

## 2010 New Year's Address

Jan. 12, 2010

### Japan Atomic Energy Commission

At the occasion of the first meeting of the Commission in the year 2010, the Atomic Energy Commission of Japan would like to send you all greetings and wishes for a peaceful, happy and successful new year and, looking at the year 2010, highlight the issues of primary importance in the year towards making it possible for the nation to enjoy the benefit of nuclear energy in an sustainable manner.

#### 1. Basic understanding

The new administration declared last September, just after inauguration, the Japan's new policy goal to combat global warming. Specifically, at the 64th Session of the United Nations General Assembly held on September 24, Prime Minister Hatoyama pledged that "Japan would seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 25 percent over 1990 levels by 2020" under condition that such enthusiastic targets are shared with all major countries. The Commission believes that in order to meet this goal it is necessary for Japan to make utmost efforts to increase the share of nuclear power generation and promote energy saving.

In the international arena, the Commission observed that increased number of countries are considering to launch nuclear power programme as a measure to improve energy security and combat global warning are rapidly increasing. In this context, expectation will be high for Japan to transfer technology and knowledge of the use of nuclear energy with a view to contributing to such programmes.

Meanwhile, in response to U.S. President Obama's pledge of determination to "pursue a world without nuclear weapons," there were new developments in nuclear disarmament and nonproliferation last year. As an example, at the U.N. Security Council Summit Meeting in September, the member countries agreed on concrete action goals for the international community to pursue concerning nuclear disarmament, nuclear nonproliferation, the peaceful use of nuclear energy, and nuclear security.

The Atomic Energy Basic Law provides the basic principle that "the research, development and utilization of nuclear energy are done only for peaceful purposes while ensuring safety, operating democratically and autonomously, making the results open to the public, and actively contributing to international cooperation." The Law

seeks to promote the research, development and utilization of nuclear energy for the purpose of securing energy resources in the future, striving for the advance in science and technology and the promotion of industries and thereby contributing to the welfare of mankind and the elevation of the national living standard. The Commission will determine policies to achieve these objectives by considering the recent situations at home and abroad, ensuring high transparency and public participation through dialogue with the public.

## 2. Issues of primary importance in 2010

- (1) To make every effort to steadily increase the use of nuclear power generation, under the major premise of ensuring safety, as a useful means for ensuring stable energy supply and combating global warming. Particular emphasis should be placed on improving capacity factor of existing units, plant life management and the promotion of new capacity addition.
- (2) To steadily progress toward the establishment of a nuclear fuel cycle. Particular emphasis should be placed on the securing of intermediate storage capacity for spent nuclear fuel, the start of the operation of the Rokkasho reprocessing plant and the utilization of mixed uranium plutonium oxide fuel (MOX fuel) in nuclear power plants.
- (3) To strengthen efforts to advance the treatment and disposal of radioactive waste and materialize preliminary investigation of potential site for high-level waste disposal facility through public bidding, in particular.
- (4) To expand the uses of radiation in response to social needs and improve the public acceptance of them: in particular, that of medical use and food irradiation.
- (5) To promote nuclear research and development activities ranging from basic and generic researches to those aiming at commercialization of innovative technologies across three different time frames; short-term, medium-term and long-term. Particular emphasis should be placed on nuclear safety research, advance in light water reactor technology, the commercialization of fast breeder reactor and its fuel cycle technology including the resumption of operation of "Monju", and steady promotion of basic and generic researches that support these efforts. Attention should be paid also to foster and secure human resources including knowledge management that are necessary for continuing the research, development and utilization of nuclear energy in Japan.

- (6) To promote bilateral and multinational cooperation, as well as cooperation with international organizations. In particular, emphasis should be placed on the contribution to nuclear infrastructure development in countries wishing to introduce nuclear power by joint efforts of public and private sectors, and the participation in the planning of multilateral approaches for nuclear fuel cycle objective of which are to increase the nonproliferation assurance associated with the global expansion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy.
- (7) To strengthen activities for public outreach for public trust and confidence building on nuclear power. In particular, to understand public expectation for safety and confidence in living next to nuclear facilities, to develop programs for mutual understanding, to ensure public participation in policy-making processes, and to promote initiatives to achieve "coexistence in harmony" among all stakeholders, including central and local governments, operators, and local residents in hosting communities of nuclear facilities.

### 3. Conclusion

Almost five years have passed since the current Framework for Nuclear Energy Policy was established in 2005. While various initiatives based on this Framework have resulted in successful outcomes, new issues have surfaced. As mentioned at the outset, those surrounding conditions around nuclear energy have been drastically changing. Accordingly, the Commission will start the deliberation about the need for a new Framework for Nuclear Energy Policy, taking into consideration of progress in the resolution of important issues and such changes in policy environment.