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Japan as a Nation for Immigrants  
A Proposal for a Global Community of Humankind

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## 1. Population Decline and a Nation Committed to Immigration

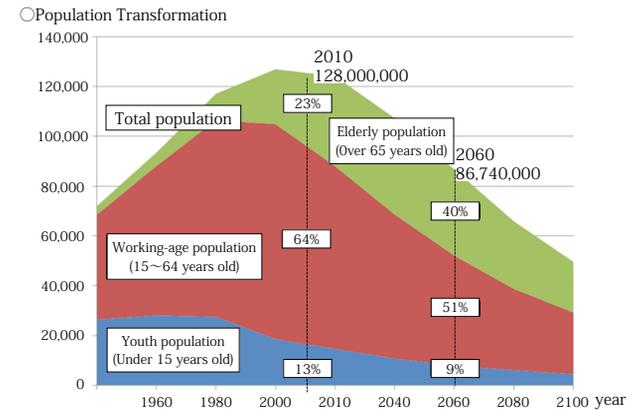
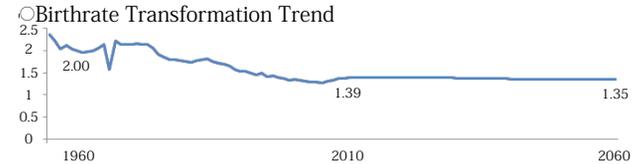
Japan's population is seriously declining as it becomes a rapidly aging society with a low birth rate.

According to the Japanese government, the total population of Japan is estimated to decrease from 128.06 million in 2010 to 86.74 million in 2060. ("Population Projection in Japan," January 2012; National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, "Population Projection in Japan (January 2012 projection)") In 50 years, the population will decline by 42 million.

See graphs below.

During this time, the elderly population of those over 65 will increase from 29 million to 37 million, making up 40% of the total population. In contrast, the working population of those from age 15 to 64 will decrease from 81 million to 49 million.

Japan in 2060 will face an unprecedented,



Top graph: Trends in the Fertility Rate of Japan

Source: (Birthrate Transformation Trend) From the 2011 published whitepaper of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare on children and child rearing. The figures past 2011 are all estimates.

Bottom graph: Trends in the Population of Japan

Source: (National Institute of Population and Social Security research on the population crisis. [The Estimated Future Population of Japan, January 1, 2012 estimates])

unusual societal structure of a decrease in the work force with an overwhelming increase in the ratio of its elderly population. If the current trend of political neglect continues, Japan's demographic order will break down. At the same time, the countdown toward Japan's decimation will begin.

A nation's population is determined by its "births," "deaths," and "immigrants." In Japan, which is a mature, civilized country, we cannot expect an increase in births. The Japanese government's long term view of the birth rate projects the continuation of a low birth rate of 1.35 from 2010 to 2060.

According to demographers in Japan, even if the birth rate rose, a shift toward population increase in this century is unthinkable due to the unusually low absolute number of the younger population. The measures promoting the entrance of women into the labor market are not sufficient to resolve this demographic crisis. This is because the population of females will drastically decline along with the population of males.

Soon after I retired from the Immigration Bureau of the Ministry of Justice in April 2005, I came to hold the conviction that the decimation of the population is a serious problem that affects the fate of the nation and its people; and that there is no other method of fundamental resolution of our population problem other than accepting immigrants on a large scale. With this in mind, in February 2007 I proposed a "Japanese style immigration nation grand design" to accept 10 million immigrants in the next 50 years under an immigration policy focused on human resources development.

I think it is possible to admit 10 million immigrants in an orderly manner in the next 50 years.

Japan is equipped with the industrial base where immigrants can work and the educational institutions where immigrants can study. Most of all, the Japanese people have the generous capacity to warmly welcome immigrants.

Ten million immigrants will amount to some 10% of the total population of Japan. This is on par with the immigrant percentages in the

United Kingdom, Germany, and France.

Currently, the percentage of immigrants in Japan is 1.6% of the population. My plan is to steadily increase this ratio through a long term plan to ultimately reach the level of advanced Western immigrant nations. I believe this is a reachable number if we work as a nation toward this goal.

The Japanese government has dealt with the low birth rate by offering measures such as support for raising children, but the birth rate remains low. If we remain a nation closed to immigrants, our population will become decimated, and Japan will plunge into the chasm of annihilation.

I urge the Japanese government to not take the attitude of just sitting around and waiting to die; we must bet the fate of the nation on becoming an immigrant country.

What is the national policy that Japan should urgently display toward the world? What is the greatest sales point that Japan has to impress upon the world? If asked to name one, I would instantly answer that Japan must become a

“nation open to immigrants.”

As the immigrant nations are closing the door to immigrants, people around the world will all welcome Japan becoming a nation open to immigration. Japan’s image around the world will change to one of “a nation that has opened up to the peoples of the world.” Japan will become known as a nation that welcomes immigrants. An image will be created of Japan as a peaceful nation where the peoples of the world coexist in harmony.

If the Japanese government announces to the world an “immigrant nation declaration” ahead of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, many young people who are fans of Japanese culture from around the world would come to live in Japan. This would be a windfall for Japan as it struggles with a society facing depopulation.

## **2. Can Japan have a growth strategy when its population is drastically declining?**

As Japan faces the crisis of decimation of its population in this century, it stands at a historical

uncture: Will it choose the path of economic deterioration resulting from the natural decrease in its population? Or will it choose the path of stabilizing its economy by stemming the natural decrease in population through immigration?

The population projection announced by the Japanese government in January 2012 forecasts that between 2010 and 2060 the low birth rate and the increase in the elderly population will become more pronounced. On one hand, the population of the young (those under 14) will decrease by half in 50 years, to 7.81 million in 2060. On the other hand, the elderly population (those over 65) will increase 18%, reaching 34.7 million.

If this population trend continues without any immigration policy put in place, Japan in 2060 will become “a society where children have disappeared from its towns,” with 4.4 elderly persons for every child.

This will herald “a world without hopes or dreams,” that has not yet been experienced by humankind.

The decline in birth rate and an increase

in the aging population means that young and productive workers will steadily disappear. Unless the Japanese government immediately adopts effective measures to stop the deterioration of its demographic order, eventually all aspects of the life of its citizens—production, consumption, tax revenues, public finance, pensions, social security—will become impossible to maintain.

I consider a new immigration policy in the era when Japan’s population is contracting to be an essential economic policy. With this in mind, I have proposed the immigration of 10 million people, to limit the impact of the depopulation on Japan’s economy to a minimal level.

Should 10 million immigrants be newly added to supplement the number of citizens, with the creation of markets and demand in immigrant-related sectors of food, clothing, shelter, education, employment, finance, information, and tourism, we can expect economic growth at least in those areas.

Here, I will enter into discussion of my main points. The issue before us is whether Abenomics

can put Japan's economy on a growth path while the producer and consumer population continues to decline. The solution depends on whether the Abe administration can introduce an immigration policy.

In an article titled "Mr. Abe's Missing Arrow: the absence of immigration reform," the Wall Street Journal (Business Asia), dated June 26, 2013, pressed the Japanese government regarding weak points in its economy, that immigration reform is essential to build Japan's economic growth strategy.

As long as Japan continues its national policy of being closed to immigration, a growth strategy cannot be formulated in the face of the contraction in the labor force and stagnation in domestic demand. Moreover, Abenomics's economic recovery, lacking the arrow of immigration policy, has a high possibility of stalling.

If, however, Prime Minister Shinzō Abe makes the decision for Japan to become an immigrant nation in order to assure its continued existence, the world's investors will likely reassess the

Japanese economy as its issues of decrease in workers and consumers will be remedied by the acceptance of immigrants.

An open immigration policy is the strongest card that can be played in Abenomics's growth strategy. Should a bold immigration policy be put in place, many of the problems in Japan's economy will move toward resolution due to the lessening of the most critical issue for the future of Japan's economy embodied in the decrease in the producer population, the emergence of effective demand related to immigrants, the strengthening of international competitiveness from the acquisition of personnel from different countries, etc.

While it may be impossible to have a "strategy for growth" to expand the scale of Japan's economy, I think it is possible to effect a "strategy for stability" to maintain our economy at a certain level under the condition of steadily implementing a bold immigration policy over the long term.

For example, in the fields of care-giving and agriculture, even though there have been hopes

for the development of new growth industries, it has been impossible to create a growth strategy as difficulties to garner young workers have continued. The means for a solution can be found in utilizing an immigration policy that attracts personnel with high aspirations from abroad.

In addition, the international community will highly value this historical “opening up the country to other peoples.” As a specific example, the world’s leading institutional investors have not regarded Japan as an investment target as it faces the demographic crisis of population contraction. There will no doubt be a major change in their investment behavior as they welcome the birth of an immigrant nation in which the production population centered on young people increases and domestic demand expectations grow.

With the projection of a sustainable Japanese economy, the return to domestic profitability of Japanese companies will start and we will be able to see a strong move toward the recovery of Japan’s economy.

### **3. Economic and financial stability cannot be gained without an immigration policy**

A country’s society and economy can exist in a healthy state when there is a good demographic balance among children, adults, and the elderly. The economy of a country with a drastically decreasing worker population will head toward contraction no matter what kind of economic policies it implements.

In order to place Japan’s economy on a stable track for the mid- and long-term, it is essential that we provide an effective stimulus to expand the productive population before the underlying strength of Japan’s economy weakens.

I suggest that we fully implement an immigration policy that is effective in energizing Japan’s economy. For instance, if we allow immigration on a scale of at least 100,000 people each year for the next 10 years, Japan’s economy will doubtless be revitalized.

Immigrants are producers as well as consumers, so economic growth that

accompanies the immigrant population can be expected. Immigrant-related industries, such as restaurants, housing, education, and tourism, will rise. The implementation of an immigration policy based on a definite course will result in acquisition of fresh personnel and new consumers, leading to the rise in trust in Japan's economy on the part of foreign investors.

Let me now turn to finances. As Japan leads the world in heading toward a society of people with a lifespan of 90 years, the decrease in population of young people under 14 years old will continue for the long term.

In this ultra-low birth rate and ultra-high number of elderly society that Japan faces, the citizenry must go through hardships and change toward a national spirit of sharing difficulties with others. At the same time, unless the Japanese government makes a decision to introduce a bold immigration policy and request many immigrants to shoulder the burden of taxation and social security expenses, it is obvious that it will eventually be difficult to keep up our social security system.

If we implement a large increase in sales tax and a fundamental reform in the social security system, and if we can foresee the entry into the social security system of 10 million immigrants, who are mostly in their 20s and 30s, we will be able to keep at least a minimal social security system and open the way to avoiding financial collapse.

We cannot effect the stability of Japan's economy and finances as the population of the young decreases and the population of the elderly increases without an immigration policy that supports Japan's economy and finances by bringing about increases in the productive and consumer populations, creating immigrant-related industries, and increasing investment from abroad.

#### **4. The immigration policy is effective in increasing the birth rate**

Not many people realize that there is an effective measure to increase Japan's birthrate. It is the personnel training-style immigration

policy created in Japan. Youth from various nations will be educated in Japan's high schools and universities and grow to become responsible members of society. As a byproduct, Japanese and foreign students study together, and we can expect them to grow as they compete as friendly rivals.

If we have an immigration policy that emphasizes the education of foreigners, these students would be in their teens or twenties when they enter Japan. We can expect marriages among them, or many marriages between Japanese and immigrants.

Human beings have an innate attraction and curiosity about other peoples. Among the young generation in Japan, as we can see from the trend in the increase in international marriages in recent years, we find an attraction to those of different ethnicities and cultures. There seems to be less of a reluctance to marry foreigners.

If the Japanese government puts in place a personnel training-style immigration policy, the possibility arises of marriages between immigrants and Japanese. An increase in such

marriages would lead to births of the second generation, which could stem the tide of low birth rates.

As we can see, an immigration policy is a promising measure to curtail the trend of low birth rates. I suggest that the Japanese government position the immigration policy as one of its pillars in countering the low birth rate. With Japanese society having a relatively large number of people favoring international marriages, this immigration policy would be effective in increasing the birth rate.

Of the advanced countries, it is immigrant nations like the U.S., Britain, and France that have birth rates of over 2.00. In those countries the birth rate among Caucasians remains low. I consider that there is a deep correlation between immigration policy and birth rate.

### **5. Immigration policy is the only way to avoid fractiousness among citizens**

As Japanese society heads simultaneously toward an ultra-low birth rate and ultra-high

elderly population, in the near future there is a danger that the society will be split into two regarding the swelling of pensions and social security costs, exacerbating the confrontation between the young generation burdened with these costs and the elderly generation who are recipients of these benefits.

In the worst case, it may come to open struggles between citizens of the same country. As far as I know, there is nothing in world history as frightening and sorrowful as this.

That is not all. This will harm the admirable traits nurtured by Japanese of the spirit of harmony and mutual help in time of need.

The only way that we can avoid this fractiousness among our citizens, which should never take place, is to implement an immigration policy to supplement the drastically declining younger generation population. As long as we cannot expect a significant increase in the birth rate for the foreseeable future, all Japanese citizens must share equally in dealing with this painful situation. This is to have immigrants, centered on the younger generation, subscribe

to the pension and social security system.

It is the responsibility of the political sphere to obtain cross-generational agreement from its citizens on the urgency and necessity for an immigrant policy as being indispensable to passing down to future generations the laudable Japanese social security system. To accomplish this, I would hope for cross-party efforts with attention paid to the position of the young generation.

## **6. Immigration policy is a crucial part of security policy**

Immigrants can be a bridge between their countries of origin and Japan, contributing to the development of friendly relations and goodwill between the two countries. The countries of origin of immigrants will feel gratitude toward Japanese for warmly welcoming their compatriots. Because immigrants send money to their families in their countries on a long-term basis, the immigrant policy will significantly contribute toward the economic development of

their countries of origin.

Japanese citizens will have increased opportunities to come into contact with immigrants in various living environments, resulting in deepening grass roots exchanges. This will increase feelings of affinity for immigrants and a heightening of interest in the immigrants' countries of origin.

This immigration policy will increase the exchanges among Japanese and immigrants, leading to a deepening of mutual understanding. That is not all. This will also promote peaceful and friendly relations between Japan and the countries of origins of immigrants. The security environment for Japan will see marked improvement. In fact, this immigration policy is an indispensable part of Japan's security policy.

Should the Japanese government decide on the fair and just acceptance of citizens from around the world as the basis for Japan's immigrant policy and develop a multi-polar immigrant foreign policy, such as concluding "immigration agreements" with many countries to encourage appropriate entry of immigrants,

close relations can be founded with countries sending out immigrants, solidifying Japan's security structure.

### **7. Japan as a multi-ethnic society will leap into a world full of diversity**

Under the system of a country closed to immigration that has continued for over 1,000 years, the Japanese people have formed close relations with each other, in effect as blood relatives. This has led to the Japanese being a people consisting of a high level of homogeneity.

Through the united effort of a nearly homogeneous people, Japan rose to the world's second largest economy. However, as we have entered the 21st century, the decline of its economy and the weakening of its national power are becoming evident.

The root cause is the demographic crisis, but that is not the only reason. I submit that break downs are occurring in the systemic structure in which politics, economy, and society are run only by Japanese who use the same script and have

the same ethnicity. It seems to me that, in this global age, the weaknesses of a homogeneous ethnic group that lacks the ability to take a broad view of the world are becoming apparent in many areas.

Biologically speaking, hybrid species are considered to have stronger survivability than pure-bred species. Can't we say that in the world of humanity it is the same, with a society made up of diverse ethnic groups having a better capacity for survival in an age of crisis than a society consisting of a single ethnic group?

If immigrants from diverse ethnic groups join its society and it transforms into one consisting of a richly diverse Japanese people, Japan will doubtless strengthen its international competitiveness and diplomatic status and become a more powerful presence in the world than it is now as a homogeneous citizenry with only a 1.6% immigration rate.

As a society of diverse ethnic groups from throughout the world, we can expand Japan's leap into a world in which the astonishing diversity in ways of thinking, sharp sensibility,

and deep ideas create a new, combined culture.

I think that the ethnic diversity that makes up a citizenry will work to our advantage in all areas: not only scholarship and the arts, but also organizational operations, corporate management, entertainment, sports, cuisine, and the attractiveness of cities.

### **8. Japan can make its appeal with its educational scheme for immigration policy**

Let us say that we will have 10 million immigrants over the next 50 years. To accomplish this, we must discard the fantasy that the world's top level talent will come to Japan. Looking at the results of the immigration policy of the past 20 years, it is clear that this effort has been a failure.

Even if top level talent came to Japan, their numbers would be minute. As a measure to solve our national crisis caused by the decline in population, it would only be like splashing water on a hot stone.

We must face up to the fact that foreigners

with specialized knowledge or advanced technology aim for English-speaking countries like the U.S. and U.K. and are not about to come to a written character-based country like Japan. With this in mind, we should employ an educational scheme in our immigration policy.

This entails taking time to nurture capable personnel by thoroughly teaching Japanese language and advanced technology to foreigners with aspirations at Japanese universities and other institutions as well as supporting them in their job searches. Positioning this approach as a national effort, we will mobilize the instructors in educational institutions to teach these foreigners in order to send out into Japanese society personnel with sufficient capabilities.

### **9. Japanese culture has become a culture for people around the world**

Foreign wrestlers are the ones who are propping up sumo, Japan's national sport. The people of Japan must face up to the reality that this traditional culture, so representative of

Japan, is being preserved by foreigners. This phenomenon of opening up sumo's doors to foreigners leading to their participation early on was possible because this was the world of sumo where ability determines win or loss.

Sumo has become a great symbol of "Japan that is open to foreigners." The sumo wrestlers from various countries of the world have contributed toward the formulation of a positive view of foreigners by the Japanese people.

If we are to trust our fate to becoming an immigrant nation, Japan must transform into becoming a nation that fulfills the dreams of advancing oneself held by the youth of the world. We must aim to become a "society of free competition" that guarantees equal opportunity for all people that evaluates humans on their abilities, regardless of nationality and ethnicity. The sumo world is a good model for this.

As the overwhelming presence of foreigners in sumo eloquently shows, those who can inherit traditional Japanese culture and transmit it to future generations are not limited to Japanese. There are a great number of young

people around the world who are attracted to Japanese culture in such fields as anime, fashion, literature, kabuki performance, Zen Buddhism, crafts, and cuisine. Among them are foreigners who understand the essence of Japanese culture more deeply than the youth of Japan.

Times have changed, and we must recognize that Japanese culture has now become a culture for people all over the world, that it is not something that is only for Japanese people.

In the field of traditional crafts and arts that is facing difficulties finding successors, if we offer a place where foreigners who love Japan or are aficionados of Japanese culture can be active, they can take part in the preservation and further development of traditional culture.

The Ministry of Justice should institute a “traditional arts skills” visa for foreign immigrants who will carry on the skills of Japan’s traditional crafts and arts.

## **10. Japanese style immigration policy**

In order for Japan to establish itself as

an immigrant nation that can be a model for the world, the formulation of an optimal “immigration policy” is needed.

I propose a “Japanese style immigration policy” that trains foreigners to become skilled personnel, offers them stable workplaces, and allows for permanent residency. What I call “Japanese style” is a unique immigration policy that “nurtures” rather than “winner picks” foreign personnel. This is possible because of the passion for education that imbues the Japanese spirit and our wealth of educational resources.

This Japanese style immigration policy has at its core educating and training foreigners at higher level learning institutions and vocational training institutions to be able to become workers who will contribute to society, supporting job searches, allowing permanent residency, and offering a smooth path to Japanese citizenship.

As Japan will have greater capacity to accept students in agricultural high schools and other educational institutions due to the declining birth rate, we can accept foreigners and educate

them to nurture future society members and Japanese citizens. At the same time, we can take care in training foreign personnel who will use their knowledge and technology studied in Japan to contribute to the economic development of their homeland after their return.

Because we will be teaching specialized knowledge and advanced technology in Japan, we will not be poaching the personnel that the developing countries have trained.

As we will be accepting as “immigrants” those foreigners who have received sufficient education, including Japanese language at the university level, by guaranteeing them stable legal status and work, this policy will not lead to the deterioration of public safety, which Japanese are concerned about. In general, we can say that immigrants who adapt to society and are offered work do not cause problems that disrupt public safety.

### **11. Immigration policy is a part of peaceful diplomacy**

We must position immigration policy as part of peaceful diplomacy with a new “immigration law” under the inviolable rule of fairness. There will be a backlash from Japanese citizens if we favor ethnic groups from certain countries as immigrants. Neither would such a method be acceptable in international society.

If we pursue an immigration policy that is well-balanced in receiving immigrants from many countries, we will be able to build peaceful and friendly relations with more countries that send out emigrants. By accepting diverse ethnicities from many countries around the world, we can build a “typical multi-ethnic society.” The diversification of Japanese nationals will progress further, as will the diversity of Japanese society.

On this basic stance we can plan the annual acceptance of immigrants taking into account the totality of Japan’s strained circumstances of personnel demand, the setting up of the acceptance conditions, the progress of social assimilation of immigrants, the international environment surrounding Japan, and the attitude

of Japanese toward immigration policy.

The plan to accept immigrants will be formulated by the administration and approved by the parliament. In formulating the plan, attention will be given so as not to concentrate the number of immigrants from a particular country or region in keeping with a world-wide view and fairness, while being mindful to accept immigrants from countries toward which Japanese have a high level of positive attitude and trust, setting an annual limit (of 20,000 people) from any one country.

## **12. Japan's youth takes up the challenge of forming a multi-ethnic community**

It is not an overstatement to say that the future of Japanese living through a time of demographic crisis depends on what kind of relationships they form with immigrants.

In general, a people who have pride in their own ethnic group and culture relate to other ethnic groups and cultures in an open-minded manner. Such people with pride are shown

respect by foreigners. For Japanese to build a positive relationship with foreigners they must be prepared in their minds to relate to other ethnic groups with self-awareness and pride in their own ethnicity.

We must put our efforts into education that nurtures Japanese to have ethnic awareness and a sense of tolerance in order to further the ties of friendship and goodwill between Japanese and foreigners. In addition, it is necessary to pursue in parallel a social structure in which we have a majority of Japanese who combine purity of spirit and a sense of tolerance in "a society where Japanese people feel happy just by being with those from foreign lands."

When we enter the period of accepting a large number of immigrants accompanied by the increase in children of immigrants studying in elementary and middle schools, we must offer multi-ethnic symbiotic education aimed at elementary and middle school pupils who will be studying side by side with immigrant children.

As a precondition to implementing this multi-ethnic symbiotic education, we must conduct

a fundamental change in Japan's elementary and middle school education, shifting from the goal of forming homogeneous Japanese which nips the bud of children's individuality to the goal of forming diverse types of Japanese that encourages the growth of individuality.

With this in mind, we will thoroughly educate children in elementary and middle schools in the proper ways of accepting foreigners and learning how to associate with foreigners. For this it is necessary to include enlightened subjects in the curriculum of elementary and middle schools.

I would hope that parents and children will discuss in their households topics of the existence of diverse peoples on this planet, acknowledging the right to existence of all ethnic groups, and the indispensable role of Japanese people in global civilization.

As they experience exchanges with other cultures by attending school with immigrant children, Japanese pupils and students will mature into adults with a sense of tolerance.

As children and youths study together with immigrants, the experience of relating to those

of other cultures will make them realize that they are indeed Japanese. This close contact and frank relationship with immigrants will give them a deep sense of the diversity of peoples. They will also learn that they have many commonalities in ways of living and in their sense of values as fellow human beings.

Hearing immigrants laud Japan's culture, Japanese will be encouraged to seriously study the essence of Japanese culture. Japanese youths who have become close friends with immigrants will take wing into a new world as they become true international beings.

Here I will discuss my main point. Is there a national goal that can invigorate Japan's youth as Japan faces a future without hope? There is an apt goal that will blow away the uncertainty of the dark clouds hovering over the coming age of population decimation. This is the formation of a multi-ethnic symbiotic nation.

Japan's youth will join hands with immigrants in the challenge to construct the first-ever "multi-ethnic community." This will also serve to have Japanese youth clear the way to invigorate their

own lives. To my mind, there is no better life goal than this for the young generation.

Specifically, we should raise as our policy objective the formation of a “multi-ethnic symbiotic society” that will attract youths from around the world to live permanently in Japan. Such a society will be one in which Japanese and immigrant youths recognize each other’s strengths and heighten their humanity by overcoming their weaknesses. It is a society in which Japanese and immigrants will become united in the spirit of harmony.

To those in the current generation under thirty who live in an era when the population pyramid will be turned upside down, immigrants are cohorts in the effort toward a new nation-building. I hope that they will work together with immigrants to overcome the crisis of the decimation of our population.

From 2013, there has been a considerable increase in the number of youths in their 20s who visit my office. In October 2013 I held a discussion on “Population Crisis and Immigration Policy” with four students from the Law

Department at University of Tokyo. At the end of our stimulating two-and-a-half hour discussion, it appeared that these students were in agreement with my Sakanaka doctrine of “facing up to demographic decimation with immigration reform.”

Hearing these University of Tokyo students talk excitedly that they must lead the way to creating a new Japan, I felt the strong stirrings of a movement toward the formation of an immigrant nation.

### **13. Immigration policy and university reform**

The success of the Japanese-style immigration policy is dependent on whether we can attract youths from around the world to Japan’s higher level educational institutions, such as higher level vocational schools, universities, and graduate schools, and educate them to become capable human resources.

For the success of Japan’s immigration policy, I urge those who are administering universities to resolutely carry out “university reform” with

a new mission for universities in an age of low birth rates.

The first step is to open up universities in such ways as the University of Tokyo's plan to allow students to enter in the autumn term, in order to increase the number of foreign students to 300,000. This requires putting in practice a system of educating foreign students at the top level in the world and implementing a strategic foreign student policy to be fair to students from all nations.

As a precursor to this implementation, the present situation of the domination of some 60% of foreign students by Chinese must be radically reformed. In the next 10 years this percentage should be reduced to 10%.

Second, the closed system of the monopoly of faculty posts held by Japanese professors must be reformed. In order to improve the levels of Japanese university education and foreign students' education, top level foreign educators from around the world must be welcomed, with a 10-year plan to increase that number to 10% of the faculty.

This will open up Japanese universities to internationally recognized researchers. If this is accomplished, Japanese universities can receive many world-class intellectuals, which Japan has sought for many years. This will be an effective policy for improving both faculty and research in Japanese universities.

Third, foreign students who have gained specialized knowledge and skills at higher level vocational schools should be introduced to workplaces that seek immigrants, in such industries as agriculture, forestry, fisheries, and care-giving. For foreign students who have completed university or graduate school, the Japanese government should improve the job environment to allow them to participate in job search opportunities on equal terms with Japanese students for them to be hired in suitable positions.

Currently the number of foreign students who remain in Japan after graduation is only 30%. If we are to increase our productive population through immigration policy, we need to increase this number to nearly 70%.

Japanese companies that are bent on survival in this global market must create and implement a plan for aggressive hiring of foreign students in order to acquire personnel who can respond to the globalization of our economy.

In addition to these measures, Japan must give favorable treatment to foreign students in terms of immigration regulations. Foreigners who have been accepted at universities or higher level vocational schools should immediately be given residence status (residence duration according to the length of study: 4, 3, 2 years). Those who have graduated from institutes of higher education and whose employment in a company in Japan has been set, should, in principle, be permitted “permanent residency” after 5 years from entry into Japan.

To create a society in which Japanese youths and second generation immigrants study together at universities and other schools and deepen their relationships, in creating the future plan after receiving 300,000 foreign students, we must keep in mind the setting up of a system so that 2 million Japanese students can

study together with 1 million foreign students (including second generation immigrants).

#### **14. Care-giving immigrants; agricultural immigrants; fisheries immigrants; construction immigrants; production immigrants**

A suitable immigrant policy is essential for the survival of Japanese industry in an age when our demographic problem becomes more serious. We urgently need to receive immigrants in care-giving, agriculture, fisheries, construction, and production in order to utilize young foreign personnel to reinvigorate Japan’s industry.

##### (1) Care-giving immigrants

It is projected that in 2025 there will be 7.55 million Japanese who need care and the required number of social welfare workers will increase 1 million to 2.49 million (Japanese government projection). If we look at the current situation when the numbers of care-giving personnel are decreasing, it will be difficult to maintain the

current numbers needed, much less increase the number of care-givers. It is also difficult to place the care-giving industry as a pillar of a growth strategy.

We are in urgent need of foreign care-giving workers. In the next 20 years we will need “care-giving immigrants” on a scale of 1 million.

The Japanese government needs to decide on the direction to accept a large number of care-giving personnel from Southeast Asian countries such as Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam, and Myanmar, by opening up the care-giving social welfare market to them. In so doing, “care-giving immigrant agreements” should be signed with ASEAN nations. In order to have these immigrants reach a level of Japanese language to allow them to pass the national test for care-giving social welfare workers, we must implement thorough Japanese language education before they enter Japan. For this, it is of urgent necessity to develop Japanese language curricula that teaches Japanese language to foreigners quickly and effectively.

Legal support for the immigration

administration system is also needed. Immigration law should be revised to set up a residency qualification for “care-giving social welfare” that accepts foreigners who have passed the national test for care-giving social welfare workers. A review of the criteria for permanent residency and naturalization should be made for those foreigners working in care-giving social welfare. To give them a stable legal status, in principle permanent residency should be allowed 5 years after entry into Japan, and citizenship after 7 years.

## (2) Agricultural immigrants

In order for the Japanese government to get rid of the inefficiencies accumulated over many years in Japan’s agriculture and to open up a future for agricultural communities, we must put in place an aggressive immigrant policy.

According to the Japanese government, as of 2010, the agricultural population is at 2.6 million, a decline of 750,000 since 2005. The average age of agricultural producers is

65.8 years. Within 5 years it is likely that the agricultural population will decline by half. That will result in the further disappearance of agricultural communities and decrease in food production. This current trend means that agriculture will be a leading declining industry.

If we see the drastic reduction in the agricultural population as the root cause of the decline in agriculture, what is needed is agricultural reform that combines immigration policy with the effort to bring in new workers.

In order to revive agriculture as a growth industry, I propose the acceptance of 50,000 immigrants in the next 10 years, and the establishment of an “agricultural immigrant zone” of some 40 hectares to reclaim farmland that has been abandoned.

The Japanese government would designate as “agricultural immigrant zones” certain areas that are abandoned cultivated lands; and it will designate “agrarian production corporations” (special agrarian producers) to permit hiring of immigrants in those special zones.

At the same time, young people from around

the world who aspire to become part of the agriculture and forestry industry will be accepted at agricultural universities and high schools to receive education. Special agrarian producers will hire as permanent employees foreigners who have graduated from Japanese agricultural educational institutions.

The special agrarian producers will engage in improving the quality of produce by using Japan’s best agricultural technology practices, and work to export high quality and nutritious rice, fruit, and meat, becoming leaders in “internationally competitive agriculture.”

As the agrarian immigrant special zone system gains traction, the principle of competition will start working, and mid-sized farm producers will form joint companies and hire immigrants, leading to opportunities for large-scale management in agriculture.

### (3) Fishery immigrants

At 2:46 p.m. on March 11, 2011, the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred off the coast

of Sanriku in Miyagi Prefecture. Immediately following, a major tsunami assaulted the Pacific Coast of northeastern Japan. The towns on the Sanriku coast line, a major fishing area of Japan, were transformed into a barren landscape.

Three years have passed since the major earthquake disaster, but it seems the recovery of the Sanriku coastal area has not made significant progress. Moreover, from what I have heard, young people of that area have turned away from fishing, resulting in the acceleration of the decline in the fishing industry population.

The rapid decline in the fishery industry devastated by the great earthquake and accompanying tsunami exists within the trend of the decline of the fishery industry due to chronic difficulties in finding successors. It is clear that the greatest obstacle to recovery is the lack of personnel to take over the fishing industry.

With those in their 60s and 70s as the major line up of fishermen, we cannot expect a resurgence of the local industry that is in such a declining state. In the worst case, there is a danger that the local community will disappear

as it will be unable to recover from this major disaster.

There is an effective means to overcome this desperate state. First, allow the immigration of young personnel who can become future citizens from around the world under a new "immigration policy." Second, reconsider the unstable, family-unit structure of the fishing industry, and transform it into large-scale organizations that can hire these immigrants.

In order to hasten the recovery of the fishing industry in the rich fisheries off the Sanriku coast where the Kurile current and the Japan current intersect, fishery corporations can be set up with investments from the fishery association and other companies. These corporations can hire youths from around the world who long to be fishermen in Japan involved in a large-scale and diverse marine products industry.

To accomplish this goal, we must not only teach Japanese fishery know-how to foreigners in their teens and 20s at marine production high schools but also have the local communities welcome these fishery immigrants as fellow

workers.

These fishery immigrants will work in deep-sea fishing, coastal fishing, aquaculture, and marine products processing industries. The Sanriku marine products industry will be able to recover its previous economic vitality if the elder generation of Sanriku fishermen can join hands with young fishery immigrants.

#### (4) Construction immigrants

Along with the urgent need for recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake disaster, the successful opening of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics requires the acceptance of a large number of construction workers from abroad as immigrants.

Currently there is a shortage of construction workers in the disaster areas. We are in need of tens of thousands of construction workers to complete large scale infrastructure and residential construction projects. The significant decline in the number of construction workers from before the disaster continues, making

it impossible to meet the demand only from domestic personnel. This situation is exacerbated with the need for more construction workers to prepare for the Tokyo Olympics.

Moreover, Japan is currently facing a low birth rate and an increasing elderly population, unprecedented in history. It is obvious that the difficulty of securing construction workers within Japan and in the disaster areas will continue for the foreseeable future. The remedy for this is none other than securing workers from abroad.

In implementing this from the standpoint of creating a society in which residents of the disaster areas and foreigners can co-exist, it is a precondition that the foreign construction workers be treated as “construction immigrants.” It is a matter of course that construction companies hire construction immigrants as permanent employees and guarantee them the same labor and wages as Japanese. The state must put efforts into training in Japanese language and occupations to support the permanent residency of these immigrants. Should immigrants so desire, they should be

given Japanese citizenship as soon as possible.

This is the time when the Japanese government must decide on the acceptance of construction immigrants for the speeding up of the recovery of the disaster areas and for the success of the Tokyo Olympics.

The construction immigrants who receive decent treatment will no doubt feel strongly motivated to work hard for the reconstruction of the disaster areas and for putting in the infrastructure for the Tokyo Olympics. Seeing these immigrants work earnestly in construction, Japanese people will show their appreciation to them.

#### (5) Production immigrants

For quite some time, it has been noted that small- and medium-sized companies, which support production and technology at the core level, are forced to close up due to lack of personnel and successors. Unless we supply abundant personnel to small- and medium-sized companies, we face the issue of survivability of Japan's historic production heritage along the

Tokaidō industrial belt.

If the worst case happens and a segment of companies under the umbrella of Toyota Motor Corporation, the flagship of Japanese industry, should go bankrupt due to lack of ability to retain workers, the impact on Japanese industry as a whole would be great.

Toyota has said that it must maintain domestic production capacity of 3 million units. Our nation must respond to the patriotic spirit of Toyota. We should welcome skilled manufacturing technicians as immigrants from abroad and place them in the small- and medium-sized companies that are part of Toyota's production group in order to support Toyota's production capacity.

In terms of Japan's immigration administration, we should allow the flexible implementation of a visa status for "technology" and "skills" as well as a new residency status of "production technicians" to promote the acceptance of production immigrants.

To prevent bankruptcies due to lack of personnel, and to stem the overseas relocation of production, we should educate youths from

around the world to become skilled workers at technical high schools; and for those who find work, we should immediately give them a “technical” or “skilled worker” visa status, and qualify them for permanent residency five years or so after their entry into Japan.

By utilizing this immigration policy, we can inject new blood into the small- and medium- sized companies that are the core of Japan’s manufacturing sector so that Japan’s manufacturing industry can continue to survive and develop.

### **15. Immigrant nation Japan aims to become a humanitarian immigrant nation**

Japan has been criticized by the international community for being a nation closed to refugees, due to the extremely low number of refugees it has accepted. The background condition for this is that Japan did not allow foreigners as permanent residents at a time when Japan’s population was growing. The world’s nations that accept refugees are all “immigrant nations.”

As Japan has entered an era of accelerating demographic decrease, we need to accept unprecedented numbers of immigrants. Under this scheme, we should allow a certain number of refugees within the number of immigrants. We need to accept refugees as part of our immigration policy.

I am suggesting that we accept 10 million immigrants during the next 50 years in order for Japan to overcome its declining population crisis. Of those, I assert that 500,000 should be humanitarian refugees. Unless we do so, we cannot rid ourselves of Japan’s international image that it is “a country indifferent to refugees.”

The Japanese government’s permanent residency support in terms of Japanese language education and employment was insufficient for the 11,000 Indochinese permanent resident refugees and the 2,500 Japanese war orphans left in China who returned to Japan.

In January 2012, I set up the “Center for permanent residency support for Japanese wives and others” within the Immigration Policy

Research Institute (IPRI) to strengthen efforts to realize the return of Japanese wives married to Koreans resident in Japan who had gone to North Korea and Japanese who were forced to stay in North Korea as they had been unable to return to Japan.

Since 2005 we have been supporting the permanent residency of Japanese wives and returnees from North Korea. Staff members of the IPRI who are knowledgeable about North Korean matters and who can speak Korean assist these Japanese wives and Japanese left in North Korea with advice on matters of daily life, counseling, job support, Japanese education, and reconnecting with their families.

We seek from Japanese citizens their understanding as humanitarian issues these problems of Japanese wives and returnees from North Korea, and their acceptance of them as fellow compatriots.

If Japanese can warmly welcome as humanitarian immigrants these Japanese who lived in a harsh country while harboring a fervent dream to return to Japan, Japan's

position will be solidified as a "humanitarian immigrant nation" in the coming age of immigrants.

## **16. Immigration Law**

### **(1) Enacting an immigration law**

Japan must enact a basic law setting out its system of immigration policy as its "Immigration Law." This immigration law will reflect the fundamental ideas of Japanese-style immigration policy and include the Japanese government's method of implementing its policy to accept immigrants.

As a fundamental idea for the acceptance of immigrants, we will seek those from countries that have a positive image in Japan and good diplomatic relations.

Accepting immigrants from a variety of ethnic groups and countries from the standpoint of fairness will deepen friendly relations with countries around the world and contribute toward world peace.

In addition, a policy objective will be the realization of a “multi-ethnic society” in which people of various nationalities and ethnicities can live peacefully in Japan.

The grounds for the rules for the basic plan to accept immigrants will be set. Specific content will include the following.

(1)A Council for Basic Policy for Immigration will be set up chaired by the Prime Minister. This council will discuss the basic policy for acceptance of immigrants, such as the scale of immigrants to be accepted, industries and regions where immigrants will be accepted, and quotas for each nationality. The basic plan that this council prepares will be submitted for parliamentary approval.

(2)Related government agencies will implement the acceptance of immigrants based on the plan approved by the parliament.

(3)A cabinet post on immigration policy will be set up. An immigration policy agency will be created to act as the secretariat for the Council for Basic Policy for Immigration; and it will plan and draft proposals for the immigration

acceptance plan for this council.

(2)Amendment of immigration and related laws

Along with the enactment of the new immigration law, the amendment of immigration and related laws is needed. The current immigration law will be amended, greatly expanding the categories of foreigners to be accepted as possible future immigrants. For example, new visa status conditions must be defined for: advanced technology and skills, care-giving social welfare workers, agricultural skills, forestry skills, fishery skills, construction skills, production skills, and traditional crafts skills.

Implementation standards for the immigration law must be reviewed, and the conditions for permanent residency must be relaxed. In sum, the immigration law must be amended to stabilize the legal status of permanent residents who will become immigrants.

Naturalization law implementation must be reviewed. As a precondition for applying for

citizenship, foreigners wishing naturalization must meet permanent residency status requirements, but a flexible implementation can be realized to allow speedy naturalization to desirable immigrants.

We must also amend the citizenship law to recognize dual citizenship, as allowed by the major advanced nations. We should also allow citizenship to be given according to the place of birth. That is, the second generation born in Japan of permanent residents (immigrants) should be allowed to have Japanese citizenship at birth so that they can live with a secure status in Japan.

### (3) Establishment of a bank for immigrants

In order for immigrants to be able to adapt to society, we must establish an “Immigrant Bank” specialized in supporting immigrants in living a stable life. This bank will give no interest, no collateral loans for immigrants to study at school and start businesses, which will allow immigrants who have no family support in Japan

to build a basis for their lives.

This “Immigrant Bank” will be funded with 1 trillion yen of capital financed by the government and institutional investors. The customers will be a maximum of 10 million immigrants and their families. The maximum loan for each borrower will be 3 million yen. The grace period for repayment will be 5 years from entry into Japan.

In order to gain the understanding of Japanese citizens on immigration policy, it is necessary to limit the financial burden of accepting immigrants. We must rely on the self-help efforts of immigrants, but the “Immigrant Bank” will play a significant role in providing loans for their initial needs for living expenses and tuition.

### (4) Japanese Culture Centers around the world

We should set up “Japanese Culture Centers” in major cities of the world. There, Japanese language can be taught to the world’s youth who show an interest in Japanese culture. The idea is to offer national scholarships to capable youth who are identified through these centers, and

after their employment in Japanese companies is decided, give them permanent residency status.

At these centers, an intensive one-year Japanese language program to educate foreigners who want to emigrate to Japan will be offered so that they will not have obstacles taking courses at universities in Japan.

For this purpose, it is essential that we prepare a revolutionary Japanese language curriculum that allows fluency in the language in a short period of time. In particular, we must urgently develop methods of teaching Japanese language to those in countries with non-character-based languages. For example, serious thought should be given to the development and research of ways to teach characters using personal computers and education methods so that local instructors of Japanese language can teach the basics of Japanese in English or in their native languages.

**17. The Tokyo Olympics is the chance of a lifetime for Japan to change itself into an immigrant nation**

In the 21st century, it is the world's common understanding that the best method to open up a country is through immigration. The international community dispassionately considers that unless Japan opens up its doors to immigrants, it will not become a truly open country. Joining the TPP (Trans Pacific Partnership) is only the opening curtain in the drama of the opening up of Japan. Its closing curtain will be the Japanese government's declaration that Japan is a country open to immigrants.

Japan has a wonderful chance to accomplish this with the Tokyo Olympics to be held in 2020.

As Japan faces a crisis of the decimation of its population with the decline in birth rate and an aging population in Tokyo and all around the country, it has been blessed with the chance of a lifetime to convert itself into an immigrant nation. The Japanese government should make maximum use of the Tokyo Olympics to gain agreement of its citizens on immigration policy.

First, to live up to the Olympic charter, I would like the Japanese government to take leadership

to overturn Japan's image from "a country that denies immigrants" to "a country that welcomes immigrants." If, on the eve of the Tokyo Olympics, the Japanese government makes an "immigrant nation declaration," it would show its accord with the Olympic spirit of creating a peaceful world overcoming the barriers of race, ethnicity, and nationality. Not only would this be effective, people from around the world will raise their voices in commending Japan for being an immigrant nation, adding to the celebration of the Tokyo Olympics.

The Tokyo Olympics will become a superb stage for people from around the world to see that "Japan is a country open to immigrants." We can expect an explosive increase in the number of youths desiring to live permanently in Japan from among the tens of millions who will visit Tokyo to watch the Olympics.

Second, taking the opportunity of the Olympics, why not have Tokyo become a candidate to be a "world city" on par with New York, London, and Paris? For people from around the world to recognize Tokyo as a world

city, it must transform itself into a city where one in ten persons is an immigrant and where youths from around the world find attractive to live permanently.

I would like opinion leaders in Tokyo to launch a movement to make Tokyo a city that warmly welcomes immigrants. The citizens of Tokyo themselves can construct a city that is open to the world.

As the first step in realizing the formulation of Tokyo as a world city, I propose a "Tokyo immigrant special zone" allowing for preferential treatment for visa status to welcome world-class personnel in economics, finance, arts, architecture, fashion, sports, cuisine, etc. The outline is as follows.

(1) For those foreigners who have visa status (existing and new) in "investment and management," "legal and accounting work," "humanities knowledge and international work," "university instruction," "arts," "medical," "technology," "skills," "advanced technology and skills" (new), "construction skills" (new), "manufacturing skills" (new), and "traditional

crafts skills” (new), allow permanent residency three years after entry into Japan.

(2) Aggressively support the employment of graduating foreign students by both public and private sector efforts, and allow permanent residency to foreigners who become employed by Tokyo companies five years after entry into Japan.

### **18. Japanese are a people who accept international marriages**

As one method toward success of Japan’s immigration policy, I propose many marriages between Japanese and immigrants to deepen the family connections between them.

In the section on “Treatment of resident Koreans” in my article titled “Future of Emigration and Immigration Control Administration” published in 1977 (hereafter Sakanaka Article), I focused on the increasing trend in marriages between Japanese and the resident Korean minority population, with the resultant increase in the numbers of children

from these unions. I forecast the future as: “Resident Koreans have deepened their blood relationship with Japanese, and if this tendency continues, we can anticipate that the majority of resident Koreans will be related by blood to Japanese in the next few generations.”

I saw as the indicator of the improvement of relations between Japanese and resident Koreans the trend in the number of marriages between them and the population trend of the mixed heritage children from these unions. I considered that the increase in the number of marriages between resident Koreans and Japanese showed that the relationship between the two peoples had become closer, and the children of mixed heritage from these unions as the symbol of reconciliation between the two peoples.

For a while after the end of World War II, the relations between resident Koreans and Japanese was strained. Reflecting this situation, there were few inter-marriages.

Looking at the trend after the Sakanaka Article was published in 1977, the increase in the number of resident Koreans marrying Japanese

has progressed faster than I had predicted, and in recent years over 90% of resident Koreans marry Japanese.

The postwar path has been one of increasing closeness between resident Koreans and Japanese. This history of the high frequency of marriages between two different ethnic peoples and the acceleration of the deepening of friendly relations and increase in blood relationships can serve as an example in the goal of establishing a multi-ethnic society in the era of Japan as an immigrant nation.

### **19. Japanese society has the power to attract immigrants**

From my experiences of meeting foreigners of various nationalities as an official in the immigration bureau of the Ministry of Justice and, after retirement, as director of the Immigration Policy Research Institute, I feel that our small universe of Japan has a mysterious power to Japanize foreigners who come here. How did Japanese society acquire this power to

attract immigrants?

Since the time of Prince Shōtoku (574-622), the national character of Japan has been based on valuing harmony in all things (according to the seventeen article constitution). As a polytheistic people, Japanese have inherited the trait of being open to accepting a variety of values and different peoples. I think that through its long history, a society that is strong in assimilating foreigners has been formed.

The foreigners resident in Japan that I know well have high regard for Japanese for their loyalty, refined sensibility, and kindness. They have strong affection for Japan that is rich in nature with its seasonal changes, has beautiful rural landscapes, is a well-organized society, and provides public safety. They love Japanese animation, fashion, and cuisine.

I believe that as the following generations of immigrants study in Japanese elementary and middle schools and grow up in a society without discrimination as to country of origin or ethnicity, they will gain an affinity with Japan, where they were born and raised, and

assimilate into Japanese society. This will lead to the establishment of a multi-ethnic community fulfilling a harmony of races.

I have been holding discussions on immigration policy with foreigners resident in Japan from many countries. They all agree that “open-minded Japanese can easily accept immigrants,” and “if Japanese and immigrants cooperate, we can create the world’s first multi-ethnic community of harmony.” They are strong supporters of such an immigration policy for Japan. I sense that expectations are high among foreigners resident in Japan for Japan to become an immigrant nation.

## **20. The momentum of the immigration policy will change Japanese history**

The “proposal for a Japanese style immigration policy” that I have proffered has been ignored by a majority of Japanese. There are practically no Japanese intellectuals who support my concept of an immigrant nation for Japan. I proposed a large-scale concept reaching a hundred years

into the future, and anticipated a major debate in which many opinions would be raised. But, so far, there have not even been any discussions.

It may be that Japanese, who have decided major issues on a consensus basis, are a people who do not favor engaging in debate that may split the nation into two. Considering the history of our country in which Japanese have lived among each other while sharing the same culture for over a thousand years, we must accept that changing national opinion to support immigration will be as difficult a challenge as opening a hole in a thick wall of rock with a slot wedge.

Feeling a strong sense of crisis that the decimation of Japan’s population will lead to the country’s demise, I have put my energies into the formulation of an immigration policy plan in order to rescue Japan from this national crisis. With the resultant publication of articles and writings I have fulfilled my responsibility as a forerunner in theoretical research into Japan’s immigration policy.

Now my thoughts are: everything comes

to him who waits. I wait in anticipation for politicians to make a historic decision. I await the appearance of an astute leader who will place Japan's future in the hands of the establishment of an immigrant nation.

I surmise that that are many Japanese who feel uncomfortable with my bold policy proposal, but I have seen hardly any rational rebuttals or emotional resistance. I don't know why this is so. Frankly, I feel somewhat letdown.

I proposed my "10 million immigrants concept" in Asahi Shimbun newspaper on February 9, 2007 to overcome the immigration exclusion system that we have had for over 1,000 years.

There were no opposing opinions stated from anywhere. No doubt it was shrugged aside as a "pipe dream" with no possibility of coming true.

That was fortunate, as the "far-reaching plan for Japan's utopia" suggested by me survived unscathed. Now, the engine has ignited to advance the Sakanaka plan, and it has started to move. From the young generation there have been voices supporting immigration on

the internet, where information revolution is advancing. The internet is overflowing with words such as: "immigrants," "immigration policy," "Japanese-style immigrant nation," "population demise and immigration revolution," "10 million immigrants concept," "multi-ethnic community," and "pioneers in immigrant revolution." The leading foreign media and the world's investors are pressing Japan to become a nation open to immigrants.

If we can confirm that there is no direct opposition to immigration from among Japanese citizens, it is possible that a once in a thousand years "big bang" can occur in Japan. Even if this proposal is not so welcomed by Japanese, should there not be a suitable counter proposal, this will become the only policy proposal to stop Japan's demographic demise. Then it could develop into the Japanese government's basic policy.

Although the idea of the Japanese-style immigrant nation was originally my personal opinion as a result of careful deliberation in seeking a world model for an immigrant nation, it can become an immigrant nation policy that

leads the world. With this as a catalyst, the mass media and the times may start to move, which may lead to a shift in public opinion toward passive agreement on immigration, with the thought: "If there is no other effective way to save Japan, we may have to accept immigrants." There may also be some voices of positive agreement on immigration from the Japanese population.

I think that the decision on whether to become an immigrant nation should follow the Japanese manner of reform of thorough government debate, persuading the citizens over time, and accomplishing this historical, great undertaking in a democratic and peaceful way.

### **21. The new Japanese culture aims to be the best in the world with love for humanity**

There can be no disagreement that Japan is one of the seven major civilization centers of the world (U.S., China, E.U., Russia, India, Middle East, Japan). Although we have passed our peak, Japan achieved rapid economic development

and attained the status of one of the few leading economic nations in the world. Japanese civilization that values tradition and aesthetic sense holds a significant place among the world's civilizations. What will happen to Japan fifty years hence when its population will be two-thirds of what it is today?

There is a high probability that it will have lost its place as one of the seven major civilizations of the world as population decrease reduces its national power and its economy shrinks. This is because in terms of common understanding, a major power requires a country to have a population of over 200 million and be an economic or military power.

I am suggesting to the Japanese people that we build an immigrant nation by accepting 10 million immigrants in the next 50 years. In order to have a system of accepting immigrants in this world-leading way, I propose the personnel training-style of immigration policy that will consist of instructors in all educational institutions to participate in the education of immigrants.

Even if Japan accepts immigrants on a large scale, our total population will decline by 30 million. In fact, it will be a much more difficult task for the state to change its society to withstand a reduction of 30 million people than working to accept 10 million immigrants. In fifty years' time, there is no hope that Japan would even continue to be one of the world's leading economic or military powers.

In place of such a trite national target, I am proposing a new national doctrine befitting an immigrant nation.

My proposal is that the new Japanese civilization aim for the top rank in the world of love of humankind. Why don't we become the first in the world to form a "world community of all humanity" based on the cooperation between Japanese and immigrants?

The ultimate goal will be a "harmony of races" in which all the ethnic peoples in Japan will live together peacefully. Japan will be challenged to create a multi-ethnic society as it assimilates peoples from around the world and receives power and energy from these new immigrants.

The world's specialists on immigration issues stress the diversity of races in working toward a "multi-cultural society."

What I am suggesting as Japan's immigrant nation doctrine emphasizes the unity of races in the construction of a "multi-ethnic nation."

While humanity is divided into diverse ethnicities and races, we have a large portion of commonality among cultures and values at the core of human beings. As races have evolved from one form of life, even if we are of different races and ethnicities, as fellow human beings we are able to communicate with, empathize with, and understand each other.

When we consider this basic essence of races, taking as a national ideal "an integrated society of a melding of the races" is not an unreachable utopia that can fade away as quickly as a fleeting dream. If Japanese and immigrants can take this on in earnest, there is a strong possibility that this goal can be realized. Should this be accomplished, it can be etched into human history as an extraordinary achievement.

For the various ethnic groups on this earth

to become united as one people, it is essential that all the peoples who permanently reside in Japan share a universal image of humankind, that “Humanity is united. Whatever differences there may be among peoples and cultures are negligible.”

From ancient times, Japanese have communed with the natural world, from human beings to animals to plants to minerals; we have felt close to nature; and we have believed that the gods and spirits reside in all things. We have inherited the idea of a parity among nature and self that regards both on the same level, based on an animistic view of nature. It is a world that can be symbolized in Bashō Matsuo’s haiku poem: “So quiet / Seeping into the rocks / The cicadas’ chirring.”

This corresponds to the understanding of nature arrived at by modern natural science through evolutionary theory, chemistry, physics, and other studies. It is a natural philosophy that connects to the coexistence of all things, including the human race. It is also the wisdom of the Japanese people who admonish the vanity

of those who lord it over all beings.

At the basis of the religiosity of Japanese are enshrined 8 million gods. Japanese have also readily accepted gods from other countries, in Buddhism and Christianity.

The spirit of harmony and openness is ever present. By relating to all peoples on an equal basis with a welcoming spirit, I can confidently imagine Japanese can create an ideal state in which the various peoples of the world can be unified.

From my experiences of 35 years dealing with government administration of foreigners and of relating to diverse peoples as director of the Immigration Policy Research Institute since my retirement from governmental service, I think it may be the Japanese people who hold the idea of the equality of all things that are the ones who have the possibility of being the first among the major peoples of the world to accomplish the great feat of forming the first society of the harmony of the races.

We must be prepared for a long-term struggle of over one hundred years in our battle with the

population decimation crisis. The goal that we are striving for is the renaissance of Japanese civilization. It is the miraculous resurrection of the Japanese people a hundred years from now. I have my eyes on the age when Japan will be at the apex of the world in humanitarianism by realizing “a global community of a unified harmony of races” that no other people in the world have accomplished.

The Japanese immigration policy is not merely a state policy to revitalize Japan as it faces its demographic crisis. It is also a global policy that strives to create a world in which the various peoples of the world can peacefully coexist in a spirit of harmony.

Japan’s immigration reform concept will compel not only Japan but also the other countries of the world to make basic reforms, contribute toward harmonious relationships and world peace for all peoples, and be the best gift to those on this earth who live in a global age in which the cross-border unity of all human races is progressing.

## **22. Aiming for the creation of a harmony of races**

At crucial times when a nation faces the threat of demise, a “savior” appears to rescue the nation as if responding to the demands of the times.

Why is it that, as Japan faces the deepening of an unprecedented crisis of population decimation, no revolutionary has surfaced who will stake his life on grappling with this problem? Why do we have no personage who can lead us at this time?

It may be that Japan’s politicians, industrialists, scholars, and journalists are unwilling to squarely face the demise of the nation that will accompany the population decline because it is too frightening. They may have self-seekingly made up their minds that the problem is too great to deal with. They may not have the courage to abolish the system of a country closed to immigration which is the greatest prohibition that remains in Japan.

There is no indication of serious discussion among intellectuals as to “Why Japan has

become this way,” or “What we can we do at this point.”

I myself, having focused solely on immigrant policy, have appeared in this world dominated by intellectuals who pretend not to see what lies ahead for Japan’s future, to urge the Japanese people to implement immigration reform in order to avoid population decimation. I have pressed for urgent action by Japanese under conviction that the only way to stop the destruction of Japan is to unite Japanese as one to effect this reform.

As a former immigration officer, I have an oversized dream as I make my lifework the theoretical study of Japan’s immigration policy. That dream is the establishment of an immigrant nation and a society of racial harmony on a global scale.

Initially this was just one dream in the mind of myself, Hidenori Sakanaka. But now the ideas brought up by specialists in immigration policy have begun to progress in an unimagined direction. Whether it is demanded by the times or of historical necessity, the fate of Japan facing

the crisis of depopulation rests on whether my Sakanaka doctrine will be applied.

Now that my dream has grown to the point of affecting Japan’s fate, my goal is to realize it. I will exert my full efforts to open the way for Japan to become an immigrant nation.

There is no greater solemn responsibility than this. As a matter of fact, at times I have wished to escape from shouldering this responsibility for Japan’s future alone. However, realizing that I have been put in a situation where I cannot escape from what is demanded of me, I have resolved to carry out my mission.

Although I do not know how much I can accomplish during my lifetime, I will continue to take a leading role in immigration reform until my final days. Unless someone of this generation lays the groundwork for Japan to become an immigrant nation, we will be admonished by future Japanese for having done nothing.

I have laid out Hidenori Sakanaka’s grand proposal for an immigrant nation in this speech. I fully believe that a time will come when, a hundred years from now, people around the

world will say, “A hundred years ago there was a visionary in Japan who dreamed of creating a global community.”

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**Profile of Hidenori Sakanaka**

Hidenori Sakanaka:

The Executive Director of Japan Immigration Policy Institute

**【Career Summary】**

Born in 1945, Hidenori Sakanaka began his career in the Japanese Ministry of Justice in 1970 after completing his master's degree in law at Keio University.

Having worked for Ministry of Justice between 1970 and 2005, having involved with immigration policy making and often referred to as 'Mr.Immigration expert'.

He left the Ministry of Justice as the Head of Tokyo Immigration Authority.

In 2005,he established Japan Immigration Policy Institute and proposed 'A Japanese-style Immigration Policy' based on the 35-year experience of policy making in the area.

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