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Keynote by Kiyoshi Kurokawa, MD 15 min

Distinguished Guests and Friends

Welcome to An Advanced Workshop: Under-nutrition: Creating New Responses organized by Pacific Health Summit.

We know millions of children, die each year, and in fact to a magnitude of more than 20,000 children die each day simply due to starvation, and more die each day in conditions, causally and closely associated with under-nutrition.

But then, why this title ‘Why is under-nutrition in the world an important issues for Japan?’ for my welcome speech?

What is the state of the world today? I would like to share with you briefly the background which I touched upon in my lecture at the World Bank in Washington DC, January 7th earlier this year, which you could see via webcast at: <http://www.worldbank.org/sti/>.

The world population increased slowly from 200 million of 2000 years ago or year zero AD, reaching 300 million in year 1000 years, to 500 million around year 1,500, and then rapidly to 1.6 billion 100 years ago, a significant human accomplishment; constantly fighting against starvation and various infectious diseases,

Life expectancy at birth reached to 40–45 years in many European countries, US, and in Japan, just 100 years ago, but now for example, Japan reached life expectancy at birth of 80 years, adding additional almost 40 years in the last 100 years. This is a great achievement of us all, but how about all those who are left behind?

During the last century, our population rose from 1.6 billion to 6 billion at the turn of the new century, and it is expected to rise further to 9 billion in year 2050.

With this human population, we face new challenges: we need more energy, food and water and various natural resources, renewable and non-renewable, more space to

live and land to cultivate. What would be the consequences?

We knew these for a long time, haven't we? Remember Rachael Carson's *Silent Spring* in 1962, a warning on industrialized economy and our society? How about *Limit to Growth* by the Club of Rome in 1972? How about the United Nation's Brundtland Report, *Sustainable Development: Our Common Future* in 1987? These warnings were noted, but could not be at the top of the international political agenda. Why?

One is Cold War. Both sides, East and West, had more than a few thousands of nuclear missiles, and we had to wait until 1991 when the Cold War ended. Indeed, very next year, the Earth Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro that delivered Agenda 21 or Declaration of Environment and Development.

But, perhaps we had to further wait until the mid-1990s amongst the rapidly progressing global market economy, then with the introduction of Internet with world-wide-web in 1992, world has begin to become connected and 'flattening'.

At the turn of the century, the world become more and more aware of these global issues as well as the widening gaps between North and South, or between 'those who have and have not'.

The wide public in the connected world has become keenly aware of human misery and suffering of the extreme poverty and inequity among nations and regions of the world.

The fraction of people with categorically extreme poverty of the world fell, nonetheless, from about 40% in 1980s to 20% at present., due mainly to the economic growth of Asia, but the absolute number of extreme poverty was not halved because world population increased 50% during the same time.

At the turn of the millennium, year 2000, Japan hosted G8 Summit in Okinawa and Kyushu. There, Japan, a country that had led the ODA of the world, invited for the first time, African leaders to the G8 Summit, where G8 Heads of States agreed on UN Millennium Development Goals (MDG), and proposed to create Global Fund to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis, a remarkable leadership and commitment by

Japanese government to one of the major world agenda.

The same year, 2000, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation was created by Mr Bill Gates, the world wealthiest businessman, in order to fight the inequity within US and among the world, the largest charitable foundation with the lofty goals of the globalized world.

The process of MDGs began in 2000, and it was delivered in 2005, under the leadership of Jeffery Sachs of the Earth Institute of Columbia University, and his entire global team: The goals are;

- Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger
- Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education
- Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women
- Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality
- Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health
- Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases
- Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability
- Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

And these goals set at year 2000, are to be halved by year 2015. This year 2008, is the mid-point of MDGs.

In the further flattening world, various global issues have emerged as widely recognizable. To describe the major issues of the globalization in short, perhaps, the Nobel Peace Prizes of the last two years illustrate the reality and possible means to our collective steps forward.

Nobel Peace Prize of 2007 was given jointly to IPCC and Mr Albert Gore. The IPCC, chaired by Professor Pachauri, has been working hard to produce and provide science-based policy recommendations on global warming and climate change, but such efforts have been mostly not widely recognized, and the effort by Al Gore has made is widely recognizable, thus, to a politically viable agenda.

Nobel Peace Prize of 2006 went to Grameen Bank and Mr Yunus who provided microfinance to impoverished women in a very poor country, Bangladesh, to enable them to become independent, a hallmark of social enterprise or social

entrepreneurship.

Now, we are in year 2008 and Japan is the center of global attention. Japan will host in May in Yokohama, 4th TICAD or Tokyo International Conference for African Development and in July, the G8 Summit in Hokkaido.

TICAD which began in 1993 and held every five years hosted by the Japanese government with UNDP and World Bank. TICAD has been well known and recognized among African leaders. In addition, ODA programs of Japan have been well recognized by its core values focusing on capacity building relevant to and meeting the local needs and values, thus the programs will be sustainable.

While Asia is growing (recognizing India and other countries still have many people with extreme poverty), Africa is the center of global agenda, embracing the majority of impoverished people of the world, 75% of HIV/AIDS of the world, and in addition to these sufferings, continuing conflicts, fighting, killings and people's sufferings of major magnitudes.

In fact, Prime Minister Tony Blair focused on two agenda in his G8 Summit at Gleneagles in 2005, perhaps for the first time, ie, Climate Change and Africa. At this G8 Summit, world scientific community worked together and for first time in the G8 Summit history, delivered G8 Academies's Statements to the G8 Heads of States. The Royal Society and the Science Council of Japan had led the process.

This process has been repeated in 2006 and 2007, and will be repeated this year. Because of TICAD and the promises of G8 Summits in the last few years, Japanese Government plans to focus on Climate Change and rightfully, Global Health as its major agenda of TICAD and G8 Summit.

Can the G8 Head of States keep their promises? Can Japan take a leadership role?

Climate change and global warming impact more on poor people, and impact crop production, water shortage, melting various glaciers and ices in polar areas and high mountains.

In fact, with increasing promotion of renewable energy of non-fossil fuels with rising

crude oil price, the global matters could be stated as '2Cs and 3Fs'; Climate Change and Fuel, Food and Feed. And this Food and Feed, or how to supply foods to feed is the core of the theme of today, under-nutrition, often associated with poverty and diseases.

I will not dwell upon further on Climate Change, but again for Japan, I would note that this matter is critical since Kyoto protocol and beyond Kyoto is another pressing issue for this year's G8 Summit.

For Japan, it is a special challenge. Whether Japan can demonstrate leadership on this matter thus could keep this well known name Kyoto as a global brand of the new century or make this name as a mere historical trivia several decades or a century later.

While Global Health, undoubtedly, has captured a global attention, recent movements further addresses various underlying and associated factors like nutrition and social issues closely linked to global health. And, nutrition is a core of the matter as I stated as Food and Feed. A recent special issue of Lancet of January, illustrated the point.

Examples of international collaborative efforts are UN and its agencies. In addition to MDGs later this year at UN, Commission of WHO for Social Determinants of Health, Decade of Education for Sustainable Development by UNECSO represent such programs. And of course, World Bank and Regional Development Banks.

Another movement is civil society movement with various and numerous NGOs and social entrepreneurship. It is of interest to note that more than half of these NGOs of the world are led by women. One interpretation is that women tend to focus more than men, on human sufferings with greater empathy; and various examples of women in leadership be it politics or otherwise, could have profound changes in governance in some African nations and elsewhere. Just imagine, what may happen to the world order if gender equity be achieved in every societal levels and sectors.

Another movements are driven, in part by flattening world. This 'flattening' underlies the intangible values becoming the major portion of corporate values which pressing more on corporate social responsibility. Stated in another way, corporate is valued not only to the value to the shareholders, but to the stakeholders in the global

community.

One of the best example of Japanese corporate is Sumitomo Chemical Company, that provides thru a Tanzanian company BedNet, the most effective and innovative device lasting for 5 years, leading to a rapid decline in Malaria infection, while creating many jobs in Tanzania and elsewhere with the workers' pride for their products. Various corporate are contributing to a major magnitude to the human development, poverty eradication and other global issues.

Food production, delivery and feeding and supply chain will be one on the major issues of under-nutrition. It is of note that the major food companies of the world are in developed countries, and the supply chain will cost great amounts of energy and carbon emission in addition to costs.

Another emerging movement is represented by the Gates Foundation and global philanthropy. Under global economy, many billionaires have emerged and the number is rising while many remain very poor. Can they think of and act upon poorest billion?

Bill Gates in his recent speech at World Economic Forum in Davos, used a word 'creative capitalism'. It will be yet to be seen whether this concept will develop and expand further as he will take a full charge of the operation of the Gates Foundation later this year.

Nonetheless, leadership of many individuals like Bono and many others are symbolic of current and future global people's movements for shaping the global agenda toward our common endeavor. How and what roles Japan wishes to play this year and beyond, are yet to be seen.

Another issue is the public-private partnership and various combinations of effective government, private sector, and NGOs/civil society movements. This still remains a significant challenge for Japan, a country where the government with strong ministries tends to dominate policy development, implementation and execution. We will see how effectively civil society groups could play a role in shaping and executing TICAD, G8 and other national, international and global agenda of Japan. The world will yet to see such processes in Japan, perhaps and hopefully some movements this year.

But, one new initiative pertaining to under-nutrition is the one by a group of young Japanese, 'Table for Two'. Affluent countries suffer from obesity, diabetes, and other life-style related disorders or condition while many suffer from starvation, Here, they work with private sector or corporate to offer low calorie healthy menu, clearly marked as 'Table for Two'. When one purchases such a menu, 25 cent or 20 yen of the purchase will go thru WFP and other paths, to those school children in poor countries, an amount sufficient to feed school meal for one, thus assuming you purchase a table for two.

This is a little cute idea and has been expanding through different fora including World Economic Forum in Davos. You may visit its website.

The final comments about Why Japan?

Yes, China, India and many others which were behind the economic growth for many decades, are rapidly growing, but Japan still remain as #2 economy of the world. Japan can contribute and offer so much to the global affairs, and it is a bit sad to see its well recognized ODA contributions declining fast and has been passed by UK last year and will be falling further behind of many countries. Whether this is what Japanese really wish to see happen? Or are they well aware of this slipping ODA contribution and declining global presence of the nation?

We certainly need strong leaderships in every sector of the Japanese society, both private and public sectors, impacting government policies, implementation and execution, be it national, regional and municipal. Civil movements are yet to come in its own power in this country, at least in my view.

This year is a major test and the opportunity for Japan to show herself again to a leadership position in the global world, that corresponds properly to the size of its economy, thus participating global affairs and order. If we miss it, such an opportunity may not come again for some years. Indeed, the G8 Summit may well be our final one.

Today's program to follow will address, 'Science, Partnership, Policy, and Action', and I sincerely hope my welcome remark is of use for further discussion of today.

Thank you.