

Importance of world-wide harmonization

1. Thanking a lot to Mr. Ramos for his contribution to the Ministerial Conference on global Environment and Energy in Transport (MEET), representing the UNECE/WP.29, the Conference indicated a policy direction to "strengthen international cooperation to develop and harmonize procedures for testing fuel efficiency or measuring GHG emissions and testing exhaust emissions through the UNECE/WP.29 and other regional or international fora" in the Ministerial Declaration adopted at the Conference. However, we do not think the necessity to strengthen the harmonization activities is limited to the field of Global Environment and Energy.

2. Under the current grim economic situation surrounding the automobile industry derived from the global financial crisis, which is said to be the greatest crisis of the century, there is a negative possibility for us to back up the promotion of safety and environmental measures in the automobile field. In such a situation, Japan thinks that the role of the international harmonization of regulations, including the harmonization of procedures for testing fuel efficiency and so on emphasized at the Conference, is essential since it can help cost reduction in the manufacturing process and approval procedures, and thus, the role of UNECE/WP.29 is crucial as a unique international body delivering such activities in the automobile field just like IMO and ICAO in the international maritime and aviation field respectively.

3. In this context, taking account of the results of the MEET, Japan would like to propose and share among the participants in the WP.29 the view that "in order to make situation where the automobile industry can keep on its activities for safety and environmental measures even under the current grim economic situation, it is important for UNECE/WP.29 to lead the world to promote international harmonization activities that can help to reduce costs in some aspects in this field, and thus, we will continue to further promote the international harmonization activities of safety and environmental regulations responding to the technology development."