

“Social Equity”

– A Global Issue for Sustainable Growth

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1 “Social equity” – a kind of “inclusive growth” aimed at achieving
 2 consistency between growth and equality – has today become a crucial
 3 issue in economic policy all over the world, while in the Middle East the
 4 “Arab Spring”, which started a couple of years ago, offers hope that
 5 burgeoning democracy there may lead to the pursuit of greater equality
 6 among the region’s people.

7 A distinguished scholar of the Middle East, Associate Prof. Satoshi
 8 Ikeuchi of the University of Tokyo, has contributed a long article based
 9 on his comprehensive analysis of the present and future of Arabic
 10 countries which are still undergoing a possible transition towards a
 11 democratic society. We highlight his article as a Special Analysis.

12 The “Arab Spring” was certainly a manifestation of a global
 13 movement in pursuit of social equity, and our cover stories in this issue
 14 showcase the latest developments in academic and policy-oriented
 15 analyses of “equality” around the world, as the editor-in-chief believes
 16 that social equity or equal income distribution is the most important
 17 issue in achieving sustainable growth. Economic growth and social
 18 equity should not to be considered as contradictory, but rather as
 19 complementary to each other. Growth cannot be sustained without
 20 social equity and social equity cannot be achieved without growth.

21 Mr. John Martin, director for employment, labor and social affairs at
 22 the OECD, and Mr. Michael Förster, a senior analyst, provide an
 23 overview of the issue among OECD countries and a useful framework
 24 for understanding it. Marc Humbert, meanwhile, a distinguished
 25 professor of political economy at the University of Rennes in France,

1 offers a comparative analysis of France and Japan that is a bit different
 2 from the editor-in-chief’s views on growth and social equity but which
 3 will be invaluable in attracting readers’ attention to the vital importance
 4 of social equity in our society.

5 The importance of this issue is, of course, not limited to developed
 6 nations but is also vital to the economic health of Asian countries such
 7 as the ASEAN members and the region’s giant economy, namely China.
 8 Dr. Ponciano S. Intal Jr., senior research fellow at the Economic
 9 Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), introduces the case
 10 of ASEAN, while one of our editorial committee members and senior
 11 fellow of the Economic Research Center at Fujitsu Research Institute,
 12 Mr. Long Ke, reveals the reality in China on this issue.

13 Some recent American films have depicted the serious social conflict
 14 between the rich and the poor in the United States. Our American friends,
 15 Dr. Lundell, president of International Technology and Trade Associates,
 16 and his colleague Ms. Shay Singh, senior analyst, give us an excellent
 17 overview of this most important political issue in contemporary US
 18 politics, an issue of heated debate in the upcoming presidential election.

19 Finally, two leading young scholars in Japan, Associate Prof.
 20 Kazumasa Oguro of the Institute of Economic Research at Hitotsubashi
 21 University, another wise man from our editorial committee, and Associate
 22 Prof. Ayako Kondo of Hosei University, describe the nature of this
 23 issue in Japan.

Naoyuki Haraoka, executive managing director, editor-in-chief of *Japan SPOTLIGHT*