

## COMMENTS IN RESPONSE TO THE PRESENTATION BY PROFESSOR D. DEWITT

**Professor Tomoyuki Kojima**  
**Keio University**

Entering into the new century, the world is moving in a big scale. Globalization is one aspect of such big movements. Globalization is not easy to bring about, however. The ministerial conference of the WTO at Seattle ended with no conclusion in December 1999, and no prospect for the new round remains clear. The COP 6 in November, 2000 failed in making any scheme to regulate CO<sub>2</sub>'s discharge, and the United States of America declared to reject the agreement in the COP 6. Taking into consideration such a complicated trend for globalization, therefore, a movement towards regional cooperation appears more active. This is another aspect of phenomena symbolizing the new century.

The East Asian region is among such movements. The year 2000 might be recalled in a future as the epoch-making one for regional cooperation in East Asia. The Seventh Session of the ARF (the ASEAN Regional Forum) talking on security issues was held on July, accepting the membership of North Korea, which had been regarded as one of unstable actors in this region. The stages that the ARF had drawn at the very beginning went through those of confidence-building and preemptive diplomacy and now entering into that of conflict resolution. China has been active as its original member, hosting the group for confidence building, and having a talk on August to lay out an action rule at the South China Sea with Southeast Asian nations which claim the Nansha (Spratly) Islands with China.

On November, the unofficial summit meeting of the APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation) was convened at Brunei. The North-South confrontation between advanced and developing countries became sharper due to the trend of globalization, and the "identity crisis" of the APEC became reportedly intensified as a result. It is the summit meeting of "ASEAN 10 " immediately after the APEC that suggested the future direction for the East Asian region. In other words, the "10 " of Japan, China and South Korea" appears more effective as the regional cooperation within the East Asian region, rather than the APEC including the United States, Russia, the EU and other members outside the region.

This summit is a conference of top leaders in 10 countries of Southeast Asia and three countries of Northeast Asia. The conference at this time was held at Singapore, and took a big step to setting up a regime of multilateral collaboration in the East Asian region. The most symbolic is the proposal for the "East Asian Zone" initiated by Singapore. The East Asian Zone reminds us of the Great East Asian Prosperity Zone initiated by Japan during the war time, but this time is not initiated by Japan at all. The initiation was done without Japan. This proposal was simultaneously introduced by President Kim Daejung, South Korea and Premier Mahathir, Malaysia. The establishment of the "Free Trade Zone" and the regularization of the "Summit" are included in this "East Asian Zone." In case of the Free Trade Zone was proposed by the trilateral coalition among Singapore, Thailand and South Korea, and then Japan was asked to accept this proposal by these three parties.

The Free Trade Zone is to set up the regional group for economic cooperation between the ASEAN which is scheduled to start the AFTA (ASEAN Free Trade Area) in 2002 and North East Asia of Japan, China and South Korea. This attempt might lead to the revival of the EAEG (East Asian Economic Group) proposed by Premier Mahathir and failed with the harsh opposition by the United States.

The latter is to provide a new type of forum where all leaders in East Asia could sit and talk on any issues including security as well as economic development. The existing " 10 plus " is the meeting in which the ASEAN has taken an initiative and invited three countries