

## **Country Report of Japan**

### **The Current Status of the Peaceful Utilization of Nuclear Energy in Japan**

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Your Excellencies

Distinguished Delegates

Ladies and gentlemen

It is a great pleasure for me to report you the current status of nuclear energy utilization in Japan.

Twenty months have passed since the severe accident that led to a large and prolonged release of radioactivity occurred at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station of Tokyo Electric Power Company struck by Great East-Japan Earthquake and the resulting tsunamis.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to offer my hearty thanks anew for the various supports from FNCA member countries since March 11, 2011.

The Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station achieved the cold shutdown states last December and the radioactive releases at the Station have been reduced to a negligible level from the viewpoint of radiation dose they bring about at the site boundary, though there remains a long way to go for completing the cleanup of the damaged units.

The radioactive releases from the plant caused radioactive contamination of the land around the plant and about 80,000 peoples are still requested to be out of hometown as the radiation level of their home is higher than 20 mSv/ year and about the same number of peoples have made choice to leave home from the fear of exposure to radiation, though the radiation level of their home is below 20 mSv/ year. Some of them are suffered from a psychological agony due to fear of radiation, separation of family, disruption of communities etc.

Designating 11 municipalities in the former restricted zone or planned evacuation zone as the “Special Decontamination Area”, the Government is promoting decontamination of this area, focusing on the part of which radiation level is lower than 50 mSv per year, to reduce annual additional doses below 20mSv in two years in consultation with residents. In addition, the Government designated 104 municipalities that had contaminated areas of over 1 mSv/y of additional dose as the “Intensive Contamination Survey Area” and has financially supported each municipality to promote decontamination activities in this area.

The most difficult issues we are faced with at present are to reach agreement with municipalities on the site for temporary storage and interim storage facilities that store the radioactive waste from decontamination work and to find an appropriate way of decontaminating forests which cover more than 70 % of their area.

Japan is continuing to collect, document and share with the international community the data and information on the progress of decommissioning of Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and of decontamination activities.

In this connection, it is my pleasure to inform you that the preparation of “the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety” to be held in Fukushima Prefecture this coming December in co-sponsorship with the IAEA is moving steadily. We expect high-level participation in this Conference from as many member states and associated organizations as possible so as to share lessons and knowledge derived from the accident at Fukushima Nuclear Power Station.

It is also my pleasure to report you that Japan established the Nuclear Regulation Authority on 19 September as a new independent regulatory organization that is responsible for “3S”, namely Safety, security and safeguards.

Japan had been reviewing from scratch its national energy policy since September last year, building upon nation-wide discussions, aiming at the mid to long term energy mix that will be able to assure the public. As a result, the Energy and Environment Council of the Japanese Government formulated, on 14 September 2012, the “Innovative Strategy for Energy and the Environment”.

The Council proposed in the Strategy that Japan should strive to maximize both renewable energy use and efficiency of energy use so as to reduce dependence on nuclear energy, while utilizing existing nuclear power stations as an important source of electricity once the NRA confirms their safety, though only two units are in operation at present.

The Council also proposed that Japan should continue to cooperate with the international community as a responsible country where this nuclear accident took place, taking fully into account the lessons learned from this accident, with a view to enhancing nuclear safety in peaceful uses of nuclear energy through the worldwide, and should offer its nuclear technologies of the highest standard in safety to those foreign countries which wish to utilize nuclear technologies of our country, taking into account the situation and the will of those countries.

The Cabinet decided on September 19, 2012 that it will implement future policies on energy and the environmental protection, taking into account of this Strategy, while having discussions in an appropriate manner with related local governments, the international community and others, and obtaining understanding of the Japanese public, by constantly reviewing and reexamining policies with flexibility.

As you know, radioactivity and radiation applications play important roles in both green innovation and life innovation, producing functional materials for high performance batteries, new plants that can absorb a larger amount of carbon dioxide than the existing ones, carbon neutral plastic and so on, on the one hand, and making it possible to diagnose diseases and cure cancers in the medical field, on the other, in addition to the roles in the promotion of basic sciences and productivity in various industries.

Japan has been firmly behind the FNCA activity in this field of radioactivity and radiation applications since its inception. Japan would like to do so in coming years, supporting the FNCA to take up challenging topics in the various fields of research reactor utilization, radioactivity and radiation applications for agriculture, medical care and industrial use, radioactive waste management etc. that are relevant to this region.

Japan sincerely hopes that the FNCA will continue to formulate various cooperative projects that will promote mutually beneficial cooperative activities among scientists and engineers who want to devote to the development of the welfare of the people in the region and will build

lasting links among organization and peoples responsible for the research and development of nuclear energy in the region.

Meanwhile, many emerging countries around the world have seriously explored the use of nuclear energy as a measure to achieve energy security and to prevent global warming since the start of the twenty-first century. Needless to say, any country that utilizes nuclear energy should pursue continuous improvement in all areas related to nuclear safety, security and nonproliferation, adhering to relevant international standards. In the spirit of prospering together, however, Japan has provided its assistance to those countries planning to introduce nuclear power generation in developing infrastructure needed, supporting their effort of capacity building and the establishment of a necessary legal framework, in particular.

Recently Japan Nuclear Human Resource Development Network has been active in supporting foreign applicants who want to take nuclear training programs conducted in Japan and the Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Nuclear Security has been also active in sharing Japan's experience in peaceful and secure use of nuclear energy with countries that are preparing for the introduction of nuclear energy, by offering various training courses.

Japan highly appreciates the initiative of the FNCA to convene a series of the Expert Panel for information and best practices sharing towards greater understanding of issues in the introduction of nuclear energy. Responding to the interest of the FNCA member countries seeking the use of nuclear energy, Japan will contribute to this kind of Panel and other actions called for by the FNCA for information and best practices sharing, believing that it is Japan's duty to share lessons learned from the accident and pursue the highest level of nuclear safety in the region based on such lessons.

In conclusion, Japan will continue the safe use of nuclear energy, while pursuing a greener and healthier society. Japan will also continue to cooperate with the FNCA countries to advance the safe use of nuclear energy as well as the nuclear science and technology for social and economic development in each country, in the spirit of prospering together, saving a green Asia and protecting human lives.

I thank you for your kind attention.