

Expectations for the Japan Atomic Energy Commission

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I sincerely thank the daily effort of the members of the Japan Atomic Energy Commission in regards to the promotion of nuclear energy policies in Japan.

I understand that the Commission is the vital body in the deliberate promotion of nuclear energy policies in Japan and the democratic management of nuclear energy administration. I expect the Commission to show leadership in respect to the following matters in order that Japan would solve various problems regarding nuclear energy utilization at home and abroad.

1. Deliberate and Steady Promotion of Nuclear Energy Policy

I expect that the Atomic Energy Commission would arrange the cooperation of the ministries concerned for deliberate and stable promotion of nuclear energy policies in accordance with the Framework for Nuclear Energy Policy. At the same time, I also expect that the Commission would actively conduct follow-ups to and evaluation of the situation of the promotion of these policies, asking the public comments on them including the ones from people working at a nuclear power plant, nuclear research institute and other nuclear facilities, and provide the public explanations of the evaluation in an easy-to-understand manner.

2. Promotion of Mutual Understanding with the Public and the Restoration of the Public Trust

Incidents such as a series of data falsification by electric utilities and the impact of the Niigataken Chuetsu-Oki Earthquake, which occurred in July, on the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant have shaken confidence in nuclear energy activities.

I expect that the Atomic Energy Commission would strongly encourage electric utilities with nuclear power plants and the ministries concerned to address these problems earnestly, so as to further develop their information provision and dialogues with the public, as well as dedicate great efforts to restoring the public trust. At the same time, I expect that the Commission itself would take initiative in the direct discussions with the public and work towards restoring the public trust.

3. Reinforcement of Efforts towards the Implementation of the Geological Repository of High-Level Radioactive Waste

The disposal of high-level radioactive waste is a task that all the people is concerned and

should be steadily promoted toward the implementation within the current generation without shifting the burdens to future generations. I expect the Atomic Energy Commission to endeavor to make steady progress in the process of selecting candidate sites for the construction of disposal facilities, clarifying the role of the ministries concerned and the related organizations in gaining the understanding of the public and local communities about the importance and the safety of the disposal facility.

4. Active Coping with the Global Warming Issue and Ensuring a Stable Supply of Energy

- (1) Issues such as mitigation of global warming and ensuring a stable supply of energy are now regarded as urgent global problems. Nuclear energy is one of the most important measures that can contribute to resolving these problems. I expect that the Conference on the Vision of Nuclear Energy for Global Environment Preservation and Secure Energy Supply established by the Atomic Energy Commission would deliberate the global energy view appropriately reflecting the merits of nuclear energy and arrange the countermeasures against global problems prior to the end of this fiscal year, taking into consideration the Lake Toyama Summit next year.
- (2) The assurance of nuclear nonproliferation, nuclear safety and nuclear security is an important challenge that must be addressed on a global level, under the international conditions wherein not a small number of countries are planning expansion of capacities of or new introduction of nuclear power generation. To this end, I expect that the Atomic Energy Commission would develop a common understanding among Asian countries in regards to the tasks at hand, for the expansion of international nuclear energy utilization, through the Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia (FNCA) and other forums. At the same time, I expect the Commission to play a leading role in the global nuclear community concerning the assurance of nuclear fuel supply, the establishment of the infrastructure necessary for sound introduction of nuclear power generation in developing countries, and so on.

5. Promotion of Strategic Research and Development

I expect that research and development of fast-breeder reactor cycle technologies, would be promoted in a deliberate manner, effectively utilizing the fast-breeder reactor Monju. I also expect that efforts would be made to specify measures for the promotion of challenging innovative research and development, including those that are counted on in the future to break new ground in the field of nuclear energy technologies.