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NEWS RELEASE

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**CEPEX Endorses CULCON Report:  
“Refining the Japan-US Relationship”**

The 23rd Plenary Session of the US-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON\*) was held on June 12-13, 2008 in Tokyo, Japan.

The Japanese and US Committee members adopted by consensus the CULCON Report "Re-defining the Japan-US Relationship (Executive Summary and Recommendations)," and presented it to the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs and the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology.

CEPEX would like to endorse this report and highlight the JET Program as a vehicle through which many of the goals listed in the report can be met. Present and past participants on the JET Program are in the perfect position to act on the four main measures recommended by CULCON to deepen the US-Japan relationship. These are intellectual, educational, grassroots, and cultural exchanges. CEPEX will continue to work on capitalizing on the success of the JET program by seeking to develop networks among former JET participants to encourage them to contribute to the bi-national dialog.

## **“Refining the Japan-US Relationship”**

[http://www.jpfc.go.jp/culcon/conference/23e\\_report.html](http://www.jpfc.go.jp/culcon/conference/23e_report.html)

### **Policy Recommendations**

With a clear recognition of the shared values and democratic tradition while respecting differences of their heritages and cultures, CULCON submits the following five recommendations for activities that will have significant impact and positive influence on the Japan-US relationship as a whole:

1. Promote intellectual exchange through increasing opportunities for policy dialog, developing networks of public intellectuals between the two countries and further promoting media exchanges.
2. Continue to foster interest in Japan among Americans and interest in the United States among Japanese through programs that focus on language education and cross-cultural communications skills for young Japanese and Americans. Invest in language education at an early age, teacher development, and high school and undergraduate exchange.
3. Solidify existing grassroots exchanges and strengthen those in areas of Japan and the United States that have had limited exposure to the other society.
4. Encourage and support networking among the diverse actors involved in Japan-US arts and cultural exchanges in both the non-profit and commercial realms.
5. Consider expansion of exchanges beyond “Culture and Education” in the narrow sense, but focusing on areas which would create opportunities for constructive communication.

In all these areas CULCON encourages capacity building support in addition to specific program support. It is also essential to develop a wider set of stakeholders in exchange activities. CULCON notes with concern that the core institutions of Japan-US exchange, those institutions that have nurtured and developed the lasting personal relationships and deep expertise among intellectuals and leaders in both countries over the past sixty years, are facing difficulties maintaining their operations, due primarily to increased financial uncertainties. These institutions collectively constitute critical infrastructure for maintaining educational, cultural, and intellectual ties between the two nations. Thus CULCON calls on both nations to do their utmost

to maintain them. The two governments have vital roles to play in providing core funding. CULCON calls for greater attention to their needs. CULCON makes this call to the governments. CULCON also calls on the private sectors in both countries, especially to the private sector in Japan to include participation and support for these activities as an integral part of their CSR missions. CULCON urges the Government of Japan to encourage private support of exchange activity through providing increased flexibility regarding tax incentives to allow for greater private support of exchange activity through these vital "core" institutions.