

Address by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe
At the Global Launch of the 2014 Human Development Report

Tokyo, 24 July 2014

Miss Helen Clark,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor for us to host the Global Launch of the 2014 Human Development Report issued by the United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) today.

The theme of this year's report is building resilience. To begin with, let me express Japan's determination to continue its active contributions toward building resilient societies in collaboration with the international organizations, including UNDP, and the international community.

Vulnerabilities to both natural disasters and conflicts can wash away countless human lives and years of hard-won and long-term development achievements, in a mere instant. In order to build resilient societies, the concept of human security, which reaches out to every individual by protecting and empowering them, is essential.

The concept of human security was first introduced in the 1994 Human Development Report. Japan attaches great importance to the concept and has since cooperated in society and nation building through the protection and empowerment individuals and communities, and in particular the most vulnerable among them.

The 2015 deadline of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) is just around the corner. Active discussions on the post-2015 development agenda are already underway on how to address development after the MDGs.

We must accelerate our efforts to achieve the MDGs. On the other, it is essential to realize a society with inclusiveness, sustainability and resilience as part of the post-2015 development agenda, using the concept of human security as a guiding principle.

Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), in particular, is a pillar of resilience. Natural disasters claim precious human lives, cause incalculable economic losses, and impose severe burdens on the lives of survivors.

To show our gratitude to the warm support and encouragement which Japan received from the international community in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake, we are determined to take a leadership role toward building societies resilient to natural disasters in cooperation with UNDP, which has demonstrated eminent performance in the field of DRR. In this connection, Japan will host the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in the city of Sendai next March. We will use this opportunity to share our experiences and lessons learned, as well as our various disaster reduction technologies and systems with the world.

In the lead up to the conference, Japan will accelerate reconstruction in the affected Tohoku region, which is making progress toward achieving its new future as “a region of creativity and potential,” and as a model for the world of successful and rapid reconstruction in the wake of a natural disaster.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe that women’s empowerment is vital for a vibrant and growing society. I am determined to work actively for the promotion of women’s empowerment in order to create “a society in which women shine,” not only in Japan but throughout the world.

This September, Japan will host the “World Assembly for Women: Tokyo 2014.” Toward creating a “society where women shine,” Japan will enhance cooperation with the international community, civil society and the international organizations, including UNDP, and lead the world on this issue.

Lastly, I am also pleased to mention that Professor Akihiko Tanaka, President of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), has been engaged in the formulation of UNDP’s Human Development Reports as a member of its Advisory Panel.

Let me conclude my remarks on behalf of the host country by expressing our renewed determination to lead international efforts to build resilient societies by making the most of Japan’s expertise and technologies.

(Thank you for your kind attention.)