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Nippon Keidanren Looks to Next Generation Reactors

The Japan Business Federation (Nippon Keidanren) has issued a proposal on a post-Kyoto international framework to combat global warming. It refers to nuclear energy in the category of innovative technological development, and calls for strengthening cooperation among industry, government and academia, as well as for international partnerships in developing next-generation reactors.

From the viewpoint of fighting global warming, the proposal first notes the importance of preparing a flexible mechanism characterized by diversity, enabling environmental and economic targets to be met simultaneously. It also stresses the need to enlist the participation of all major countries emitting CO2. It goes on to argue the necessity of both assisting developing countries and applying new technologies, including the development of innovative technologies and the promotion of their use.

The proposal then outlines more specific mechanisms. For example, it says that countries should develop their own measures to prevent global warming, and commit to them internationally. Their activities would then be checked, also internationally, using the "plan-do-check-act" (PDCA) method. Included among the commitments that the countries are to make are: (1) targets for achieving energy efficiency domestically, (2) a centralized approach, i.e., sharing know-how internationally in each area of industry, (3) financial and technological assistance to highly motivated developing countries, and (4) the development of innovative technologies.

The innovative technologies that the Nippon Keidanren identifies include hydrogen energy, next-generation nuclear technology, next-generation highly efficient photovoltaic power generation, and clean coal technology. The proposal emphasizes the need for cooperation among government, industry, and academia, along with international partnerships, noting that it will take many years and vast amounts of money to develop the technologies from the initial basic studies to their eventual application.

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