

Economic Development and Environment Destruction

“Let’s think about eco-friendly economic together!”

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There are many countries in the world. Some are developed, and others are developing. They have their own circumstances. Their various circumstances cause unbalance disparity between countries, especially between developed and developing countries. It could be the disparity that triggers serious environmental destruction, disputes. Among them the environment problems are considered serious. Because once the nature has been destroyed, we cannot recover it as it used to be, let alone we cannot buy it back. The answer can be found in economic development, we think.

The countries in environmentally critical conditions are also economically unstable. Most children there cannot go to school because they have to work to support their families. Also many people in developing nations are engaged in agriculture. But most of them are not well educated and do not have basic knowledge about farming. They do not know bad influence on the environment. So they continue using toxic chemicals. Some developed countries export the chemicals which are banned domestic use to developing countries. In Africa those chemicals harm wild animals. They could not grow good products because of lack of breeding and fertilizing techniques. As a result they could not get stable income. If they had those knowledge and techniques, they could do it without damaging the environment. Of course, those techniques must be environmentally friendly, or the problems will be more serious. Actually some countries depend on unfavorable techniques because they cannot afford to invest in good techniques. And that makes the circumstances around them get worse.

Therefore what we can do for a better earth is to send messages about our countries to the rest of the world.

At first, the messages might be just information about fashion and music popular among us, young people. But if we have opportunities where we can share even a little thing, someday we will be able to interchange messages casually and frankly. And in the future, we will be able to share the knowledge and techniques of medicine, science and even the environment. Using them, problems which people once gave up

addressing will be solved. Using them, emerging nations will be able to find a way to be a member of the group of developed nations. Sending experiences will be also useful.

Japan is often hit by earth quakes. As you know, East Japan was heavily damaged by the big earthquake in March 2011. Through the experiences we can tell you what measures are taken against earth quakes in Japan, why so many people could not escape from tsunami, why we could not prevent the nuclear accident. These messages from Japan will help other countries minimize possible damages.

As we told you, techniques are indispensable for economic growth. Economic growth should be Eco-friendly. However some technological development gives bad influences on the environment. Since today people have invented a lot of technology, such as breeding to get good farm products. People have invented medical techniques to treat serious diseases such as cancer. We believe people will be able to develop more eco-friendly technology and use it to solve various problems on the earth.

How about the emerging countries? It is said that cotton industry is easy to develop in those countries. Because cotton industry needs many hands not high-tech machine. It demands lots of employment and improves the poverty. Desolate land becomes eco-friendly cotton fields. Real international cooperation does not only mean that developed nations help developing nations. But all the nations should become ONE to cooperate with each other. Emerging nations should send messages about their present situation, messages about techniques they need. Industrialized nations should understand their messages properly, do research and development of them and send information. We hope people all over the world are interested in this movement.

Now we would like to send a message from Japan. In the near future emerging nations will make more effort to get economic success. However they should not seek for only economic growth.

Why? We are going to tell our sad history now.

Do you know "The Japan Big Four Pollution Diseases"? These pollution diseases broke out during Japan's rapid economic growth after World War II. There are Minamata Disease, The Second Minamata Disease, Itai-Itai Disease and Yokkaichi

Asthma. Problems of these pollution diseases have not been solved even now. We will explain about each of them.

At first, Minamata Disease. This disease broke out in Minamata City located in the west north part of Japan. Nine years later, another Minamata disease was found near the Agano River located in the middle north part of Japan. It was called The Second Minamata Disease. The cause of both diseases was toxic chemical called methyl mercury. You may not have heard the name of this substance, but it is used in clinical thermometers, blood pressure gauges, even in lights. The factories drained polluted waste water into the near rivers and the sea. People who ate fish and shellfish polluted by mercury for a long time and got poisoned themselves. The patients suffered various symptoms such a nerve disorder, sensory disorder and speech defect.

The next one is Itai-Itai Disease.

This was the first pollution disease in Japan. It was caused by Cadmium, a toxic substance. Cadmium polluted the land and water along the Jintsu River. People ate vegetables on the land and ate fish in the water. And they got ill. Their bones got weak and easily broken and finally they could not stand or walk. They had very severe pain and most of the victims died screaming "painful, painful", "Itai, Itai" in Japanese. That's why this disease was called Itai Itai Disease.

The last one is Yokkaichi Asthma which broke out in Yokkaichi City located in the middle south part of Japan during Japan's rapid economic growth after the World War II. Petrochemical complexes emitted polluted gas. They drained poisoned waste water as well and it gave more serious damage to the environment. People there got asthma, respiratory diseases, heart attack and lung cancer. Sadly these terrible symptoms made many victims kill themselves.

In Japan, the environmental pollution has drastically decreased in the past decades. But it is clear that we had many victims in the past and that some of them are struggling for the diseases even now. Indeed, Japan accomplished economic development. However, we were too much engaged in economic growth and ignored the environment and lives which should come first.

Everyone wants to lead an affluent life. Economic development is necessary for all of us. But we should be kind to the earth whenever we are trying to get any kind of

success. This is the message from Japan. Economic growth brings us rich life. But today rich people are getting more rich, while poor people more poor. We seem to forget the meaning of "Rich" in these days of plenty. Some people might feel rich when having a good meal or studying at school. Others might feel rich when just having good time every day. Each image of rich life is exactly itself. However some of them could not realize their images. People in any country at any time have the right to lead a happy life. It is difficult that all people enjoy rich life and economic stability. However we will have to tackle these problems hand in hand with the same generation to make a difference for our future.

Why do you think the world is divided into 190 countries? We think, it is in order to think widely from various viewpoints, respect and understand diverse values and solve problems in cooperation with different people. But how is the actual world today? Haven't we led the differences between nations to any disputes?

In order to solve international problems including environmental preservation, let's think together what the world should be and take action together to make a better world.

Thank you for listening.