

Press Release



The Asia Cosmopolitan Awards Commemorative Forum was Held to Commemorate the Establishment of the Awards

Nara, February 3, 2012 – The Asia Cosmopolitan Awards Commemorative Forum entitled “*Moving towards Economic and cultural Integration in East Asia*” was held in Nara, Japan by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) and Nara Prefecture. This was an open forum, with more than 300 participants.

The forum was opened by remarks from Mr. Shogo Arai, the Governor of Nara Prefecture, followed by speeches from H.R.H. Samdech Norodom Sirivudh, Founder and Chairman of the Board of Directors, Cambodian Institute for Cooperation and Peace (CICP) and Dr. Takashi Shiraishi, President of the Institute of Developing Economies (IDE), Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO). H.R.H. Sirivudh expected that the establishment of the Asia Cosmopolitan Awards would lead to an opportunity to develop human networks and make relationships stronger, and might even bring wisdom to East Asia!



Dr. Surin Pitsuwan, the Secretary General of ASEAN delivered a speech on “The Future of Asia”. He referred to the challenge of building a community in East Asia, which is a diverse region with a greater variety of religions, languages, and ethnicities than Europe. Mutual cultural respect and appreciation are essential. He expects Japan to take the initiative in building a community from the diversity of East Asia.

The next speech was delivered by Prof. Fukunari Kimura, Chief Economist of ERIA, who stressed that the international division of labor in production processes and tasks brings with it the opportunity for a new relationship between advanced and developing countries. For example, East Asia reveals a new model of development based on connectivity by providing an international environment for the unbundling of formerly continuous processes.

In his special lecture, Prof. Robert Campbell stressed that it is necessary to change social systems to introduce a framework which can allow an economy to acquire heterogeneous people from outside the country, and facilitate their collaborate with each other.

A Panel discussion on “Cosmopolitan Role and Expectation” moderated by Prof. Osami Kiyomoto from Ritsumeikan University featuring Ms. Hanae, the essayist, Dr. Campbell, and Mr. Shogo Arai, completed

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the forum. They had a memorable discussion on “the meaning of cosmopolitan” from their differing points of view and backgrounds.

Mr. Hidetoshi Nishimura, the Executive Director of ERIA closed the forum. He expressed his gratitude to all the participants who had attended the Asia Cosmopolitan Awards 2012 in Nara, Japan. He also mentioned that the award is expected to promote and strengthen the people to people connectivity in the wide and diverse Asian region, and raise awareness of the need for regional cultural exchange.

The result of the award is expected to be reported in the year end ASEAN Summit.

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