

September 14, 2012

Statement by Yasuchika Hasegawa, Chairman of Keizai Doyukai

On the Release of the Innovative Energy and Environment Strategy

1. The Government Energy and Environment Council released “the Innovative Energy and Environment Strategy” today. In that strategy, the government clearly presented concrete policy targets such as “no nuclear power plants operating in the 2030s” and “no increase in the number of nor extension/upgrade of existing nuclear power plants”. I cannot help but describe this decision as regrettable, for it neither elects the realities we face nor is it responsible.
2. This decision, no doubt, will cause serious issues and difficulties in various areas such as; 1) create anxiety about energy security in the future; 2) have negative impacts on employment, business activities and the quality of life of the people, due to increased energy costs and continued concerns over energy supply; 3) lead to inevitable loss of technology and human resources in the nuclear safety area; 4) create confusion over the nuclear fuel cycle, such as issues over storage of the spent nuclear fuel in Rokkasho, in Aomori prefecture; and 5) cause deterioration of Japan’s presence and potential for contribution to the international community caused by going against the global trend, which recognizes nuclear power as an important component of the energy supply, as stated in the APEC 2012 Leaders’ Declaration.
3. At this stage, accurate projections of the technological developments are impossible. We cannot foresee to what extent the technology to secure the safety of the nuclear power plants will be improved, the extent that renewable power generation will become more efficient and cheaper, or the extent to how technologies in the area of energy saving and storage as well as thermal energy will improve. Judging from such circumstances, we regard the government decision of setting tips definitive time frame at “2030” at this stage is inconsiderate and irresponsible toward the future of Japan.

###