Keynote Address

## "Japan Rethinking Northeast Asia"

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I would like to talk on three themes today. First of all, I would like to give the background, in simple form, of the evolution of Japan's foreign policy and international relations over the last 60 years. Next, I would like briefly to talk about the recent overall situation regarding the policies and directions of the ROK, China, Russia and the DPRK, and finally about Japan's economic policies vis-à-vis those countries.

## [Japan's Foreign Policy Viewed in 15-Year Blocks]

Following its defeat in World War Two the cornerstone of Japan's diplomacy became its alliance with the US. That this forms a major refrain within Japan's diplomacy has scarcely changed through to this day. If you look closely at this, however, the timbre changes somewhat practically every 15 years. Why every 15 years or so? It may have to do with economic developments, technological progress, or changes in US policy, but I think domestic factors feature large.

In other countries, notably in the US and Europe, it is often remarked that Japan is slow in making decisions. According to Tadamori Oshima of the LDP, a Diet policy committee chairman, it is customary in the Diet that nobody dares to take the first step, so that progress is small. A similarly thing was also said by former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger; that Japanese people are very slow in coming to a decision, and are slow however large or small the problem.

He gave three examples. The first was when Commodore Perry came to Japan in 1853. Japan dithered for 15 years, however, and during that period there was something akin to civil war. Why had the Japanese been slow in making a decision? In 1868, 15 years on, the Meiji Restoration took place.

The second example was 1945, when Japan was completely defeated in World War Two and capitulated. Subsequently, the ruling party was vehemently divided, but eventually a conclusion was reached for Japan to just go along with the US. Even though there was a decision at the government level, however, it was 1960 when this permeated down to the public. This had taken 15 years.

The third example was the collapse of the bubble economy in 1991. Subsequently, 15 years were spent in the conflict over the pros and cons of the injection of public funds into delinquent loans and over the amount of that injection, and in 2006 it was finally resolved to all intents and purposes.

That is Japan's method of debate. If one looks at other countries, for example Britain, the 30-year-long debate there on nuclear submarines still has not ended. Conversely, the US seems to make decisions in a flash, but it takes them 10-15 years to get back to their original starting point.

It all depends on how you look at it, but it seems to me that Japan is proceeding at just the right speed. These 15-year blocks work well when looking at the changes in Japanese diplomacy.

Post 1945, what is generally called the Yoshida Doctrine continued until 1960, and in that period the opinions of Japanese were violently split, with infighting and conflict. I think that the process of reaching a conclusion to these was probably the right thing to do. Following that, from 1960 to around 1975, was the period for the implementation of the Yoshida Doctrine, with the result that the Yoshida Doctrine, where security was delegated to the US and Japan concentrated on economic matters, continued until the first oil crisis and war in the Middle East.

Due to the oil crisis and the Middle East war, it became clear that for Japan to devote itself entirely to the economy was untenable, and the shift in direction toward being a more active member in the Western Alliance occurred from 1975 to 1990. They would henceforth have to try and do what they could as a member of the Western camp.

Just when they thought they would have some stability, along came the end of the Cold War, and both the Western and Eastern Blocs entered unsettled times. Amid this situation what would be a good policy for Japan's diplomatic line? Japan came up with a different course, and started down a new path of "civilian power," meaning a country where military power would not be utilized much at all and a contribution could be made to the world. Before much progress could be made, however, difficulties in various forms began to crop up. Global terrorism, in particular, became prominent, and the campaign in opposition to this, with the US at the center, gained strength, and Japan participated too. Eventually it became the case that being a civilian power alone wouldn't work. Furthermore, Japan plunged into the very difficult period of the first decade of the 21st century, which had to greatly affect domestic politics also.

Regarding 1945–60, 1960–75, 1975–90, 1990–2005, and 2005, I have said that these are 15-year blocks of a mechanical, repetitive fashion, and every 15 years changes have come about. In 2003 Japan participated in the Iraq War, there was also the "new Anti-Terrorism Special Measures Law" debated in the current Diet session, and although it is unclear how far Japan would proceed along this path, as Kissinger had said, it is after roughly 15 years that Japan's course finally becomes fixed.

With the passing of just 15 years, the situation and one's own thinking will change, and again a different course will emerge. From 2005 to 2020, passing through many twists and turns, globally, there will however probably be a change toward a course of aspiring to do things normally, in a way similar to other countries. A "normal country" can be taken as meaning that we won't definitely not wage war, but what is called a "normal country" here means doing to a small degree what many other nations do, and in the case of Japan, reality is probably already in the lead.

Over the last 60 years, the diplomatic line has differed subtly, but its core has been the alliance with the US. Yet at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century great changes are taking place.

One example is the explosive increase in intraregional trade in East Asia. Currently China is Japan's number one trading partner, and the combined trade between Japan, the ROK and China has increased much more greatly in comparison to that with the US.

In addition, there has been a similar explosive increase in passenger numbers since 2000. These have continually risen, and the annual number of air-travelers between Japan, the ROK and China has increased to around 10 million, and within five years will probably reach 15 million or even more.

The traffic between these countries has resulted in a very dense interchange of people, goods, ideas and technology, and what's more is hastening.

A direct indicator of this is that the airports near the centers of major cities are expanding. In Japan this is Haneda Airport. Haneda (as opposed to Narita Airport) and in the ROK, Gimpo Airport in the old city area, (rather than Incheon Airport), are striving to expand.

In Beijing, rather than Beijing Airport on the outskirts, Nanyuan Airport is rapidly increasing its efforts for the Olympic Games. In Shanghai, Hongqiao Airport, an old airport within the city, is expanding. Pudong Airport, built later, is huge, but it lies far from the city center, and Hongqiao is once again the focus of attention.

When people move, it facilitates the establishment of businesses, and an increase in trust. It facilitates technology transfer. Good effects in many areas can be expected, understanding of the other countries' history, culture and people will be facilitated, and this will probably usher in great changes.

## [The Foreign Policies and Directions of the Nations of Northeast Asia]

In the new millennium, great changes from the bottom-up have been quietly taking place. On the other hand, however, there are various bottlenecks. Whichever (Northeast Asian) country you look at, while there are many instances of infrastructure that is not always smooth and efficient and there are businesses which don't always do that which is concomitant to any change, major changes are occurring in any event.

Japan's alliance with the US will probably continue for some time, with no great changes. Against such a backdrop, I will state in simple terms what kinds of policies the ROK, China, Russia and the DPRK have come up with.

Firstly I would like to talk about the ROK, and about the president-elect, Lee Myung-bak, who won the December election. Mr. Lee was originally a businessman, who became mayor of Seoul, and he is very dynamic. He is also very progressive. According to the description by Diet policy committee chairman Tadamori Oshima, he is different to Japanese people, and is more progressive.

It's worth mentioning that, although making good sense, the powers of the president under the ROK constitution are enormous. The president's secretary has boasted that presidential powers are so great that, other than change male to female and vice versa, the president can do anything. In contrast the powers of the Japanese primeminister are negligible. The prime-minister's powers are almost at the same level as cabinet ministers' and only a little higher. Direct subordinates are few, and as the office of prime-minister scarcely exists in institutional terms, it mostly is unable to create specific policy. That is laid down by the constitution. Beyond that the Cabinet Law has hardly changed from that before the war.

As to how the powers of the president of the ROK will evolve, it is worth looking at the thinking of president-elect Lee Myung-bak; his approach will be very proactive.

Firstly, he places importance on active investment into research and development into science and technology. In this area, he would actively push the ROK into the seventh, sixth or fifth position among the OECD nations.

He is proactive on free trade agreements (FTAs). The preceding ROK administration signed an ROK-US FTA, and even if its implementation takes some time, it's a question of sticking with it. Whether things will go well amid the state of affairs in both the US and the ROK is not clear, but Lee Myung-bak is incredibly proactive. Why? Because he, more than Roh Moo-hyun, believes that agriculture should be further liberalized. He thinks that service industries and manufacturing industries with low productivity should be liberalized even if it leads to temporary unemployment of workers.

Immediately after the former-Prime Minister Shinzo Abe took office, he visited the ROK and China. When he visited the ROK he met President Roh Moo-hyun, and there was a draft for a Japan-ROK FTA, in which the details had been mostly settled, and which was about to be signed. Ban Ki-moon (then the Minister of Foreign Affairs, currently the Secretary-General of the United Nations) handed it to President Roh Moo-hyun for signing, but President Roh refused to do so. The major reason for that refusal, although it seemed a little strange for the Japanese, was that it was apparently true, after the ROK's great determination in liberalizing agriculture vis-à-vis the US, that there was irritation toward the fact that progress in agricultural liberalization had not gone any further in the Japan-ROK FTA. In addition, there was the influence of President Roh Moo-hyun having negative feelings toward Japan on such matters as the interpretation of history, and in the end things did not work out. President-elect Lee Myung-bak, however, seems to be different. He will probably strongly promote agricultural liberalization.

On direct investment, president-elect Lee Myung-bak is active. Wherever you go around the world, you will find ROK financiers. They are courageously and vigorously investing in—as viewed by Japanese enterprises—smallscale businesses and those where there is a low expectation of growth. Under (president-elect) Lee Myung-bak this would most likely accelerate further. Although there has been the kidnap of an ROK Christian group by the Taliban in Afghanistan, there truly seems to be a great many people in the ROK who are ready to go out and proselytize, and a very large number who are willing to make investment.

He is proactive too on direct investment in the DPRK. In a difference to President Roh Moo-hyun, he has made clear that there must be a "real reciprocity"; if the DPRK doesn't move forward in the direction of denuclearization, the ROK will not move forward on investment in the DPRK. He has made clear his thinking that the ROK will actively seek to invest in the DPRK only as long as the DPRK opens up. There is a modest investment in the center of Kaesong, but he will strive to expand that. Depending on the situation in the DPRK, and with the completion of the six-party talks or an agreement, it is evident that the DPRK and the US want to advance the normalization of relations. The ROK is considering incorporating within its own framework commitments along the lines of Japan's in the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration. The ROK is actively considering investment in the DPRK, more so than Japan, but from the position of "real reciprocity" it will probably make strong demands concerning the denuclearization of the DPRK.

The ROK's get-up-and-go can be explained by the differences in the extent of development and the stage of economic development, but its get-up-andgo on globalization contrasts with Japan, and they have decided that the Chinese and Japanese languages are to be compulsory at the junior-high-school-level. Having a second language taught as part of compulsory education is not just to have it taught, but has the aim of its acquisition. This differs greatly from the actual situation in Japan where English acquisition is not making progress. All ROK university students are proficient in English. They are better at it than Japanese university students. In addition to this, if junior high school students don't learn Chinese or Japanese they won't graduate. That should be food for thought.

I will now move on to China. What President Hu Jintao is promoting is harmony, or *hexie* in Chinese. Due to intense economic development, difficult social problems have accumulated, and almost on a weekly basis there are demonstrations, protests and disturbances drawing hundreds and thousands of people. To bring reconciliation in these situations the government is doing its best to try and solve problems as peacefully as possible, and in foreign relations also they want to move forward peacefully without confrontation, no matter the country.

In China today they are enjoying economic momentum, although they don't know whether this will continue for 10 years or 20 years, and they are determined that they definitely not sacrifice it over a confrontation with another country. The *hexie* policy will probably permeate domestically and internationally, although domestically this will be quite difficult. In China there is growing corruption, the forced appropriation of land, the creation of people whose human rights have been dramatically infringed and amid this backdrop the problem is difficult of how far they will be able to implement the policy in the name of harmony. Their stance toward others countries, however, is very clear.

Last year a US aircraft carrier left Yokosuka, and although having received permission to make a port call in Hong Kong, on its way there the Chinese government revoked the once approved entry into port. For the US it was hard to believe, but in the end the ship returned to Yokosuka. On that occasion, however, the US aircraft carrier came back via the Taiwan Strait. It is questionable whether it was a good idea to go that far, although it is probable that the national line vis-à-vis Taiwan would not be able to permeate domestically if they didn't drive the message home. While President Hu Jintao is beset by extremely difficult problems, I think that at any rate he wants to make the most of the momentum of the economy. I believe this is the chief route to making China a global major power, and they have to consider domestic and external policy in that way, otherwise things won't go smoothly.

Robert Zoellick, the President of the World Bank, has said "China must become a responsible stakeholder," and that argument doesn't differ to such a large extent from President Hu Jintao's *hexie* policy. In that sense, China doesn't make much fuss, although when it considers its own position to be paramount, for example on Taiwan, human rights, history and territorial disputes, it is highly inflexible.

When Prime Minister Fukuda visited China, there were no concrete agreements reached. The East China Sea problem is mixed up with energy and territorial problems, and that no decisions were made speaks volumes about the character of Hu Jintao's policy.

This Hu Jintao line, however, is very proactive on links with Japan, and via economic, technological and cultural ties, is attempting to advance the science and technology and state-of-the-art technology which China itself needs. In state-of-the-art technology, taking the example of specialty steel, China is still unable to produce high-quality specialty steel. The ROK can produce it, and Japan has been able to do so for quite some time. The current situation is that China cannot do so and the Chinese leadership is quite frustrated about that. Regarding the solution, they understand well that the development of science and technology is essential, and strongly hope for progress in it.

On maintenance of the environment in a sustainable manner, with the Olympics just round the corner they are going all out with improvements, but this can't be achieved overnight. I think cooperation with Japan is very important regarding environmental issues.

Now a "Bubble" is beginning to form, and they are very concerned about financial stability. At the moment monetary economics and financial engineering are becoming very popular subjects. The well off have increased, but at the same time the flow of money has become quite uneven, and they are aware of this yet don't know what to do.

Under these circumstances, I think that China and Japan will want to build up solidly their mutual beneficial relationships.

I will move now to the Russia of President Putin. In the recent elections, President Putin's party won a large victory. Following that he decided that, in keeping with the constitution, he would himself become prime minister, and his subordinate would become president in his stead. The most important thing in Putin's policy at this point in time is that Russia does not want to become a northern Saudi Arabia.

Saudi Arabia and the Gulf States, thanks to their oil reserves, have pockets bulging with money. Their investment in infrastructure is somewhat poor, and investment in industry, having small populations, has not made much progress. It has been declared that, although having resources, if it doesn't develop its science and technology to a high level, then Russia will follow in the footsteps of Saudi Arabia or Kuwait.

In autumn of last year, President Putin sent a deputy prime minister and the Minister for Science and Technology to Japan. It was not major news in Japan whether they wanted to get an agreement on intergovernmental cooperation in science and technology, or only came on a fact-finding trip, but it is a certainty that Russia is thinking about cooperation with Japan in this field. My friend Professor Shigeki Hakamada met President Putin, and Putin said that in science and technology he had rediscovered Japan.

President Putin is a judo expert. When he came to Japan he did some judo. His daughter is studying Japanese at Saint Petersburg State University. That doesn't mean he's a Japanophile, and President Putin takes a tough position on energy and territorial issues and on a peace treaty. Furthermore he is very active in cooperation in science and technology.

He is very critical of the active anti-terrorism policies of the US. In Poland and the Czech Republic, the US is trying to construct missile bases or subsidiary facilities which are thought to have Russia in mind. President Putin strongly objects to them. He advocates a "sovereign democracy" which absolutely rejects interference in domestic politics, and liberty and democracy are not things which interfere from abroad. It's extremely interesting what policies he will develop once he becomes the next prime minister.

Finally I would like to draw together briefly what the thinking is of the DPRK and National Defense Commission Chairman Kim Jong-il.

For the DPRK, the end of the Cold War saw the ushering in of conditions that were to prove the beginning of its years of great crisis. While the Cold War existed, and with the DPRK troubled by the ROK, the US and Japan seeking to expand their spheres of influence, both China and the Soviet Union supported the DPRK in various ways. With the end of the Cold War, however, the DPRK went on as if nothing had changed. In both China and Russia the per capita national income is very low. The active support for the DPRK—with nothing at all, with zero energy or foreign currency—shrank.

Furthermore in 1994, 1995, 2004 and 2005 there were a great many deaths from large-scale famine. Various factors combined, such as flooding and crop failures, leading to a situation, occurring on a ten-year recurring cycle, where a great many people had no food for their stomachs.

The DPRK is extremely energy-poor. The country's electricity generating facilities are not fully utilized. There is the Supung Dam on the Yalu River, which forms part of the border with China. The dam was built in the Japanese colonial period and some minor improvements were made, and it is still a major supplier of electrical power. In such circumstances, with a shortfall in supply, the development of nuclear power has moved forward, but it has not been too successful, and there have been various small-scale impediments.

Misgivings from other countries have been strong that this is the development of nuclear energy not for peaceful means alone, but for use in nuclear weapons as well, and the six-party talks framework was put together. The US has increased international sanctions, and Japan has participated in those sanctions, and this has been a blow, and is continuing as an ongoing "body-blow."

Ultimately, the US and the DPRK's final point for agreement, as seen from the US-side, is denuclearization. They advocate "Stop nuclear development and get rid of your nuclear capability," and they are making efforts for inspections to verify how that is proceeding. The reports from the DPRK, however, are ambiguous, and do not touch upon this matter.

For the DPRK-side, they are insisting that they get guarantees for the survival of their system, as they don't want the collapse of their political system with Kim Jong-il at the helm. It is unclear as to whether the DPRK is waiting for the US to concede to their retaining a power that in part includes maintaining their nuclear capability, or whether they are just trying it on.

For the US, to what extent they will guarantee the DPRK's system is the issue. Giving guarantees and letting the DPRK do what it wants would go against US national interests. Maybe both sides would like to arrive at a joint agreement, and progress on this is just about to be made at the six-party talks. Although there have been many twists and turns, there seems to be a pattern of agreements involving understanding each other up to a point where they meet half way, while at the same time making some concessions.

As a backdrop to this, there is the current situation of the US devoting substantial military power to Palestine, Iraq and Afghanistan, and the US wants to avoid the opening of a new theater of operations with the DPRK. It wants the elimination of the DPRK's nuclear weapons, but may be ready to allow nuclear power in some form for the development of energy. In the case of Iran, in the middle of the development of a nuclear program, it is considered that, in terms of effectiveness, dealing with Iran first has overtaken dealing with the DPRK. During the eightyear Democrat administration the DPRK had practically produced a nuclear weapon, and it would be difficult to completely nullify that. The current hardening position is a target of non-proliferation for the DPRK, and absolutely no production of nuclear weapons for Iran.

Along with the six-party talks probably reaching agreement, or more specifically sometime later the probable restoration of diplomatic relations between the US and the DPRK, there will be a climbing on board of this direction by Japan, one of the members of the talks, and talks on a separate restoration of diplomatic relations between Japan and the DPRK will commence.

Moon Chung-in, a Yonsei University professor, who accompanied the first visit to the DPRK by former ROK-President Kim Dae-jung and the visit to Pyongyang by Roh Moo-hyun, shook hands with Kim Jong-il on both occasions, and he said that, in comparison to the first time, the handshake the second time was limp. I think that amid the uncertainty about the fate of the nation, perhaps Kim Jong-il is conscious that his own strength is fading, but I really don't know what consequence this holds.

In the case of China, it would be a headache if the DPRK collapsed. Lying across the Yalu and Tumen rivers, China's territorial sovereignty can be easily breached, and this is a factor for destabilization, including in the political sphere. In order to sound military and political warnings, China has adopted an aggressive posture at the six-party talks. For the ROK too, they want to do something as a collapse would spell trouble for them. For Japan as well, it cannot ignore the problem if it becomes a factor in increasing instability.

If the DPRK collapsed, and the whole Korean peninsula fell to the ROK, that would be a problem for the ROK also. The DPRK this year celebrates the 60th anniversary of its establishment in 1948. The population has decreased, and the people's physical stature has also got smaller.

In any case events are approaching a major crossroads. I think that the DPRK will probably not collapse, agreements from the six-party talks will be enacted, and for the US, China and the ROK, if the DPRK were to conduct politics in a slightly more civilized manner, then there would be the outcome of their permitting the survival of the DPRK of today. On nuclear weapons, however, it is thought that the course of the desired elimination of nuclear weapons will move forward.

Kim Jong-il is cautiously pushing ahead, little by little, in a fashion that will not create internal destabilization. Regarding the ROK, the thinking has gone as far as considering that all the funds for cooperation from Japan, the disputed compensation payments, be placed within the ROK's own framework. While being aware of this point of view, how should Japan respond? Japan's thinking when the six-party talks are concluded must be robustly discussed.

## [Japanese Economic Foreign Policies toward its Four Neighbors]

Finally I will speak about Japan's economic policies. Put simply, business is moving apace in areas not deeply bound up with such issues as territorial disputes, the interpretation of history and human rights. As a recent piece of evidence for this I can give the example of when former-Prime Minister Abe visited China, and with a desire to somehow resolve several issues, economic, technological and financial ties were improved at a stroke; and they are also presently rapidly expanding. Even where intergovernmental talks have not advanced, Toyota, for example, has built an automobile plant in Saint Petersburg. In areas where political problems do not form major obstacles this situation will probably rapidly progress from this point on. If we talk about why things haven't progressed until now, however, a factor other than political problems is that the business infrastructure on both sides is extremely weak.

Although I commented earlier on airport infrastructure, it is a problem for the major cities of every country. Gimpo Airport in the ROK is a short distance from the center of Seoul. Incheon Airport is distant from Seoul. Beijing Airport is far from the central city area, and under debate is how and to what extent they can utilize Nanyang Airport, which is in the city center. In Shanghai, they built Hongqiao Airport, although small in scale, and Pudong Airport way out toward the coast. The latter, although again large in scale, is far from Shanghai city center. In many forms infrastructure is inadequate, and Japan and the ROK cannot congratulate themselves that they are superior. If improvements are not made swiftly, in spite of a flourishing business momentum from economic development, it will be unusable.

Public opinion is the foundation for political matters, and political agreements far removed from that will be difficult to conclude. We can only wait for future developments. Regarding infrastructure improvements, if there is no coming of business, then they will take both time and money. It is certain, however, that we will end up looking idly on as such business opportunities pass by, and it is a problem about which something must be done.

As to why the situation is unfolding in this way, the answer is population dynamics. Where are the "population superpowers," countries which will have an increasing population in 2050? The most obvious is probably India. Next comes the United States. Increasing continuously in small increments will be Britain. In contrast Russia will see its population fall rapidly. In both Europe and Japan the population will be falling.

As to how this will end up, the answer is an increase in the elderly. Pensions and medical treatment will be all the more necessary, and that cost will rise rapidly. In such a situation, infrastructure policy will slip down the order of priorities. The consent of all citizens will not be received readily. Not to mention there will be strong opposition to military matters. That will be the same for every country, with India and the US probably being the countries that won't oppose it.

In places where the momentum of economic development similar to East Asia's is still obscured, doing away with both investment into infrastructure and investment into research and development in science and technology is not the solution to that problem. The population will be decreasing, but the things that will develop society dynamically are these two kinds of investment. The time is coming of being able to make a Seoul-Beijing-Tokyo day-trip. An air-shuttle route resembling the Yamanote Line [Tokyo subway circle line] is possible, in terms of technology, in East Asia, but at the present time the various kinds of infrastructure are incomplete. As for public opinion, there are many doubts as to whether there should be the investment of large amounts of money. This is, however, a factor which is clearly arresting business development.

Additionally, finance in particular will become a major problem in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and with the occurrence of

problems such as with subprime mortgages, adverse effects can spread from one original point. In order to respond to such an emergency situation, the cooperation of financial authorities in various forms and a swift response are required.

The ROK is actively playing for high stakes in the resuscitation of the DPRK. China is not seeking confrontation but wants to be proactive. Russia wants to do things aggressively. The US is proactive too. Although the economy is gradually losing ground, when it comes to business they are enlivened. I think things will probably follow that pattern over the next 10–20 years.

In those circumstances, it is extremely important for Japan how they think about political obstacles, what kind of agreements they make, and to what extent they earnestly and swiftly carry out infrastructure improvements. With the momentum in economic development of the neighboring countries of the ROK, China and Russia looking set to explode, taking an even greater interest will probably lead to an increase in business opportunities.

Within this, Niigata Prefecture and Niigata City are in a central position. I earnestly hope for the creation of various kinds of business here. I would like to see the tackling of infrastructure matters as swiftly as possible. This is not a question for delay, and today, which is brimming with so much momentum, I think we won't have a problem if a lot of infrastructure is put in place.

There are two airports in Hong Kong, nearby are the airports of Shenzhen and Guangzhou, and with other airports in the surrounding area, there are a lot of airports larger in size than Haneda and Narita in Japan. Business opportunities are expanding with that kind of energy.

It is striking, in Japan's case, that it is overly cautious. I sincerely believe that moving forward with great vitality and courage will hold the promise of development for a region like Niigata.

[Translated by ERINA]