

Speech by Hon. Takeo Kawamura
March 6, 2019

Thank you very much for the introduction. I am Takeo Kawamura, Member of the House of Representatives. I am Chair of Federation of Diet Members for the ILC, and Head of the Liaison Committee for Realizing the ILC. Today I'm participating with my fellow executives of our Federation. I very much appreciate the invitation as well as this opportunity to say a few words.

In my speech at the ILC international conference in Morioka at the end of 2017, I called on uniting the world through ILC with the spirit of 'Science First' amidst the rising global trend of unilateralism over international cooperation. Since then, there have been many great strides in Japan towards realizing the ILC project. This international conference is an extremely important milestone to take us to the next stage. Tomorrow, we would be finally embarking on a new level of collaboration, where, in addition to the political, academic, industrial, and regional collaboration, there will be proactive engagement by governmental bodies to promote the ILC. I sincerely hope that you will understand the full extent of Japan's commitment to realizing the ILC upon hearing each sector's intent and explanations.

We have been working to foster a political environment conducive to the ILC, both inside and outside of Japan. Currently, the major movement at the political and governmental level is that the Liberal Democratic Party's Liaison Committee for Realizing the ILC was established in September last year to start discussions as a legislative body across multiple ministries and various policies. In tandem with these political efforts, the governmental side has also started to consolidate the opinions not only within MEXT (the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology) but across different ministries. I believe the Director-General from MEXT will brief you tomorrow on matters including such full-fledged activities on the governmental side. Discussions of the European Strategy for Particle Physics have started, and we well recognize that the placement of the ILC in this process is crucial for its realization.

I understand that the report by the Science Council of Japan last year has led to concerns in and out of Japan. Firstly, the Council is not an organization with policy-making or budgetary authority. Rather, it is an organization that represents the Japanese scientists. We would like to take it positively from the perspective of Japan's

science and technology policies that the scientific merit of the ILC was highly recognized by such an organization. Following this report, the Minister of MEXT has requested an evaluation in the framework of the Master Plan, which is a standard process. The Japanese bureaucracy is process-oriented, and it takes much time and effort to proceed. I recognize that this worries our international partners, but please understand that such time and process are necessary in this vertically-segmented and single-year-accounting-based government system of Japan.

In order to overcome these administrative barriers, I believe the ILC should be realized through politically-led efforts, cutting across different ministries and agencies. As such, we're proceeding to realize a budgeting as a national project with a separate budget outside of the regular science and technology budget.

There has also been much progress in the understanding of the ILC in Japan. It has gained large media attention and there are news reports on this topic day after day. Also, the three major economic organizations of Japan have recently delivered a joint message toward realization of the ILC in Japan. The number of signatures from all over Japan demanding the realization of the ILC exceeded 410,000. In the Tohoku region, a student proactively collected signatures hoping that the ILC be constructed in their local region. It is quite understandable: this student from Tohoku University told me that he would like to study particle physics and become a scientist working at the ILC, and with his shining eyes, entrusted me with the list of signatures addressed to the Minister of MEXT.

Since 2013, we have been strengthening the relationship with the US at the parliament and government levels. In addition, in January of last year, we formed a delegation consisting of political, industrial, administrative, and academic circles to visit France and Germany, and started dialogues with their parliaments and governments. From Europe, the French National Assembly Member Hon. Becht and German Bundestag Member Hon. Kaufmann visited Japan, in May and October respectively last year, and engaged in further discussions with us. I heard that they both visited the candidate site for ILC during the visit. Also, last October, the Under Secretary Paul Dabbar of the US DOE visited Japan, and we had in-depth discussions on the ILC. This was a very forward-looking discussion, and I can assure you that the collaboration with the United States is solid. I have sent a letter to him after the meeting and received his letter in return recently.

We have finally come to the stage to start concrete international discussions. On the international cost sharing, we have to separate the infrastructure part of civil engineering and conventional equipment that is natural to be taken up by the host country and the apparatus part that is natural to be internationally cost-shared among technically competent countries. Otherwise, the project would fail due to unnecessary extra cost. A concrete image or a draft idea needs to be produced first, and we would like to gain cooperation of worldwide researchers on the technical aspects as well.

The Abe Administration has been incumbent for more than six years this year. It has been pursuing ‘the Abe diplomacy’ that looks over the globe. As a result of its leadership, this year we host the Rugby World Cup, host the G20 Summit as the chair, and next year in 2020, we host the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games. As Japan’s next contribution to the world and to humanity, we would like to build Asia’s first large-scale international research hub by hosting the ILC. This bears significant meaning both diplomatically and politically.

As the environment has ripened socially, politically, and administratively, the next mission for politics is to secure the budget for the construction. In parallel with the government’s administrative process, we will begin in earnest from our role as political and legislative body to obtain the necessary budget for construction.

This year marks a historical turning point for Japan with the abdication of the current Emperor and the accession of the new Emperor. Professor Yoshiharu Noyori, who won the Nobel Prize in Chemistry, once voiced scathing criticism of the government at the time for slashing the science and technology budget saying, “Are you prepared in the future to stand in the court named ‘history’?” Investment in science is a political responsibility. We are committed to hosting the ILC in Japan as an investment for the future, a new page in Japanese and global history. I hope this passion of Japan for ILC is well understood by the participants who gathered here today, and I beg you to firmly support this plan as international organizations of researchers.

Let’s strive toward bringing about the ILC for unlocking the future.

Let me repeat once again: Science First!

Thank you very much.