

# India and Japan in a Resurgent Asia

by

**Ambassador Aftab Seth**

**Ambassador Aftab Seth:** I am very happy to be here at the Sasakawa Foundation Peace Foundation USA seminar in Washington, and also very happy to have as my distinguished panelists two individuals whom I have had the privilege of knowing for several years. I was spokesman of the Foreign Office when Ambassador Clark was the American ambassador to India, and Philip Oldenburg has an even longer connection with India and with me personally. But about that we shall speak later. Philip Oldenburg is a great scholar of India and has spent many years studying the country. He speaks one of the languages of India, or perhaps more than one, but I'm sure that we shall benefit greatly from the presence of such distinguished discussants and such a distinguished moderator.

I shall touch upon India, the vision of those who founded India, India as we see it today, India in the context of Asia as it is today, then very briefly on India and the United States, and then India and Japan.

## **Vision of Founders of India**

What was the vision of the founders of India? Let me begin by reading to you something written by an Indian—an Indian by birth—but a man whose vision clearly encompassed the world, one of the greatest universalists, one of the greatest poets, one of the greatest philosophers, and the first Asian to win the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. I speak of Rabindranath Tagore. This is a small piece from one of his more well known writings, and I think it encapsulates the vision that inspired the founding fathers of our country as we see it today.

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“Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high, where knowledge is free, where words come out from the depth of truth, where the world has not been broken up into fragments by narrow domestic walls, where tireless, striving stretches its arms towards perfection where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the dreary desert sand of dead habit, into that heaven of freedom, my Father, let my country awake.”

And did we, indeed, awaken to the vision of Rabindranath Tagore, a friend and partner of Mahatma Gandhi and a mentor, in a sense, of Jawaharlal Nehru, our first prime minister? Did we realize that vision of freedom, of individual emancipation from fearlessness, that vision of tolerance and compassion? Let's first look at that prospect and that proposition from the point of view of the elections which were recently held in India not more than 3 months ago, in May of 2004.

This was an exercise that involved an electorate of 670 million people, 800,000 polling stations, and 4 million election officers. There are not 4 million people always doing election work, they are civil servants who are drawn from their normal jobs and put on election duty, but we need 4 million of them to man the 800,000 booths that we have. Of course, we have electronic voting machines, which I believe this time worked rather well. This was an exercise of massive proportions, presided over by an indepen-

dent statutory election commission. This has been in action since our first election in the early '50s, and it has done an extremely good job in ensuring transparent, free and fair elections, with the odd aberration, of course.

The present government led by Manmohan Singh—who last night arrived in New York for the United Nations General Assembly and was the finance minister in the Narasimha Rao cabinet at the time when Ambassador Clark I think was still in India as ambassador. He was the architect in the Narasimha Rao government of what are called the economic reforms, the liberalization of the economy, the reduction of tariffs, the opening up of the economy, the easing in of foreign investment, and so forth. The finance minister in this present government is a man called Chidambaram, who was the finance minister in a subsequent government of India, but who is also a well-known financial expert. The economic management at the apex level is in very competent hands.

### **Current Government Committed to Reform**

This government, which succeeds one that did the full course of 5 years is as committed to the process of reform, as in fact all governments have been since 1991. This is something on which there is a wide consensus across the political spectrum. This government has set as a target, a growth rate of 7 to 8 percent in a sustained and inclusive manner, while ensuring—and this is important for understanding the philosophy of this government—while ensuring equitable growth for all sections of society, what Manmohan Singh calls “reform with a human face.” With a billion people in the country, any government has to ensure that economic liberalization does not erode the

broad political support for the reform process itself. Any rapid movement, any unthinking forward movement at the behest of the people down the street here at the IMF and the World Bank, can lead to major problems for the vast majority of our people.

This is the leadership of our country today. Is it inspired by the vision of Tagore, the man I quoted at the beginning of this presentation? Before I examine that proposition a little further, let me underline that the government today is in a sense a government of a triple minority. I say that because the president of India is a member of the Muslim community, who professes the Islamic faith. This is our largest minority, 120-plus million people, making India the second-largest Islamic country in the world, after Indonesia. But he is not only a member of the Islamic faith, he is a convert to that faith from one of the most depressed classes of Tamil Nadu, a southern state, a class of fishermen. Here is a man who belonged to a very depressed class, in social terms, converted to Islam, a minority faith, who became one of our most eminent scientists and is now the president of our country!

The Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, belongs to the Sikh faith. This is a religious group, a small group numbering some 20-odd-million people. It was members of this group who underwent a tremendous internal crisis in the late '70s and early '80s, which led to the destruction of their holiest temple and the assassination of a Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi, by two members of this particular religious group. And 20 years after that traumatic event, on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October, 1984, a member of this very minority group finds himself the prime minister of India. Twenty to twenty-five million people, about one-fiftieth of the Indian pop-

ulation, has a member of its faith as the prime minister.

There is one more of this little trilogy—of this little troika, if I may use a much-maligned word—and that is Sonia Gandhi, who is the President of the All India Congress Committee, which is the largest party in the present day ruling coalition. Sonia Gandhi is the widow of another assassinated Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who was the son of a former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, and the grandson of former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru. Sonia Gandhi was born in Milan, in Italy, and at first was an Italian citizen. She professes adherence to the Roman Catholic faith, and yet she, who became an Indian citizen not more than 20-odd years ago, is the president of the largest section of the ruling coalition, and could have been prime minister of the country had she chosen to accept that job.

### **Government Supports Tolerance and Pluralism**

I have gone into this at some length because I wanted to underline that the government today is committed to some of the more vital aspects of the basic ingredients which went into the founding of our republic, which, apart from what I mentioned—economic reform with a human face—includes two other important elements of tolerance and pluralism.

I will quote to you a letter from Sonia Gandhi, which she wrote to me in response to a letter I had written her, soon after the election. She says this: “The election result is a tribute to the strength and vibrancy of our democracy, and to the wisdom and maturity of our electorate, which has so decisively rejected the politics of divisiveness and reaffirmed its faith in our pluralistic culture

and our cherished tradition of tolerance in secularism.”

While making due allowances for the fact that this is a letter written by the head of a political party, a victorious political party, and carries the possible prejudice of a group which has vanquished another political group, there is a resonance when she speaks of pluralism, tolerance, and compassion with the vision that I spoke of in the beginning: an inclusive society that takes into account the richness and the extraordinary diversity of the billion people in our land.

### **India’s Vision of Tomorrow’s World**

A few words about our vision of tomorrow’s world: It is a truism to say that the edifice of confrontation that we associated with the Cold War came crumbling down with the collapse of the Berlin Wall in ’89 and the subsequent velvet revolution. In the process of coping with the post-Cold War world we witnessed its virtual end on September 11, 2001, in New York. We have not yet found, I believe, an adequate replacement for the dismantling of the structure of the Cold War. In the momentous transition through which the world is passing, in which a new order is struggling to be born, one clear reality, I think, is quite discernible, and that is the growing interdependence of nations in this globalized world. Whatever the military, technological, and economic strength or capacity of any one country may be, that country cannot take on the exclusive responsibility of ensuring universal peace based on its undoubted pre-eminence. I put it to you that a unipolar world is not a sustainable proposition in the long run.

India’s vision is of a multi-polar world, a partnership of nations, a sharing of responsibility for the safety and well-being of all

mankind, by providing equilibrium and stability on this planet. If it is accepted that globalization is the direction in which the world is moving, then surely multilateralism has to be its life-sustaining mechanism. To describe the limits of unilateralism we only have to see what is happening today in Iraq, and I cannot do better than to refer to the 20<sup>th</sup> September issue of *Time Magazine*, which was used, I think, in some of the things that candidate Kerry used in his speech last night in New York: “A genuine spirit of multilateralism means global problems require global solutions arrived at globally, to avoid repeating past mistakes and creating conditions of genuine security.”

If I may quote the work of a tireless worker for such goals, Prince Hassan of Jordan, former crown prince and now uncle of King Abdullah, who runs a very successful inter-faith institute in Amman, Jordan, which, incidentally, works closely with the Sasakawa Peace Foundation. This is what Hassan said in testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee here, in this city, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, 2004. Senator Lugar was in the chair, and Hassan was testifying on the Middle East issue, but his words have a universal ring which I think are well worth noting. This is what he said: “What we seek is cosmopolitanism and a broader-based interdisciplinary strategy, not a policy of compulsion. Common humanity is the basis for promoting self-security.”

I entirely agree with Prince Hassan. For combating common threats, joint responses that carry rule-based legitimacy need to be fashioned, and need to lay down clear-cut norms for inter-state behavior. Only a rule-based international order, an inclusive configuration, an inclusive process which creates a stake for everyone in the security of the human race, is the answer to what we seek. If it is our goal to create equitable glo-

balization, embracing multipolarity, democracy, and the rule of law in a spirit of peace and harmony, then early reform and reinvigoration of the UN system is necessary. This reinvigoration and reform of the UN system must reflect changed ground realities, and this requires a renewed urgency. On that I have a little more to say later.

### **Globalization of Terrorism**

What about the globalization of terrorism? The globalization of terror is a serious threat to civilization, we have no doubt about that, and we need a universal, civilizational approach to the problem. As a spiritual leader of a lay Buddhist group in Japan which has a worldwide following, Daisaku Ikeda, the head of the so-called Soka Gakkai says: “The real enemies of global security are poverty, hatred, and, most formidable of all, the dehumanization that exerts a demonic dominion over contemporary society.” These are typically Ikeda’s words. But we do have to remember that piracy at sea has its origins in poverty on land. And it is poverty which often breeds misunderstanding, leading to hatred. Therefore, as Ikeda goes on to quote Kofi Annan, the Secretary General of the UN, we have to devise a more effective strategy to prevent emergencies from arising in the first place. That is the underlying philosophy of a multilateral approach to conflict prevention—which is equally, if not more important than conflict management, i.e. to prevent the emergency from arising in the first place.

### **Rising Power of Asia**

A word about globalization in Asia. Some have spoken, with good reason perhaps, that the 21<sup>st</sup> Century will be the century of Asia. It is worth noting that Asia’s contribution to world output since 1950 has doub-

led. With strong growth in countries like China, India and other countries in Southeast Asia like Vietnam, favorable demographic trends and higher intra-Asian trade, the Asian GDP may surpass the combined GDP of North America and Europe by accounting for over 50 of the global GDP not so far away from now, 2025, about 20 years down the line. This is according to some estimates. Goldman Sachs predicts that by 2050 China's GDP will be \$44.4 trillion U.S. dollars, India's would be \$27.8 trillion U.S. dollars, and Japan's would be \$6.7 trillion dollars. Therefore, by 2050, the middle of this century that we have now entered, three of the four top economies, according to this study, will be Asian economies—that is, China, India, and Japan. We should ponder what contribution to global security that Asia, as the fulcrum of such intense and heavy economic activity, can make in the middle of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

India is guided by this vision of a vibrant future for Asia, and with this as a background, India is working with vigor to strengthen relations with countries in the Far East—China and Japan and Korea—and, of course, with ASEAN and our immediate neighborhood, which is Central Asia and the Middle East—what we call West Asia. We are working with South Asia, too, despite problems with some of our neighbors, to move into a future unshackled by the historical past and imbued with the vision that sees collective effort as being the norm for our future pursuit of peace and prosperity.

Here, I want to say that as much as our idealism and our idealist concept of Asian brotherhood has been the driving vision of our work in Asia, today the rhythm of our region is determined equally, by economic activity, investment, and trade; much of what we see going on between India and

Southeast Asia and the Middle East is driven by economic activity and trade, and that is behind the decade old “Look East” policy that came in, as Ambassador Clark will recall, when he was the U.S. ambassador to my country.

While in the early '80s and the early '90s this economic element was important, we now see at the end of the '90s decade and at the early part of this century that security issues now inform much of the dialogue between India and ASEAN and countries like Japan. It is in this context that we have established strategic contact bilaterally with countries in Southeast Asia, with ASEAN and the ASEAN Regional Forum. We are, for the last 2 years, a dialogue partner with the ASEAN Regional Forum. We have acceded to the ASEAN Treaty of Friendship and Amity, and this applies equally to our relations with China. Ever since the historic visit of Rajiv Gandhi to China in December, 1988, our relations with that country have seen an incremental improvement every year. We had our prime minister visit that country very recently, and there is a consensus across the political spectrum in our country that the relations with China are important and have to be worked on with vigor.

This is equally true of our relations in Japan, where in August, 2000, the then Prime Minister Mori, when he visited our country, announced a global partnership between India and Japan with our prime minister, then Prime Minister Vajpayee. Free trade agreements are the flavor of the day. China has a framework free trade agreement under discussion with ASEAN; Japan has already signed one with Singapore; we have already signed one with Thailand. There is a sub-regional grouping called “BIMSTIC” which includes Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and Thailand. There is the Indian

Ocean Rim grouping which includes the Indian Ocean rim countries, Oman and the countries of the African eastern seaboard. There is SAARC, which includes the countries of South Asia, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives, Bangladesh, India, Pakistan. An Asian economic community emerging out of these subregional economic and semipolitical groupings is not beyond the realm of possibility in the not-to-distant future.

Nehru, our first prime minister, with his deeply historical insight and his historical sense, spoke in these terms at the Asian Relations Conference in March 1947, five months before we gained our independence from Britain, when he said—it was hosted by India in New Delhi—“We live in an age of tremendous transition, and already the next stage takes shape when Asia assumes her rightful place with other continents.” That was in 1947, and we see where we have come now.

### **India’s Standing in a Resurgent Asia**

Where, then, does India stand as it strives to take its due place in the resurgent Asia that I have just spoken of and in the world of tomorrow that I spoke of earlier? That India is a rich, inclusive civilization which from ancient times has contributed to the intellectual, spiritual, and material well being of humanity is, I think, a well-recognized truism. We are a microcosm of the globe, accounting for a sixth of humanity and virtually all the religions represented on this earth and many of the races represented on this earth. As I have said earlier when I was talking about our elections, our free press, our judiciary, and a functioning democracy have given us a certain resilience and a strength, which has made it possible for us to dream of 8% growth a year. Since 1991 we have been averaging 6% a year.

Our foreign exchange reserves today, at \$120 billion, are, according to the IMF, the sixth-largest in the world today, after Taiwan, Japan, and a couple of other countries. And, don’t forget, 120 billion today is exactly 12 years after 1991 when they had come down, as Ambassador Clark will recall, to \$1 billion, which was sufficient for one month’s imports. The economy has doubled, and if we can manage to sustain an 8% growth it can be doubled again by 2010. The Goldman Sachs report that I referred to earlier says that our GDP will cross the \$1 trillion US dollar mark by 2011, and the \$2 trillion mark in 2020, six by 2032, ten by 2038, and 27 trillion, as I have mentioned earlier, by the middle of the century. Other experts have painted equally positive pictures about the possibilities of economic growth in India.

Demographic trends, which are often the source of weakness and act as a drag on the economy, for obvious reasons, can and have been a source of strength for countries like India. It is worthy of note that 550 million, which is over half our population, are below 25. The middle class, which is rapidly growing, is estimated at 300 million people. We have the second-largest reserves of trained manpower. Our universities and institutes of technology produce 2.4 million undergraduates every year, 300,000 non-engineering postgraduates, 200,000 engineers, and 9000 PhDs. The IT workforce is 650,000, and by 2010 will exceed 2 million people in the information technology workforce. We have, with our own technology, an indigenous scientific R and D effort, produced our supercomputers, the entire nuclear cycle, and have made great advances in space and rocketry.

Morgan Stanley did a recent study about the automobile market in India, published in an article which I read in the New York Times

of 30<sup>th</sup> July. It said that if the car market grows as it is growing today at 8%, then by 2008 our car market will have doubled. If we grow it at 6%—even 6%—then by 2010 we will be the fourth-biggest automobile market in the world after the U.S., Japan, and China. Note that here in Washington, in this car market, Suzuki of Japan has 48% and Ford motors has only 3%.

Telecom: Again, from an article which I read in the *Japan Times*, this time, we are adding one million mobile telephones every month in the Indian market, and will shortly be, as far as telephones are concerned, a very large market. Not nearly as large as China, but approaching that figure.

Textiles: A McKinsey study says that with the end of the quota system at the end of this year, under the 10-year phase out program, our \$15 billion export of textiles can move from the present 4 to 6.5% of the world's share. This is an important sector for us because it accounts for a quarter of our export earnings and it employs 35 million people in our industrial workforce and otherwise, and accounts for 4% of our GDP. The world market for textiles is a little under \$250 billion. And quite apart from being a great producer, we are also an extraordinarily large market for textiles.

Our IT industry, as is well known, has been making great strides in the last 10 or 12 years. Last year, 2003, we exported software products worth \$10.6 billion US, and this year that figure will go up to \$16 billion. The biggest company in our country, the Tata Consultancy Services, is now a \$1 billion company, and last year their profits rose dramatically. And when they put some of their shares on the market they were oversubscribed 4.8 times. This gives you an idea of the vibrancy of the market in certain high-growth sectors of the economy.

We have developed a thing called the “simputer,” from simple and computer, in Madras, Indian Institute of Technology and the Indian Institute of Science in Bangalore, a very handy, easy-to-use computer which sells for as low as \$200, and this is going to be marketed shortly, which will make IT accessible to small farmers and fishermen, and people in the agrarian sector who really need access to this kind of information.

Indian companies have also, in recent years, been acquiring foreign companies abroad—49 of them, in fact, last year, bought companies abroad. Tata, for example, bought the British tea company called Tetleys, they bought the truck wing of Daewoo in Korea, and they have recently bought over Nat-Steel, which gives them steel mills now in China and in Vietnam. There are 650 companies of India already in Thailand, which, as I mentioned before, is one country in Southeast Asia with which we have already signed a free trade agreement under which, by 2006, tariffs are supposed to come down to 0%.

### **India Faces Many Drawbacks as it Advances**

There are, of course, many drawbacks, many pitfalls, many shortfalls in this forward process. Agriculture is one of them, and no one is better aware of this than Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and Finance Minister Chidambaram, who has made it a point of saying that for all our IITs and for all the Ph.D's that we produce, we have not been able to get one black board into every village school in the country. This is a drawback that they recognize. They recognize also that the approximately 2.5% growth in agriculture is not good enough. Montek Singh Ahluwalia, who until recently was sitting here in Washington in the IMF and is now back as the deputy chairman of our

Planning Commission, is one of the people who is well aware of this and knows that we will have to improve on our agricultural performance if our GDP growth dream of 8% is going to be achieved. We are also aware that poor governance, bad governance, acts as a drag on our economic growth. Unless we quicken the pace of decentralization and reform in good governance, that drag will continue.

We look, of course, to our partners, our democratic partners, to help India in this task, to become a responsible and contributing partner to other countries of the world. We attach the highest importance to our friendships with all countries of the world, but particularly to democratic countries, of which the United States is one of the more important. We have had a good relationship with this country from before we became independent. We recall the pressure that President Roosevelt put on Prime Minister Winston Churchill when we were negotiating with the British for our independence. We recall the similar pressure that the Americans put through the Marshall Plan, in the days of American multilateralism, that they put on countries like France and Belgium to ease up on Indochina and the Belgian Congo, using Marshall Plan money earmarked for the Netherlands, France and Belgium, in Indonesia, in Indochina, and in the Congo. They used that money as a lever to extract concessions, for giving greater freedom to the peoples of Asia. This is remembered and recognized.

### **Growing U.S.-India Relationship**

We have, in recent years, moved forward. There was a time when Eisenhower came to us in the early '60s, I think it was 1960, and then we didn't have an American president come to us until Jimmy Carter came in 1978. Then there was another extraordi-

narily long gap of 22-plus years, until we had that historic visit of Bill Clinton in March 2000, when he said, "Strengthening a friendship with India is strengthening a friendship that is, indeed, critical to the future of the entire planet." I think he's got it right. Vajpayee, when he came to the USA on a return visit within 6 months of Clinton's visit to us in September 2000 in this city, was the chief guest at a banquet in Washington which Clinton said—or others said—was the largest banquet ever thrown for a visiting head of state, at which Clinton remarked jocularly: "I'm told there are 2 million-odd people of Indian origin in this country, and I believe half of them are present at this banquet tonight." It was one of those rather largely-attended events.

I think it's because the Diaspora—now numbering nearly 2 million people—of Indians in this country, some of whom are present in this room, this prominent Diaspora, has contributed greatly to the building of understanding with decision makers and the power elite in this country. They have contributed greatly to the economy of this country, to the scientific and R and D effort in this country, and this has been an important factor in the improvement of relations between India and the United States in the last few years.

Don't forget that in the Clinton period Strobe Talbott and our Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh met, I think, 13 or 14 times on three continents and in about 15 countries over a 3-year period, to engage in a sustained and rigorous intellectual dialogue to try and reach an understanding. I must say, for the successive administration, that National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice and our then National Security Advisor Brajesh Mishra did sustain dialogue and frequent contact continually. Perhaps not as intense and as frequent as the Talbott and

Jaswant Singh dialogue, but important nonetheless.

This is something that we who have a mutual interest in a long-term strategic partnership have to work on. Our militaries do things today which would have been unthinkable 5 years ago. We have joint exercises in snow warfare in Alaska. American troops jointly exercise with ours in Agra, the city of the Taj Mahal. These things would have been unthinkable 10 years ago, but they are symptomatic of the heightened relationship of trust and mutual partnership that exists between us.

### **India and Japan's Historic Relationship**

I come to the position of India and Japan in this changed Asian scenario that we have spoken of. What can the two of us contribute to make a more secure and prosperous future for ourselves, for Asia, and for the world at large? Our history of cooperation goes back well over 1500 years, to the time of Shotoku Taishi, who did so much to introduce Buddhism and the philosophy that underlies Buddhism—the compassion, the peace—into Japan. We know that there was great interchange and exchange intellectually and spiritually between Japanese scholars and Indian scholars which took place indirectly, through the medium of China.

One example is the 9<sup>th</sup> Century scholar called Kobo Daishi, who came from the small island of Shikoku in Japan, Kagawa Prefecture. His birthplace has a beautiful temple called Zentsuji. This man went to China and met many Indian scholars, Buddhist scholars, and brought back from them ideas of Indian Buddhism and Indian Buddhist philosophy, which was heavily imbued with Hindu Upanishadic philosophy. We know that this interchange carried on; 450 years ago it was given a new dimension by

the visit of St. Francis Xavier, the Portuguese Jesuit missionary, from his base at Goa on our west coast, to Kagoshima and Miyazaki in Kyushu. There was this triangular sort of exchange between Goa, Kagoshima, and Rome, with India as the meeting point.

We know that in spite of the isolation of the Tokugawa Period, contact with India continued through the Dutch in Nagasaki. Immediately after the Meiji Restoration, contact with India resumed, and we had a flourishing trade with Japan that made us, in the '30s, the third-largest trading partner of Japan, after the U.S. and China. There were intellectual exchanges through people like Rabindranath Tagore and Japanese intellectuals like Okakura Tenshin and Yokoyama Taikan, who visited Tagore's University at Shantiniketan, brought ideas of the Bengal Renaissance to Japan and introduced them into Japanese art.

During the national struggle we had people like Rash Bihari Bose, one of our national leaders, who come to Japan to seek the help of the Japanese. He was, in fact, given help by a rather notorious Japanese called Toyama Mitsuru, who was the head of the Black Dragon Society which had to its credit the assassination of several Japanese prime ministers. We had, during the war itself, Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose and his Indian National Army, which received support from the Japanese for his methodology, in the methodology that he adopted of achieving independence for India through war.

We know the enormous impact that Radhabinod Pal, the Indian judge on the Tokyo Tribunal, the war crimes tribunal, had in the dissenting judgment that he made. Out of the 13 judges, he was the only one who gave a dissenting judgment declaring the war criminals not guilty. We know that

when this judgment was published at the end of the American occupation in 1952, it had an electric effect on the Japanese populace at large, for it gave them a sense of self esteem, a sense of self-worth. They realized that not everybody in the world thought that they were a nation of barbarians and a nation of cruel people.

The gift of a baby elephant by our first Prime Minister Nehru, an elephant called Indira, was a small act in 1949, but a very large, symbolic gesture for the people and the children of Japan, because, don't forget that in '49 the fire-bombing of Tokyo had meant that the entire city was flat. People were still, by-and-large, homeless, without clothes, without food, and without medicine. The elephant, which gave children and their parents joyrides in Tokyo and all the other cities of Japan that it visited, had an enormous impact on the people of Japan, as a gift of love from the people of India.

This was the background of the post-war period, and we started rather well. We became the first nation to receive ODA from the Japanese in 1958. But things didn't go so well because of the Cold War and because of our own alignment with the Soviet Union and the misconceptions that created of us as being a "satellite" of the Soviet Union. And then the security treaty with America in the 1950s created its own problems, vis-à-vis India. There was a hiatus in our relationship with Japan and there was a sense of stagnation.

But despite this coolness, some visits were exchanged. Indira Gandhi went when Sato Eisaku was prime minister, Rajiv Gandhi went there when Nakasone Yasuhiro was prime minister, and Narasimha Rao went there in the early '90s. No Japanese prime minister went to India until 1990, when Kaifu visited us, and then we had a 10-year

gap until Mori made his very courageous visit in August 2000. I say courageous because there was a lot of opposition to it in the Foreign Office and certain political circles in Japan, because Japan had somewhat overreacted to our nuclear tests in May, 1998. However, the visit took place, and it showed great understanding of our security concerns. We still talk of the Mori visit and his announcement of a global partnership with India as being one of the more important events that has taken place in the century.

And whenever we discuss and I discuss in Japan the question of the nuclear issue, I sometimes quote a poem by a Japanese poet named Kitagawa, who has written a poem called "Bubbles." I'll just read it to you, as it symbolizes, in a sense, the transitory nature of problems that appear so acute at one stage, yet looked at historically and in perspective, they look different.

It says: "From the stagnated rivers, reeds, roots, bubbling, bubbling, come rising to the surface—bubbles. Those bubbles, each one, each one, inside blurred spheres. Although they contain abundant discontent and dissatisfaction, on the water surface they are transient, disappear, and are gone."

Mori's landmark visit of August, 2000, and the cooperation that started in earnest from then, particularly in the field of information technology where he was instrumental in easing up on the visa regime for our people, has led to great things between our two countries. In December 2001, when our prime minister came to India, former Prime Minister Vajpayee, the global partnership was reiterated. Foreign Minister Kawaguchi had been to India in 2003, and again very recently. Even before 9/11 we had put into place a major mechanism for consultation on matters relating to security. We call it

the Comprehensive Security Dialogue, which, for the first time, brought together the militaries of the two countries along with the foreign offices and defense ministries. This is something that has really transformed our relationship with Japan, and the Navies and the Coast Guards are now working closely together in a manner which would have been unthinkable some time ago.

### **Contributions of India and Japan**

What do Japan and India have that we can contribute to our fellow Asians and to others? One of the things I think we can both contribute as stable and mature democracies, is democracy. I say this not out of any sense of superiority, but because of some of the things that democracy does for people, for countries, for the building of value systems.

I would like to quote Amartya Sen, a Nobel Prize winner, a person who is well-known in this country and in universities in this country. And he says, “Democracy does not simply mean a mechanical condition where the majority opinion prevails. Democracy has three types of values. One is the intrinsic value of democracy, in a sense that to be prevented from participating in the political life of a community is a major deprivation. Secondly, democracy has an important instrumental value in that it enhances the ability of people to express their requirements and support their claims in the eyes of their political leaders, and make articulate demands with regard to their economic needs. And thirdly, democracy has a constructive importance, in the sense that the practice of democracy gives citizens an opportunity to learn from one another and help society form its values and priorities.”

All democracies, including this one, have a stake in peace and equilibrium and in an order. And we, in India and Japan, have a major stake in that, and perhaps a pivotal role that we can play in strategic terms and in geopolitical terms in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It is a natural partnership in that sense. Our economies, to a degree, are complementary, and our market remains an attractive one for the Japanese. They’ve been a bit slow off the mark in comparison to the Koreans, but I think recent months have seen a quickening of the pace of Japanese investment in India.

The UN is another organization where we both have much to contribute and where we both, in our desire to strengthen a system for common defense and common stability, is a desire that we share for strengthening the security apparatus of the UN. Last month Foreign Minister Kawaguchi was in India for talks with our new Foreign Minister, Natwar Singh, who arrived in New York last night, and the two of them agreed—and this is a major advance, I think, in our relationship—that Japan and India, and I am quoting, “Share the understanding that it is of great importance to enhance the effectiveness and credibility of the Security Council, particularly through expanding the membership of the Security Council, both in the nonpermanent and permanent seats. Japan and India, based on the firmly shared recognition that both countries are legitimate candidates for permanent membership of the Security Council, in the light of the current realities of the international community, will support each others’ candidature and make the utmost effort and closely work together towards realizing the reform of the Security Council.” This is a major landmark event in our bilateral relationship. Up until 4 years ago there was great reluctance in the Japanese political community to undertake this step.

Disarmament is another field where India and Japan have much to contribute to the world. Japan has been the only country to have experienced an atomic bombing. India has contributed to disarmament because of the principled stand it has taken on the issue since Nehru first raised it in 1954 in the United Nations, the subsequent efforts that India has made through the six-nation disarmament initiative of Indira Gandhi in the '80s, Rajiv Gandhi's plan put before the UN in 1988 at the second conference of disarmament, and the subsequent refinement of that program by Prime Minister Narasimha Rao in the early 1990s.

Information technology is an area that we are already cooperating with Japan very closely on, and is something that we can do even further, and we have cooperation in ocean security, maritime security, and our ODA from Japan; we have now, as of March last year, become the largest recipient of Japanese ODA, which has crossed the 1 billion yen mark.

We have something slightly more fundamental than this, I think, to contribute, and that is the business of environmental protection. Why I say that Japan and India have a contribution to make is because of the Shinto-Hindu-Buddhist tradition that treats human and nonhuman nature as one. While I could quote Japanese scholars who have talked about this as far back as the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, people like Alex Kerr notwithstanding, who has written about "Lost Japan," I do think that the Japanese and the Indians and their view of nature, both human and nonhuman, are inheritors of the same philosophy. And I will just quote to you from Rabindranath Tagore: "The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day, runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures. It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust and

the earth, in numberless blades of grass, and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers."

This is the kind of understanding that we need to deal with those Doubting Thomas' on the Kyoto Protocol, who need to look at what Indian and Japanese sages have spoken of in this context, this feeling that the supernatural, the human being and what we call "inanimate nature" all share a common source.

I hope in the ensuing minutes that are still left to us that we will be able to share the wisdom of our discussants and moderator. And I'd be glad, if any of you wish to ask me something about what I've said or what I've not said, please feel free to do so. I shall try and answer you.

**Erland Heginbotham:** Mr. Ambassador, thank you very, very much. That was an awesome sweep of coverage from philosophy through history to current and contemporary events, and it will be fascinating to see what, if any, gaps we find in the discussants' presentations. I am now pleased to introduce our first discussant, Ambassador William Clark.

**Ambassador William Clark:** I am delighted to be here to bring together the two interests that I have, Japan and India. For your background, I spent 14 years in Japan, the last both being as Deputy Chief of Missions for 4 years under Mike Mansfield and 2-1/2 years in India. I prepared for my Indian experience by spending a year in Cairo as Deputy Chief of Mission and then Charge D'Affaires.

### **Two Different Countries and Cultures**

Two different countries and two different cultures; let me give you a small example

of what I mean by that, because it's an approach thing, as they say. In Japan, if I were to give a presentation like this without a written text I would be considered to not have done my homework. In India, if I were to give a talk like this from a written text I would be considered using the work of others and not having given people the thoughts that were in my mind at that time, other than the written page. So, we come at these from very different angles. It took me a little while to sort this out after I got to India, but, as I said, I finally got it straight.

In India, as I said, it's a little like the United States and Japan. In Japan, you normally start a presentation with an apology for not knowing enough about the subject. In the United States, you always start with a joke, because you don't know enough about the subject. So I used to start mine by apologizing for not having a joke, and took it on from there.

It is interesting if you look at the developments. Certainly, India is the birthplace of Buddhism. Even though He was born in Nepal, He did come to just outside of the Holy City of Benaras to deliver his pronouncement. Buddhism is a very small part of India today, and a very large part of Japan, and one can trace that.

India and Japan had an interesting development over, say, the last 250 years. Indians moved out of India, so if you go to Southeast Asia, you will find that the third largest ethnic group is Indian. If it's in Singapore, the largest is Chinese, the next is Malay, the third is Indian. If you go to Malaysia, the largest ethnic group is Malay, the second is Chinese, the third is Indian. It works that way throughout Southeast Asia. The Japanese, of course, had a period of closing the country when all of the Japanese colonies in Southeast Asia were cut off. Then they had

the unfortunate experience of losing a war when all of the Japanese were repatriated to Japan, even though many of the families did nothing there for quite a while. Therefore, you have no indigenous Japanese in Southeast Asia and a large number of indigenous Indians. This seems to be sort of a natural situation, and that's what I really want to talk about: how do India and Japan accommodate what is a very rapidly changing environment in Asia today? And the topic is: resurgent Asia and the role of India and Japan.

### **Rapidly Changing Environment in Asia**

The Asian market today is seeing impressive growth by both China and India. In India I was fortunate enough to be there when it changed directions. For years, India had a deluvian growth pattern, which was that the public sector occupied the heights and the private sector occupied the depths—I guess that is the way you would explain that in short form. What it meant was that the Indian industrial houses had a large number of different things that they did, because after you got to a certain size in a particular industry you couldn't get any bigger. So you had to go out and do something else if you were going to continue growing, and I talked to Tata about it.

Tata Industries was omnipresent in all sectors of the economy and growing the largest consultancy and software business in the world, which is what he wanted to do, the TCS. The Chinese did the same thing. In fact, Japan was rather lucky for about 250 years that two of the largest most vibrant economies were trying to do things the wrong way. Both of them now are doing things the right way, at least in my view, and Japan is looking at a rapidly changing environment in Asia. Where does that leave them? Well, you have Northeast Asia,

which has three vibrant economies: China, Korea—the southern part—and Japan, with Japan soon to become more dependent on trade with China than it is with the United States; Korea already has a larger trade with China than with the United States, and therefore a diminished role for Japan in the economy of the region. I say diminished, but it's still huge. But, it will become smaller and lead to a larger role for China. What does this do for the balance in the region? Well, it means you need to look for some other place to balance, and one of the logical places is India.

Ambassador Seth quoted the automotive production in India, and it's quite true, partly due to the fact that India, after independence, had two major automobile manufacturers and one minor. One was in Delhi; the car was called the Ambassador, which always bothered me a little bit.

It was about a 1954 Morris that had been heaved up and under-powered, and ran around India. In fact, when I was leaving India I said to Narashima Rao, "We've gotten to be pretty good friends," and I said, "You know, it is a pity that you have named that car the Ambassador and that you kept producing it for so long." And he said, "Oh, Ambassador Clark, don't you realize that because we produced it for so long every blacksmith in India can fix the Ambassador?" A lot of them look like they have been fixed by a blacksmith.

I said—which was a wild exaggeration—"But Mr. Prime Minister, don't you realize if you'd been modernizing your automotive sector that every blacksmith in India would be a modern automotive mechanic by now?" It sort of works the same way. Both of them weren't quite true, but anyway, that changed.

## Trade between India and Japan

The first people in were Japan, with the Suzuki cooperation on the Mauruti, which was a brainchild of Sanjay Gandhi and during the Gandhi period. And this car, being modern, being produced in Japan, was a remarkable success. There was a waiting list because they ran right off the line. With the Ambassador, if you were important enough, you could get someone to follow it down the line and make sure it was almost right, and then when you received it, you took it off and got it fixed. But the Mauruti was a modern car, on not very modern roads. Ambassador Seth quoted some figures on automotive production which I think are right; however, if you don't fix the roads, you're going to have the biggest traffic jam in Asia.

But it is moving. There are areas of cooperation between India and Japan. And India does not provide direct competition to Japan. Now, one of the things Japan decided to do, and Ambassador Seth mentioned it, was that there was a need for software development in Japan. And one of the things about the way the computer industry has developed is that you need to speak English, really, to do computer programming. If we hadn't done it that way, many of the experts tell me that the best language to have used would have been Sanskrit, but I don't speak Sanskrit, so I don't know whether that's true or not.

The two economies have a remarkable degree of compatibility, and I believe will overcome their differences. By differences I mean India is a huge, sprawling country with 18 languages and all the religions in the world, as the Ambassador said, whereas Japan is a compact, homogenous, single-language country with a single diet. If you

have ever been to dinner in India you know there is no single diet.

The leadership in India today is very much attuned to doing that. As Ambassador Seth mentioned, he has the Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh, who is the architect of the economic change, plus the man who helped him with it a great deal and, in fact, worked for him before and is with him again, Montek Singh Ahluwalia, and the best-dressed minister in India, P.K. Chidambaram. And when I say that, it is a bipolar meaning. He is South Indian; he dresses immaculately in South Indian dress when he is in India, and when he is not in India he is the best Western-tailored cabinet member that India has ever sent abroad. He's one of the brightest, so he has everything going for him. It is a remarkable team.

The differences that Japan and India have are very many. But the one thing they have in common is that they are both good businessmen. And since neither one is looking to influence the politics of the other, it seems to me you have a natural fit that will allow Japan a little bit of leverage, although perhaps not the political leverage they would hope to have in a relationship with India, but certainly a little bit of a counterweight to what is the growing presence of China in Northeast Asia.

**Heginbotham:** Thank you very much. We now turn to our South Asian Academic specialist, Dr. Philip Oldenburg.

**Philip Oldenburg:** Thank you. I am grateful to Ambassador Clark for proving that I am Indian by the fact I have no prepared remarks, and will think off the top of my head. I knew I was an Indian, but this is ultimately it. I'll just make a few quick remarks on his remarks, first.

The Ambassador is still being produced. It's not improved that much, I don't think, but one class of people who are delighted are the Morris aficionados in England who can still get a Morris, brand new—parts of it.

I have no experience in Japan, so I'll not say anything about it, except to point out the issue of roads in India, and I'll come back to the automobile metaphor here. The roads in Eastern U.P. were remarkably good when I traveled on them seven years ago. The reason for that was the Japanese had decided to invest in good roads between the Buddhist pilgrimage sites, as well as good signage. Quite amazing. So that's a small example of a contribution.

I've known Ambassador Seth, as he says, for a long time. The last time I heard him on an occasion like this was when he was reading his own poetry. And I think we saw that a little bit in this session. It's all well and good to recite figures and so forth, but his heart was really in the poetic part of what he's saying.

I'm in the odd position of finding myself, for once, being—I don't know what the correct word would be, but I'm normally the most optimistic person, the most rosy-pictured person in the room, when it comes to India. And now I find myself outbid, and I won't even begin to compete. So I'll take the other side and say let me put the brakes on some of this a little bit in the commentary here.

### **India's Improving Transportation System**

Let's take the automobile. India's auto market is improving. Those traffic jams are coming fast and furious. The roads, actually, are being improved, as it happens, with a

major project linking all of the four metropolitan cities of India with world class highways for the first time in India. But clearly, automobiles in a country as dense as India, and in a country which has—and I suppose on a different level with Japan but somewhat similar—one of the finest and largest railway systems, I think, in the world. It's not very comfortable at times, but it sure moves literally billions of people over a year's time, an enormous movement. The railways are there, clearly suiting India, it seems to me, more than an interstate system, which some of the people envision, whether the cars are Japanese or other cars. That can't, I don't think, be the solution. I was disappointed that the image or the symbol, as it were, of India's progress and so forth is, in this case, the automobile, rather than another symbol which I think of fondly, the Delhi Metro.

Delhi, after many years, has decided to build an underground metro system. They brought a person in from the railways who very effectively developed a new railway line down the West Coast of India, and he has led a project which is improving, which is building a metro efficiently. It's coming in ahead of schedule and under budget. It is being built so that the first section that is opened is connecting one of the poorest parts of Delhi to a slightly less poor part of Delhi. The major lines that are being opened first are the ones that connect poor and lower middle class areas.

I remember coming to Washington when the Washington Metro was being built. It was a total mess. Delhi, where I live part of the time off and on, has been handling the metro construction there with great comfort, as it were, to the drivers and pedestrians. And this is a project that is being built by the much-maligned public sector. I like to think of this as something that is a cor-

rective to this great gallop into the future of a globalized world with globalized standards, and I'll come back to that in a second.

Here is a Delhi metro which, it seems to me, has the priorities right: poorer people, instead of the rich and comparatively rich who can afford the new automobiles in this burgeoning market, and for that matter, the new mobile phones that are coming down. This is a public sector enterprise which has taken seriously the notion of doing things efficiently and effectively, with a certain amount of public oversight. It has not succumbed to politicians trying to pick it apart.

Isn't that a better symbol for India's future, and one which perhaps Japan could play an effective role, particularly when we are talking about that notion of environmental consciousness and, shall we say, sustainable development? Because it seems to me that an India that buys into a globalized ideology of ever-more growth is better, more automobiles are better, a Security Council seat is better, military preparedness and the kind of military investment that India has been making—let's not forget about those nuclear tests—that sort of symbolism of the muscular India, an India that is going to get into the world tables of GDP, and so forth—shouldn't that be muted, and instead we have more of a concentration on the contributions that India can make to itself, to its own future, by limiting that growth to a sustainable level?

I think India has been doing that quietly. On the one hand, the Supreme Court in India intervened to make sure that all of the polluting taxis, three-wheeled vehicles and buses, particularly, were converted to CNG, into compressed natural gas. Delhi's pollution has not evaporated, but has come down considerably as a result. That same Supreme Court has mandated a completely

cockamamie project of linking India's river waters in a gigantic mega project which dug the three gorges—I think that's maybe what they were thinking about doing. India's problems, as I see them in the future, have to do with sustainability. Is there going to be simply, literally, enough water to deal with? And what we should be thinking about are the technological and other fixes that India can develop on this.

### **Free and Fair Elections Important to India**

Similarly, when we talk about the election, and I write about the Indian elections, it's terribly important that Indian elections are held in a free and fair manner, and that parliament is elected. All of the things that Ambassador Seth has said about Indian pluralism and the symbolism of a Muslim President and a Sikh Prime Minister and so forth, I take as read. One of the things that India has also developed is a vigorous opposition to just these people, a lot of it grass roots, people who say—I mean, the economic reform with the human face is something that has come from above but has been, in very significant part, a response from people in the grass roots making protest, trying to stop the juggernaut of India repeating the mistakes that we in this country have made on a whole series of dimensions: economic, social, and international security, the security dimension. My question is what, on that level, does India and Japan have to work together to accomplish? Let me stop there.

**Heginbotham:** Thank you very much. I confess that your remarks particularly resonate with me because you have, in effect, in both China and India, this pall mall desire to join the automotive age with a vengeance. In both cases there are highly dense populations where mass transit would be

the much better solution, and the implications, not only for pollution and urban contamination, but the energy requirements and problems involved, and their sweep globally, are horrendous.

I think in spite of the broad sweep of the comments by both the principal speaker and the discussants, there is a broad sweep of possible questions on topics that haven't been covered, as well as those that have.

### **Q & A**

**Questioner:** I have two questions, one for Ambassador Seth and one for whomever. Ambassador Seth, you and I belong to the same generation. We were socialized in much the same way, and I agree with your vision of India. My question is, how much in harmony do you find your young colleagues, the probationers who served under you? I can certainly tell you that my students who are supposed to be at the cutting edge, the best and brightest in India, would not necessarily have shared the vision you depicted. So I'd like you to comment on that.

The other question is about Japan. When I was in Delhi, I helped negotiate with the Japan Foundation a collaborative project to exchange ideas and people who were doing research on China. Granted, Japan probably has the best resources on China in the world and India does not, despite a very great interest in China. And, of course, I did interact fairly regularly with people in the Embassy of Japan. At that time—I think it was at the time of Prime Minister Mori's visit—they were talking about a visit from the emperor; they wanted to celebrate their wedding anniversary and they honeymooned in India. Nothing came of it, and I have always been puzzled as to why Japan, otherwise so very quick on the uptake every-

where, has been so very, very slow to recognize opportunities in India. And when I was writing a book some time back and interviewed a number of people in the Japanese government, I kept getting the answer, “Well, you see, for us Asia ends with Burma. We can’t talk about Japan and India and these parts of Asia because India is not part of Asia.” I have found the same attitudes among the Japanese, that India doesn’t enter into this picture of a resurgent Asia. I’d like a comment.

**Ambassador Seth:** On the question of shared vision of the younger generation, I agree. I think that has to do with a deficiency in our education, both in our country and to a degree, I think, in this country, but for different reasons, an unwillingness to come to terms with the fact that we are, in India, a multicultural and multiethnic and religious country, as much as America is becoming today. One third of all elementary and secondary school students are people of color in the USA today, and the projection is that by 2015 they are going to be 50. When we talk about a vision of a multicultural society and how people of the so-called main stream cope with dealing with people of different cultures and different religious backgrounds, I think we have to look at the education system.

I can say for India there has been tampering with it from both ends of the ideological spectrum and a refusal to develop multicultural education in the true sense of the term, which means equipping children with the ability to live and cope with people of different gender, sexual orientation, color, or religious persuasion, or whatever.

### **Japanese Reticence Toward India**

On the Japanese reticence, as far as India is concerned, I agree with you. There is this

reticence. It’s not for any want of trying on the part of the Imperial Family. They themselves are extremely well-disposed toward India and very keen on establishing closer ties with us. And this goes from the Emperor, the Empress, and down the line, but there are constraints placed upon them by diehard elements within the Imperial Household Agency and within the foreign office. Old habits die hard, and the Cold War mentality and the fact that America has everything or China has everything—there isn’t really a well-developed “India” lobby within the *Gaimusho* as there is in an America or a China lobby. There are not enough people who know about India within the foreign office; that is really the big lack, but not for want of trying on the part of the Imperial Family.

### **Reasons for Lack of U.S. Attention to India**

**Ambassador Clark:** Let me take a little bit of a shot at that. It was one of the questions I got a lot when I was Ambassador to India: How come you don’t ever pay any attention to us? And the answer, it seems to me, was not simple, but had a number of roots. One of the major roots was that, in point of fact, although our sea-going ports in New England had been trading with Madras for a long time—you can buy American clocks in Madras in the market, still, that were brought over with the trade because it was a British preserve—Her Majesty’s Government, or His Majesty’s Government, whichever happened to be the case at the time, was not terribly happy with Americans trading or doing business, and certainly not investing in India.

People say, “But you pay attention to China.” We have been in China for a long time. The Yenching Institute from Harvard has taught people in the United States, and peo-

ple who have risen to positions of some prominence, about China. There was no counterpart to teach people about India. And Her Majesty's, His Majesty's Government were perfectly happy to leave it just that way, thank you very much.

It wasn't until after the Second World War that we really got involved with India, and it went along rather well, until 1967 when we hit a bad batch and didn't get back on the road until 1990, when we had some military exchanges. Although, I will point out that all during the period where we were technically grumpy with India because of its connection to the Soviet Union, Indian military officers continued to attend U.S. military schools in the United States. And, in fact, the Indian government matched the stipend that the U.S. gave such students because they felt what we were offering was not sufficient for an officer and a gentleman to maintain a lifestyle in the United States. We just didn't have the depth of background and the depth of scholarship on India that we had on China, and it's taking us time to catch up.

**Questioner:** The relationship between Japan and India might be changing. I was struck a few months ago when the Japanese Ambassador to India gave a speech in which he advocated the formation of a trilateral Japan-India-China relationship. The emphasis was economic, but it also seems to me to have a political content. And I notice the actions of people daily in China also—also Raja Mohan in the Hindu wrote an article saying we should pursue this. I'm wondering if the panelists know anything more about it. It seems to put in what the Ambassadors referenced to a multilateral versus unipolar view of the world, but it's particularly interesting coming from the Japanese Ambassador to India.

**Ambassador Seth:** There are a number of people who have tossed these ideas around—Japan, China, India; Russia, China, India—this kind of connection. I don't know what Enoki had in mind. He is an extremely active and, I think, going to be one of the most successful Japanese ambassadors in India. But I think what he had probably in mind was on the economic front, the two countries working together. India's trade with China, for example, from 200 million about 6 years ago, is well over 7 billion today, which is almost double our bilateral trade with Japan. In Japan we've been trading for the last 50 years, whereas with China our trade really picked up only a few years ago, after the improvement in our relations. I think what he had in mind was an economic interaction between the three countries.

I don't know if there can be any institutionalized political activity involving all three countries at the same time. I don't know if that is what he had in mind. I doubt it, because I don't think that is something that we are going to do in the very near future. With China and Japan particularly, there is so much bad blood that the Chinese wouldn't react very happily to the idea of working—they might be willing to work more closely with India, but I think with Japan they would have several questions.

**Ambassador Clark:** But, as I was trying to point out, it does make sense for Japan to have this type of a counterweight and counterbalance, rather than just with China. In Northeast Asia you have Japan, Korea, and China talking. The Russians would like to get in, but they haven't quite made it yet.

There are a number of these things going on, but certainly, to involve India, China, and Japan in the same forum, while it will not be political, economic connections and

economic ties are an important part of maintaining a balance in the region. I saw Enoki talk, and it didn't surprise me. In fact, it seemed like a rather wise way for Japan to go.

**Questioner:** I would be appreciative if Ambassador Seth could elaborate on some of the debates that are now going on in your own country about the ambition that India could have in the future. Having a permanent seat in the Security Council is just a means, not a goal. So what sort of ambition, in terms of strategic terms, do you think you're going to have in the future?

### **India's Active Role in the UN**

**Ambassador Seth:** India has, as a founder member of the UN, taken a very active part in all UN activities from the inception of the organization. In particular, I would draw your attention to peacekeeping operations in which India has played a very large—disproportionately large, some might say—part from the very early stages: the Korean armistice, Indochina, and in the Suez, the Belgian Congo, and so on. So India has not been laggard in participating in not just a peacekeeping operation, but all activities of the UN specialized agencies. We have a large number of our experts; I mentioned in my talk the vast pool of trained manpower. Many of the UN specialized agencies—UNICEF, UNESCO, WHO, and so on—are manned by Indian experts.

That apart, the composition of the Security Council as it exists today reflects the situation obtained in 1945: victor countries became the P-Five, and the vanquished, which includes Japan and Germany, were obviously excluded. The world today is a different world, and I think it's not just India's ambition, but many other countries in the world recognize that this post-war situation

is not truly reflective of present-day realities, and therefore the Security Council cannot perform the functions that it was meant to perform because of the poor representation of different parts of the world.

The Japanese, at long last, have understood that we are not competing with each other, but that we are both entitled to be on the Security Council for different reasons. You contribute 20% of the UN budget and don't have a say at the Security Council. And we, for the other reasons that I mentioned, have been playing an important enough part. As a country representing a billion people, it is odd that we should not be there, and that is one of the primary driving factors behind our desire to be in the Security Council.

You had people from Taiwan in New York the other day in the streets, demonstrating, saying that they should be in the UN because they are bigger than 120 other members of the UN, at 26 million people. So if Taiwan can agitate for a seat in the UN, then I think a billion people have every right to agitate for a seat in the Security Council.

**Oldenburg:** Let me be provocative about this: why, instead of Japan and India uniting to become part of that particular club of permanent members of the Security Council, do they not propose that there be no permanent members of the Security Council? In other words, India is entitled, and India has been kept out of the club.

**Ambassador Seth:** I'll interrupt you there. We can only abolish a club after we become members of it. If you want to end [the permanent membership of] the Security Council, we have to get in there to abolish it.

**Oldenburg:** If you say we will become permanent members for the purpose of abolishing the permanent members, which I doubt would happen, the general thrust of your argument is that a unipolar world, I agree, is a terrible idea. But multipolar, unfortunately, covers a multitude, a variety of things. And I suspect that India, along with other countries, feel that there is, in fact, an oligarchy which ought to exist. A true multilateral or multipolar world in which the multi is open-ended is not something that India, it seems to me, is prepared to accept at this point, partly having been excluded for so long from what it sees, and I agree, is its rightful place in that world order.

It seems to me that what India and Japan could contribute particularly to thinking about disarmament issues, to thinking about human face issues; we could go back to the notion we had in the 1950s that here is a different, Asian way of looking at the world, and that could be reflected in not buying into this Western hierarchical system.

**Ambassador Clark:** Let me add the last provocative thought to this, because it seems to me, if you read the most recent polls in Japan and particularly among the younger people in Japan, about whether or not Japan should strive mightily for a seat in the Security Council, the answer is not really. We're doing pretty well where we are. We don't need to be in the Security Council. The strongest support for Japanese membership in the Security Council is in the foreign ministry, and therefore it does not surprise me that Ambassador Enoki has finally come around to supporting India, because that will bring Japan along to continue to campaign for a seat in the Security Council. All my Japanese friends will now be angry at me.

**Heginbotham:** If I may take just one moment to add one observation on one of the subjects that came up. One of the interesting features and phenomena of Asian regionalism is that the leadership for regional integration and all of the dynamics of that has been led by the business community, with very strong interactions with the academic community. And the two together have often dragged governments kicking and screaming along behind them, refocusing these governments' attention on areas where there were real prospects for progress. In that context, I think that the absence of meaningful openings in India to foreign investment has been a major impediment to Japan's giving attention to India on a broader scope of activity.

There is also, I think, a psychological factor if you contrast Korean behavior, as Ambassador Seth mentioned at one point. The Koreans have been very swift and very quick and very perceptive all over the globe to spot openings and opportunities. They did so in Eastern Europe, they are doing so in Central Asia, and they have done so in India, to a much greater extent than the Japanese, in spite of the difficulties of entering the Indian market. These are just behavioral aspects of East Asia that are important as background for understanding the whys and wherefores of how close these bilateral and multilateral relationships become.

Well, thank you again to our principal speaker and discussants and to our audience with questions. Thank you very much for coming and for your participation.

[End]

## About the Panelists

### Main Speaker

**Ambassador Aftab Seth** is Director of the Global Security Research Institute at Keio University. Previously, he was Ambassador of India to Japan, the Federal States of Micronesia, Vietnam and Greece. After joining India's Ministry of External Affairs, he worked in embassies and consulates in Beirut, Cairo, Hamburg, Jakarta and Karachi. Ambassador Seth received a B.A. (Honors) from St. Stephen's College, Delhi University, an M.A. from Christ Church College, Oxford University, which he attended as a Rhodes Scholar, and a Doctorate of Laws from the American College of Greece. He also received a certificate of enrollment with distinction in Japanese Language and History from Keio University. Ambassador Seth has published a book in Japanese entitled "How Much Weight Can an Elephant Lose?" (2002) and a volume of poems entitled "Pillars of Landscape" (1995), as well as several articles and reviews in newspapers and magazines.

### Discussants

**Ambassador William Clark, Jr.** is Managing Director of Hills & Company. Previously, he was President of the Japan Society, Inc. He has held many senior positions in the Department of State, including Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Ambassador to India, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, and Deputy Chief Mission at the U.S. Embassy, Tokyo. He also held the Japan Chair at CSIS. Ambassador Clark received a B.A. and honorary Doctor of Letters degree from San Jose State University. He also did postgraduate work at the National War College. Ambassador Clark has received numerous awards, including the Order of the Sacred Treasure Gold and Silver Star, conferred by the Emperor of Japan (2000), and the Department of State Distinguished Honor Award (1989).

**Dr. Philip Oldenburg** is Adjunct Research Associate at the Southern Asian Institute, Columbia University. He has taught political science at Columbia University since 1977, as a member of the regular faculty and as director and associate director of the Southern Asian Institution. Dr. Oldenburg has spent a total of more than a decade in India since his first trip in 1964, doing research, consulting, and assisting delegations. He was also a member of the Council of Foreign Relations-Asia Society Independent Task Force on U.S. Policy Toward South Asia. Dr. Oldenburg received a B.A. from Brandeis University, and an MA. and Ph.D. from the University of Chicago. He has published *India Briefing: Quickening the Pace of Change* (editor, with Alyssa Ayres, 2002), "Politics in India" in *Students' Britannica India* (2000), and will soon publish *India Briefing 2004* (editor, with Alyssa Ayres).

### Moderator

**Mr. Erland Heginbotham** is Professor of Asian Studies at the Johns Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS). He also teaches at the National Foreign Affairs Training Center (Foreign Service Institute) in Virginia. Mr. Heginbotham is a retired diplomat from the U.S. Foreign Service; he served at several American embassies in Indonesia, Vietnam, Liberia and Korea. He is a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia and the first Director-General of the U.S. Foreign Commercial Service. He also founded Gateway Japan, a print and on-line clearinghouse of information on Japan and Northeast Asia, co-sponsored by the National Policy Association and the University of Maryland. He has authored several books and numerous articles on East Asia. Mr. Heginbotham is currently writing a book, *Asian Economic Development and Dynamics*.