

## **Chairperson's Report**

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**President, Science Council of Japan**

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Since 2000 the Science Council of Japan has been holding annually an international conference on the theme of science and technology and sustainable human society. We chose the theme of information technology and capacity-building in 2002 and energy in 2003, inviting eminent scientists of global standing to conferences that proved to be of great significance. In 2004 we planned to address various problems that confront mega-cities in Asia, a region considered certain to achieve growth from now on, and addressed urban planning, security, health and public hygiene, and poverty; the conference was held over a three-day period from November 10 to 12 in the Auditorium of the Science Council of Japan.

At the outset of the planning stage, experts in urban engineering took the lead, and given the very great importance to the social-science aspect.

As normal every year, with respect to international cooperation and publicity we were able to secure the kind backing of the International Council for Science (ICSU), the United Nations University (UNU) and the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS), and also the support of the Global Carbon Project (GCP), the InterAcademy Council (IAC), the InterAcademy Panel on international issues (IAP), the International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme (IGBP), the International Human Dimensions Programme on Global Environmental Change (IHDP), the Pacific Science Association (PSA) and the Science Council of Asia (SCA). Through those bodies we were able to make this international conference more widely known and to have its content explained and public relations and other activities carried out.

The distinguished keynote speakers included Lord Robert M. May, President of the Royal Society in the United Kingdom; Dr. Shigeru Omi, Regional Director of the Western Pacific Regional Office of the World Health Organization; Prof. Lewis M. Branscomb, Professor Emeritus of Harvard University, who co-chaired the U.S. Academy report *Making the Nation Safer* released after the 9/11 attacks; and Prof. Malcolm John Grant, President of University College London. These keynote addresses were rich with suggestions and implications from a very broad range of perspectives, and the panel discussions were also of the highest quality. Both factors that ensured that the three-day conference proved to be a highly satisfying experience for all participants. The Conference Statement was compiled at the end of the conference period with the cooperation of all participants.

A distinctive feature of the conference was the emphasis placed on the social-science aspect at the planning stage, which was one of the factors that contributed to the conference's success. The conference also emphasized that although major cities in Asia are growing rapidly, the nature of

that growth differs in certain respects from the conventional pattern of large cities such as Tokyo and cities in Europe and America, where growth has occurred in tandem with modern industrialization and the transformation of the industrial structure to one based on the mass production of standardized products. In consequence, they face problems that differ from those experienced by large cities hitherto. For example, the numbers of urban poor are relatively large, because the flow of population to the cities is occurring irrespective of demand. Another of these problems is that the rapid growth of urban populations is often difficult to issues for governance.

The conference received the unanimous high praise of all participants, who participated with a considerable degree of enthusiasm throughout the three days. This can also be inferred from the widespread talk as to the excellence of the Science Council of Japan's international conference that was heard at the first Science and Technology in Society Forum (STS Forum), held at the Kyoto International Conference Hall from 14 to 16 November just after our conference.

More than two years of preparation went into the holding of the STS Forum at the suggestion of Mr. Koji Omi, former Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy. It is the first forum of its kind in the world to gather together leaders such as eminent scientists, politicians and business people to discuss the progress and possibilities of science and its social aspects, i.e., "lights and shadows" of science and technology, and to exchange views on the global issues of the future. The forum was attended by about five hundred leaders from around the world, including government ministers responsible for science from more than 10 countries. Prime Minister Koizumi sent a strong message in his speech in which he gave concrete examples to support his belief that science and technology can make environmental protection and economic development mutually achievable. It has been decided to hold the STS Forum annually in Kyoto in the immediate future, and in 2005 to hold it — as was the case this year — as a series in conjunction with the Science Council of Japan's international conference.

In addition, an international conference on the subject of industry-academia collaboration was held jointly by the Science Council of Japan and JETRO on November 17. A similar schedule is being arranged for 2005 and is planned to be held together with the Science Council of Japan's international conference around the time of the STS Forum on September 11 to 13. We hope to develop the period into a kind of "science week," with a belief that the contribution made to the world by the Japanese scientific community and its addressing of global issues will build confidence in Japan as a nation built on science and technology, and gain the understanding and acclaim of wider society at home and abroad for our efforts.

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the many officials and others who worked so hard on the preparations for the Science Council of Japan's international conference, the STS Forum, and the international conference held jointly with JETRO.