

*Keynote Address**A New Stage for Northeast Asian Cooperation*

ZHANG Yunling

Director, Academic Division of International Studies,
Chinese Academy of Social Sciences

Summary

On 13 December 2008 the Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit was held in Fukuoka. The first stand-alone Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit was one which illustrates the new trend in cooperation among the three nations. Agreement on regularizing the stand-alone Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit can be given as a distinguishing feature.

At the summit the further strengthening of cooperation among the three countries was affirmed, and as a result four documents were agreed upon. Notably the "Japan-China-ROK Action Plan" was announced, and with the effecting of commitments in concrete areas of cooperation, the fact that they agreed is of major importance.

In addition, the three countries were as one in the promoting of close coordination toward overcoming the current global economic crisis. That they agreed on the further promoting of economic growth, adherence to market economics, the avoidance of trade protectionism, aiming for the early conclusion of the WTO Doha Round, and a currency-swap deal, shows a genuinely cooperative will toward overcoming the global economic crisis.

As a basic recognition of Northeast Asian cooperation, if the trilateral cooperation by Japan, China, and the ROK progresses smoothly and plays a central role, then I think that Northeast Asian regional cooperation will be able to head in the right direction. Therefore, the three countries of Japan, China, and the ROK, in addition to overcoming issues relating to history, will have to stop fighting with one another over the right to leadership, seek a genuine cooperation among Japan, China, and the ROK, and further continue toward Northeast Asian regional cooperation.

Furthermore, when considering Northeast Asian regional cooperation, continuing forward in a format which is able to embrace as many sectors as possible in what can be called a "functional approach" is of importance.

The Chinese government, to keep to the bare minimum the influence on the global economic crisis, is putting together a variety of measures to stimulate the economy in order to expand domestic consumption. As the three countries of Japan, China, and the ROK have mutually-dependent relationships, if the Chinese economy is able to recover early, then for Japan, China, and the ROK also, and for the Northeast Asian region as a whole as well, it is thought that it will lead to further developments in cooperative relationships.

Yet further, this address is comprised of the following four matters:

- 1 . The developments in Japan-China-ROK cooperation
- 2 . The new trend in Japan-China-ROK cooperation
- 3 . Northeast Asian regional cooperation
- 4 . The role of China

(The responsibility for the wording of this piece lies with ERINA)

[Translated by ERINA]