

UPF Japan holds 32nd Peace Diplomats Forum at United Nations University Hq.

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Tokyo, Japan—The 32nd Peace Diplomats Forum, hosted by UPF-Japan, was held on March 30, 2018 at the Elizabeth Rose Conference Hall in the United Nations University Headquarters building and had UN diplomacy as its theme. Forty-nine diplomats from 37 embassies and other government establishments in Japan participated in the event. Guests included five ambassadors and two chargé d'affaires, as well as 42 other guests who were former Diet members, representatives of UN agencies, former ambassadors of Japan, academics and scholars

To open the event, Dr. David Malone, rector of the United Nations University, gave welcoming remarks, stating that he was “honored to have ambassadors from various countries and Japanese experts assemble together and discuss such an opportune theme.”

Representing the sponsors and welcoming the participants was Mr. Tetsuya Endo, an advisor to the forum and the first ambassador of the Permanent Mission of Japan to International Organizations in Vienna, Austria. In his greetings, he indicated that the UN can be seen as “universal and credible” but on the other hand could be seen in a conflicting manner: “lacking skills in resolving issues.” Nevertheless, he stated that it is essential for member states to support the UN from the viewpoint that it is the sole organization that tackles issues that transcend national borders. He added that he was hopeful that discussions from the forum could generate ideas on how Japan can get more involved.

Following Ambassador Endo’s greetings, Mr. Masayoshi Kajikuri, president of UPF-Japan, took the stage and gave a presentation about UPF activities in Japan.

As the keynote speaker, Mr. Motohide Yoshikawa, former ambassador and permanent representative of Japan to the UN, gave a speech titled “Three Major Challenges of Japan’s Diplomacy at the United Nations: North Korea, PKO, and Reform of the Security Council.” Ambassador Yoshikawa expressed a certain degree of appreciation for the proposed summit meeting between North Korea’s Kim Jong-un, chairman of the Workers’ Party of Korea, and U.S. President Donald Trump, yet stressed that “unless actual results are produced, it is unrealistic to be overly optimistic since it is but inevitable to be cautious in dealing with North Korea, especially when looking back on their past since 1993 (where they have repeatedly agreed to and then annulled agreements of denuclearization).” In addition, in raising the matter of UN Security Council reform as a major issue of UN diplomacy, he emphasized that “the framework of the UN Security Council laid out by the victorious allied nations of World War II does not reflect today’s state of international affairs.” He also talked about expanding permanent membership and stated that “reform of the UN Security Council is a major issue for all nations.”



After Ambassador Yoshikawa's speech, Mr. Sebastian von Einsiedel, director of the United Nations University Centre for Policy Research who participated in the forum as the commentator, gave the closing remarks. Mr. von Einsiedel mentioned that the current UN, with the five permanent members of the UN Security Council possessing overwhelming power, has difficulty in dealing with the important issues that the world is shouldering. He also cited that Japan's bold effort to reform the UN Security Council will be evaluated beginning with Ambassador Yoshikawa and stated that Japan should continue to move forward in its attempt.

After the talks, which were followed by an animated panel discussion, four Ambassadors for Peace were newly appointed: H.E. Mr. Cham Ugala Uriat, ambassador of Ethiopia; Mr. Hideaki Ueda, former ambassador of Japan to Australia; Mrs. Momoyo Ise, the first executive director of the United Nations University; and Mr. Enis Xhemaili, first secretary of Kosovo's embassy in Japan.

