
Panel Discussion 2 “Globalization and Youth Employment”

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Purposes of Panel Discussion 2

Moderator Suwa:

In this session, we are going to discuss globalization and measures for youth employment with all gathered here. Regarding the present situation and measures concerning youth employment, I would first like to hear the opinions of the panelists from their own perspectives, and then have a discussion on how all parties concerned, including the youth themselves, international organizations, governments, trade unions, enterprises, and all those who interact with young people, can respond to improve youth employability and look at the path toward the future.

Now, I would like to show you a graph of power point I have prepared concerning the relationship between age and evaluation in the world of work. The bottom left represents childhood. In this period, you may be well taken care of, but not highly evaluated in society nor counted on by other people, except for very special children, such as in the case of Mozart. The vertical axis represents social position while the horizontal axis stands for economic position. When you move into adolescence from childhood, you still cannot find your place in society, but will enter into the world of work out of a gradually increasing economical necessity. In this world of work, youth will improve their working capabilities and become reliable persons through learning by themselves, through being supported and educated by people around them, and, above all, through accumulating working experiences every day. As you could see, the four young people who addressed their opinions in the preceding session moderated by Professor Genda, are steadily learning to support themselves with a dream to be a member and get rewards in the world where you are evaluated in economic terms, and further to become highly-valued persons, both socially and economically. When you enter into

middle age, some people start to gain a very high social evaluation while some establish a responsible position in their respective workplaces. Additionally, as their level of skills, capabilities, or knowledge and experiences are enhanced, so is their market value, their employability, and their economic rewards improved. Then, as you become older, you may have an established standing and gain respect in society or may receive due respect, but unfortunately at the same time, you may be requested to retire in terms of economy. It may be because your way of thinking become old, your abilities or experiences become obsolete, or the industry itself is no longer needed, among other reasons. To sum up, the elderly receive due respect socially but are not needed economically while the young are in demand economically but are not respected socially. And this situation can be assumed to be the “normal” condition. Now, the most worrisome and painful situation is if you are neither respected nor needed. This is the most miserable situation for young people to be in. Therefore, we must first think of this point when we work on measures for youth employment. The next situation is the normal condition, in which you are not so respected but duly needed. Then, how can youth move into a situation in which they are needed, and eventually into an ideal situation where they are both respected and needed. I hope this session will be devoted to a discussion to find a breakthrough, or how to formulate programs that lead to this ideal condition as soon as possible and how to accelerate such programs.

Vocational Education and Training Measures in Six Countries in Asia

Prof. Imano:

I have worked as a member of the Japan Institute for Labor Policy and Training and have surveyed vocational training measures in six countries in Asia. My research revealed that despite diversities in policy among these nations, there are some points they share, and I would like to bring these into focus.

After the financial and economical crises in the late 1990s, each nation in Asia changed its policies for vocational education and training. In particular educational training for youth, the increased needs for human resources amid attempts to recover the economy and the efforts of companies to demonstrate their competitiveness while coping with globalization during the post-crisis economic recovery. Under these circumstances, two new challenges in human resources development have been observed in a broader perspective. The first change is that increasingly sophisticated needs for human resources makes it very difficult, especially for people with low academic background or little vocational training, to find employment. Accordingly, enhancement of the general academic level of such people should be the primary target of vocational education and training policies. The other issue is while each country sees an increasing percentage of its population having higher academic qualifications and a considerable number of college graduates pouring into the labor market, these highly educated people are facing difficulties in finding job opportunities. Accordingly, the second problem arises. That is, what kind of training should be provided for those who are highly educated but

are having difficulties in finding a job, or more explicitly, highly educated people who still do not have the abilities to meet ever-diversified and ever-changing requirements for human resources. To sum up, we are facing two challenges: namely raising the general level on one hand, and training the highly educated, never an issue in the past, on the other. Taking these circumstances into account, I am going to introduce some of the new movements commonly found among various nations.

One movement is to work out policies for human resources development in this dynamically changing time, aiming at lifetime capability development, in order to maintain the so-called “employability” over the decades that one may work in one’s life. What I personally believe is the most important point is that the integration of education and training has accelerated in each country. Again, in order to formulate new policies and breakthrough the present situation by integrating these two factors is the first movement. Equally as important is the movement to integrate educational training and employment. This symposium introduced the dual system of the Japanese version, but similar systems also exist in Thailand, Korea, and Singapore. Considering these trends, what should we note when reinforcing human resources development policies for young people? Firstly, it will become even more crucial to establish a collaborative partnership between the governmental bodies responsible for education, and those responsible for vocational training, and enterprises as actual employers, as the integration between education and training, and the integration between educational training and employment accelerate. Secondly, when linking education, training, and employment on the basis of “can do ability,” it will be critical to determine what exactly “can do ability” is, how it can be evaluated, how the results of the evaluation can be reflected in programs for education and training, and how it can be linked with vocational qualifications. Accordingly, some countries are reviewing and reconstructing the definition of “can do ability.” At the same time, the integration of education and training or educational training and employment is a form of training program which Asian countries, including Japan, are not familiar with. Therefore, when we promote such programs, we are likely to face a variety of problems to overcome. The content of such training programs is undoubtedly an issue. Besides that, we need to build up various systems; for example, how to establish systems for enterprises to accept trainees, and how to set up the conditions for trainees when participating in training within enterprises. However, in reality, the international foundation is far from solid in regards to international comparison of best performances or practices on investment in educational training and information exchange. Therefore, in creating best practices, I think it is very important to establish systems that enable countries in Asia and around the globe to exchange information on educational investment portfolios, by using opportunities in international conferences like this symposium.

Problems and Measures for Youth Employment in Korea

Dr. Kim:

First of all, globalization has brought two types of impact on the economy: positive impacts and negative ones. Positive impacts may be represented by rational distribution of resources, economy of scale, efficiency, and free trade. At the same time, negative impacts include such problems as economic controls, excessively intensified mutual dependency in various economic layers, and widening income disparities. Other issues include the hollowing out of industry, increasing youth unemployment rates, non-regular employment, and so on.

Now, I'd like to move on to the next issue. The Republic of Korea had demonstrated very favorable economic performances over the past several decades by making the best use of technologies and resources. Under such circumstances, many Korean enterprises attempted to expand their businesses globally. Companies that entered into the foreign market numbered 368 in 1998, and gradually increased over the following years. In the meantime, however, under the very powerful labor movement in Korea, trade unions boosted wages in a short period, creating surging labor costs. As a consequence, many Korean enterprises sought for alternative sites for their business operations. Thus, in Korea, the effects I mentioned at the beginning can be attributed to wage increases, as well as globalization, and has been causing industrial hollowing out of manufacturing industry. The next diagram shows the impact of globalization on Korean youth. The figures at the bottom indicate overall unemployment rates, while the upper line plot refers to unemployment rates for young people. The level of unemployment is comparatively lower than that in Western countries. As a matter of fact, however, many Asian countries may possibly have hidden unemployment, as families often take care of their unemployed family members. Now I'd like to focus on the background of the high youth unemployment rate in Korea. Due to advances in technological innovations and industrial structures, the number of people needed to generate a GDP of 1 billion won dropped from 68.7 persons in 1990 to 41.9 persons in 2002. In other words, what happened was economic growth without the creation of employment. Another issue is the mismatch between the demands from industry and supply from school education. Korean society prefers to hire experienced workers. As for company recruitment, experienced workers accounted for only 39.6% of total recruitment in 1996, but this number jumped to 79% in 2004. In addition, there is the issue of job preference. Because of differences in wages and performance, many people wish to become employees of large corporations, shunning small- to mid-sized companies. This results in big differences in the seriousness of labor shortages between large corporations and small- to mid-sized companies.

The next statistics show the trends in labor shortages in Korea. The next focus is on the impact of globalization on the young in Korea, as the OECD pointed out in its advice to Korea. Dismissal is strictly restricted in Korea. Enterprises are reluctant to hire regular employees, and so the number of non-regular employees has been increasing. Further, due to these factors, duality in the labor market has been intensified. The solutions suggested by the OECD are an enhancement of measures for the socially vulnerable, targeting non-regular employees, and improving the employment flexibility of regular employees.

Lastly, I would like to list up some measures for globalization: to have right values and a clear

vision for work; to tackle the realities of globalization; and to think about work for a lifetime, not about the workplace for a lifetime.

Youth Employment and Efforts of Trade Unions

Ms. Yacob

I would like to present the labour movement's perspectives on the challenge of youth employment. As a whole, Asia has a significant number of young people among its population. This is both a cause of great potential as well as a challenge particularly in ensuring that they remain gainfully employed. The rate of youth employment varies considerably from country to country depending on the economic condition. Overall the level of youth unemployment is higher in most countries compared to that of workers of other age groups. In the developing countries, where opportunities are limited and there is poor investment in education, many young people work in the informal sector in jobs that pay low wages, provide little protection and may even be detrimental to their health and safety. The challenge for governments is how to provide access to other opportunities to the young through education and skills upgrading so that they can migrate to decent jobs in the formal sector.

In the more developed economies, where jobs are more knowledge intensive, the education system plays a critical role in preparing the young for jobs in the growing sectors of the economy. Where a mismatch occurs, the young will be poorly prepared for the labour market which is not only a waste in investment but also causes frustration and unhappiness among them when they are unable to find work despite having the qualifications. As job requirements are constantly evolving due to the changes in the economy, new technology and demands, close collaboration between industry needs and the education system is important to ensure that the young acquire the relevant skills and knowledge required by the labour market.

The young today are also entering a labour market which is more challenging and fragmented with the proliferation of part-time, casual and temporary work. Whether or not this has an impact on how the young today view the future, plan their careers, or whether it will affect decisions on marriage and parenthood, is not clear as there is not much research or studies done on this and is an area where perhaps more could be done to help policy makers.

One common complaint among the young today is that they are often not able to benefit from the opportunities that are available in the labour market because employers often cite their lack of experience as a reason for not employing them or giving them the chance to try new experiences or opportunities. It is therefore important that employers keep an open mind and provide adequate opportunities for the young to acquire experience and contribute effectively.

It is also important that governments provide appropriate career guidance or counseling assistance to young people to help them find and retain jobs in a rapidly changing environment. A slow career progression due to circumstances such as a seniority based wage system can cause frustration among the young as they see little recognition of their contributions and abilities. A more dynamic remuneration system which is more challenging to the young will be

one which recognizes not only loyalty but also performance. At the same time, a supportive environment at work where more senior members of the team participate actively in the transmission of values and experience will greatly help in the integration of the young at the workplace.

The Singapore National Trades Union has been very active in running programs and activities to promote the employability and employment of workers in Singapore, including our young. Through such activities, the NTUC has already trained 180,000 people since our efforts started a few years ago with heavy government funding. About one third of our members are below the age of 35 years, and most are covered under collective agreements, one important way of addressing any labour market imbalance. In this way, we are also able to narrow the wage gaps that exist between young and older workers for the same work that they do. The NTUC also assists in job placement efforts of retrenched workers and about 30% of those who register at our employment service office are under the age of 30 years, indicating that even young people find our service useful.

Labor Market and Measures for Youth Employment in China

Ms. Zhang

I would like to present my personal opinions about youth labor from the perspective of the labor market.

Improvement of the environment for the labor market is a key for young people to make a contribution to society through employment. Although the supply of young workers in the labor market in the People's Republic of China is great, an unlimited supply is not guaranteed for the future. The second characteristic is that Chinese society is facing the major challenge of providing young workers with opportunities to work as long as possible in their future. It is the responsibility of the government to improve vocational capabilities through education. The third issue is that, as most young people live in rural areas, they move into metropolitan areas for job opportunities, and society should also be responsible for supporting these migrants. The fourth issue is that the formal labor market lacks flexibility and therefore needs further relaxation of regulations. On the other hand, the informal sector requires the enactment of laws and the tightening of regulations as employment protection is not sufficient.

Now, I would like to highlight the progress of youth employment measures in China. Considering the characteristics of youth employment, government intervention is indispensable, though such intervention must be implemented through taking account of the roles of the labor market. In a sense, the mechanism of the labor market must be used to resolve the issues facing youth employment. Second, the labor market has seen a growing formal sector and accelerated integration. While the growth of the informal sector has slowed down since last year, job creation by the formal sector has been expanding, providing youth employment opportunities. A series of government policies has been implemented to stabilize employment and provide social security to workers in the informal sector, enabling young

people, even in the informal sector, to get jobs that are better in quality than previously. Third, the employability of young people has improved. Efforts have been made to introduce various systems, such as vocation or skills appraisal systems, workers development systems, and qualification systems. Nevertheless, job opportunities are still insufficient. Undoubtedly, improving education, especially the enhancement of secondary education, is crucial for future youth employment. Development of labor-intensive industries will continue to be important. Support for unemployed youngsters, especially those who got laid off from the restructuring of national enterprises, will be required. To conclude my talk, I would like to emphasize that we must build up a foundation just like when constructing a high-rise building. This may also apply to youth employment. There is no doubt that it is important to acquire international experience, including in employment services, both in policies and in practice. However, above all things, the domestic circumstances of each country are the most important factor. When both of these aspects are fully addressed, the challenge of youth employment can be resolved.

Arrangement of the Point of Discussions

Moderator Suwa:

I would like to summarize the key points that have been addressed so far.

First, all countries and international organizations seem now to be more aware of the importance of youth employment. Second, although the challenges are apparently different from country to country due to each nation's history and culture and stage of industrial development, they all may be facing similar problems. Third, countries in Asia seem to have been reviewing or implementing almost the same measures. Fourth, which I believe to be the most critical, amid the progressing globalization, no government, nor social partner, nor even academic expert in some cases, can keep pace with the changes all the time. Fifth, it must be noted that, even when they appear to be catching up with the changes, those in the position of developing appropriate measures are often very advanced in years, and therefore their recognition of the times tends to fall behind. Sixth, a new paradigm is called for. One example of such a paradigm is, as Professor Imano reported, the integration of education and vocational training and employment. Other panelists also raised the issue of how to integrate industrial policies, economic policies and employment policies. I believe Ms. Yacob talked about the integration of various policies in consideration with working careers. As shown here, I believe we are pressed to come up with a new paradigm, some new form of integration for youth employment policies.

Employability and Educational Training and the New Movement in Employment

Moderator Suwa:

In the latter half of this discussion, I would like to hear the opinions of the panelists, with a primary focus on the employability of youth. Another pillar of this session is the new movement of integration between educational training and employment. I would welcome your thoughts on possible inventive approaches, especially about how to improve the motivation of youth.

Ms. Stewart:

It was interesting to find how common the panelists' messages were. One is about the information sharing that Professor Imano, Ms. Yacob and Ms. Zhang pointed out. As part of YEN (Youth Employment Network), the Secretary-General of the United Nations requested the ILO to conduct a global analysis of national action plans on youth employment in each country. It would be very much appreciated if the Government representatives present today would provide your UN delegates with the useful information you shared with us this morning so that a good global analysis could be made.

Secondly, regarding employability, today's discussion centers on importance of education, training, lifelong learning and how to find new integrated approaches. Here, I wonder what an appropriate pedagogy, or how to learn, is that should come with such new approaches? As society changes in conjunction with globalization, I believe there are strategies that enable us to learn more flexibly and quickly.

Before this session, we heard the impressive presentations of the four young Japanese workers. As we saw clearly, youth is not the problem, but rather the solution. We should show respect for young people's abilities. I myself have two sons and have no doubt about their flexibility and learning strategies, especially with IT-related technologies. Young people have experiences, capacities and capabilities ready to be used and will be able to make valuable contributions to the society at their age. What is important is to ask ourselves, as employers and policymakers, how we can draw out young people's aspirations and motivation for work, and whether we are satisfying their aspirations, or whether we can formulate policies and solutions for their needs.

Ms. Zhang:

I think education is most important in improving employability. China is facing a situation where, every year, 50% of junior high school graduates, and 50% of high school graduates do not advance to higher educations. In order to enhance employability, the provision of sufficient education is the primary challenge. China is actually seeing new movements to integrate employability and education. But we should first tackle the basics. As for the motivation for work and voluntary efforts, I think the establishment of sound systems would serve as the primary foundation in promoting such motivation. I believe these systems will draw out the creativity and energy from young people.

Dr. Kim:

Regarding systems for employability enhancement, I would like to propose three different approaches. First, an enhancement of the linkage between the industry and educational institutions. It is also important to encourage competition among universities. Second, the provision of government support. In other words, to guarantee the independence of education. This further implies a reduction in costs for re-training in industrial circles, efforts to stabilize employment, and governmental support for such efforts. Lastly, encouraging every individual's voluntary efforts for self-realization through lifetime learning. For young people, it is vital to enhance their own competitiveness through self-development and self-empowerment in the present environment.

Ms. Yacob:

I would like to emphasize two points. One is that since young people are familiar with IT, we should make better use of IT to establish two-way communications using a different teaching approach. Such an approach would make it possible to teach in a more effective way.

The other is innovation and creativity. Although young people are creative and innovative, they are not fully utilized because many organizations are rigid and offer few opportunities for the young to demonstrate their capabilities.

Taking an instance of public officials in Singapore, young officials are divided into some groups so that each group can compile various ideas and proposals. They work on these ideas and proposals, together with other members, and also with their seniors. This kind of grouping has proved very effective. The formation of such groups should be promoted, then pick up their proposals and ideas and deliver them to higher levels to actually implement them.

Prof. Imano:

I have previously mentioned that the integration of education, training, and employment is needed. That means the contents of education or training do not match the needs of the industry. I addressed it as an issue on the supply side, which is responsible for educating and training human resources and sending them out to the industries. However, lastly, I would like to refer to the opposite side of the story, especially with Japan's situation in mind. If you ask Japanese enterprises that hire young people, "What kind of people does your company need," they just answer, "Good people." What does a 'good person' mean? If the business world points out education and training as an issue, industry itself must clearly define what kind of persons they want as their employees and make efforts to deliver this defined concept to society. Otherwise, youth will become confused or lost.

Questions and Answers from the Audience

Audience question 1:

This could be one instance of information sharing. I would like the panelists from countries in Asia to describe some of the measures implemented in their countries, if there are any, as

useful information for other countries, or particularly for Japan.

Ms. Yacob:

I totally agree with the way the questioner thinks. For example, I think it is useful to gather information of best practices under an ILO-led initiative so that all countries can share it.

As a small country without natural resources, Singapore is emphasizing education and training, that is, the development of human resources. People with high academic abilities go to colleges or junior colleges, while people with less academic abilities learn at such places as vocational training schools or technical training schools. Everyone is given a chance to improve their own ability. In the past, education was provided equally on an across-the-board basis, in a sense. However, we have made attempts to change our educational approach so that we can provide education that meets the varying needs of all children, because each child has different abilities and needs. At the same time, we are also emphasizing improvements in skills, especially skills of those who have already started their career in society. The pace of change in workplaces is too fast, and so is the speed of economic movement. An economic boom may only last for a few years, for example. Therefore, we need to continually provide training to people so that they can be prepared for such changes. To that end, a fund for skills improvement was established in 1992, and all employers are required to contribute to this fund. This is important for employers of small- to mid-sized companies, who cannot provide training by themselves for their employees.

Dr. Kim:

To improve the employability of youth, I think the educational system plays the most vital role. Since Korea is an equal society, Koreans cannot accept disparity in education or differences in the grade of college education. This has caused people to develop a stereotyped mentality, and even the abolishment of entrance examinations. Under such an educational system, the business sector cannot find college graduates who satisfy their needs, and, during the past ten years, we have been facing a very serious problem. That is, although the number of college students has doubled, the quality is very low. Therefore, to change the educational system by introducing a system that has proved successful in other countries is what is needed most in Korea now.

Ms. Zhang:

College graduates in China are confronted with employment issues. 20-30% of them cannot find jobs after graduation as soon as possible. Accordingly, the central government has formulated some policies to promote college graduates employment. One of these is encouraging and favoring such college graduates to work in the poorer western regions. Graduates are offered a post usually in grass-root level of government, after 1-3 years, they could have new choices. I find this effective, because they can learn a lot from working in such places.

Ms. Stewart:

In reference to sharing information, this symposium is a good opportunity to do so and I would like to thank the Government of Japan to have organized it. The Asia and Pacific Skill Development Programme (APSDEP) is another forum, again supported by the Government of Japan, which is a network of vocational training institutions in the Asia and Pacific region through which, I would suggest, people in this region could share experiences. Another important point is to nurture culture of entrepreneurship in the curricula. In the Voices of Youth session, Ms. Omura, a bamboo crafter, mentioned she not only created the products but also sold them in the stores. The ILO can support the promotion of entrepreneurship like hers.

Prof. Imano:

For society, the world of business, and every enterprise, investment for the future is indispensable. Generally speaking, there are three types of investments: investments into equipment, investments into technological development, and investments into human resources. Governments, company executives, and leaders of industrial circles actually share information on future investments in equipment and technologies, globally or domestically, and have formulated policies based on such shared information. However, they do not share information on investments in education or training. Therefore, I call for information sharing at the level of basic policymaking, and the formulation of best policies based on this.

Additionally, countries in Asia are making similar efforts, such as the dual system, linkages between vocational training qualifications and those of educational training, and improvements to college student internships. I think it is very important to share both successful examples and unsuccessful ones.

Moderator Suwa:

Looking at the four countries of our Asian panelists (China, Korea, Singapore, and Japan), we can find several common points. They have all been very enthusiastic about education. This is probably because people understand investments in education are crucial for economic development and social stability. However, as Professor Imano has just mentioned, sharing information about this point among people, including company executives, has not been successful, as recent movements show. Therefore, I agree with his opinion that we should trigger the exchange of best practices by actively taking opportunities like today's discussions.

Audience question 2:

It would be appreciated if you could tell us about any internships provided to high school students in Asian countries.

Ms. Zhang:

China offers an internship program for high school students, which provides two- to three-year

vocational training to high school graduates so that they can prepare for work in society. In China, many people go to vocational training schools besides formal education to undertake training. Such training is regarded as public education but does not have any academic aspects. Students who take such educational programs are offered opportunities to undertake practical training at school and/or in a factory. The second example of internship provides students enrolled at vocational schools and college students with opportunities to actually work in internship base. They can acquire many modern technologies and practical experiences of various occupations. The third example is that enterprises with good reputations are selected and students are sent to such enterprises for internship.

Dr. Kim:

In Korea, the targets for internships are college graduates, in principle. Especially after 1998, Korea suffered from foreign currency shortage amid the economic crisis, and few enterprises hired new employees. Therefore, the government supported enterprises to open their doors to college graduates by subsidizing half of their salaries. This support reduced the youth unemployment rate. However, what happened was that even when an enterprise opened its door to 100 interns, for example, it selected only a few of them and released all the rest. Consequently this system lost popularity. Currently, Korea is attempting to develop a better program by reviewing the initial aim of internship programs.

Ms. Yacob:

In Singapore, internship is provided to students-students of technical training schools and vocational capabilities development schools. The program basically targets students over the age of 16, and dispatches the students to enterprises for a certain period. This is carried out as part of the school curriculum and is a prerequisite for the completion of technical education or vocational capabilities development. Another type of cooperation is also available. This provides opportunities of managing a company to students of vocational capability development school. They are commissioned by companies to sell specific products at their schools. In other words, this program sets up a small experimental environment where students take the role of retailers. Through this system, they acquire experiences of business management such as marketing, forecasting, product planning, and resource allocation. This program is implemented in collaboration with enterprises, but vocational capabilities development schools or technical training schools receive considerable amount of subsidies from the government, and employers are supposed to just offer opportunities.

Ms. Stewart:

Adopting one country's model in another is always a challenge but the dual system in Germany has been used in many countries, including Japan. Collaborative models that integrate education, training, and employment in various forms will definitely increase.

Summary

Moderator Suwa:

I would like to hear the final comments of each panelist before concluding this session.

Prof. Imano:

I think the integration of education, training, and employment and information sharing across borders are the key concepts. As for the former, I, as a researcher, am particularly interested in the experiences accumulated through the history of Europe. Especially, from my non-European perspective, the dual system appears to have been revived after the late 1990s. On that point, I would like to exchange information with people from Europe, too.

Ms. Yacob:

I believe the training provided at present is overly related to work and the scope is very restricted. People who undertake training directly connected with their work may have difficulties when changing a job. Therefore, critical skills should be skills that enable people to acquire new skills to switch to other jobs.

Dr. Kim:

I once asked one of friends who was teaching at college, “What kind of advice do you give to your students?” He stresses that employability that responds to the place where you find yourself is critical in today’s globalized society. He tells his students who are looking for jobs to think about employability from a broader perspective, not restricting the scope to just within Korea but expanding it to China, Japan, or other countries. He emphasizes that, in this world of globalization, employability differs from place to place.

Ms. Zhang:

The first thing we need to do is to take specific actions. For example, we should conduct research. The first step is to grasp the situation of youth employment in depth, which can be realized through conducting special survey, indeed we are doing such kind work, and obtain comprehensive understanding about youth employment through research about the outcome of the survey, which will provide valuable suggestions for relative policy making.

Ms. Stewart:

I would like to briefly mention three points. During this symposium, we have been mainly focusing on the importance of education and training, and I must restate that a considerable amount of investment is required to provide high quality education. As the participants of the Tripartite Meeting on Youth Employment held in Geneva mentioned, this should be understood in the context of macro level policies. Secondly, I expect to see many of you in Geneva next June when the International Labor Conference will hold a general discussion on youth

employment. Lastly, I would like to thank the chairperson for handling this panel discussion in such an effective way.

Moderator Suwa:

I would like to conclude this session by confirming some points. First, we should share best practices by adopting a more global approach. I feel I cannot emphasize this point too much. Second, when we think of issues such as employability, education and training, and employment, we must ensure that young people do not enter into careers that will only lead them into a dead end. In order to ensure that young people, who may need to work for 30 years or 40 years to come, can continue meaningful work throughout their lifetime, and that they can make contributions to society and realize their potential in their own way, we must focus particularly on careers for youth, careers that progress into the future, not the careers of the past. From this session, it has become crystal clear that whether the policies, workplaces, and education can secure and support the future careers for young people is most critical. In a word, the discussions we have had over two days at this symposium has reconfirmed the significance of an old proverb: “Strike while the iron is hot.” We have become aware again, at the opening of the 21st century, that the world is facing a challenge of developing human resources into leaders of the next generation, and so we must strike the iron while it is hot. But, how and for what? We need to continue our discussions and experiments to identify these points. To that end, I must emphasize again, that we need to share best practices and repeat our experiments towards a better future.