

SESSION IV : Prospects for International Philanthropic Cooperation

Role of Japanese Philanthropy in Creating a Healthy International Environment

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I see the need for increased Japanese philanthropy as only part of a broader need for deeper ties between Japan and the Third World. The unfortunate history of World War II demonstrated the distance that exists between Japanese culture and the cultures of other parts of Asia.

For example, in addition to development aid there is considerable need for reciprocal expertise between Japan and the Third World. Of course, there is considerable expertise in Japan on different countries and different cultures. However, the results of Japanese scholars are usually inaccessible to people of third countries. There is great need for an automatic translation facility that would translate such studies and make them accessible to the people in the countries concerned. Not only would people in other countries see how they look in the Japanese mirror but feed-back from those countries to the Japanese scholars could serve as an important corrective and the beginning of true scholarly dialogue.

Japanese organizations must also help Third World countries to develop experts on Japan -- Japanese politics, economy, history, and society, not merely people who can speak the language. Japanese philanthropy is, perhaps more than any other country's, based on the idea of "enlightened national interest."

Unlike other countries where philanthropy developed haphazardly, in Japan philanthropy directly reflects Japan's dependence on the international order for the maintenance of its international position and prosperity. Most other countries depend on military power to defend their interest, but Japan must instead develop a different arsenal of diplomatic instrumentalities in order to turn economic power into political strength. It is a unique situation, and if Japan rises to the challenge it will constitute a great manifestation of hope for mankind.

At this point I would like to make several comments, or perhaps warnings, concerning general development support. Any support in the area of development as a whole must include the principle of efforts to help strengthen local institutions. Africa provides the most dramatic example; the entire continent has been densely populated with foreign experts and the results have been disastrous.

The Third World has been given wrong advice by foreign experts in many cases. One result is that we have become traders and consumers of sciences and appliances, instruments and mechanisms that were developed by the North for the Third World without having the capability to apply them correctly and to make the necessary adjustments in order to suit their solution to our problems.

We must not only improve our scientific capabilities so that we can properly adapt technologies, but also so that we have some hope in participating in the micro-electronics and bio-technology revolutions which are now shaping the international division of labor and the future of mankind. Not only the North, but we as well desperately need to develop capabilities in conflict resolution and arms control. We must all work together to insure that a world populated with 10 billion people in the 2010 remains a livable place with a maximum degree of humaness and civility.

What I am trying to say is that I hope in your deliberations that you will have an opportunity to go beyond mere philanthropy for public relations, be it public relations in terms of Japanese national interest or Japanese corporate interest, to begin to play a role in the preparation of not only Japanese society but societies in the Third World for a future that will be very interdependent, to build a truly healthy international environment in which Japan will be able to pursue its legitimate national interests.