

29 October 2006

【7<sup>th</sup> Session】

TOWARDS THE HISTORICAL RECONCILIATION  
AMONG JAPAN, CHINA AND KOREA  
HOW TO REALIZE THE ASIAN SHUMAN DECLARATION”

TOSHIYA TSUGAMI

- 1) It is obvious that East Asian regional integration (if it happens) can bring about various economic and political benefits to the region. But only emphasizing the aspects of “benefit” is not enough in propelling the integration, rather, resuming the mutual confidence and favorable impression among the countries is also important, particularly for countries which have experienced unfortunate history in the past.
- 2) In this regard, a historical precedence of German-French reconciliation serves as a precious reference for East Asia. The two countries have seriously tackled how to liquidate the problem of the unfortunate past. East Asia, particularly Japan needs to follow this lesson if it means to follow the success of Europe. But simultaneously it is also necessary to keep in mind that the German-French reconciliation was accomplished under an international circumstance that is quite different from what East Asia faces today. At least, there are two new problems today.
- 3) First, recent economic globalization has had great influence on various people’s interests in a different manner. For people suffering, antagonism, antipathy and anxiety against “alien” (or “nationalism”) have risen. In East Asia, countries in the region have benefited through *de-facto* economic integration in macro economic terms, however, there certainly exists “asymmetry” as to whether one benefits or suffers. Sharing the common goal under this circumstance is no easy even in a country.
- 4) Second, East Asia is facing both an era of economic integration as well as “China’s rise” simultaneously. In past world’s history, such rapid rises of new regional power have often caused wars. Today “war” is unthinkable though, it is a fact that the region has entered into an unstable situation. In Japan, as opposed to the growing economic benefits coming from China, antagonistic feeling against China is also increasing. Until recently, about a half of Japanese supported Premier KOIZUMI’s “YASUKUNI” visit. It is quite noteworthy that more than half of them do so by reasoning that “An independent country should not obey foreign pressure and bend the policy.” In their psychology, China has made the change-over from a victim to an assailant before one is aware. It has something to do with “China’s rise.” Many Japanese have started to feel that it will be passed by sooner or later.
- 5) Through more than a century, Chinese have suffered enormous mental “trauma” by

tumbling from the worlds largest Empire to a very poor and chiacked country. They are still occupied by this self identity even today. One may think that with today's great achievement, time has come for Chinese to overcome this trauma, however, the issue of "asymmetry" matters again. The reform and opening policy have produced both numerous millionaires and economic sufferers. For the latter people, the idea of "overcoming the historical trauma" or so-called "peaceful rise" may not be persuasive.

- 6) Thus, the road for East Asian integration is long and winding. But the region must aim at the goal and must not abandon it. For this sake, there are several tasks from which we can not run away. For Japanese, first we should face and accept the reality of "China's rise" however it is bitter and sour. Building a mutually benefitable and peaceful relationship between China is what Current generation should be responsible for future generation. Second, historic reconciliation issue comes again. It is true that post-war Japan has successfully established "pacifism," however, it is originated more form the feeling of war sufferer, rather than from the recognition that "the war that Japan inflicted has caused enormous damages and pain to neighbors." We need to face this fact again.
- 7) For Chinese, there is an old saying in China that "one can not applaud only by one hand." Reconciliation needs mutual efforts. If it can be realized only by Japan to one hundred percent accept and obey the official and traditional historical view of Chinese Communist Party, then the reconciliation will be unlikely. As mentioned above, China also has "asymmetry" problems. It is no easy to let every people support the idea of "peaceful rise," nonetheless, I sincerely ask and hope Chinese friends to think about how best to realize the reconciliation and East Asian integration on their part. Maybe it is necessary not only for both countries' future generation but also for future generation in the entire region.