

**“BUILDING A BETTER ASIA:  
FUTURE LEADERS’ DIALOGUE”**

*2009-10 Theme*

**“BUILDING THE COMMON GOOD IN ASIA”**

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This has four key elements: shared prosperity, common security, ecological balance, and human security.

The first element is shared prosperity. Economic growth is critical to Asia’s security and well-being. But it must be shared. The region must ensure that no country and sub-region is left behind, or turns out to be a loser in globalization. The benefits of growth must be distributed evenly, both within and between nations. The task of eliminating poverty and deprivation in all parts of Asia should be urgent.

The second is common security. This means reducing inter-state and regional conflicts through confidence-building measures, crisis-management, peacekeeping and peace-building mechanisms. A regional capacity for peacekeeping and peace building and humanitarian operations must be developed with the consent and active participation of all the countries.

The third element is ecological balance. Environment is truly the common heritage of mankind and the region. Environmental stress respects no national boundaries. Asia faces severe challenges to its environment. Rapid economic growth and rising energy consumption in Asia’s major economic players such as China and India could lead to competition for scarce resources and is a key factor in climate change. Large-scale deforestation in Indonesia and the haze resulting from forest fires are a threat to the entire region.

The fourth element is human security. Unlike state or national security, human security focuses on the safety and dignity of the individual. Human security includes freedom from fear as well as freedom from want. Ensuring human security requires protecting human rights through national and international action. Promotion of democracy also helps to improve conditions that affect human security. Ensuring human security requires reducing military competition, preventing a regional arms race, and devoting more resources to education and health.

### **Format of Retreat**

The BABA Retreat has three main goals. First, it hopes to bring together alumni of Nippon Foundation Group with leadership potential to discuss issues of contemporary relevance and importance. Second, it seeks to strengthen the networks among these alumni. Third, it endeavors to encourage Nippon Foundation Group alumni to work together for the benefit of their collective communities.

Previous BABA Retreats have led to the establishment of networks, across countries, age and cultures, of various academics, professionals and policy practitioners across Asia through a cross-cultural exchange of experiences. During the retreat, and more importantly, after the end of the retreat, it is hoped that new measures to build a better Asia are developed.

Topics of discussion at the last BABA Retreat included development and political transition issues, the media, innovation and civil society. Several Asian leaders including the chairman of the Nippon Foundation and a former foreign minister, as well as prominent scholars were among the people that the participants interacted with.

The format of the retreat is split into four main categories. They are lectures, leadership activities, group discussions and organic study tours. The lectures set the tone for the retreat, by bringing up important contemporary issues and sharing the vast and interesting

of the distinguished resource persons. There are various management-style leadership activities to impart a philosophy of leadership to the retreat participants. In what is termed an “open session,” retreat participants are made to come up with topics and trends to be discussed. Discussions are led by participants with the help of the resource persons and facilitators. Each night the resource persons are engaged in a long open conversation, where participants are encouraged to ask them about their leadership and life experiences. Finally, study tours to get a sense of the hyper-local environment are arranged for the participants.

At each retreat, there is an emphasis on digital communication, in the form of audio, internet and video. Social media and various other web-based technology are harnessed to get a discussion going before the retreat, and to ensure that it continues long into the future.