

The 14th Science and Technology Ministers' Roundtable

1. Date and time: October 1, 2017 (Sun.), 13:15-15:20
2. Venue: Annex 1, Kyoto International Conference Center, (Takaragaike, Sakyō-ku, Kyoto)
3. Participants: Ministers responsible for Science and Technology (S&T) Policy, science advisers to the head of states and other representatives from 25 countries (including Japan - see list attached)
4. Theme: The Role of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for Future Society – Human-Centered Society to Be Realized through Society 5.0 –

Discussion Points

1. Can the realization of the visions for future society presented in Society 5.0 contribute to overcome societal challenges in your country? If so, what are the societal challenges?
2. How would you design international cooperation in order to overcome societal challenges in your country?

5. Roundtable Summaries:

i) The Roundtable was chaired by Mr. Masaji Matsuyama, Japan's Minister of State for S&T Policy. Minister Matsuyama's opening remarks covered the following points:

- The 5th S&T Basic Plan," launched April last year, serves as a comprehensive five-year strategy of STI in Japan. The plan introduced "Society 5.0," which is a concept proposal of an advanced, futuristic, and human-centered society, created by transformations led by STI.
- Visions for future society that each country draws up can be expected to vary depending on their respective needs and socio-economic situation, but this kind of societal transition through the development of S&T is considered to be a common challenge for advanced countries as well as developing countries.
- It will be necessary not only to work on research and development (R&D) in advanced areas, but also to upgrade the means of disseminating and applying R&D results, i.e. through new institutions and social systems so that we can build future societies capable of addressing the various issues in each country, region and the society.
- In this globalized world, to share the benefits of S&T with everyone in every region and nation, each country must take on its role as part of an appropriate international cooperative effort.

Minister Matsuyama then introduced the theme of the Roundtable "The Role of Science, Technology and Innovation (STI) for Future Society – Human-Centered Society to Be Realized through Society 5.0 –," and asked participants to share their experiences and thoughts regarding the use of STI in realizing the visions of future society in their countries. He

concluded his remarks with his hopes for productive discussions that would deepen the level of mutual understanding among the participating countries, enabling the networks to be built for collaboration.

ii) An open discussion session, moderated by Dr. Ueyama, Executive Member of Council for Science, Technology and Innovation, covered the following points:

- (1) Various social challenges mentioned by the participating countries included high population density, excess concentration of population and industry in metropolitan areas, aging society, poverty reduction, and securing of stable food supply. The countries have recognized the importance of promoting STI in addressing these issues.
- (2) The countries that are promoting the use of ICT and other new services are facing the needs to build a system to integrate various data while dealing with cyber security issue. In the countries where STI is yet to be developed, the use of cutting-edge S&T is a challenge itself and the application of S&T needs to be selective in accordance with the challenges they are facing. Meanwhile, what is essential in building our future society is human resource development, especially encouraging the next generation of creative researchers to develop new technologies.
- (3) It was pointed out that the development of S&T alone is not enough to effectively deal with issues such as aging and decreasing population and widening gaps between cities and remote areas; To utilize new technologies such as ICT, robotics and automated driving, it is necessary to improve the overall environment, for instance, in easing restrictions and changing rules in the areas of data use and privacy-protection; the key to realizing the future society while boosting international competitiveness is taking measures to respond to the various needs of people.
- (4) These issues cannot be solved by a single nation; they need to be addressed multilaterally through international cooperation and collaboration, such as in sharing experiences and good practices.

iii) Dr. Ueyama summarized the discussion as follows:

- (1) The government, with its policy-making functions, plays the central role in ensuring cooperation among various sectors and consistency in policies and measures.
- (2) Continuous communication among countries is the key to the development of new technologies and promoting digitalization.
- (3) In international cooperation for addressing social challenges, countries need to keep in mind that cooperation is done in an inclusive manner so that everyone can benefit from S&T.

iv) In closing, Minister Matsuyama formally expressed his gratitude to participants from each country. He stated that through this meeting, participants were able to better understand the role of STI in realizing the future societies countries hope to build as well as the importance of harmonizing international efforts while taking into account the different circumstances the countries are in. Furthermore, it was also pointed out that in realizing society 5.0, typical common challenges include, aging society, health, food, water, and IT. The minister expressed his hopes for accelerating cooperation and collaboration among participating countries toward finding solutions to these common social challenges and establishing the strong and sustainable base for the purpose.

6. Working Lunch: Prior to the Ministers' Roundtable, Minister Matsuyama hosted a working lunch as a networking place for attendees and exchanged opinions. On this occasion, Dr. Ueyama gave a keynote presentation on the vision of future society Japan is inspired to build through achieving "Society 5.0."

7. Bilateral Talks: Minister Matsuyama held bilateral talks with the following ministers and representatives:

- Prof. Frédérique Vidal, Minister for Higher Education, Research and Innovation (France)

The two ministers reaffirmed the significance of bilateral cooperation in the area of S&T and space policies. They also shared their thoughts about how important human resource development, support for female scientists and industry-academic-government collaboration are in promoting STI. Meanwhile, Minister Matsuyama invited Prof. Vidal to the Second International Space Exploration Forum (ISEF2) scheduled to be held next March in Tokyo. He also asked the French minister to encourage the companies from his country to participate in a large-scale field operational Test for automated driving systems. In response, Prof. Vidal said she would give positive consideration to the two requests.

- Dr. Fidel Angel Castro Díaz Balart, Scientific Advisor (Cuba)

Minister Matsuyama and Dr. Castro discussed the importance of nurturing the younger generations in promoting STI and continuous promotion of knowledge exchange toward the year 2019, which marks the 90th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.