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The presence of U.S. and Russia lent weight to G20

By KAWAKAMI Takashi

G20 Summit held in Turkey on November 15th right after the Paris terror at-tacks, which had occurred on November 13th, utterly changed in its state compared to what it used to be. Although G20 is supposed to be a stage to discuss economic issues, the problems of Syrian and terrorism were highly focused on this time.

Top-level meeting between President Barack Obama and Russian President Vladimir Putin was paid attention globally than was to G20 summit itself. It is said that the atmosphere of their one hour and half minutes-long discussion was rather relaxing than the one held this September even though both of them had a talk with absolute sincerity. Since the terrorism threat by ISIS has been more pressing, they have shared a dead-on mutual interest in which ISIS, the common enemy between U.S. and Russia. The terrorism in Paris as well as in Lebanon plus shooting down a Russian civil airplane produced numerous casualties. It is obvious that these tragedies were subjected to reprisal by ISIS against the military operation in Syria. Now that the terrorist attack by ISIS can be said to have entered the state of global expansion. United States can no longer be comforted any more. President Obama has started to work on the issue at last.

The talk at the highest level between the U.S. and Russia reached an agreement for rushing into a political settlement and they formed a conclusion that the United Nations should arrange an accommodation. Holding an election campaign within one year and half suggested by Russia at Syria peace talks in Vienna has become more likely. German Chancellor Merkel as well as the leader of European Union (EU) expressed their view of a refugee policy that it should not be changed. Some countries sealed their borders due to the concern of surging refugees. The principle of EU, "EU is one land with-out borders," was shaken profoundly. EU itself could be collapsed being confronted with the terrorism if the closure of the national borders should be accelerated. Chancellor Merkel and EU representative feared uneasy about it and they might have given a warning. However, the ideal is now an open question facing the current threats.

Although the solution to the Syrian civil war was receded due to the worsened relations between U.S. and Russia, they conversely began to look for the ways of

political solution by the series of terrorist attacks in Paris. This is a complete change precisely because Obama and Putin could carry out who both are cold and pragmatist. After all, the relations between U.S. and Russia holds the key to Syria issues.

(This is the English translation of an article written by Dr. KAWAKAMI Takashi, Professor of Takushoku University, which originally appeared on the e-Forum "Giron-Hyakushutsu" of GFJ on December 1, 2015.)