

World Dementia Council - Global Dementia Legacy Event Japan

November 5th, 2014: Academy Hills, Roppongi, Tokyo

Welcome Address by Kiyoshi Kurokawa, Member of the World Dementia Council

On behalf of the World Dementia Council, I welcome you all to Global Dementia Legacy Event Japan.

The World Dementia Council was one of the main commitments made at the G8 Dementia Summit, last December, initiated by the Government of the United Kingdom led by Honorable Prime Minister David Cameron.

Why at the G8 (now G7) Summit?

We enjoy better health and longer life, owing to remarkable progresses in science, technology and effective public health policies on calorie intake, hygiene, sanitation, vaccination, and development of many innovative drugs and medical technologies. We have achieved more than 20-30 years of additional life expectancy in many countries.

A hundred years ago, life expectancy was about 40-45 years in UK, US, Japan, and elsewhere, but we gained many additional years during the last several decades. In Japan it reached 60 years in 1950, now we enjoy one of the best in the world of average 84 years, 82 for men and 87 for women.

With ageing population, unfortunately, there are more and more individuals with decreasing brain functions by an entity called 'Dementia', about half of which is Alzheimer's disease. Dementia is the major health challenge in developed and developing economies. Thus, dementia has entered the file as a critical disease and social challenge, demanding more human and financial resources with uncertain economic prospects.

The World Dementia Council aims to stimulate innovation, development and commercialisation of life enhancing drugs, treatments and care for people with dementia, or those at risk of dementia, **within a generation**.

The Council currently has 18 members, chaired by Envoy Dr Dennis Gillings and I was invited to join this Council. Dr Gillings cannot join this Legacy Event Japan, unfortunately, thus, I am privileged to make a welcome remark on behalf of Envoy and the entire Council.

The World Dementia Council met, first in London, in April, followed by two meetings, one in Paris, in July, and another again in London in October.

Legacy events were held in London, in June; Ottawa, in September; and now in Tokyo.

The Council addresses various relevant issues and focuses on;

1. Integrated Development; thus, optimising the path of medicines from research through to market by reducing barriers and encouraging regulatory flexibility.
2. Finance and Incentives; thus, looking to increase investment in dementia research and drug development.
3. Open Science and Big Data; thus, information can be shared more widely and there is a collective global effort to find a cure.

In addition, we consider the growing body of evidence on the link between lifestyle risk factors and dementia, quality of care of patients and of caregivers, models of community engagements, frontiers of biomedical science, digital technology such as social robots. And various leadership by the private sector.

The Council is looking forward to learning and sharing the experiences of Japan, the frontier of many aged nations, where one in every four is older than 65, more than 50,000 centenarians, and a nation which achieved the best health outcomes by WHO measurements during the last decades of the 20th Century.

With luck and a bit of good nutrition, each of us in this room, will have the joy of passing the age of 65 and becoming an “older person”- as some of already have. It is through cross-national exchanges and collaborative meetings such as this Legacy Event that successful models are shared and new ideas are born -- as we all work to improve the lives of older persons around the world.

Thank You and Welcome