『時代の要請に適合した』研究開発を Research and Development Meeting the Needs of the Times

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当社100周年を記念しての研究開発報告の発行にあたり、一言申し上げます。

先ず、これまでの当社の研究開発活動に多大のご支援・ご協力を頂きました数多くの関係者の皆様に御礼申 し上げますとともに、これまでの研究開発を継続して実践されてきた諸先輩、また現在も研究開発に従事して いる研究員の皆様にも厚く御礼申し上げます。

さて当社は、創立以来、数多くのかなり広範囲な分野において研究開発に取り組んで参りました。その時々の要請に応えながらテーマを設定し、目指した成果をえられたもの、またその時点では目論見どおりの成果は得られなかったが、後に他の研究開発に貢献したもの、あるいは機会を得て華々しく陽の目をみたもの、製造技術基盤を支える機能を果たしつづけたものなど、テーマの歴史も千差万別です。もちろん、その成果は着実に事業に生かされ、その発展に貢献してきたことは明らかなことでありますが、そのことに留まらず、社会の要請にも応え、社会の発展にも寄与してきたものと強く信じる次第です。

今、AGCグループは歩みを止めることなく、新しい未来に向かって歩き続けているわけですが、背中に大きなリュックを背負い、その中にたくさんの財産(研究開発成果)を詰め込んで歩いています。これが軽装で軽やかに歩いていくことができれば、さぞ楽であるかもしれません。しかしこの重い荷物こそが我々の競争優位の源泉であり、その荷物を背負い続けることが、我々の使命ではないだろうか、と確信しております。当然のことながら、荷物の整理・整頓は大切であり、荷物の中身を入れ替えていくこと(当然、背負える容量がある)、荷物の詰め方、荷物の持ち方、等々、時々の変化に対応していくことが重要であることは言うまでもありません。新しく詰めていく物についても全く同じことが言えます。

更には、研究開発に求められるものは、その時代時代によって変化するものであり、その変化に適合し実践されていくべきです。現在では数多くの分野で話題になっている、『時代の要請(変化)に適合する』といったことが、大切なキーワードであると考えています。これからの次の100年にどんなことが起こるか? 誰にも想像することはできませんが、我々旭硝子の研究開発活動においても常に念頭において取り組んでいくべきは、『時代の要請(変化)に適合する』 = 『技術は常に社会の要請に応えられる準備をするとともに、社会の判断を謙虚に受け入れる姿勢が必要である』ことであります。今後とも継続して行われていく我々の研究開発活動が、社会の要請に応えることができるとともに、社業のますますの発展に寄与することを願い、皆様の絶大なご指導・ご支援をお願いして、ご挨拶といたします。

I would like to make a brief address at the publication of the special edition of "Research Reports of Asahi Glass Co., Ltd." for the 100th aniversary of Asahi Glass Co., Ltd.

First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all those concerned who have substantially supported and cooperated with the research and development activities of our company, as well as the many predecessors who have continuously performed research and development and researchers who are presently engaging in research and development.

Our company has performed research and development in a wide range of fields since its foundation. Although we have set themes responding to the needs of the times, the pursuit of these themes has produced various results: (1) research that attained their goals, (2) research that did not produce immediate achievements, but contributed to other research and development at a later stage, (3) research that produced splendid achievements later on, (4) research that continuously supported manufacturing and technological infrastructures. It is obvious that these achievements have steadily been reflected on the business and have contributed to the advancement of the business. In addition, I firmly believe that these achievements not only contributed to our company but also responded to the demands of society and contributed to its development.

At present, AGC group is continuously walking toward the new future without stopping. With a large pack on its back, the company carries a lot of assets (results of research and development) in the pack. If this walk is made in light attire, it would be easier. However, I believe that this load is the source of our competitive advantages, and our effort to continuously carry this load on our back is our mission. As a matter of fact, organizing and sorting out the contents of the bag is sometimes important. Replacing the contents is also important since the volume we can carry is limited. It is naturally important to respond to the changes of the times in terms of how to pack the bag and how to carry it. The same thing can be said about the new items to be added into the bag.

In addition, what is required for research and development tends to change with the times, and research and development should be made in pace with these changes. "Meeting the needs (changes) of the times" is considered to be an important phrase at various fields. No one can imagine what will happen in the coming 100 years. What we should keep in mind is "meeting the needs (changes) of the times" in research and development activities at Asahi Glass. This key-phrase can be translated into the following phrase: "all involved in research and development should consistently prepare to meet the demands of society, and in addition, they should have an attitude to humbly accept the judgment of society." I hope that our research and development activities, which will continuously be conducted in the future, will respond to the demands of society, and contribute to the development of company business. At the same time, I would like to ask your warm guidance and support in the future.