

Opening Remarks

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Seminar on Human Security and Health

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- I am honored and delighted to open this seminar on “Human Security and Health.” This is an auspicious day to hold this seminar, as it happens to be the 10th anniversary of the death of former Prime Minister of Japan, Keizo Obuchi, who is the founding father of human security as Japan’s new and fundamental policy framework.
- To make a long story short, I started working with Keizo Obuchi on human security in 1998. I had had a good fortune of working with Obuchi over the years as the head of JCIE which I founded exactly 40 years ago as an independent, non-profit, non-governmental organization. This gave me the opportunity to work with innovative and thoughtful political and corporate leaders. The concept of human security had just been emerging around that time and I was deeply influenced by some of the speakers today like Ambassador Takasu, Lincoln Chen, and Keizo Takemi.
- I am delighted that we are here today bringing together leaders of diverse sectors who have been focusing on the emerging theme of human security and health. I believe through today’s deliberations we can discuss diverse issues raised by this timely report of the secretary-general on human security. We certainly are delighted to see the UN is paying greater attention to this field, and we very much hope that today’s discussion will further deepen the deliberations that should lead to practical actions.
- Before moving on, I would like to thank Dr. Allan Goodman and IIE, and our co-organizers, the Permanent Missions of Japan and Norway to the UN and UNOCHA. Without their cooperation, we would not have been able to organize this seminar.
- Now, I would like to introduce Ambassador Takasu, who has been a major promoter of human security within Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and globally. After his remarks, Ambassador Wetland from Norway—another very important partner in the human security field—will make some remarks, following which Bob Orr, from the Secretary-General’s office and an expert on both health and human security, will talk about the report in more depth.