

**Japan's view of US Nuclear Energy Policy, How the US could Deal with
Energy Security
General Meeting of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of
America
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Introduction

I have been asked to discuss how Japan sees the US nuclear energy policy.

A system cannot know itself. Even an excellent lawyer cannot defend himself in the courtroom. But Merina has asked me to do exactly that.

What I would like to do is to make today's presentation in tandem with Mr. Hattori, the vice chairman of the Japan Atomic Industrial Forum (JAIF) which was established in 1956 to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The forum since then has been working in collaboration with international agencies including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and national counterpart organizations. Until last year, Mr. Hattori served as the vice president of Tokyo Electric Power Co. Ltd. (TEPCO) in charge of construction and operation of nuclear power plants. I would therefore leave him in charge of discussing Japan's nuclear energy programs while I attempt to play the role of a lawyer in defense of the US. I hope this tandem approach will work and be useful to this general meeting.

At present I serve as the director of the Business-University Forum of Japan. I have attached the list of its members as reference material. It is composed of representatives of business, university and government, with Dr. Shoichiro Toyoda serving as its Representative. Just like GUIRR it is a forum that addresses national issues based on business university partnership. Energy and environment are national concerns dear to all Japanese and Mr. Gaishi Hiraiwa, TEPCO's longstanding chairman and one of the founders of the Forum participated in the 1992 Rio de Janeiro United Nations Environment Summit as the top management of the world's largest electric power company. He led world's energy and environmental issues.

There is another pressing theme in Japan today; which is how to develop human resources in an innovative way. During the Meiji period (1868-1912) Japan led modernization process in Asia. Immediately following the end of the W.W.II, Japan led the world in manufacturing technology and management. In the last two decades Japan allowed its winning public space to deteriorate to the extent that the Swiss International Institute for Management Development (IMD) ranked Japan's competitive edge to be as low as the 24th last year. Fortunately, Japan's economic scale remains the largest only after that of the US, but under the gathering waves around the world I fear that Japan's number two position may be temporary. Many think that the Japanese policies were absent during the last twenty years, but the way I see it is different. Simply put, we did everything we could think of, from building mechanism to promote science and technology, making financial investments and carrying out institutional reforms, but they failed to show results.

I believe that J. von Neumann (1903-1957) made suggestions to get Japan out of this paradox. That is to say, in studying Artificial Intelligence, he pointed out that we needed a far reaching thinking if we were to address a profound object such as human language. I for one believe that we can free ourselves from the paradox by adopting, not symptomatic patchwork measures but putting in place incremental policies¹ based on profound thinking, which is needed to address issues such as human resources and energy security that we are here for today.

IMD's assessment of the US competitiveness is number one, though it may prove temporary. I believe Japan has a more profound policy on energy security but that the US has a more insightful policy on competitiveness. Japan must learn from the US and I hope to work with GUIRR to set up opportunities for learning.

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