

Attached Document 4:

Opening Address from Her Imperial Highness, Princess Takamado

2005 World Sustainable Building Conference in Tokyo 27th September 2005

I am delighted to be with you on the occasion of the 2005 World Sustainable Building Conference in Tokyo and I extend a warm welcome especially to those of you who have travelled to Japan from various different parts of the world. It is an honour to be able to host this conference for the first time in Asia.

The history of the human species dates back to around 6 to 7 million ago and of the 17 or so homo species, homo sapiens, with its large brain, survived and dispersed throughout the world. While other species adapted their bodies to a particular niche within the ecosystem, the human species chose to use fire, make tools, wear clothing, invent methods of transportation and build houses. By so doing, he made the whole of the earth his habitat.

At the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the concept of “Sustainable Development” was brought to the fore, but unfortunately in the 13 years since, we have not solved our problems. The human species is the world’s most numerous large animal, and it is undoubtedly true that we have single-handedly drastically impacted the environment of this planet.

I believe it is imperative that concrete action be taken at all levels – international, national, industrial and individual and that it should be done with a sense of urgency. I am greatly encouraged that experts – not only architects and building engineers, but from academia, industries and governments – from different parts of the world have gathered here to exchange views on sustainable building. Together with food and clothing, habitat is a fundamental requirement for living. The construction of buildings that use energy and natural resources wisely are essential for the preservation of our environment.

If we are the dominant species in terms of numbers and we have taken upon ourselves the leadership role, then we have a duty to all existing life forms to maintain the harmony and balance of the earth’s eco-system.

Ladies and gentlemen, I wish you all a successful and “constructive” conference.