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U.S./Japan to Work Together on Fuel Cell and Hydrogen Research

Supports President Bush's Hydrogen Initiative, International Energy Partnerships

TOKYO, JAPAN — Spencer Abraham, U.S. Secretary of Energy, and Goji Sakamoto, Senior Vice Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry of Japan today signed a joint statement of intent to pursue pre-competitive research and development in the field of fuel cell and hydrogen technologies.

“The United States and Japan both recognize the contribution research and development can make to the development of a hydrogen economy and to cost-effective technologies to meet future global energy needs,” Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham said.

“International cooperation is key to achieving the hydrogen and fuel cell program goals outlined by President Bush in his last State of the Union address.”

Following the signature of a Joint Statement, the two countries intend to bring together appropriate officials and technical experts to participate in workshops and seminars, as well as exchange experts and share information on current policies, technological programs and developments in the area of fuel cells and hydrogen production, storage, and transport technologies

The United States and Japan are members of the International Partnership for the Hydrogen Economy (IPHE). On November 20, 2003 in Washington, DC, Secretary Abraham, joined by Ministers representing 14 nations and the European Commission, signed an agreement formally establishing the IPHE. Secretary Abraham called for international hydrogen collaboration in his speech to the International Energy Agency Ministerial Meeting last April in Paris, France.

The International Partnership supports the deployment of hydrogen energy technologies, establishing collaborative efforts in hydrogen production, storage, transport, and end-use technologies; common codes and standards for hydrogen fuel utilization; and the sharing of information necessary to develop hydrogen fueling infrastructure.

The use of hydrogen as an energy carrier offers several important advantages relative to existing systems. Hydrogen can be derived from multiple feedstocks, which fosters fuel versatility. End-use technologies that employ hydrogen, such as fuel cells, are more efficient and can be used safely while improving the environment and public health.

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