

Speech at the 50th Anniversary Celebration OECD/NEA

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On the occasion of the 50th Anniversary of the OECD/NEA, I would like to express my heartfelt congratulations to Mr. Luis E. Echávarri, Director General of the OECD/NEA, and his staff.

Since our accession to the ENEA in 1972 as the first non-European member country, Japan has contributed actively through various activities, such as participating in the Halden Reactor Project and the OECD/ROSA Project. Japan highly values the specialized and pragmatic activities of the NEA, which have contributed to the resolution of various problems facing nuclear power.

The Japan Atomic Energy Commission is in charge of planning, discussing and deciding the basic principles of Japan's nuclear energy policy. In 2005, we formulated the Framework for Nuclear Energy Policy as a basic policy strategy for the Government and industries to follow for ten years or so to come. Its main objective is to make the share of nuclear power in electricity generation after the year 2030 similar to or greater than the current level of 30 to 40 percent, in order to improve energy security,

energy economy and environmental protection in Japan.

Currently, there exist 55 nuclear reactors in operation, which have produced approximately 30% of electricity generated in Japan. Thanks to nuclear energy, the rate of energy self-sufficiency in Japan has increased from 4% to 18%.

We recognize that the importance of nuclear power, which contributes to the stable supply of energy and serves as one of the countermeasures against global warming, will never be diminished in Japan's future. Furthermore, in the recent years of the "Nuclear Renaissance", a growing number of countries have expressed their interest in introducing or expanding nuclear power programmes.

To expand the use of nuclear energy on a global scale, it is obviously important to ensure 3S, namely, non-proliferation/safeguards, nuclear safety and nuclear security, and to gain the understanding of the general public. But for promoting the sustainable utilization of nuclear power in future years, it is indispensable to make strenuous efforts for basic and fundamental research and development, in order to accumulate truly necessary technology and know-how, while also fostering human resources that play an important role therein.

Japan expects the NEA to further enhance and develop its efforts that are

indispensable for realizing the sustainable utilization of nuclear power, through specialized technological deliberations at its various committees and through improving and developing its Data Bank services. Japan also intends to continue contributing to these activities.

Thank you for your attention.