

Remarks at the Miraikan Science Expo in Tokyo, Japan

April 24, 2014

Konnichiwa. Please sit down. Thank you so much. Well, I want to thank Dr. Mohri and everyone at the Miraikan for welcoming me here today. And it is wonderful to see all of these outstanding students. Dr. Mohri is a veteran of two space shuttle missions, embodies the spirit that brings us here together: the incredible cooperation in science and technology between Japan and the United States.

I want to thank all the students that I had a chance to meet with as we went around the various exhibits. We heard a message from the International Space Station. We saw some truly amazing robots, although I have to say, the robots were a little scary. They were too lifelike. They were amazing. And these students showed me some of their experiments, including some soccer-playing robots that we just saw. And all of the exhibits, I think, showed the incredible breakthroughs in technology and science that are happening every single day.

And historically, Japan and the United States have been at the cutting edge of innovation. From some of the first modern calculators decades ago to the devices that we hold in our hands today—the smartphones that I'm sure every young person here uses—Japan and the United States have often led the way in the innovations that change our lives and improve our lives.

And that's why I'm so pleased that the United States and Japan are renewing the 10-year agreement that makes so much of our science and technology cooperation possible. Both of our societies celebrate innovation, celebrate science, celebrate technology. We're close partners in the industries of tomorrow. And it reminds us why it's so important for us to continue to invest in science, technology, math, engineering. These are the schools—these are the skills that students like all of you are going to need for the global economy, and that includes our talented young women.

Historically, sometimes, young women have been less represented in the sciences, and one of the things that I've really been pushing for is to make sure that young women, just like young men, are getting trained in these fields, because we need all the talent and brainpower to solve some of the challenges that we're going to face in the future.

Earlier today Prime Minister Abe and I announced a new initiative to increase student exchanges, including bringing more Japanese students to the United States. So I hope you'll come. Welcome. And it's part of our effort to double students' exchanges in the coming years. As we saw today, young people like you have at your fingertips more technology and more power than even the greatest innovators in previous generations. So there's no limit to what you can achieve, and the United States of America wants to be your partner.

So I'm very proud to have been here today. I was so excited by what I saw. The young people here were incredibly impressive. And as one of our outstanding astronauts described, as we just are a few days after Earth Day, it's important when we look at this globe and we think about how technology has allowed us to understand the planet that we share and to understand not only the great possibilities, but also the challenges and dangers from things like climate change, that your generation is going to help us to find answers to some of the questions that we have to answer, whether it's, how do we feed more people in an environment in which it's getting warmer? How do we make sure that we're coming up with new energy sources that are

less polluting and can save our environment? How do we find new medicines that can cure diseases that take so many lives around the globe? To the robots that we saw that can save people's lives after a disaster because they can go into places like Fukushima that it may be very dangerous for live human beings to enter into. These are all applications, but it starts with the imaginations and the vision of young people like you.

So I'm very proud of all of you and glad to see that you're doing such great work. You have counterparts in the United States who share your excitement about technology and science. I hope you get a chance to meet them. I hope you get a chance to visit the United States. As far as I know, we don't have one of those cool globes, but we have some other pretty neat things in the United States as well. And I hope we can share those with you if and when you come.

Thank you very much. And I just want you to know in closing that I really believe that each of you can make a difference. *Gambatte kudasai*. You can do this thing if you apply yourselves. So thank you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3:27 p.m. at the National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (Miraikan). In his remarks, he referred to Mamoru Mohri, director, National Museum of Emerging Science and Innovation (Miraikan).

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