

<Opening Remarks at the Brookings Institution on the occasion of the 2nd Joint Forum “Nuclear Renaissance and the U.S.-Japan Alliance: Finding New Markets and Preventing Proliferation”>

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Good morning ladies and gentlemen and distinguished guests,

It is my great pleasure and honour to be here at the Brookings Institution once again to host the 2nd Joint Forum co-sponsored by the Slavic Research Centre at Hokkaido University and the Centre for the Northeast Asian Policy Studies here at Brookings. Please allow me to take this time to thank the Brookings Institution, particularly, my old friend Kevin Scott, Assistant Director of the CNAPS and Shoichi Itoh, currently a CNAPS visiting fellow and a non-resident Associate Professor of our SRC, for their support and cooperation to provide this opportunity to invite experts to share their thoughts and expertise on today’s theme “Nuclear Renaissance and U.S. Japan Alliance: Finding New Markets and Preventing Proliferation.”

It was on May 8th of this year when the Slavic Research Centre and the Centre for the Northeast Asian Policy Studies held our very first groundbreaking joint forum on “U.S. Japan Alliance: Beyond Northeast Asia,” where we invited experts from US foreign policies communities on Northeast Asia, Russia, Central Asia, the Middle East and Europe to not only discuss the “reshaping” of Japan’s presence in US foreign policy beyond Northeast Asia but also to “reconfirm” Japan’s commitment in these areas.

I had made it clear then but I will say it once again: this joint forum to bring

together experts from various areas to address common concerns that surround and affect us today, and, to move toward a direction for a “constructive” and “rational” deliberation to advocate and promote “sound” foreign policies are not only important for the U.S. and Japan but also for the international community as a whole. It is our responsibility to continue this joint venture.

The world has witnessed a historical moment for nuclear weapons disarmament with U.S. President Obama’s declaration in Prague. However, while continuous commitment for nuclear weapons disarmament is imperative so is the vigorous discussion and cooperation on nuclear energy source. To quote President Obama, “we should build a new framework for civil nuclear cooperation, including an international fuel bank, so that countries can access peaceful power without increasing the risks of proliferation.” We are gathered here today to consider the possibilities of a plausible framework to facilitate the peaceful use of nuclear power. The significance and impact of this forum are obvious. To borrow the President words, “Together we can do it.”

As the Director of the Slavic Research Centre, allow me to end with few words on our current project at the Centre. We have just launched the Global Centre of Excellence Programme on “Reshaping Japan’s Border Studies” and the objective of this project is to bring together area studies experts from not only Eurasia or Slavic regions but from other regions in the international community to conduct all kinds of research on border-related issues and topics. Nuclear issues are also “included” in our project. This grandeur project is in line with our ongoing mission to establish a new methodology to compare similar phenomenon that transcends the current “segregated” area studies discourses to promote peace and stability around the world. This joint forum, to a certain degree, is one of our initiatives for this mission and part of this

forum has been funded by this project. I would like to extend my invitation to experts here today to join us on this mission and I look forward to your continuous support and future collaboration.

Thank you again to the Brookings Institution, invited guests and the audience that has made this joint forum possible.

Thank you.