

Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland

Remarks on the occasion of the signing of the cooperation agreement between the University of Tokyo and the Norwegian Council of Universities.

Tokyo, 28 January, 1992.

Presidents, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The search for knowledge and understanding is one of the most deeply rooted characteristics of human nature. This search is universal, and has the potential of forging a truly multinational community.

The agreement which has now been signed between the Norwegian Council of Universities and the University of Tokyo is an excellent example of this. The agreement will promote academic exchange and cooperation reaching all the way around the globe. It will encourage mutual understanding between our two peoples. And it is our hope that it will also pave the way for increased cooperation between our two countries in many different areas extending beyond the sphere of research and education.

The Norwegian Government attaches great importance to further strengthening our excellent relations with Japan, and we welcome the agreement between the Norwegian universities and the University of Tokyo as an important element in this process of developing our cooperation.

Modern technology is a field of particular importance in international scientific cooperation. Today, Japan is one of the greatest locomotives of world technological progress, and we highly appreciate that your country is ready to open its research institutions to international cooperation. Taking part in this cooperation is essential to the future development also of Norwegian research and development activities.

Norway on her side also possesses advanced technology and forefront competence in a variety of fields. The potential for a fruitful and mutually beneficial cooperation should be the best.

I find it particularly promising that the Norwegian Institute of Technology at the University of Trondheim and the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Tokyo have already initiated several cooperation projects. The formal framework now established will certainly stimulate further cooperation of this kind, and this in turn may also lead to increased industrial cooperation between our two countries.

The cooperation between our universities should also be seen

in the broader context of the crucial challenges we are facing together as an international community: the threatening degradation of our environment, the outrageous poverty of a majority of the world population, the need for a sustainable development in order to safeguard our common future. These challenges cannot be met without international cooperation, and this international cooperation must include advanced research. Together, we must put technology at the service of humankind. Research and technology alone certainly cannot resolve the problems, but on the other hand they can hardly be resolved without research. Working on some of this research together is a way of recognizing our common responsibility and our interdependence.

Presidents, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me conclude by congratulating the University of Tokyo and the Norwegian Council of Universities on their agreement on academic exchange and cooperation. I wish you a successful partnership.