

International Symposium on Climate Change Held in Tokyo: Former Environment Minister Yuriko Koike Says Nuclear Energy to Be Emphasized

The Japan Committee for U.S.-Japan Nongovernmental Dialogue and the Japan Atomic Industrial Forum (JAIF) staged, on November 17, the "International Symposium on Climate Change: Energy Efficiency and Innovative Technological Solutions" in Tokyo, drawing about 300 participants from Japan and overseas.

In a keynote address, Yuriko Koike, a member of the Japanese House of Representatives and former Minister of the Environment, mentioned that Japan's CO2 emissions had increased 8.7% from 1990 levels in 2005, since the first year under the Kyoto Protocol. The primary cause for that, she went on to say, was a drop in the total availability factor to the 60% level, due to the prolonged stoppage of Kashiwazaki Kariwa nuclear power plant (NPP) operation as a result of earthquakes. She said that emissions could have been reduced by about 5% otherwise.

Given that, Koike said, "Nuclear energy, as a powerful tool not only in dealing with global warming but also issues of energy security, is being quietly advocated even in Germany. During my recent visit to Dubai, I learned that the governments of the Middle East, including Abu Dhabi, are discussing national strategies to cope with oil depletion, including the introduction of nuclear energy. They are also mindful of its value in building a low-carbon society."

Besides the keynote address, the symposium also included panel discussions among representatives from Japan, the United States, India, Denmark and China.

Editor: Mio Kimuro, JAIF