars at the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in September 2013: (1) promoting women's participation in society and of the empowerment of women; (2) engaging in greater efforts in the field of health and medical care for women; and (3) promoting women's participation and protection in the areas of peace and security. Mr. Abe indicated that Japan will implement ODA in excess of US\$3 billion over the next three years, targeting these pillars.

The World Assembly for Women in Tokyo “WAW! Tokyo 2014” was held in Japan on September 12 and 13 this year. The Government of Japan has made continued efforts on women's empowerment, and creating “a society where women shine” has consistently been one of the highest priority issues since the launch of Prime Minister Abe's administration in December 2012. The participants in this symposium discussed a variety of women-related issues in the international community as well as in Japan from the two main perspectives, 1) promoting women's active roles in the economy, and 2) global issues and women's initiatives.

Creating an environment in which women find it comfortable to work and enhancing opportunities for women to work and to be active in society is a matter of great importance. I don't have to repeat the story of Ms. Malala Yousafzai who has strongly appealed to the world the message of the importance of education of women not only in Pakistan but in the world and won the Nobel Peace Prize this year.

(Japan's ODA)

The year 2014 marks Japan's 60th anniversary of ODA. Over 60 years since 1954, Japan has actively utilized ODA and contributed to poverty reduction in developing countries, peace-building, realization of sustainable economic growth, resolution of global issues, and providing humanitarian assistance/emergency relief.

ODA addresses development issues in developing countries, and is also expected to help revitalize Japan's economy by taking in the dynamic growth of developing and emerging countries. The “Infrastructure System Export Strategy” (formulated in May 2013) and the “Japan Revitalization Strategy” (approved by the Cabinet in June 2013) express Japan's intention to utilize ODA strategically in such areas as infrastructure systems export, sharing advanced technologies and know-how of small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) and local governments, sharing medical technology and services, and the securing of international standards.

The importance of ODA is increasing as Japan seeks to be a “Proactive Contributor to Peace” as upheld by Prime Minister Abe. The National Security Strategy (NSS) approved by the Cabinet in December 2013 states that responding to development issues contributes to improvement in the global security environment, and Japan needs to strengthen its efforts as part of its “Proactive Contributor to Peace” based on the principle of international cooperation.

Moving ahead, Japan will cooperate closely with local governments, NGOs and the private sector to promote proactive and strategic ODA activities.

(Japan's ODA to Pakistan)

Since 1954, Japan has been extending its ODA to Pakistan. The schemes of cooperation range from technical cooperation, grant aid and ODA loans in various sectors like health, education, environment, water supply, agriculture, transportation, infrastructure and so

on. The cumulative amount of ODA from Japan to Pakistan up to Year 2012 is about 6.67 billion US dollars; 4.04 billion of Yen Loan, 2.16 billion of Grant Aid and 0.47 billion of Technical Assistance.

In the area of emergency aid, Japan provided timely emergency assistance to Pakistan at the time of earthquake in AJK in 2005 and the floods in 2010, 2011 and 2012.

Pakistan too extended assistance to Japan at the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami in March 2011. Pakistan provided relief goods such as mineral water, milk and biscuits to Japan and the Pakistani people in Japan went to Tohoku region to serve curry and rice to the victims. This proves that the cordial and friendly relationship between Japan and Pakistan has always been maintained.

Japan has a scheme called “Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Project (GGP)” to support small-scale development projects to meet the basic human needs of the local people. Japan has granted more than 300 assistances to Pakistan through this scheme since 1989 to date and the Consulate-General of Japan in Karachi has so far implemented 11 projects since 2009.

(Prospect for Pakistan’s development)

Pakistan is a country with great potential for economic growth. Pakistan has a large population of 188 million, the 6th largest in the world. This means there is a large market in Pakistan. And Pakistan is very near to the Middle East. So a large potential market lies not only in South Asia but also in the Middle East. The large manpower and natural resources such as copper, coal, zinc and natural gas are also available. With these available resources and favorable conditions, Pakistan has a big potential for development in the future.

What I would like to stress here is that education is one of the most important factors for development of a nation. Japan has no natural resources but has only human resources, who are very well educated. Human resources of Japan have such qualities as sincerity, honesty, dedication, discipline, punctuality and consideration for others. These qualities are as important as technical skills. The media in the world reported very highly that at the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011, the people in Tohoku region of Japan were very much disciplined, helped others and lined up patiently for food allocation, etc. The Japanese people with these qualities rose from ashes of World War Two and are now rising again after the Great East Japan Earthquake.

Let me quote a figure of Japanese educational level. In Japan about 98% of junior high school graduates go on to high schools and about 48% of high school graduates go to universities and about 6% go to junior colleges and about 17% go to specialized technical colleges and if I add the students of 4th grade of technical colleges, the rate of high school graduates who go on to study in the higher level is about 80%.

In Pakistan too, the key for success in developing the country is education. Basic education for all and higher education, especially in the area of science and technology, is important for economic development.

(End)