

Statement by Mr. Shinichi Kitaoka, JICA President
High Level Leaders Round Table
Natural Disasters and climate change: Managing and Preparing Differently

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude for the many kind messages of sympathy that we received from around the world following the great earthquake that hit Kyushu, Japan last month.

As you know, Japan is prone to natural disasters and has been learning how to cope with them since the 8th century. Based on this experience, Japan has hosted the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction three times. These conferences have served as important platforms through which to share our experience of disaster risk reduction with the international community.

In fact, Japan's experience was incorporated into "The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030," which was adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in March 2015. In particular, we emphasized the importance of (i) the roles and responsibilities of central governments, (ii) making preventive investments prior to a disaster, and (iii) when a disaster hits a country, preventing the reemergence of vulnerabilities based on the concept of "*Build Back Better*."

Against this background, Japan supports all of the core commitments on natural disasters and climate change and commits to implementing the following five actions based on the Sendai Framework.

First, Japan will contribute to realizing the "Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction" launched by Prime Minister Abe in March 2015. This initiative aims to stimulate cooperation by effectively combining (i) technical assistance to help establish laws, institutions, systems and to develop human resources, (ii) financial support to foster economic and social infrastructure development, and (iii) global and region-wide cooperation. More concretely, Japan will steadily implement its commitments over four years. Between 2015 and 2018, Japan will provide a total of 4 billion US dollars to strengthen disaster risk reduction efforts. We will also train 40 thousand government officials and local leaders from around the world to play a leading role in their national disaster risk reduction efforts and in post-disaster "*Build Back Better*."

Second, Japan commits to sharing the effectiveness of preventive investment in disaster risk reduction and to helping mainstream disaster risk reduction. Japan will also assist with alleviating economic loss caused by disasters, which is one of the goals of the Sendai Framework and the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.” In particular, Japan will promote improved coordination in disaster risk reduction planning between national governments and other relevant parties through developing the capacity of national authorities.

Next, Japan will strengthen cooperation with other countries in advancing science and technology in the field of DRR. Japan has vast experience incorporating scientific advances to cope with disasters. A number of these lessons-learned are incorporated in a report issued following a conference organized by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) last January in Geneva. I believe that this document can serve as a foundation for effective cooperation among actors in this sector.

Fourth, we will continue to build on effective partnerships between development and humanitarian actors, such as the current collaboration between WFP and JICA in Malawi. Japan will contribute to building community-based resilience by flexibly combining short-term and medium-to long-term assistance for the victims of floods and droughts.

Finally, as an outcome of the UN conference in Sendai, the United Nations adopted World Tsunami Awareness Day last December. In order to share lessons-learned and to protect people’s lives, it is critical that we train and educate the children of the next generation. It is with this belief in mind that Japan is planning to invite high school students, mainly from the Asia-Pacific region, to a “High school students Summit on World Tsunami Awareness Day” this year.

I would like to assure you again that Japan, as a disaster-affected country, will continue to share our experience and knowledge with the international community so that we can realize human security and ensure the pledge of the SDGs that “no one will be left behind.”