

Speech of the Prime Minister

Excerpts from the Address at the 2nd Eastern Economic Forum, Vladivostok, Russia, September 3, 2016

Full text: http://japan.kantei.go.jp/97_abe/statement/201609/1218950_11015.html

President Vladimir Putin, I am truly delighted at this, my first opportunity to set foot in Vladivostok, in response to your gracious invitation.

Every year in your annual address to the Federal Assembly, you highlight the development of Russia's Far East region as the most important factor for national development. Mr. President, you are looking to make Vladivostok a gateway linking Eurasia and the Pacific, am I correct? The Pacific Ocean is now poised to evolve into a free, fair, and open economic zone. The vast Eurasian land area lying beyond this city will provide further impetus to its dynamism.

President Putin, when we met not long ago in Sochi, I presented you with an eight-bullet-point proposal (See opposite page) in which I had narrowed down a list of fields where Japan can cooperate with Russia. The economies of Russia and Japan are not in rivalry. I am fully confident that ours is a relationship in which each complements the other in a magnificent way. For example, cooperation between small- and medium-sized enterprises is extremely promising. The development of energy resources and the expansion of their production capacity will be a prime example of creating a win-win situation.

Let us make the Far East Russia region a base for exports to Asia and the Pacific region while raising productivity by moving forward with the diversification of Russian industries and then taking full advantage of that. Shall we not move forward together in generating momentum for cooperation in advanced technologies and people-to-people exchanges—in other words, in investing towards the future?

Given that, President Putin, I will present to you a new proposal. Let us meet once a year in Vladivostok to confirm with each other the state of progress of these eight points.

In addition, Vladimir, one big, big issue awaits you and me down the road.

I cannot help but say that it is an unnatural state of affairs that the important neighbors of Russia and Japan, which surely have unlimited potential, have to this day not yet concluded a peace treaty.

We stand here today shouldering our respective viewpoints on history, as well as our own particular public opinion and patriotic spirit. As the leader of Japan, I am firmly convinced of the correctness of the Japanese position, while you, Vladimir, as the leader of Russia, are entirely confident of the correctness of the Russian position.

Yet if we continue on like this, this very same discussion will continue for yet more decades to come. By leaving the situation as it is, neither you nor I will be able to leave better possibilities to future generations.

Vladimir, shall our generation not be the one to have the courage to fulfill our responsibilities? Shall our two countries, Japan and Russia, not overcome all manner of difficulties to leave to the young people of the next generation a world that makes those possibilities come into full bloom? Putting an end to the unnatural state of affairs that has continued these 70 years, shall we not together carve out a new era for Japan and Russia going forward?

Vladimir, in order to carve out towards the future bilateral relations overflowing with unlimited potential, I am resolved to putting forth all my strength to advance the relationship between Japan and Russia, together with you.



Japan's Eight-Bullet-Point Proposal for Economic Cooperation with Russia

1 Cooperating to enhance medical treatment levels and extend healthy life expectancies for the Russian people

Cooperation in the fields of health promotion, preventive medicine, rehabilitation, palliative care, pediatrics, etc.

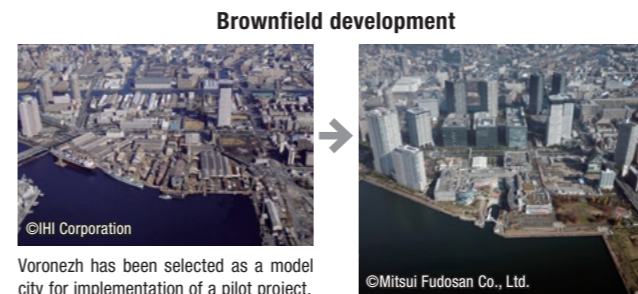


2 Developing comfortable and clean cities easy to live and be active in

Housing designed for extremely cold areas, waste-treatment systems, alleviation of traffic congestion, brownfield development, etc.



Heat from the waste combustion is effectively utilized to warm a pool.



Voronezh has been selected as a model city for implementation of a pilot project.

3 Radically expanding exchange and cooperation among medium-sized and small companies

Establishment of organization to promote business matching, support for start-ups, food-related exchanges, etc.

4 Cooperating in energy development and increasing production capacity

Diversification of petrochemical products, strengthening of collaboration from upstream through downstream, and formation of symbolic model projects.

5 Promoting industrial diversification and enhancing productivity in Russia

Enhancement of production line efficiency with equipment from Japan, including renewal of equipment.

6 Developing industries and export bases in the Russian Far East

Ports, agricultural land development, seafood processing, lumber mills, airport construction, etc.



Photo: The Economic Research Institute for Northeast Asia (ERINA).

Indoor plant-growing factory



Unaffected by climate, making fresh vegetables available for consumption even in midwinter.

7 Promoting cutting-edge technologies

Nuclear power, mail and ICT, agriculture and fisheries, medicine

8 Radically expanding people-to-people interaction

Interaction between universities, joint sporting events, sister-city ties, etc.