

Opening Remarks

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It is a great honor and pleasure to address you on behalf of the Japanese delegation to the Conference on economic cooperation in Northeast Asia. The idea to develop regional cooperation based on economic complementarity between neighboring countries appeared quite a long time ago, but at first it seemed hardly possible to be implemented because of political and other barriers of the Cold War era. But now the cold war is over and cooperation is gaining momentum. And the academic community has made an important contribution to this movement. Symposiums, conferences, studies, publications and other research activities have contributed significantly to the solidification of the regional cooperation concept.

From now on, I hope we continue with our studies regarding not only the basic concept, but also the specific directions and themes of cooperation. In this respect, I am sure the conference in Yongpyeong will play an important role.

In our Japanese delegation we have people both from the Japan Sea coastal prefectures, mostly involved in cooperation activities, and also from the Tokyo area. We are looking forward to fruitful discussions. We believe that the conference will be a success and we will be able to bring forward some valuable proposals and ideas which will hopefully speed up further cooperation between those countries belonging to the Japan Sea economic time region.

Finally, I want to express our gratitude to the hosts and organizers of the conference – the Asia Pacific Institute of Korea, the Northeast Asia Economic Forum, and the Government of Kangwon Province.