

Foreword

Good morning. Mr. Sato, thank you very much for your opening remarks. Today, it is really hot, a typical summer day in Hiroshima. Despite this heat wave and your busy schedules, thank you very much for joining this symposium. I am Nishida, and I am currently serving as the Director of the Institute for Peace Science at Hiroshima University.

As Mr. Sato said, today, from now until the evening using, we will be talking about peace-building efforts in Asia. Also, Mr. Sato mentioned as well that we were so grateful to be able to have invited the world's experts and practitioners in Japan as well as from abroad, so we will be, I hope, having quite active discussions later. But whether this type of symposium will end in a resounding success or not, is not only a function of the speaker's lectureship, but more so a factor of how much active participation we can get from the audience.

Each speaker will speak for approximately 20 minutes on their experience and viewpoints. Afterward, there will be a moderator for each session: the first will be Professor Yamane, and I will serve as the second moderator. During each section, the floor will be open to observations, opinions, and questions, and we would like to secure as much time as possible for this interaction. I hope that by so doing, today's symposium will be interesting, informative, and a constructive place to express your opinions and knowledge. If we succeed in this goal, it

would be very helpful.

Well, this year marks the third year since I took over the directorship of the Institute. On average, we have had two major symposia per year, and this past summer, our symposium was held on the anniversary of the 86th A-bomb day. This particular symposium was geared toward discussions on peace in broad terms; people came together to discuss nuclear non-proliferation, including diplomats, government officials, and academics, as well as citizens, business interests, students, and NGO representatives. The door is always open to everybody, and we welcome anyone who is ready to take action. The second symposium each year was initially held in autumn. Today, the world is in a rather dire situation. Despite criticism, we believe that the United Nations still plays a very important role. This year, the theme of the third autumn symposium is on the role of the United Nations, and we ask the question: How to strengthen the functions of the United Nations?

These are the reflections of the interest of the Institute, and we would like to deepen the dialogue with all of you in this field. Today, we are talking about peace-building. Well, you may say, what do you mean by peace-building, peacekeeping? Well, what about to build and to maintain peace? What does peace mean? I will say there is no consensus on those terms yet, although 70 years have passed since the World War II. When you turn on TV, you'll

see news of the hardships faced by refugees, terrorism, famine, flood and earthquakes, hurricanes and typhoons. We see so many conflicts: man-made conflicts as well as natural disasters, and some things that many of us cannot imagine. There are many possible ways human-generated climate change might be the cause of natural disasters, with a lot of casualties and death tolls accompanying them. There are many problems occurring in the urban settings in the world, and all those things are not telling us the world is at peace right now. There's another school of thought in which some people say that peace means the absence of wars between nation states. Well, under that definition, the world after the Second World War might have enjoyed peace, but from my perspective, a practitioner's point of view, that kind definition by the Castle in the Air.

On the other hand, the role of NGOs and universities has been discussed so many times, hundreds of times in the past, but we always only say that we could, or we can do something about it. But even if we determine how to strengthen their roles, actions do not really follow. When we say peace-building, in UN system, for example, Africa is the main theater. In Africa, there have been a number of conflicts in the south of the continent. Refugees, women, and children were placed in a very difficult situation, so the response from the UN and from NGOs is to think the north of the African continent is the main area of peace-building. But what about Asia, say, the

Korean Peninsula? Particularly for the DPRK, where we never think that the country is at peace. Personally, I think it is very good that China is rising and becoming a big power, but if China grew so rapidly and acted accordingly, sometimes that could cause some friction among the neighboring countries. Be it Cambodia, the Nepal, or the Philippines, there are conflicts, and there are some obstacles to peace in Asia. How may we recover peace in a more sustainable way, not only today but tomorrow, or even for future generations? These are the questions in this region of Asia, so that's why we are focusing this time on the Asian region.

From now, we will start the part 1, it will spend approximately two hours. In Part 1, there will be three distinguished speakers, moderated by Associate Professor at Hiroshima University, Mr. Yamane. In this session, we will trace the peace-building efforts in Asia where they are either successful or failing, and we will also discuss the experiences. And in the afternoon, we will have session 2, which will be based on the experiences briefly discussed in part 1. We will also be focusing on future challenges and prospects for peace-building in Asia. We might see more issues and different policies in the future, and we would like to extrapolate the future direction of very active discussions.

Let me repeat. I cannot overemphasize that hearing your opinions, statements, and questions or resolutions is what will really determine whether today's

meeting will be successful or not. Today, one of my friends, the writer Mr. Udagawa, will be the keynote speaker. On the topic of diplomacy, he will talk about French culture, particularly the food culture, history, politics, and social life in France, and how the citizens of France perceive the issues of the country as well as of the world. France has been a very important member of the international community for hundreds of years. So through Mr. Udagawa's speech, I will talk about the broad aspects of peace within French culture.

I think I have been talking too long,

so, I might as well stop here. Let me repeat: I really welcome your opinions. Please raise your hand and speak up in today's session. That will be a crucial factor in the success of today's meeting. Thank you very much.

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