



World Economic Forum and Japan Night 2012

Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda addresses the Davos Meeting in the January 28 videoconference

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P Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda participated in a video conference via satellite in the World Economic Forum 2012 Annual Meeting session in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland on January 28, titled “Tough Choices in a Time of Crisis.”

In it, he spelled out the status of Japan’s ongoing recovery, as well as the challenges the country faces and model it hopes to present to the world.

“Japan’s stance is to share the lessons learned from the earthquake with the international community,” the prime minister said. “We should also remember that it is the socially vulnerable who are severely affected by multiple crises. The perspective of human security is critical in my opinion. Japan will continue to actively address the issues also facing the international community, such as poverty and infectious diseases, and contribute to the international community.”

Earlier, on January 26, Prime Minister Noda had sent a video message to the 2012 Davos Meeting side event Japan Night.

To about 600 guests in the venue, he emphasized, “Through the cordial assistance provided by countries around the world, both the infra-

ing recovery in no uncertain way, while the Tokyo metropolitan area and other areas outside the disaster zone have already returned to the ordinary living they enjoyed before the quake. Many Japanese companies achieved restoration at an astounding speed, with the supply chain having fully recovered.”

“With regard to the accident at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station of Tokyo Electric Power Company as well, the reactors reached a state of cold shutdown at the end of last year, and the accident is no longer a major impediment to conducting business in Japan.”

The prime minister said post-quake Japan is currently playing three historic roles in once again taking on humankind’s front-line challenges.

“First is the challenge of aiming for sustainable growth while maintaining fiscal discipline. In particular, in Japan this involves the difficulties of addressing a society of longevity unprecedented in human history... I will surely realize major reforms in order to forge a sustainable social security system and maintain fiscal discipline in Japan.

“Second, in considering Japan’s growth

over the medium to long term, it will be essential for us to incorporate to the fullest extent the vitality of the Asia-Pacific region, which has achieved dynamic growth. Japan will contribute actively to the creation of rules in this region. The first of these will be bringing the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific to realization. Last year, I decided that Japan would enter into consultations toward participating in the TPP negotiations with the countries concerned. Japan will concurrently promote networks of high-level economic partnerships, including Japan-China-Republic of Korea, ASEAN, and Japan-EU economic partnerships, and transform the energy of reconstruction from the great earthquake to capacity for new growth open to the world.”

“Our third challenge is addressing constraints on energy, which brings light to civilization. We are experiencing a new trial of a very tight electrical supply that has arisen in connection with the suspension of our nuclear power stations since the earthquake. This is one that I believe can be converted to an op-

portunity to attract pioneering innovations. We will promote the expansion of renewable energies, the introduction of rechargeable batteries, smart grids and other new systems that pursue efficient energy management, and the evolution of a culture of energy conservation. In so doing, Japan will continue to lead the world in this area.”

In addition to the aforementioned speech from the prime minister, guests were able to hear from the famous Japanese actor Ken Watanabe, and watch a short film titled “Lights of Japan” that features Japan’s recovery from the earthquake disaster, its great progress, and its international contribution. To loud applause, calligrapher Sisyu performed on stage, writing the kanji characters for “*hikari*” (light) and “Japan” on a huge dragon-painted canvas.

Guests who attended this year’s Japan Night enjoyed a selection of Japanese food and drinks, including some products from the Tohoku region hit by the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami. The sake corner in particular attracted many guests. HJ

Guests enjoyed Japanese food and drink at Japan Night on January 26

