

CULCON Global Leaders Working Group:

Development of a Future Generation of Leaders of the US-Japan Relationship in the Age of Globalization

- 1) For the past half century, a close bilateral relationship between the US and Japan has been created and maintained by leaders who have learned to respect each other's politics, economy, society and culture. Now in the early years of the twenty-first century, the US-Japan relationship is entering a new phase. Issues have become more closely entangled with each other and involve many actors, ranging from the two governments to two civil societies with different cultural, historical, and religious backgrounds. No single issue can be solved without interacting and collaborating with these other actors. In the face of these changes, the US and Japan need to expand their close cooperative relationship to address these emerging challenges in order to contribute constructively to the peace and development of the world.
- 2) In the past, various exchanges and other programs, such as Fulbright Scholarships, played an important role in producing those people who supported the close US-Japan relationship. In order to develop leaders for the next generation, we must evaluate the results of these existing programs and consider ways of amplifying them to respond to requirements of the twenty-first century. In doing so, we should thoroughly consider such issues as the roles of the US and Japan in world development that encompasses different cultures, and requires recognition of multiple viewpoints in the face of globalization, as well as the current status and concerns of US-Japan exchange.
- 3) The US-Japan relationship has undergone significant changes during the half century following the war. It began as a more unilateral relationship with Japan dependent on the US, but has grown toward a more mutually interdependent relationship. After the collapse of the cold war structure, both the US and Japan have tended to regard each other from the more multiple viewpoints of their various multilateral relations. At the same time, the significance of roles the US and Japan play in world peace and the welfare of human beings is growing. Though, as some point out, there is a tendency in both the United States and Japan to take our relationship for granted, the promotion of mutual understanding and a good relationship will undoubtedly remain as one of the most important issues for the US and Japan in the twenty-first century. We believe that now we must build on the relationship we have worked to develop over the past fifty years and apply our experiences to foster leaders in the next generation.
- 4) A strange asymmetry exists in US-Japan mutual understanding. The United States is more diverse but inward looking; Japan is less diverse but more outward looking. The general public in Japan has more interest in and understanding of the US; Americans in general tend to be less interested in external affairs. Whether cause or effect, access to information about the other country is unequal; information about the United States in Japan is much more available. But at the elite level in government,

business and academia, Japan's understanding of the US is said to be more difficult than US understanding of Japan. One reason may be that it is harder for Japanese to appreciate the diversity of the US. Another circumstance is that while in the past Japanese specialists in American studies were small in number, they tended to have a broad understanding of the US; nowadays there are more specialists in Japan but they tend to confine themselves to narrower specialties, making broader viewpoints more difficult to find. It is important to keep this asymmetry in mind when we consider developing the next generation of leaders.

5) A problem peculiar to Japan is that Japanese students are unable to debate equally with students from other countries in international venues, in part due to the weakness of their English language proficiency, but also resulting from a lack of assertiveness. Japanese culture and school education lack training in debate, and in asserting one's opinion. This is one of the problems Japan needs to confront directly as an important issue in a global era. It should also be given sufficient consideration in devising leadership programs so that help is given to raise such debating ability.

6) In the United States, a fundamental issue is the parochial view of American students about international affairs. This may arise from the great political power and economic wealth that the United States has amassed since World War II. This condition leads to a situation in which young people do not imagine conditions or norms other than those of their own upbringing, might exist.

7) The next generation of leaders to support the US-Japan relationship may be those who display leadership in their own areas of specialization, but who are not limited in their general understanding to the narrow confines of their specialization. They should be opinion leaders who have a sense of proportion, broader views, long-term national or local interests, and the ability to exert influence beyond the borders of the two nations.

8) The target communities for the next generation of potential US-Japan leaders include all professions in the spectrum of public life. Though they will be well grounded in their areas of specialization, CULCON aims to produce a program that will help them transcend the confines that specialization necessarily entails. Younger generations (students) should also be looked at as preparatory resources.

9) What are the qualities required for this next generation of leaders? The first is a broad viewpoint, knowledge and judgment, unrestrained by limits of their specializations. The second is the ability to show understanding towards different cultures, allowing them to establish a symbiotic relationship encompassing the differences while preserving their own cultural identity. The third is the ability to build up a broad network of people. Further necessary qualities include an ability to take risks by opening oneself to unfamiliar experiences, and the ability to question one's own cultural assumptions.

10) In considering programs to develop a new generation of US-Japan leaders with a global outlook, it would be effective to evaluate existing programs and discuss plans for improvements based on such evaluation. It will be necessary to assess the history and current status of various exchange programs between the US and Japan, and explore what

will be required for future exchange programs, including financial issues.

11) In order to bring a global perspective to the US-Japan relationship, it will be necessary to consider organizing exchange programs that include other nations, mainly the neighboring countries in Asia but also more broadly from the Pacific Rim and even countries in the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Africa. It will also be useful to offer fulfilling opportunities for university students to experience the planning and preparation of international conferences. Research on successful leaders may sometimes bring useful insights.

12) The Working Group will explore simulation or experiential learning programs, where a group of students might be asked to solve a concrete problem. It will look at the Global Youth Exchange program currently administered by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Japan-American Student Conference, or the Young Leaders Program of the US-Japan Foundation. It will look at any longitudinal studies that may have been done on these programs. Based on a study of these programs, the Working Group aims to develop a set of guidelines, a clearinghouse or an actual program that will help in promoting the next generation of leaders to support US-Japan relations in the global era.

13) The Working Group has asked the secretariats to survey the array of binational exchange and other programs for pertinent information, including purpose, sponsor, length of program, number of participants, collaborative experiences, homestay or other living arrangements, longitudinal studies (and willingness to share), evaluation (and willingness to share), follow up, preparation, notable alumni, kind of program, target participants, venue, cost and field.

14) The Working Group agreed that the next binational meeting will be held July 1, 2005 in Juneau, Alaska.