

Hokuriku Initiative
16th Northeast Asia Economic Forum
Toyama, Japan
October 27, 2007

In recognition of the economic importance of Hokuriku, its geographical position and economic base for promoting communication and cooperation in the Northeast Asian region, the Hokuriku Economic Federation, Hokuriku AJEC, and the Northeast Asia Economic Forum (NEAEF) - together with Toyama Prefecture, Toyama City, and the Institute for International Studies and Training - have jointly organized the Sixteenth Meeting of the NEAEF in Toyama City, Japan on 25-26 October 2007. Our agenda included important and informative sessions regarding the environment, energy, and transportation and logistics.

Participants in Session 1 (Environment) confirmed the importance of “establishing sustainable economy and society” as a common agenda for the countries in Northeast Asia, an area with rapid economic growth, population growth and concerns of multi-layered environmental deterioration across national borders.

It is necessary to recognize the preservation of the global environment and the solution of various regional environmental problems as a common goal of the Northeast Asian region, and to promote cooperation among the Northeast Asian countries to construct societies of low carbon use, recycling, living with nature, and safety and comfort.

Anticipating the movement toward further regional economic integration, participants recognize the importance of developing cooperative partnerships between public and private, extending common efforts of environmental monitoring, sharing environmental information, encouraging human resource development for the improvement of regional environmental governance, and the promotion of technological development and technical cooperation for environmental regional integration in the formation of international resource circulation systems, in the framework of an industry-academia-government partnership. Participants agreed that it is required to examine financial schemes to promote these endeavors. General agreement was reached in assuming our responsibility to develop and preserve environmental resources in Northeast Asia for future generations.

Participants in Session 2 (Energy) reconfirmed the important role of energy for economic development and security in Northeast Asia. Growth of energy demand is anticipated with the regional continuous economic growth in Northeast Asia. It is important to increase energy supply, and it is further important to improve energy efficiency. China and Mongolia, in particular, have large potential capacities for energy conservation and alternative energy development. General agreement was obtained in recognizing that the improvement of energy efficiency and promotion of nuclear energy with special attention to non-proliferation and other alternative energy resources would benefit not only Northeast Asian economies but also the world economy.

The Forum recognized and that it is essential to strengthen cooperation in Northeast Asia in order to realize these goals. The expectation that the knowledge, experience, and advanced efforts of the Hokuriku region on both energy conservation and nuclear and other alternative

energy resources would play a major role in energy cooperation in Northeast Asian countries was expressed. Regarding nuclear energy, Hokuriku is committed to become a base for human resource development to establish nuclear safety technology in Northeast Asia.

In Session 3 (Transportation and Logistics), the participants agreed that it is essential to pursue the development of common strategies of transportation and logistics, and to promote complementary transportation systems. Hokuriku is strategically located at the intersection of the Pacific Ocean, the Japanese islands, and the Eurasian continent, and it could serve as the entrance to the rapidly-growing northeastern China, Mongolia, and even to Eastern European countries through ground transportation such as the Trans-Siberian railway. The participants recognized that, as a future effort, it is necessary to examine and coordinate the construction of a new comprehensive logistics system in Northeast Asia through cooperation among the countries in the region.

With regard to development financing, participants welcomed the Joint Statement of the Fourth Meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee for establishing Northeast Asian Bank, which was held in Tianjin, China, on 25 July 2007. Participants also agreed that the Northeast Asia Economic Forum should continue its efforts toward the establishment of this Bank, such as establishing a financial research center. The Young Leaders Training and Research Program (YLP) was held at the University of Toyama from 14 October through 27 October as a part of the NEAEF activities to support research and to develop strong networks by young leaders regarding challenges and progress in regional economic cooperation in Northeast Asia.

The Forum participants appreciated the achievement of the 32 participants in the YLP, recognized the positive contribution of the YLP toward peace and prosperity in Northeast Asian countries, and expressed the hope that the Young Leaders Program would continue along with the Forum's annual conference.

The Forum accepted with gratitude the invitation of Mr. Wang Shuzu, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of Tianjin People's Congress, on behalf of the Tianjin Municipal Government, to host the Seventeenth Forum in Tianjin, China, in the autumn of 2008.

NEAEF and its participants celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Hokuriku Economic Federation, and expressed their gratitude for the important contributions made by the Hokuriku Economic Federation, the Hokuriku Electric Power Company, Hokuriku AJEC, Toyama Prefecture, Toyama City, and the Institute of International Studies and Training in hosting and supporting the Sixteenth Meeting of the NEAEF, in cooperation with the Japan Committee for the Promotion of the Asian Energy Community, the Northeast Asia Project Development Center, the University of Toyama, the University of California at Berkeley's East Asia Program, the Tianjin Municipal Government, the BOGO Economic Research Institute, the Beijing Institute for Frontier Science, the Korea Energy Economics Institute, the China Asia Pacific Institute, the Korea Asia Pacific Institute, and the University of Hawaii College of Social Sciences.

The participants warmly thanked the Hokuriku Economic Federation and Hokuriku AJEC for their hospitality and efficient implementation of this meeting.