

**Keynote Address at a Conference "Higher Education Reform in Japan and Germany—Taking Stock and Looking Ahead"**



Photos taken at the Japanese-German University Presidents' meeting.

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I gave a keynote speech, "The Higher Education in the Age of Globalization" at the above conference held on February 28, 2006 at Hitotsubashi Memorial Hall, National Center of Science Building, Tokyo. The conference chairmen were President Hideo Miyahara of Osaka University and President Stefan Hortmuth of Giessen University, Germany. The meeting was participated by many university presidents and administrators of both Japan and Germany.

The abstract of my talk is attached below.

## **The Role of Higher Education in the Age of Globalization**

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### **Abstract:**

*Excellence of a research university is dictated by three major components: outstanding faculty members, talented and motivated students, and well-managed financial and administrative support systems to facilitate innovative research and effective learning.*

*The university has been playing a critical role in the modern history of every industrialized nation and the world. It nurtures fine young minds to become the national and international leaders through their pursuits in politics, socio-economic sectors, as well as in their intellectual contributions in the arts and sciences.*

*Such fundamental missions of the university will remain largely unchanged in the future as well, but specific mechanisms to effectively implement these missions must change by taking into account various factors that surround the university. They include: responding to demographic changes in the student pool; updating knowledge and skills required for industrial competitiveness; training students for their productive employment; embracing the increasingly interdisciplinary nature of scientific research and emerging applications; and exploring the pervasive influence of networking, distributed processing and grid computing.*

*The higher education system of the United States, especially at the graduate level, has in the recent past been the envy of the world. But it now faces some new challenges. The recent reform of the higher education system in Japan seems to have shown some progress but a number of difficult problems remain unsolved. Germany and other EU countries are in the midst of undergoing the so-called Bologna process. In the discussion that follows this presentation, we would like to identify strategies conducive to improving higher education in Japan and Germany and to find ways to accelerate successful implementation of such strategies.*