



Japan Renewable Energy Foundation
2-18-3, Higashi-Shimbashi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 105-0021, JAPAN
phone: +81-3-6895-1020, FAX: +81-3-6895-1021, www.jref.or.jp

Japan Renewable Energy Foundation REvision2015

Greetings

Iino Hall, March 4, 2015

Masayoshi Son
Founder and Chairperson,
Japan Renewable Energy Foundation
Chairman & CEO, SoftBank Corp.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I am Masayoshi Son. Time has flown by since Japan Renewable Energy Foundation was established and here we are at our 4th symposium, REvision 2015.

The massive accident at Fukushima caused a horrendous disaster that engulfed the entire Tohoku region. We as a company providing communications infrastructure experienced that when there is no power coming through, that infrastructure essentially ceases to exist. I have been troubled ever since by the thought that the death toll might have been reduced, even just by one or two, if only radio waves travelled a little further or if only communications could have been maintained without interruption; and this has given me a strong sense of lifelong responsibility.

I have realized that, while telecommunications is our core business, we have to be aware that without electricity it is not possible to supply communications services. The issue of energy is of grave concern not only for Japan but for people around the entire world. Energy is one of the issues that most require serious discussion if our planet is to survive through the 21st and 22nd centuries.

One of the major factors behind the wars that have occurred around the world during the past 100 years or so has surely been a scramble for energy. Indeed, the struggle to secure energy resources has always been one of the major causes for disputes and wars, with people competing with one another for the globe's finite resources. If only we could obtain energy from a natural source in a way that does not cause harm to the environment or have any adverse effects on people; if obtaining that energy was economically feasible and stable, clean and renewable, and the cost was lower compared to conventional fossil fuel energy and non-polluting as well; and if infrastructure enabling such energy to be supplied continuously could be established—people would no longer need to resort to war in the scramble for energy, and the various problems that are triggered by the competition for energy would no longer occur. So, this is a theme of major importance in pursuing global peace and improvement of the global environment.

Fortunately, awareness of this issue is shared by many others, and, spurred by the earthquake disaster that struck north-eastern Japan, a large number of members of the Japanese public and concerned people all around the world have begun to discuss and become engaged with this matter. In various places around the world, we are now seeing situations where the volume and distribution of electricity generated by renewable



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energy surpass that generated by nuclear energy, and there are cases where the cost of electricity generated by renewable energy has become lower than electricity generated by any fossil fuels. Wind power seems to have the lead at the moment, while the cost of solar photovoltaic has been reduced by as much as 75% over the last few years. A time when the cost of PV is lower than coal power is increasingly coming into sight.

So, there is no question that this huge trend will become reality. But because this is something new, there are a number of issues still to be examined: whether existing power distribution and power transmission networks can be utilized as they are; how the separation of power generation and power transmission should be handled; how the charges should be structured and so on. It is in human nature for people to be reluctant to change existing arrangements, and people with vested interests take advantage of that resistance to protect their own position. But I think it is a question of what those people are seeking to achieve by protecting their vested interests. I feel certain that no one will prevent any effort to introduce change, reform even, if that change leads to a more fulfilling future brought about by methods that bring with them peace of mind, are safe to use and are, furthermore, affordable.

If Japan, so recently affected by such a major catastrophe, can apply the wisdom gathered from around the world here to the widespread, sustained use of clean energy, I believe that will generate the momentum for progress towards making the use of clean energy, renewable energy, a universal reality.

It is not that Japan Renewable Energy Foundation has any particular power in Japan, but I do believe that if we provide the Japanese government, industry, consumer organizations and individuals with opportunities to reflect on the basis of the wisdom brought together here from around the world, we will be able to contribute to stimulating thinking on these issues. Though what I can do is limited, I would still like to contribute to reaching that goal by sharing my commitment with you.

Today, unfortunately, my schedule prevents me from being with you, but I wished to convey to you my passionate concern about this. I trust you will all take full advantage of this opportunity to engage in vigorous discussion and put forward your proposals.

Thank you very much.