

# **The 32<sup>nd</sup> Policy Plenary Meeting on “The Recent Development and Future Challenges in the Regional Cooperation in Environment and Energy”**

April 27, 2009

The 32nd Policy Plenary Meeting of the Council on East Asian Community (CEAC) was held on April 27 at the conference room of the Japan Forum on International Relations, to discuss "The Recent Development and Future Challenges in the Regional Cooperation in Environment and Energy." Prof. HIRONO Ryokichi, Vice-President of CEAC and Professor Emeritus of Seikei University, made keynote report, which was followed by an active exchange of views among Members of CEAC. Professor HIRONO stated as follows:

The environmental deterioration in East Asia has been aggravating, and the three specific areas of water pollution, air pollution and deforestation pose the biggest challenges to East Asia. Environmental cooperation in East Asia can take two possible approaches; an approach to incorporate perspectives of environmental protection in existing international cooperation projects and programmes, or an approach to initiate and expand new environmental cooperation projects and programmes.

While bilateral cooperation has been the core of environmental cooperation in East Asia so far, multilateral and regional cooperation have been increasingly emphasized. Areas of environmental cooperation include the promotion of an Asian version of international framework on climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity and 3Rs (Reduce, Re-use and Recycle Wastes). It is also noted that East Asian environmental cooperation cannot be achieved only by governments and therefore the collaboration between the public and private sectors will be necessary and essential. In addition, it is necessary to actively promote cooperation on the issues that are not considered by other East Asian countries as of a great significance. For instance, the post-Kyoto Protocol requires participation not only of developed countries but also of developing countries participating in G20. East Asian countries have a high expectation on the Japanese

technology with regard to the enhancement of energy efficiency. Japan needs a proactive approach to actualize the "21st Century Environment Nation Strategy" announced in June 2007. It will be necessary that Japan demonstrate a model of the global efforts for environmental protection by establishing a framework such as the "21st Century Earth Fund." With regards to the emission of greenhouse gases, two tons per capita of CO2 emission is probably the most plausible standard. A regional framework on greenhouse gases in Asia should be set as soon as possible, as Asian countries have been emitting every year a higher volume of greenhouse gases, such as Australia, China, India and Japan. Japan's leadership in APT and EAS is requested urgently.

In response to the above reports, 21 members of CEAC joined in an active exchange of views on the topic.