

Remarks by Japanese Government Representative at IFNEC Executive Committee Meeting

1. Introduction

- I am Yasuhiro Sonoda, Parliamentary Secretary of the Cabinet Office, representing Japan.
- I would like to thank the Government of Poland for hosting this IFNEC meeting.
- I heartily welcome Argentina and the Netherlands joining this meeting as new IFNEC participants.
- I am very pleased to be able to discuss the future use of nuclear energy with you. I hope we have fruitful results.

2. Toward the international community (focusing on thanks and information disclosure)

- Japan has been plagued with the Fukushima nuclear plant accident triggered by the March 11 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. International cooperation has been very helpful for Japan, including advice from experts in various countries and the IAEA (International Atomic Energy Agency) and provision of protection suits, water treatment systems and remotely controlled robots. I would like to take this opportunity to offer our deep thanks to IFNEC members and other countries for the warm support and cooperation we have received.
- While future progress is still uncertain, we are determined to thoroughly trace the causes of the accident with an international viewpoint and provide the international community with all relevant information promptly and accurately, so as to prevent recurrence of nuclear accidents.
- Japan cannot restore international confidence without the revival of Fukushima. Putting top priority on resolving the Fukushima accident, we will do our utmost to achieve a cold shutdown of the reactors and to minimize the risk of radiation leakage through treatment of contaminated water in order to attain the target to significantly hold down the radiation dose. We will also make full efforts to secure the safety of the Fukushima nuclear plant workers, and steadily implement the Roadmap towards Restoration from the Accident.
- As for Japan's organizational structure for nuclear safety regulation, a Nuclear Safety and Security Agency (NSSA) will be created by April 2012 with a view to separating nuclear regulation from nuclear promotion.

3. Japan's present and future nuclear energy policy

- Meanwhile, I understand that promoting safe use of nuclear energy will continue to be a global issue even after Japan's nuclear accident. Accordingly, we intend to respond to the interest of countries seeking use of nuclear energy. In the past few years, many countries around the world, including emerging countries, have seriously explored the use of nuclear energy as a measure to achieve energy security and to prevent global warming. Japan has provided various support to such countries, including assistance to increase nuclear safety. I also believe that it is Japan's duty to learn lessons thoroughly from the

recent accident at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Stations of the Tokyo Electric Power Company, and to continue to share those lessons with the international community. While Japan has already submitted reports on the accident progression to IAEA twice, we will continue to share information with other countries actively in the future, and will seek to achieve the highest level of nuclear safety..

- Based on the recent accident, Japan will strengthening efforts to increase the safety of nuclear power generation, while also lead the expansion of development and use of renewable energy. We will decide on Japan's desirable medium- to long-term energy composition by around the summer of 2012.
- The new energy and environment strategy attempts to meet the requirement for the combination of “safety and security,” “stable supply,” “economic efficiency” and “environmental adaptation,” aiming to achieve national consensus on a new energy system.
- In this process, Japan is eager to proactively pursue a safer nuclear future in cooperation with other countries and international organizations including the IAEA.

4. Japan's Perception of and Contributions to IFNEC

- We perceive the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation (IFNEC) as an international framework that provides a forum for cooperation to explore mutually beneficial approaches to ensure the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in a manner that meets the highest standards of nuclear safety, security and nonproliferation.
- Japan will continue to support the IFNEC's mission and make contributions as a vice chair of the IFNEC Steering Group and a co-chair of the Reliable Nuclear Fuel Services Working Group.
- We perceive that the Asian region still has strong needs for the introduction of nuclear power generation to meet growing energy demand even after the Fukushima accident.
- In order to respond to such global needs and to build a safer nuclear future, we must train nuclear experts to undertake the future. Building reliable fuel service arrangements is also an important issue.
- Recognizing that the IFNEC Infrastructure Development Working Group and Reliable Nuclear Fuel Services Working Group are contributing to the training of nuclear experts required to achieve the highest level of safety, and that they provide countries with a place to discuss desirable, comprehensive fuel service arrangements, we are willing to continue our cooperation in this area.

5. Closing statement

- Lastly, I would like to offer my hearty thanks anew for the support in various areas that has come from countries around the world for resolving the nuclear plant accident. While great difficulties are expected in resolving the accident, I am confident that we will be able to overcome this by bringing together the wisdom of the world.
- I thank you for your kind attention.