

## Opening Address to the 14th FNCA Coordinators Meeting<sup>1</sup>

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Good morning ladies and gentlemen.

On behalf of Japan Atomic Energy Commission, it is a great pleasure for me to welcome you all to Tokyo for the 14th FNCA coordinators meeting. I would like to thank you all for making the effort to attend this meeting to review and discuss the current status and future direction of various projects promoted in the framework of the FNCA.

Today we mark the two year anniversary of the Great East-Japan Earthquake and tsunami that caused severe accidents at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. In the face of this hardship, Japan has received tremendous outpouring of supports and expressions of solidarity from around the world. Taking this opportunity, I would like to convey the Japanese people's sincere gratitude to the global community for its support extended to us all the time since the accident.

The accident caused a wide range of direct and indirect effects. These include effects on public and environmental health, evacuation and relocation, indirect health effects related to anxiety and avoidance of outdoor play, particularly in the case of children, radiological stigma and symptoms of a post-traumatic nature, as well as effects on property and the economy. The fact that about 160,000 people are still out of their home and are forced to worry about the future of their family and homeland is an indication of the magnitude of the effects.

Japanese government is making utmost effort to promote the activities for environmental remediation in close interaction with the peoples and municipalities affected by the accident, as well as the activities for decommissioning disabled plants at the site. The Government is also supporting a long-term initiative of the Fukushima prefecture to pursue the rebirth of safe and beautiful Fukushima, overcoming such difficulty that the sales of the products from Fukushima Prefecture have been plummeting due to consumer fear, even though they are not contaminated as the production of agricultural and marine produce are strictly restricted at the place where we see the danger of contamination.

Japanese government has also been making an effort for discussing knowledge about the cause and impact of the accident, experiences of remediation and decommissioning activities

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and lessons to be learned from them in various fora, including a number of IAEA initiatives and FNCA activities, with a view to sharing them with international community. We intend to continue doing so in future.

As for energy policy, the Government of Japan had started, about a half year after the accident, the review of energy policy including nuclear energy policy, taking a hard look at the causes and impacts of this accident. The Government had concluded the review last September. Then the general election was held, however, and it changed the Government. And the new Government announced recently that they would go back to the drawing board again.

Accordingly all I can say at this moment is that the government is in a position,

- a) To make it possible to restart the operation of idling nuclear power plants, as an important power source, that have a firm plan to satisfy the new safety rules to be set before July by the Nuclear Regulation Authority, which is a new independent nuclear regulatory agency that came into force last September.
- b) To mobilize all policy resources for promoting conservation of energy, utilization of advanced fossil fuel power stations and renewable energies so as to assure the stable supply of energy, compensating the probable decrease in the contribution of nuclear power in mid- and long-term basis.

The NRA recently published the main points of New Safety Rules for LWRs under consideration. It seems to me that the NRA is, recognizing that a major uncontrolled release of radioactivity, whether driven by natural or malicious causes, is unacceptable, to request the operator to;

- a) Ensure that design base external events such as seismic, seismic-tsunami and other events are properly evaluated.
- b) Ensure extended losses of power and ultimate heat sink are covered under design extension condition and protection of severe accidents is provided by a diverse and flexible alternate capability to supply power and cooling:
- c) Ensure adequate severe accident management procedures including reliable hardened vents for specific reactor containments are in place, taking into consideration of the fact that external events might affect the entire site.

I should add that in connection with this, the NRA has already asked all the operator of nuclear facilities to accelerate the survey and characterization of active faults around the site, including their interlock condition, based on the most up-to-date knowledge in seismology and detailed geological studies including 3D observation of underground structure.

We do not know at present, how each operator will decide when he find that it will cost him a significant amount of money to conform his plant to the new set of rules and requirements

arising from the findings about active faults. It is fair to say, though, that not all of the unit will recover their operation, and the contribution of nuclear power in the future power production in Japan will decrease to a certain extent, as there are small capacity plants and aged plants for which it is difficult to justify a large amount of additional investment.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The FNCA has attached importance to voluntary initiatives of mutual cooperation among experts of member countries to utilize nuclear science and technology for development in each country, and has been facilitating the formulation of cooperative networks among experts as well as relevant institutions in member countries by drawing up various cooperative projects among them under the governance of the Ministerial-level meeting.

The resolution of the last Ministerial-level meeting in Jakarta includes various directions for you to deliberate programs and actions;

- a) to cooperate for developing infrastructure as well as human resources that ensure the highest level of safety and better public acceptability towards nuclear energy in Asian region,
- b) to establish both the networks to promote coordination of RI production among FNCA member countries and the networks between the radiation application sectors and end-users for facilitating practical use, and
- c) to collaborate in the conduct of assessment of the socio-economic impact of radiation applications, among others.

I should also mention that the Ministerial-level meeting has recently directed us to try to make the merit of panel discussions, workshops and seminars in the cases of cooperation for human resource development and knowledge sharing for safe and economical design and operation of nuclear facilities. I believe that this direction is based on the recognition that we should care the competency of junior experts for nuclear energy policy and technology utilization to do with what they have learned from textbooks in dealing with big challenges to be faced with in such activities, and such competency can mainly be honed through discussion or interactions among senior and junior experts.

The JAEC has been firmly behind the coordinators meeting since its inception. We have supported over more than ten years the meeting to play a pivotal role in steering the major activities of the FNCA under the direction of the Ministerial meeting, taking up challenging topics in the various fields that are relevant to this region and formulating various cooperative projects that deal with them. We will do so in future also.

With that, I wish you FNCA coordinators a successful meeting and a pleasant stay in Tokyo.

Thank you for your attention.