

The 31st Policy Plenary Meeting on “Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit and the Prospect of an East Asian Community”

March 18, 2009

The 31st Policy Plenary Meeting of the Council on East Asian Community (CEAC) was held on March 18 at the conference room of the Japan Forum on International Relations, to discuss "Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit and the Prospect of an East Asian Community." Mr. KOHARA Masahiro, Deputy Director-General of Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, made keynote report, which was followed by an active exchange of views among Members of CEAC. Mr. KOHARA stated as follows.

In December 2008, the Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit Meeting was held in Fukuoka. This was a historically significant meeting in which leaders of these three countries, for the first time, had a meeting of its kind independently from other international conferences such as ASEAN+3 Summit Meeting. At this Trilateral Summit Meeting, leaders released "Joint Statement for Tripartite Partnership," in which they showed their firm resolution to promote trilateral cooperation in a future-oriented manner, "guided under the principle of openness, transparency, mutual trust, common interest and respect for our diverse cultures." In addition, "Trilateral Joint Announcement on Disaster Management Cooperation," "Joint Statement on the International Finance and Economy," and "Action Plan for Promoting Trilateral Cooperation among the People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea" were also released. Although there are difficult problems, which are closely related to people's sentiment, in each of those bilateral relations among Japan, China and Korea, leaders of three countries have gathered at the Summit and shown a cooperative attitude to tackle common issues by agreeing upon a concrete "Action Plan." As for the future architecture of East Asia, the following three points need to be noted; (1) we should promote regional cooperation in a multilayered way by utilizing various framework such as ASEAN+3, EAS (ASEAN+6), ARF, APEC and Six Party Talks in a complementary and mutually reinforcing manner; (2) we should steadily promote regional cooperation through "functional approach"; (3) regional cooperation

needs to be based upon universal values such as freedom, democracy and human rights as well as the global common rules like WTO. It is expected that Japan, China and Korea will be able to build a "win-win" relationship in a future-oriented manner.

In response to the above report, 16 members of CEAC joined in an active exchange of views on the topic.