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Policy Speech by Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda to the 178th Session of the Diet

September 13, 2011
[Provisional Translation]

1. Introduction

On the occasion of the opening of the 178th session of the Diet, I would like to offer my prayers for the repose of those who lost their precious lives in the Great East Japan Earthquake, as well as in the concentrated heavy rains and typhoon, which followed in succession. In addition, I would like to express once again my sincerest sympathies to those who have been affected by disaster and who still have to endure inconvenience in their daily lives.

I have been recently appointed as Prime Minister of Japan. In any era, there is only one thing that is required of politics, which can be expressed in a simple phrase: "sincere spirit and just intent." While listening to the voices of the people, with a just intent and sincere spirit, I am committed to being true to my conscious as a politician and doing everything in my power that is possible to take on the grave responsibility of dealing with the national crisis brought about by the disasters. In this endeavor I humbly ask for the understanding and cooperation of our coalition partner, the People's New Party, all other political parties and parliamentary groupings, and the people of Japan.

Already six months have passed since the fateful day of March 11. That disaster claimed so many lives and destroyed tranquil lifestyles in many hometowns. The scars it left are still deeply etched on the affected areas. Furthermore, the disaster, coupled with the accident at the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station have had an enormous impact on the entire country, not only on the affected area. With the long-running challenges that face economic society in Japan still remaining, the disaster has imposed a further set of new and grave challenges that require urgent resolution.

Living during this national crisis, there is something that we should ensure we never forget. That is the high-minded spirit demonstrated by the Japanese people in the midst of despair after the earthquake disaster. Ms. Miki Endo was working as a disaster prevention staff member in Minami-Sanrikucho, where she continued to urge residents to evacuate to high ground. It was her voice, relayed over the radio from the disaster prevention offices, which gave people courage and saved countless lives. Although her

voice was tinged with fear and apprehension, Ms. Endo continued to broadcast to the very end. She was engulfed by the tsunami and never returned home. If she were still alive today, she should have been celebrating her marriage this month. Everywhere in the disaster affected areas, there were deep bonds with fellow human being without regard for their own lives, and filled with a sense of mission. Determination to fulfill a public duty in the midst of a crisis, as exemplified by Ms. Endo, and also, the countless people affected by the disaster who, showing kindness to others, have silently withstood the trials and hardships they face – are these not the qualities that ought to give us pride as Japanese and hope for the future?

There is something else we should not forget. That is the people who are struggling on the frontlines of the disaster reconstruction effort to deal with the nuclear accident and provide support to affected people. Last week, in my capacity as chief of the Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters, I visited TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. There, more than 2,000 people are continuing to work silently and tenaciously, wearing masks and protective clothing and facing the dangers of both radiation and heatstroke, in order to bring the accident to a close. In the areas damaged by the earthquake and heavy rain disasters, there are also various local government officials, who, while affected by the disasters themselves, are nonetheless continuing to attend to the needs of residents, spearheading rescue, recovery and decontamination activities.

The mayor of Nachi-Katsuura, Mr. Shinichi Teramoto, is a supreme example of such commitment. Although filled with the pain of having lost family members, he continues to oversee and direct operations being undertaken in response to the heavy rains.

At this very moment, the struggle against the nuclear accident and disaster-related damage is continuing. Through various dedicated and ongoing efforts in the affected areas, Japan's present and future are being supported. Shouldn't we give greater consideration to these people with our encouragement and gratitude?

There is something else we should not forget. It is the feelings of the disaster-affected people, and above all those from Fukushima, for their hometowns. Although efforts towards reconstruction are now underway in many regions, residents of the area around the power station in Fukushima continue to face an unclear future and struggle with worries and unease about radiation they cannot see. I recall the words of a certain high school student about the feelings of the people of this area,

"To be born in Fukushima, grow up in Fukushima, and work in Fukushima. To get married in Fukushima, have children in Fukushima and bring up those children in Fukushima. To see our grandchildren in Fukushima, to see our great-grandchildren in Fukushima and to end our days in Fukushima. That is our dream."

These words are from a play by high school students from Fukushima, which was performed at the 35th All Japan High School Cultural Festival in Fukushima last month. These young people have overcome feelings of sadness and anger, unease and impatience, resignation and helplessness, and are filled with a strong desire to take a step forward toward tomorrow. Does such young enthusiasm not give us the conviction that we can achieve reconstruction in the disaster-affected areas and Fukushima?

It is highly regrettable that recently a Cabinet minister resigned following inappropriate statements lacking compassion for disaster victims. I would like to take this opportunity to pledge once again that the Cabinet will redouble its concerted efforts to bring the nuclear accident to a conclusion and advance assistance for disaster victims, restoring

the public's confidence in the Government.

Even after the disaster, global developments continue as before. Views and perspectives on Japan continue to be subject to rapid change on an almost daily basis. The voices who have praised the high-minded spirit of the Japanese are being drowned out by critical views on Japan's politics. We now hear certain mocking comments from overseas suggesting that "procrastination and the inability to show political leadership" are "the Japanese way." The trust and confidence that our country has earned up to now is currently in real danger of being lost.

We must accept the severe and harsh realities we face. We must also overcome them. In order to prevail over the crisis before us, protect the lives of the people and restore hope and pride to Japan, now is the time for the executive and legislative branches of our country to fulfill their prescribed roles.

2. Recovery and Reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake

(Expediting recovery and reconstruction)

It goes without saying that recovery and reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake are the greatest and highest priorities for my Cabinet. To date, the Government has worked in cooperation with local governments, making every effort to engage in recovery operations, including the construction of temporary accommodation, the removal of debris and support for the livelihoods of the people affected by the disaster. Although it is a fact that in comparison to the immediate aftermath of the disaster substantial progress has been made, we have received comments that the operations have lacked speed and assistance is not reaching those who need it.

What my Cabinet needs to do is self-evident. We will implement each needed specific measure steadily and assuredly based on the Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction. To this end, we will expedite preparations for the compilation of the third supplementary budget. We will also work to formulate such measures as the provision of grants that can be easily accessed by local governments, and the creation of a system for special zones for reconstruction as matters of urgency.

The basic principle regarding financial resources for recovery and reconstruction is that the burden of these resources should not be passed onto the next generation, but instead should be shared together by all generations living here in the present. First of all, we will endeavor to secure resources through various efforts, including reductions in expenditure, the sale of national assets and a review of civil servant personnel costs. In addition, the multiple options available for time-limited taxation measures will be considered in a multifaceted manner that duly examines the current economic situation and takes into account other matters, including specific items for taxation, the period for such measures and their scope and scale in each fiscal year.

We will promptly submit to the Diet a draft bill for the establishment of the Reconstruction Agency, which will function as a body that transcends the current framework of multiple ministries and agencies, providing a one-stop response to the requests received from local governments that have been affected by the disaster. In order to accelerate reconstruction of the disaster-affected regions, I would request that the ruling and opposition parties work together on a concerted response.

(Efforts to bring the nuclear power station accident to a conclusion and the revival of

Fukushima) Bringing the nuclear power station accident to a conclusion is a national challenge. Without the revival of Fukushima Prefecture there will be no restoration of trust and confidence in Japan. We will engage in every possible endeavor to ensure that the release of radioactive materials into the atmosphere, ground and oceans is halted, and will steadily work on the realization of the Roadmap towards the conclusion of the accident, while making maximum efforts to ensure the safety of the workers engaged in operations at the power station. By accumulating knowledge and expertise from around the world, we will also overcome the technical challenges we are facing. To ensure that there is no recurrence of such a nuclear accident, we will work tenaciously to identify the causes of the accident based on international perspectives, and will provide comprehensive information on such causes and prevention measures.

The disbursement of provisional compensation payments to people affected by the accident is another urgent matter. There are residents who have been forced to evacuate and have endured inconvenience in their daily lives over a long period; owners of livestock businesses who have faced the heartbreak of seeing their animals euthanized; farmers who have been forced to dispose of their crops; and owners of small and medium enterprises (SMEs), who have been forced to stop their operations due to unfounded reputational damages. To assist these victims of the disaster facing such a severe situation, we will expedite measures to provide fair and appropriate compensation and provisional payments.

In order to alleviate worries and concerns of residents and further accelerate reconstruction efforts, it is essential that thorough efforts be made to eliminate the radioactive materials that have already been dispersed and provide failsafe measures to manage the health of residents in the vicinity of the nuclear power station. In particular, we will prioritize health management programs for children and pregnant mothers. In order to ensure safety and peace of mind concerning food products that people consume on a daily basis, we will further enhance the inspection structures in place for agricultural produce and beef, among others.

There are still areas, predominantly in the vicinity of the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, where levels of radiation remain extremely high. Keeping firmly in our minds the sorrow and despair of those who have been forced to leave their ancestral lands, with the cooperation of local governments, the Government will take responsibility for whole-hearted efforts to engage in large-scale decontamination measures that will eliminate the radioactive materials present in the living environment.

Furthermore, based also on the lessons learned from this disaster, as well as taking all possible measures to respond to the large-scale natural disasters and accidents which threaten the lives and health of the people, we will reassess the Government's disaster preparedness measures with the aim of creating a sustainable, disaster-resilient nation.

3. Response to the Global Economic Crisis

In addition to recovery and reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake, another priority issue that must be addressed by this Cabinet is the rebuilding of the Japanese economy. Since the March 11 disaster, issues such as the rapid appreciation of the yen, constraints on electricity supply and demand, and the instability of international financial markets have occurred in a composite manner. Japan is on the verge of suffering a major loss of national credibility due to the hollowing-out of its industries and its exacerbating financial situation.

(Reconstruction of energy policy)

The first step towards rebuilding Japan's economy is reconstructing its energy policy. We continue to face a situation where the supply and demand of electricity is constrained due to the nuclear power station accident. Without the stable provision of electricity, which is the very "blood" of our economy and society, the foundation for Japan's affluent lifestyle will lose stability and we will become unable to bolster domestic industrial activities.

Thanks to the energy saving efforts of the public this summer, we did not have to resort to carrying out rolling power outages. I thank you for your sincere understanding and cooperation. In order to empower Japan to escape the situation of being forced to endure energy-saving measures, we will spend the next one or two years implementing supply and demand countermeasures. At the same time, we will revise from scratch the current Basic Energy Policy, which lasts until 2030, and will create a new strategy and plan by around summer of next year. In doing so, we will steadily consider a mid- to long-term energy composition that citizens can feel comfortable with from the perspective of energy security as well as using cost analyses, while widely taking into account the views of wide-ranging groups of citizens.

Concerning nuclear power generation, it is unproductive to grasp nuclear power as a dichotomy between "zero nuclear power" and "promotion." In the mid- to long-term, we must aim to move in the direction of reducing our dependence on nuclear power generation as much as possible. At the same time, however, we will restart operations at nuclear power stations following regular inspections, for which safety has been thoroughly verified and confirmed, under the premise that a relationship of trust is developed with the local government. As per an organizational restructuring of nuclear safety regulation, the Nuclear Safety and Security Agency will be established as an affiliated agency of the Ministry of the Environment and will work to boldly unify regulations for nuclear power safety.

The history of humankind is also a history of people attempting to develop new types of energy. Japan, a country with few fossil fuel resources, must lead the rest of the world in constructing a society that bases itself on new forms of energy. Japan will utilize its advanced technological power to pair regulatory reform with measures to promote dissemination in transmitting a cutting-edge model for energy conservation and renewable energies to the world.

(Implementation of bold countermeasures to the appreciating yen and industrial hollowing-out)

Historical levels of yen appreciation paired with the rise of emerging economies and other factors are precipitating an unprecedented industrial hollowing-out crisis. The exporting companies and small to medium-size enterprises that have led Japanese industry in the past are now crying for help. Unless something is done, there is the concern that domestic industries will drop in strength and employment will be lost. If that happens, overcoming deflation and reconstruction in the affected areas will become significantly more difficult tasks.

Countries in Europe, the US and Asia are engaging in a location battle where national efforts are being made to attract companies to their countries. In order for Japan to prevent the hollowing-out of its industries and maintain domestic employment, we must work together with the Bank of Japan, which conducts monetary policy, in utilizing all policy means available. First, we will utilize reserve funds and the third supplementary budget to implement emergency economic countermeasures that include the bold

enhancement of location subsidies. Furthermore, we will take advantage of the merits of the appreciating yen to support Japanese companies in purchasing foreign companies and acquiring resource interests.

(Achieving both economic growth and fiscal health)

Since before the March 11 disaster, Japan relied on national bonds for half of its national revenue, and the national debt was at risk of reaching one thousand trillion yen. The disaster has raised the crisis level of the public finance even further, making Japan's situation the worst among major advanced nations. Today, as Japan's national credibility is severely questioned, we cannot continue to manage public finance by covering old debt with new debt. Do we have the right to force more debt on future generations, who cannot now speak for themselves? The responsibility of today's politicians is being put into question.

Financial reconstruction is by no means a simple problem that can be realized in a direct manner. There is the path of cutting expenditures, which is achieved by the streamlining of politics and governmental administration. There is also the path of increasing revenues realized by revitalizing the economy and the affluent lives of citizens. While exerting every effort to realize these two paths, there is also the path of revenue reform where we must ask citizens to bear a greater burden so that we do not create problems for future generations. We must push forward while keeping view of all of these three paths, and that makes for a difficult journey.

Economic growth and fiscal health must be advanced in unison like two wheels of the same vehicle. For that purpose, efforts to realize the New Growth Strategy formulated last year will be accelerated and a strategy that takes into account the circumstances after the disaster will be enhanced with the aim of compiling, by the end of the year, a strategy to revitalize Japan.

In order for the Government to act as a "control tower" overseeing important national policies, including the realization of these strategies, we will gather the knowledge of the industrial, government, and academic sectors, consolidate existing meeting structures, and establish a new meeting structure, that I will administer.

It is the dynamism of private companies such as small and medium-size enterprises that will lead Japan's economic growth. We will develop an environment conducive to generating new industries and ample employment opportunities mainly in the environmental energy sector, which is also linked to resolving the problem of global warming, and the medical-related sector, which is in high demand due to Japan's longevity society. Moreover, in order to deepen relations with growing foreign markets, we will strategically promote economic partnerships and advance market development in a concerted effort between the public and private sectors, while at the same time strengthening efforts to attract expertise and funding from overseas.

The idea that "agriculture is the backbone of a country" is still alive today. Food supports and nurtures life. Due to the very fact that consumers demand a high standard of safety and reassurance, the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries may possibly become growth industries that assume the lead in the new era. Using efforts to revitalize agriculture, the core industry in affected areas in the Tohoku region, as a gateway, concrete measures will be compiled in order to swiftly revitalize the agriculture, forestry, and fisheries industries in accordance with the midterm recommendations of the Council for the Realization of the Revival of the Food, Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishery Industries.

In addition, post offices are a pillar of social infrastructure that supports rural communities. I will work to ensure that the bill for the Postal Reform Act is quickly passed so that post offices are able to provide the basic services of the three branches in a unified manner as bond-forming bases among the people of each community.

The Government will also continue to promote the reform for increasing local sovereignty.

4. A Japan that has Hope and Pride

Along with overcoming the "two crises" of the Great East Japan Earthquake and the world economic crisis, we must invest in Japan's future in order to be a country filled with promise and a country which each and every person can have pride in and be grateful that they were born in this country.

(The Revival of a Large Middle Class and Social Security Reform)

In times past, Japan used to be identified as a country in which all people belonged to the middle class. Supported also by one of the best social security systems in the world, the large middle class had been the basis of economic development and social stability. However, the birthrate decline and aging population have progressed rapidly, the employment and family patterns to date have largely transformed, and the "lifetime safety net" of the social security system, too, has begun to show some gaps. Among the people who used to belong to the middle class, there are now more people who are finding it difficult to get by.

Giving up could eventually turn to despair and then to anger, and then the collapse of the stability of the Japanese society from its core. "Hope" and "pride" will not emerge unless we bring back Japan which has "warmth" rather than "despair and anger."

The social security system must be shifted to one that is tailored to all generations and one which all generations can feel is fair. Specifically, we need to strengthen support measures for the younger generation by advancing comprehensive support for children and child rearing, including the provision of child allowance agreed upon among the three parties of the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ), Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), and New Komeito party and the establishment of a framework for the unification of nurseries and kindergartens. Another major challenge is to eliminate any concerns about the healthcare and nursing care systems and to efficiently provide high quality services tailored to the community situation. Furthermore, amid prospects of a declining workforce population, we must improve the employment rate of young people, women, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. We must advance the realization of a society in which all people participate, in which everyone with a will to work is able to work. And we must form a reliable safety net to ensure that no one falls into the poverty cycle.

In June of this year, the Government and ruling party's final draft plan for the comprehensive reform of social security and taxation systems was compiled after much discussion. With this plan as our basis, the ruling and opposition parties will sincerely carry out repeated discussions and we will aim to submit the relevant legislation during the next ordinary session of the Diet. In order for the ruling and opposition parties to have an open dialogue and to be able to reach an agreement on the passage of the legislation, I sincerely ask for the participation of the members of all parties and parliamentary groups in the policy discussions on the comprehensive reform of social security and taxation systems.

(The Aspiration to Engage Actively Overseas and Contribute to the International Community and to All of Mankind)

In order for Japanese people to regain "hope" and "pride," there is one more important thing. That is never to become "inward-looking" – to have the aspiration to engage actively overseas. Since the Meiji Restoration, our forefathers paved the way to prosperity by boldly challenging the world. I believe there are definitely things that only we Japanese people can do to resolve the issues facing the international community and contribute to the future of all of mankind. In order to call forth the aspiration to become a pioneer of a new era among the young, we will advance the development of human resources, including the bringing up global human resources, and educate to develop people's ability to learn and think on their own. Furthermore, we will be exploring policies to open up frontiers of a new Japan, including the establishment of a new community development model which aims to achieve prosperous furusato (homelands), the development of sea areas which are said to be a reservoir of marine resources, and the establishment of a strategic scheme for promoting the development and use of outer space.

(Restoration of Confidence in Politics and Government Administration)

The country cannot function without the public's confidence in politics and government administration. We will strive to restore confidence through the generation of tangible outputs of administrative reform and political reform. Already, a Cabinet decision has been approved soon after the end of the war in 1946, which vowed to thoroughly revitalize the operations of the government in order to increase public confidence. Despite the fact that more than 60 years have passed since this Cabinet decision, government revitalization is still midway into the process. We will work to eliminate any wasteful spending and inefficiencies included in government administration and to strengthen the truly necessary government functions. These government revitalization efforts must be continued and reinforced consistently. We will enhance the methods of reviewing government programs (shiwake) that we have been undertaking since the change of government. Furthermore, the Government and ruling party will go back to the original goal of "putting the lives of the people first" and make concerted efforts to fight vested interests and to carry out an array of administrative reforms.

In order for the nation's civil servants to be able to truly demonstrate their capacities as those serving the needs of the people and realize efficient and high quality government services, we will endeavor to achieve the early passage of the legislation related to the reform of the system of national civil servants. Along with cutting the personnel costs of national civil servants, we will carry out efforts for materializing the reform of the civil servant system.

Our foremost priority in political reform is correcting the difference in weight attached to a vote, which is currently a violation of the Constitution. I expect that serious discussions will take place among the ruling and opposition parties regarding the mechanisms of the election system, including the issue of the number of Diet members.

5. Foreign and National Security Policy that Addresses the New Requirements of the Times

(Changes in the global situation and security environment surrounding Japan)

The global situation surrounding Japan is continuing to change on a daily basis, even following the recent disaster. The global presence of emerging economies is increasing and in response to the new requirements of the times, brought about by multi-

polarization it is vital that Japan's foreign policy respond robustly to these changes.

There is also an increasing lack of transparency in the security environment surrounding Japan. In such a situation it is naturally the responsibility of the Government to create a system in time of peace that is capable of responding swiftly to any crisis that may unfold in order to ensure regional peace and stability as well as safety of the people. In accordance with the new National Defense Program Guidelines that were formulated at the end of last year, Japan will enhance its readiness and mobility and work to build a dynamic defense force, thus responding to the new security environment.

(Deepening and developing the Japan-U.S. alliance)

The Japan-U.S. alliance remains at the cornerstone of Japanese diplomacy and national security, and also a publicly shared asset fostering the stability and prosperity of not only the Asia-Pacific region, but also the world.

The significance of the Japan-U.S. alliance relationship that has been strengthened over the long course of more than half a century was reconfirmed during the disaster, through "Operation Tomodachi." In addition to moving quickly to build relations of trust at the leader level, we will work to deepen the Japan-U.S. alliance on various levels, focusing particularly on security, economics, and exchanges of culture and human resources, thus deepening and developing an alliance relationship that is appropriate for the 21st century.

Regarding the issue of the relocation of Futenma Air Station, in line with the Japan-U.S. agreement, it is important to avoid a situation in which the Air Station becomes fixed in its current location and ensure that the burden on Okinawa is alleviated. We will make every effort in this regard, while explaining the situation sincerely to the people of Okinawa to ask for their understanding. We will also actively implement measures for the revitalization of Okinawa.

(Strengthening bilateral relations with neighboring countries)

The Asia-Pacific region is expected to remain as a center for global growth in the future and Japan will naturally continue to strengthen political and economic relations with countries in the region and also to deepen exchanges in cultural aspects. We will make efforts to build trust as a fellow member of the region and ensure robust relations.

In relations between Japan and China, in view of next year's 40th anniversary of the normalization of relations between our two countries, we will work to promote specific cooperation in a broad range of areas and, while seeking for China to play an appropriate role befitting its responsibilities as a member of the international community with greater transparency, we will work to deepen our strategic relationship of mutual benefit.

In relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK), we will further strengthen relations, based on a future-oriented vision towards the next one hundred years. In relations with North Korea, in cooperation with other countries and based on the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration, Japan seeks to normalize its diplomatic relations with North Korea through the comprehensive resolution of the outstanding issues of concern, including the abduction, nuclear, and missile issues, and settling the unfortunate past. Regarding the abduction issue, this is a grave issue that relates to national sovereignty and as the responsibility of the State, we will spare no effort towards achieving the return of all abductees to Japan at the earliest possible juncture.

In relations with Russia, in addition to continuing tenacious efforts to resolve the issue of the Northern Territories, which is of prime concern, we will work to build an appropriate

relationship as a partner in the Asia-Pacific region.

(Linkage in a multi-polar world)

In order to cultivate assured bonds with each country in a multi-polar world, great strength of will be required to join together in resolving the challenges that the world faces in common. These "kizuna -bonds of friendship-" must be broadened and expanded in multiple tiers of society, in various public and private sector bodies.

One example of such efforts based on such "kizuna" is recovery and reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake. The disaster-affected regions have benefited from the provision of countless instances of warm support from countries around the world. This assistance can be said to be one of the significant fruits of Japan's contribution to the international community in the post-war period and the trust the world places in us. Japan is the only country in the world to have suffered the devastation of an atomic bombing and is also a country that has suffered from the recent unprecedented disaster. In addition to continuing to take the lead among nations to appeal for nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, Japan must pay back the kindness that has been shown by the world, by sharing the lessons and knowledge we have gained in the areas of nuclear safety and disaster prevention with other countries.

Efforts to strengthen linkages between countries in economic aspects are termed "economic cooperation." As a part of such cooperation, essential challenges are efforts to ensure growth in the global economy and prevent the hollowing out of industry. Based on the "Basic Policy on Comprehensive Economic Partnerships" we will make strategic moves seeking to conclude high-level economic partnership agreements (EPA). In specific terms we will advance the EPA negotiations with the ROK and Australia, and we will aim to initiate negotiations in the near term for a Japan-EU EPA and a Japan-China-ROK EPA. In addition, with regard to the participation in the negotiation of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement, we will conduct thorough discussions with a view to reaching a conclusion as soon as possible.

With regard to measures relating to such issues as securing natural resources and energy as well as a stable supply of food, we will proceed actively with economic diplomacy. In addition, in respect of various global challenges, including assistance to developing countries and a response to international negotiations on climate change, a response to the situation in the Middle East and North Africa, and measures for fragile states, Japan will continue to make an active contribution.

6. Closing Remarks

Politics is all about working tenaciously to bring about realistic solutions to issues, while coordinating contradictory interests and values. The essence of parliamentary democracy lies in consensus building based on carefully wrought dialogue and understanding.

Under the previous administration we have already found a number of solutions through repeated dialogue. Given the constraints placed on us by a divided Diet, now is an apt and opportune moment to reflect on the rightful nature of the legislative branch of government, namely the aim of reaching consensus through discussion.

To the honorable members of the Diet gathered here, representing your constituents,

and to the people of Japan, I would like to reiterate the following.

In order to revive Japan from this historic national crisis, do we not need to now amass and concentrate all the latent potential in our country? The members of the Cabinet will make concerted efforts to discharge their responsibilities. The members of the bureaucracy will demonstrate their maximum abilities as experts in their fields. The ruling and opposition parties will engage in thorough discussions and dialogue and give their all to identify common ground. Is it not now time for the Government, corporations and each individual, indeed every person in the nation, to be of one mind and united in our efforts to face this crisis?

I will take the lead among the Cabinet in listening carefully to the voices and the heartfelt cries of each and every person in the nation. I will conduct myself with "sincere spirit and just intent." I will devote myself only to the people of Japan, and, in order to overcome the crisis before us and resolve the challenges that have beset Japan for many years, I am determined to spare no effort as I advance tenaciously and doggedly forward, one step at a time.

I close my policy speech by reiterating my request for the understanding and cooperation of my fellow citizens.

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Video Message from Mr. Yoshihiko Noda, Prime Minister of Japan on the Occasion of the "Japan Night" Opening Ceremony at the Annual Meeting of the New Champions (the "Summer Davos") in Dalian, China

September 14, 2011
[JAPANESE](#)



 Japanese Government Internet TV •     00:00:00 / 00:08:27  Large

Introduction

- Hello and a very good evening to all of you participating in "Japan Night." I am Yoshihiko Noda, Japan's new Prime Minister. On behalf of the hosts, I would like to extend my warm welcome to those of you joining in this event.

Gratitude for assistance with the earthquake and tsunami disaster

- Half a year has passed since the fateful 3.11, when the Great East Japan Earthquake struck. First I would like to extend my thanks on behalf of the

Government of Japan for the tremendous outpouring of cordial assistance that Japan has received from all around the world from immediately after the great earthquake and tsunami disaster struck right up until the present.

Appeal for the reconstruction of the Tohoku District

- This earthquake, which at magnitude 9.0 was one of the largest ever in history anywhere in the world, was centered on the coastal region of the Tohoku District. The colossal tsunamis it spawned caused a massive amount of damage, with more than 20,000 people who perished or are still unaccounted for. While six months have passed since that day, for the families and relatives of the deceased, this is simply not enough time to ease their heartache.
- Yet, the infrastructure and the economy of the tsunami-ravaged area has rebounded convincingly these last six months, with efforts towards reconstruction moving forward steadily. Epitomizing this is the fact that this summer, all around Tohoku, communities celebrated their summer festivals. By continuing to hold these festivals that their ancestors passed down for generations the people of the disaster-stricken areas welcomed home the souls of the victims, grieved for them, and renewed their will to bring about their own reconstruction. A great number of tourists from within and outside Japan also visited the region. The reconstruction of the Tohoku District will move into full swing from now.
- I emphatically encourage all of you to visit Tohoku, to buy the products of Tohoku, and to attend international conferences in Tohoku. In this disaster-ravaged region which is now starting to recover, what the people there need is that kind of assistance. To people all around the world, I look forward to your kind consideration and cooperation towards Tohoku.

Overview of the safety and the appeal of Japan as a whole

- The day to day circumstances of the areas other than those directly struck by the disaster, including the Tokyo Metropolitan region, have returned almost entirely to how they were before the quake. Tokyo Sky Tree, which already boasts the title of the highest-rising broadcast tower in the world, continued its climb to still greater heights even during the time of the earthquake and tsunami disaster, and it will begin operations next year as a symbol of the revitalization of Japan. And, while there are concerns about the impact of the strong yen, the Japanese economy is itself also recovering from the damage of the earthquake and tsunami disaster. While there had been fears of a breakdown of the supply chain in the manufacturing sector as a result of some factories suffering damage, Japan overcame this through our companies' tenacious efforts. Very tight electrical supply had also been a source of worry, but through energy conservation measures taken up by the entire nation we would like to tide over this summer without incident.
- What has become apparent through this historic earthquake and tsunami disaster was, in fact, the great resilience of Japanese society and Japanese technology. Japan has from ancient times raised itself up robustly whenever it faced difficulties. From wartime devastation, we achieved spectacular economic growth;

from the oil shock, we created the most energy efficient country in the world. I can only think that this catastrophic earthquake and tsunami disaster will also become momentum for us as we take on new challenges.

- I have been appealing to the Japanese people that "now is the time to have great ambitions, to head abroad full of determination, resolve the problems that the countries of the world are facing, and contribute to humankind." Even after the earthquake and tsunami disaster, in Japan we have the will and the ability to contribute to the world.

The resilience of the Japanese people and Japanese society

- I am sure you have heard the stories of disaster victims that took level-headed action even amidst the confusion after the earthquake and tsunamis. Have you heard the story of Mr. Mitsuru Sato, the executive director of the Sato Suisan fishery company in a town called Onagawa-cho? On March 11, upon seeing a tsunami bearing down on the coast, Mitsuru Sato first and foremost saw to it that the twenty Chinese who were trainees at his company evacuated to a safe location on higher ground. He had then gone back to search for his wife and child when the tsunami struck, killing him. I have heard that the spirit of mutual cooperation that he demonstrated in first saving, without discriminating, the trainees as victims of a disaster in a foreign land has been acclaimed in China as well.
- No rioting of any kind occurred, even in the disaster-struck areas. Japanese have a noble spirit to help one another when difficulties arise. I suspect that this is not necessarily the case in many places around the world.

Appeal regarding Japan's international contributions through its technological prowess

- Japan's technological capabilities related to the environment and energy, whether high-efficiency power generating technologies, residences and electrical appliances boasting high energy efficiency, or electric-powered vehicles, are at the very highest level found anywhere in the world. And this is true not only for major companies; there are also any number of small- and medium-sized enterprises having truly outstanding technologies.
- After the earthquake and tsunami disaster as well, confidence in such technologies has not wavered at all. Despite such an enormous quake striking, the Tohoku Shinkansen bullet train came to a halt automatically afterward, with no reports of injuries. Restoration of the Tohoku Expressway also took less than a month. There is also a mechanism called the earthquake emergency warning system, and using this Japan has a system fully in place by which the public is notified of the possibility of aftershocks immediately before they occur. In particular now after this great quake has struck, there are an enormous number of items for which it can be said that the reliability of Japan's technologies and systems preparing for a great earthquake has been clearly demonstrated.

Allaying anxieties about the nuclear accident

- There might also be some fears about the nuclear accident. Compared to the early stages of the accident, the amount of radioactive materials being emitted is now one ten-millionth of that amount. Decontamination measures taken up by the entire local community are now moving forward to address the problem of radioactive materials that have already been dispersed into the areas surrounding the nuclear plant. My Cabinet will be devoting its full efforts to bringing the nuclear accident completely under stable control, and by mobilizing the wisdom from the international community, the situation has thus far transitioned exactly in accordance with the envisioned schedule. The fact that nuclear reactors are located in areas where earthquakes occur is not something limited to Japan. Communicating our experiences in this situation is also a form of contribution to the international community that I feel Japan should shoulder.

Conclusion

- Hand in hand with you, leaders across a vast spectrum of fields who have gathered here today from around the globe, I intend to enable the disaster-struck areas to recover while making Japan an even more marvelous country than ever before. I very much look forward to the ongoing support and cooperation of people from countries all around the world.
- *Sakura*—the cherry tree—is a tree well loved by the Japanese people. I myself am extremely fond of *sakura* trees. Each spring, *sakura* cherry blossoms never fail to bloom, but in a little more than a week these blossoms will have all been scattered with the wind. Then after passing a cold winter, when spring arrives, their new blossoms never fail to appear once more. For that reason, a great many people consider the *sakura* cherry blossoms as helping them feel the passage of time, and as symbolizing “revival and revitalization.”
- Some of Japan's *sakura* trees boast being more than a thousand years old. A catastrophic disaster said to arise once every thousand years has occurred, and just like the *sakura* trees that have been through a thousand years of history, Japan and the Japanese will surely once again make gorgeous *sakura* blossoms come forth.
- Let me close my remarks tonight by wishing all of you here a wonderful evening in which you feel decidedly these expectations for the future.

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Address by H.E. Mr. Yoshihiko Noda, Prime Minister of Japan, at the United Nations High-Level Meeting on Nuclear Safety and Security

September 22, 2011

New York

JAPANESE

Mr. Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Mr. President of the United Nations General Assembly,
Excellencies,
Ladies and gentlemen,

1. The accident at the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Stations of the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) has raised a profound issue of how humankind should deal with nuclear energy. I commend the insight of the Secretary-General for his leadership in convening this meeting, taking the opportunity of the United Nations General Assembly, for which representatives of states around the world assemble.
2. Since struck by a massive earthquake and tsunamis, the people of Japan have been receiving very heart-warming encouragement and support from all over the world. On behalf of all the Japanese people, I should like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to you all.
3. Science and technology have aided the progress of the human race and brought prosperity to every corner of the world. For over half a century, since it made use of most advanced high-technology to take its first stride towards the civil uses of nuclear energy in 1957, Japan has researched and applied means to use nuclear power safely, and fostered and developed its nuclear industry so diligently that the whole nation suffered a serious blow by the recent accident.
4. For the last half a year, since the accident occurred, Japan has been struggling, with all its strength by concerted efforts throughout the nation, to bring the accident under stable control at an earliest possible timing. As the person in overall charge of those efforts, I visited the site of the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Stations of the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) immediately upon taking office as Prime Minister this month, and observed the reactor buildings from up close. This very fact demonstrates the steady progress in our efforts to bring the accident under stable control.

5. Through the dedicated efforts of our people involved, we are steadily moving closer to stable control of the accident. The most recent estimates indicate that the amount of radioactive materials being discharged is now being held down to a level one-four millionth of the level at the early stage of the accident. We are now making every effort to achieve the state of cold shutdown of the reactors roughly within 2011, ahead of schedule. Improvements to the situation are being sustained by the dedicated efforts of over 2,000 workers who continue their work in steadfast perseverance even as they expose themselves to the dangers of radiation and heat stroke. We would be remiss to forget that fact.
6. The unimaginable destructive force of the enormous tsunami, which reached a height of 15 meters, has left traces that can still be found even now in the tsunami-stricken areas. At a minimum, there is little doubt that we had overestimated our preparations for tsunamis. It is clear that electrical power supplies for emergency use and pumps should not have been situated in locations that could be submerged by tsunamis. Insufficient were preparations for a severe accident that would result in damage to the reactor core. Making a vent took more time than expected, causing loss of precious time. While a full-scaled process to discover the cause of the accident will continue for some time, we have identified "faults", as well as "lessons learned" from them. Full-fledged inspections to be conducted based upon these on the safety of nuclear power station both within Japan and abroad should be a most urgent task ahead of us.
7. Japan will disclose to the international community all the information related to this accident, in both swift and accurate manner. We have already presented two reports to the IAEA on the course of events. The Investigation Committee on the Accident at Fukushima Nuclear Power Stations of Tokyo Electric Power Company is conducting a comprehensive investigation of the accident from a neutral and objective standpoint and will release its final report next year. Japan will hold an international conference to be co-hosted by the IAEA next year, through which we will share with the international community the results of our comprehensive inspections and our charted courses of actions towards the safe use of nuclear energy.
8. Japan will send out to the whole world lessons learned through this accident. It has already made proposals to the international community, such as the strengthening of co-operation and co-ordination among regulatory authorities of nations, the reinforcement of the international assistance mechanism in the case of nuclear accidents, and a review of the IAEA Safety Standards. The international community has responded to it. The leaders of the Group of Eight in Deauville, and the ministers of a larger number of states in Paris, declared their determination to raise the safety of nuclear power to the highest level in the world, and today an Action Plan on Nuclear Safety was endorsed by the IAEA General Conference. These are all very welcome developments.
9. Japan is determined to raise the safety of nuclear power generation to the highest level in the world. In addition to the emergency measures already taken, we plan to establish "The Nuclear Safety and Security Agency" around April of next year, by separating off the Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency (NISA) from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, to accomplish the independence of nuclear regulation from promotion, for the purpose of centralising the regulatory system and ensuring a thorough safety culture. We will also fundamentally reinforce

nuclear safety regulations themselves.

10. Japan stands ready to respond to the interest of countries seeking to use nuclear power generation. For several years, emerging nations and many other countries around the world have earnestly explored ways of using nuclear energy amid the needs for energy security and for responses to global warming. Japan has been supporting their efforts, including their improvements of nuclear safety. Japan remains steadfast in responding positively to their interest in our undertakings.
11. In parallel, Japan will also take lead to increase development and use of renewable energies. Japan will redouble efforts to increase development and use of renewable energies by mobilising the advanced technologies in the possession of both the public and private sectors. Japan will also present practical strategies and plans around the summer of 2012 concerning the composition of energy sources over the medium and long terms.
12. Japan will also participate actively in efforts to ensure nuclear security. The preparedness for terrorist attacks on nuclear power facilities and exchanging security information among relevant authorities of countries should be important tasks. I will take part in the Nuclear Security Summit next year, and will join actively in international undertakings in this field. Japan will for its part reinforce its measures to protect its nuclear materials and facilities.
13. Energy is the 'lifeblood' of the economy and serves as a foundation for the daily human lives. In a broader context, it impacts the peace and prosperity of the entire human race. It is the cornerstone of the well-being of not just our own generation but of our future generations as well. We can ill afford to continue wavering for a long time concerning our next actions. We must mobilize science and technology to the maximum extent possible to decide urgently on our next actions, rationally grounded.
14. I am confident that the human race will be able to utilise its wisdom to overcome without fail the challenge thrust before us by this nuclear accident. I am confident that, for Fukushima, the day will come when it is remembered as "the place where, through people's strong will and courage, a new era was opened for the future of humankind." And indeed, I am confident that today's meeting will serve as a signpost for the next actions we should take together in order to raise the safety of nuclear power to the highest level. I should like to close my remarks by pledging that Japan, as the country in which this accident occurred, will dedicate itself to shouldering its responsibilities and taking action.

Thank you very much.

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ADDRESS BY H.E. MR. YOSHIHIKO NODA PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN AT THE SIXTY-SIXTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

23 September 2011
JAPANESE

Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, I would like to begin by congratulating His Excellency Mr. Al-Nasser on his assumption of duties as President of the 66th session of the United Nations General Assembly. I express my gratitude to His Excellency Dr. Deiss, the former President, for his devoted efforts during his tenure as President. I would also like to pay my deep respect to His Excellency Secretary-General Ban for his leadership.

This has been a year of extraordinary challenges for Japan. A little more than six months have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake struck Japan. Nearly 20,000 people were killed or remain missing, and nearly 40,000 who were forced to evacuate even now continue to endure inconvenience in their daily lives. I am truly proud to see the noble spirit of the Japanese people manifest itself even amid such despair and hardships. At the same time, I have been deeply moved by the strong feelings of compassion shown by people the world over toward Japan. There are many unforgettable stories.

Ms. Rita Retnaningtyas, an Indonesian nurse candidate and trainee at the Miyagi Hospital, evacuated 120 patients from the hospital to a safer location just before the arrival of the tsunami. She herself stayed on at the hospital for several days, taking care of the patients in the absence of electricity and water supply.

In Brazil, the children of a small rural town collected change and sent their contribution to us in a tin can. I heard that, when asked why, one of the children answered that it was because Japan, a friend of Brazil, was suffering.

University students in Kenya gathered in Nairobi in memory of Japanese victims of the earthquake. They sang in chorus the popular Japanese song known outside Japan as "Sukiyaki", whose original Japanese title reads, "Let us walk looking up", saying that they wished to deliver the song to the Japanese people.

These are only a few such stories among tens of thousands. The world expressed friendship and solidarity as well as praise for the Japanese people immediately after the earthquake. On behalf of the people of Japan, I express my heartfelt gratitude for the helping hands extended from all over the world. These bonds between Japan and the international community will be forever remembered by the Japanese.

Since the 11th of March, the sounds of recovery have been echoing throughout the Tohoku region of Japan. The Government of Japan has been exerting all efforts to restore and reconstruct the disaster-affected areas. The daily lives of those outside the affected areas, including the metropolitan area of Tokyo, have almost returned to normal. The infrastructure and economy of the coastal areas of Tohoku, which were washed away by the tsunami, are recovering. Damaged supply chains are close to full restoration. We have been sharply reminded of the role that Japanese companies, including small and medium-sized enterprises, play in sustaining the growth of the global economy.

We are making steady progress towards securing stable control of the situation at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Stations of the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO). Currently, we are focusing our efforts on moving up the existing target period to achieve cold shutdown status by the end of this year. A number of other challenges remain to be addressed, including removal of debris and rebuilding of the livelihoods of the Japanese people in the affected areas. We will continue to be fully engaged in the efforts for restoration and reconstruction, as our highest priority task, so that Japan's renewal can be realized without delay.

Mr. President,

As the new leader of Japan, I am deeply honored to discuss and share Japan's ambitions for the world's future as well as Japan's diplomatic vision with all those in attendance here today at the United Nations General Assembly. The world is now undergoing tremendous changes, including those now under way in the Middle East and North Africa. These changes have been brought about through the aggregate consciousness of all individuals who have awoken. In its experience of the massive earthquake in March, Japan became newly aware of the importance of bonds with the people of the world. We have come to realize fully how important the responsibility to be fulfilled by each individual is to a society. We have never felt more strongly the significance of promoting human security. I am resolved to implement Japanese diplomacy working hand in hand with the all of the world leaders here at the United Nations, with the determination to make a substantive contribution to overcoming the challenges the world is facing and to shaping a brighter future for humanity.

Mr. President,

Allow me to touch upon Japan's efforts for the growth of the world economy.

Japan has a long history of assisting developing countries in building wealthy societies through nation-building efforts and human resources development. Japan understands very well from its own experience that the engine of economic growth is a strong middle class. To strengthen the middle class, it is necessary to construct a social foundation upon which all individuals can enhance their capacities and develop them to the fullest. From this perspective, Japan will continue to support developing countries through the active utilization of its ODA.

We must not let the current global economic uncertainty and financial unrest hamper the

efforts of the international community toward growth. It is vital that all countries cooperate in order to create harmony out of the current chaos. I myself am also committed to do my best as the new leader of Japan.

Achieving economic growth in tandem with fiscal health is the most crucial challenge confronting the world at the present time. Japan will press ahead with its targets for restoration of fiscal sustainability. Meanwhile, as we recognize that revitalization of the Japanese economy is directly linked to the rebuilding of the world economy, we will work on the strengthening of industrial infrastructure, employment and energy conservation, toward achievement of a full-fledged recovery from the earthquake disaster. In the mid-to-long term, we intend to further reinforce partnership between Japanese and other global economies. It is also important that trade activities not be disturbed by the excessive currency volatility.

Moreover, to realize sustainable growth of the Japanese economy, we will promote the attainment of a low-carbon society and a transition to a green economy. The key to achieving these goals is technological innovation in the areas of renewable energies, energy saving and clean use of fossil fuels, movement referred to as "green innovation". By around summer of next year, the Government of Japan will create a new strategy and plan on Japan's mid- to long-term energy composition to pursue a bold energy shift.

Japan will further improve upon its excellent, safe, secure and environment-friendly technologies, as represented by energy-efficient houses, electric appliances and electric vehicles. Japan will make a useful contribution for the growth of the global economy and for a brighter future for all in the discussions toward Rio+20.

Mr. President,

Japan will seek a safe and brighter future with full force. The maximum vertical height onshore above sea level, called the "run-up height", of the tsunami that hit the Tohoku district reached as high as 40 meters, the highest such value ever observed in Japan's recorded history. We have learned that we must be very well prepared. In that regard, there are contributions that Japan, with such experience behind it, is uniquely qualified to make.

The first lesson from Japan's recent tragedy is the importance of international cooperation in disaster risk reduction. We have a long history of combating and overcoming natural disasters. In fact, we have provided active support in the efforts to respond to the disasters which have occurred in recent years in areas such as Sumatra, Sichuan in China, Haiti and New Zealand. We are prepared to share with the world our accumulated knowledge and skills, as a country which has learned to coexist harmoniously with nature. As a first step, Japan will hold an international conference in the disaster-stricken Tohoku region next year to boost international cooperation on coping with natural disasters. To build on the outcome of the conference, Japan proposes to host the Third World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2015. Japan will take a leading role in the international community in creating a disaster-resistant world society.

Next, Japan hopes to share its acquired knowledge and experience in the field of nuclear safety. I welcome the holding yesterday of the high-level meeting on this issue under the initiative of the Secretary-General. Following the nuclear accident, Japan has implemented emergency safety measures and has further strengthened its nuclear energy regulation regime. In yesterday's meeting, I expressed my resolve to contribute

positively to the reinforcement of global nuclear power safety, drawing on our experiences in the accident. Next year, Japan will co-host an international conference with the IAEA to share the results of the overall assessment of the accident in comprehensive detail, and to contribute to the various measures taken by the international community to raise the standards for nuclear safety. Although some countries, regrettably, are still imposing undue restrictions on imports from Japan, our government will continue to provide prompt and accurate information on this matter, with transparency. I would request that all countries make sound judgments based upon scientific evidence.

Mr. President,

Global threats continue to proliferate. It is essential to solve the root causes of these threats while taking steps to address them. Japan will continue to respond to both challenges in order to ensure a brighter and more peaceful future.

With regard to the issue of piracy off the coast of Somalia, Japan will remain actively engaged in combating the problem through the continuous deployment to the area of two destroyers and two patrol aircraft.

Japan intends to make enhanced efforts toward the eradication of terrorism as well as its causes. Despite the passage of a decade since the 9.11 attacks, our collective sorrow is yet to be healed. And in that connection, I would like to express my sincere condolences on the demise of Mr. Rabbani, Chairman of the High Peace Council in Afghanistan. Japan reiterates its firm condemnation of these atrocious acts of terrorism. In order to prevent Afghanistan from once again becoming a breeding ground for terrorism, we will continue to confront the problem with strong resolve. Japan has expressed its commitment to provide approximately five billion U.S. dollars of assistance over five years from 2009, focusing on security, reintegration of former insurgents into society and development, and will steadily implement this commitment.

UN peacekeeping missions are being dispatched to fragile and conflict-prone States. Japan will contribute to the efforts for peacebuilding by actively participating in those operations. We must further improve circumstances to this end.

At the same time, we will do our best to achieve the ideal of "a World without Nuclear Weapons" through such efforts as the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative or NPDI.

The DPRK's nuclear and missile issues pose a threat to the entire international community, and Japan continues to urge the DPRK to take concrete actions toward their resolution. In particular, the abduction issue represents a violation of basic human rights. Thus, this is a universal issue and a matter of great concern for the entire international community. Japan is committed to continuing its utmost efforts to realize the return of all the victims at the earliest possible date, through strengthened coordination with other Member States. With regard to Japan-DPRK relations, Japan intends to maintain its efforts to comprehensively resolve the outstanding issues of concern, settle the unfortunate past and normalize relations, in accordance with the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration. Japan urges the DPRK to take positive steps in order that our countries may have a dialogue toward this goal.

Mr. President,

In recent years, the role of the United Nations has taken on greater significance than ever. In order for the United Nations to tackle these issues more effectively, Japan will continue to support increasing effectiveness and efficiency and reinforcing the functions of the United Nations.

Security Council Reform is absolutely necessary in this respect. We must accelerate the stagnated reform process. All Member States must proactively commit to the reform with a sense of urgency, that it would affect the credibility of the United Nations. Japan intends to launch a substantive negotiation toward the reform with like-minded members, to make tangible achievements during this session.

Mr. President,

As I promised moments ago, Japan will recover from the earthquake disaster, and seek a peaceful, safe and brighter future side by side with the leaders gathered here. For that purpose, Japan will maintain its contribution to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, focusing on health and education. Moreover, Japan will continue its contribution to the development of Africa by hosting the Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development or TICAD V in 2013. Regarding the support for the developing countries to address climate change, Japan will implement its commitments on the Fast-Start Finance up to next year. Japan will continue its support beyond 2012.

Mr. President,

Today I would like to announce Japan's new commitments.

Firstly, I wish to congratulate the people of the Republic of South Sudan on achieving their independence, and I assure that Japan will extend wherever possible support for the nation-building efforts in South Sudan as well as for the consolidation of peace in the region. Japan is eager to make contributions to the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) in the fields in which Japan excels. From this point of view, we are preparing to dispatch Japanese Self-Defense Forces personnel to Mission Headquarters as staff officers. Japan is also interested in dispatching an engineering unit of our Self-Defense Forces, to which the UN expresses high expectations. Japan therefore will conduct the necessary field study as early as possible.

Secondly, Japan will remain actively involved in the international community's efforts against humanitarian crises. One of the most pressing challenges at present is the drought in the Horn of Africa, which is directly affecting the children of the region. To mitigate this suffering as effectively as possible, Japan will provide further humanitarian aid in addition to the assistance worth approximately 100 million U.S. dollars which it has already implemented.

The last commitment I would like to announce concerns the Middle East and North Africa. Japan will support reform and democratization efforts in this region, which is now undergoing a massive change often referred to as the "Arab Spring". To improve the employment situation and support human resource development in the region, Japan is prepared to extend an additional yen loan worth approximately 1 billion U.S. dollars in total, for projects which are expected to contribute to infrastructure building and industrial development. Moreover, we will provide support to ensure fair elections in Tunisia and Egypt, where polls are scheduled to be held in autumn this year. For a new Libya, Japan will support the country's nation-building efforts in cooperation with the international community, utilizing its expertise and technological capacity. At the same

time, Japan will deepen economic relations with Middle Eastern and North African countries by further promoting trade and investment through such means as trade insurance and export loans. As Middle East peace represents the linchpin for the peace and stability of the region, Japan will make active efforts, such as extending assistance to the Palestinians, for the realization of the two-state solution.

To conclude my statement today, I will touch briefly upon what I have felt in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake. After the events of 11 March this year, I strongly felt the magnificence of a society in which each individual undertakes actions in an orderly manner, a society in which people help each other. In addition, all lines of the Tohoku *shinkansen*, bullet trains, including a train which was running at 270 kilometers per hour at the time of the earthquake, made emergency stops safely, without causing a single injury. I believe this demonstrated fact bears witness to Japan's high level of technical advancement.

I thus believe in the strength of the Japanese people, which comes to the fore most prominently in times of crisis. I am certain that such resilience, both human and technological, which does not yield in the face of enormous difficulties, will be the very source of Japan's future contribution to the international community.

Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let us take on the challenges for the resolution of the issues confronting the world today, with strong determination to open the way to a brighter future for humanity. As the new leader of Japan, I am determined to make progress step by step towards a more peaceful, prosperous and positive future, hand in hand with the leaders assembled here today.

The people of Japan as well as the government are determined to overcome any and all difficulties. We will continue our contribution towards a brighter future for the people of the world.

I should like to close my statement by reiterating our firm determination.

Thank you for your attention.

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Japan-Philippines Joint Statement on the Comprehensive Promotion of the "Strategic Partnership" between Neighboring Countries Connected by Special Bonds of Friendship

September 27, 2011

JAPANESE

His Excellency Benigno S. Aquino III, President of the Republic of the Philippines, on the invitation of the Government of Japan, paid an Official Working Visit to Japan from 25 to 28 September 2011. President Aquino paid a State Call on His Majesty the Emperor of Japan and visited Ishinomaki City in Miyagi Prefecture, a disaster-affected area of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

His Excellency Yoshihiko Noda, Prime Minister of Japan, and President Aquino held a productive first Summit Meeting in a cordial, forward-looking and constructive atmosphere. Sharing the recognition that relations between Japan and the Philippines, as two maritime countries bound by shared basic values and common strategic interests, have developed into "Strategic Partnership", the two leaders issued the following Joint Statement:

1. Prime Minister Noda expressed his profound gratitude for the provision of emergency relief supplies and the dispatch of a medical assistance team by the Government of the Republic of the Philippines to disaster-affected areas in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake. Facing this unprecedented national crisis, he stressed his determination to make utmost efforts for a reconstruction open to the world, while strengthening the "Kizuna" -bonds of friendship- with the international community and "taking in the vitality" of foreign countries. He also stated that Japan will share the experiences and lessons learnt from the accident at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station with the international community and thereby contribute to enhancing global nuclear safety. In response, President Aquino reiterated his condolences to the victims of the earthquake and their families, and reaffirmed the Republic of the Philippines' readiness to extend further assistance within its capacity, emphasizing such support is a testament to the Filipino people's friendship and solidarity with the Japanese people. President Aquino expressed his confidence that Japan will recover soon and continue to play an active role in the international community.

2. President Aquino conveyed an invitation for Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress and other members of the Imperial Family of Japan to visit the Philippines, at a mutually-convenient opportunity. Expressing his gratitude for the warm hospitality extended by the Government of Japan, President Aquino invited Prime Minister Noda to visit the Republic

of the Philippines in 2012 at an opportunity convenient to both sides. Prime Minister Noda expressed his gratitude for the invitation.

3. The two leaders reconfirmed that the two countries share such basic values as freedom, democracy, fundamental human rights and the rule of law, they have developed together as free and dynamic market economies, and they have such common strategic interests as ensuring the safety of sea lines of communication. The two leaders also shared the view that, based on the friendly and cooperative relationship that has been fostered for more than half a century since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1956, the two countries will cooperate not only for strengthening the bilateral relations but also for fostering the open and multi-layered network, which serves for sharing common vision and principles, as well as the possible establishment of rules in the Asia Pacific region, composed of existing frameworks of regional cooperation. The two leaders confirmed that both governments have elevated their bilateral relations to a "Strategic Partnership."

4. The two leaders shared the view that Japan and the Republic of the Philippines, as neighboring countries connected by special bonds of friendship, will promote the following concrete forms of cooperation in a comprehensive manner in order to further reinforce the "Strategic Partnership."

(1) Maintaining and strengthening high-level bilateral relations

(i) Mutually beneficial cooperation in economic field

The two leaders expressed satisfaction that Japan and the Republic of Philippines enjoy dynamic and mutually-beneficial economic relations including robust trade, investments and development cooperation. Prime Minister Noda stated that taking in the vitality of Asian countries, including the Republic of the Philippines, which are developing dynamically and sustainably, is essential for Japan's economic growth. President Aquino welcomed Japan's policy to strengthen economic relations with Asian countries. The two leaders shared the view that it is important to further deepen the close economic relations between the two countries.

(Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement)

The two leaders welcomed the smooth implementation and operation of the Agreement between Japan and the Republic of the Philippines for an Economic Partnership (JPEPA). They welcomed the convening of the Joint Committee and Sub-Committees established under the Agreement, including the recent meeting of the Sub-Committee on the Improvement of the Business Environment held in Manila on 15 September. They confirmed the importance of continuing dialogues with Japanese business groups, to further promote investment. Furthermore, the two leaders recognized that the promotion of the movement of natural persons under the Agreement will serve the two countries' interests, and decided to continue consultations in order to further improve the current situation including the smooth dispatch and acceptance of Filipino candidates for qualified nurses and certified careworkers. President Aquino expressed his gratitude for various measures taken by the Government of Japan to support Filipino candidates such as introducing Japanese language training before their dispatch to Japan, and welcomed ongoing cooperation between the two Governments in this regard. President Aquino emphasized the importance of increasing the passing rates of Filipino nurses in the Japanese National Examination for nurses. The two leaders confirmed that both Governments will cooperate

towards a successful first General Review of the Agreement pursuant to Article 161 of the Agreement, to maximize mutual benefit.

(Promotion and enhancement of investment)

The two leaders confirmed the importance of improving the business environment and further promoting investment between the two countries. President Aquino affirmed his Administration's commitment to promoting good and accountable governance and the improvement of the business environment, including continually enhancing administrative transparency and predictability. Prime Minister Noda expressed his high appreciation for the efforts by President Aquino.

President Aquino requested Japan's support for his Administration's Public-Private Partnership (PPP) program, which prioritizes infrastructure and development projects, in furtherance of the "Philippine Development Plan 2011-2016." In response, Prime Minister Noda stated that Japan will support the improvement of the investment environment through the active utilization of Official Development Assistance (ODA), and thereby promote private investment and contribute to the development of the Republic of the Philippines. In this regard, he announced that Japan will dispatch a public-private mission to the Republic of the Philippines by March 2012 and hold a seminar in Manila which will contribute to the improvement and development of infrastructure in the country.

The two leaders also stressed the importance of the exchange and cooperation between business groups such as the Japan-Philippines Economic Joint Committee in advancing infrastructure development to encourage investments. The two leaders confirmed the importance of the timely conclusion of the Republic of Philippines' ongoing process with regard to the Japanese terrestrial digital TV broadcasting system.

(Continuation of economic cooperation)

President Aquino expressed his heartfelt gratitude for the support that Japan, as the top donor country to the Republic of the Philippines, has extended for poverty reduction and economic development in the Republic of the Philippines. In response, Prime Minister Noda stated that Japan will continue its assistance to the Republic of the Philippines as an important ODA target country. The two leaders also emphasized the importance of the Japanese ODA loan project "Forestland Management Project" for disaster management as well as addressing climate change, and welcomed the signing and exchange of notes for the project that took place today. The two leaders welcomed the entry into force on 8 April this year of the Agreement on Technical Cooperation between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines.

The two leaders also decided to continue to promote maritime connectivity in the Republic of the Philippines and its surrounding area through their support for the "Maritime ASEAN Economic Corridor", the initiatives to contribute to the implementation of the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity (MPAC), and cooperation under the framework of the Japan-BIMP/EAGA (Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines - East ASEAN Growth Area), while coordinating with the Comprehensive Asia Development Plan (CADP) formulated by the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA).

(Disaster prevention and management)

The two leaders confirmed that bilateral cooperation in the field of disaster prevention and management has been strengthened based on the sharing of experiences and lessons accumulated by the two countries. Expressing his appreciation for Japan's assistance for the enhancement of the disaster prevention capability of the Republic of the Philippines, President Aquino stated that the Republic of the Philippines will steadily implement ongoing projects such as the yen-loan project "Pasig-Marikina River Channel Improvement Project Phase II" and the grant aid "Project for Improvement of the Meteorological Radar System." The two leaders also confirmed that the two countries will further improve disaster management capabilities through grant aid projects such as the "Project for Evacuation Shelter Construction in Disaster Vulnerable Areas in Province of Albay," and share expertise and experiences in disaster prevention through technical cooperation projects such as the "Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Capability Enhancement Project."

(Environment and climate change)

President Aquino renewed his appreciation for Japan's continuous assistance for the climate change mitigation and adaptation measures of the Republic of the Philippines, as demonstrated by the grant aid "Project for the Introduction of Clean Energy by Solar Electricity Generation System" and the "Programme for the Improvement of Capabilities to cope with Natural Disasters Caused by Climate Change", which were implemented as Japan's assistance for developing countries to address climate change up to 2012. The two leaders decided to continue their close cooperation in the field of environment and climate change.

(ii) Mutual trust in Political and Security aspects

(Convening of multi-layered policy dialogues)

The two leaders decided that the two countries will continue to frequently hold high-level dialogues by utilizing opportunities afforded by regional and multilateral meetings. They also decided to upgrade the existing Vice-Ministerial Policy Dialogue to a Vice-Ministerial Strategic Dialogue, to promote discussions and cooperation on regional and global issues of mutual concern and interest, such as maritime issues, countermeasures against terrorism and international organized crimes, the reform of the United Nations (UN), disarmament and non-proliferation, and environment and climate change. They also decided to hold the fifth Japan-Philippines Political-Military (PM) and Military-Military (MM) Dialogues in the Republic of the Philippines in the first half of 2012.

(Cooperation in the field of maritime affairs)

The two leaders reaffirmed the necessity of strengthening bilateral cooperation in the field of maritime affairs between Japan and the Republic of the Philippines, being two maritime countries sharing sea lines of communication. They shared the recognition that piracy off the coast of Somalia is a serious threat to maritime security and the safety of maritime navigation. President Aquino expressed his gratitude for the escort operations by the Japan Self Defense Forces with Japan Coast Guard officers aboard, off the coast of Somalia, which benefit Filipino seafarers on board ships plying the area. The two leaders also welcomed the important role that the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) has played in combating piracy

in Asia.

The two leaders welcomed the first Japan-Philippines Dialogue on Maritime and Oceanic Affairs held on 9 September 2011, and decided to enhance the cooperation and coordination between their maritime safety authorities through such measures as the dispatch of patrol vessels of the Japan Coast Guard to the Republic of the Philippines for trainings for the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) based on mutual consent and the support for the capacity building of the PCG. They also decided to promote exchanges and cooperation between their defense authorities, such as reciprocal visits between the Chief of Staff of Japanese Maritime Self Defense Forces (JMSDF) and the Flag Officer of the Philippine Navy, port calls in the Republic of the Philippines by JMSDF vessels, and the holding of the Japan-Philippines Maritime Chief of Staff Meeting.

(Peace in Mindanao)

The two leaders reaffirmed the importance of peace in Mindanao for regional security and stability. President Aquino underscored his Administration's commitment to securing peace in Mindanao, and expressed his gratitude to the Government of Japan for its continued contribution to the Mindanao peace process. In this regard, the President thanked Japan for its assistance in facilitating his meeting with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) leadership in Japan on 4 August 2011, which pushed the peace process forward. In response, Prime Minister Noda stated that the Government of Japan will continue to send development experts to the International Monitoring Team (IMT), to implement J-BIRD projects, to contribute through the International Contact Group (ICG), and to conduct the Mindanao Young Leaders Invitational Program, among others. He also stated that, with regard to J-BIRD projects, Japan will adopt two technical cooperation projects, "Rice-based Farming Technology Extension Project for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)" and "Capacity-Building in Support of the Community Development for Conflict-Affected Areas in Mindanao", which were requested by the Republic of the Philippines. President Aquino expressed his appreciation.

(iii) Mutual understanding at the people-to-people level

(Tourism exchange)

Noting that there are over 210,000 nationals of the Republic of the Philippines living in Japan and that Filipinos constitute the fourth biggest group of foreign residents therein, the two leaders decided to further expand people-to-people exchanges between the two countries, through the promotion of reciprocal tourism in order to strengthen "Kizuna" – the bonds of friendship-. Prime Minister Noda thanked President Aquino for his visit to disaster-affected areas, which demonstrated the safety of travel to Japan even after the earthquake. The two leaders welcomed the efforts of the Government of Japan to promote Philippine nationals' visits to Japan, including the participation by the Embassy of Japan in tourism exhibitions in the Republic of the Philippines.

(Youth exchange)

The two leaders shared the view that supporting exchanges between their peoples, especially young people who will be leaders of the next generation, is essential for ensuring stable bilateral relations between the two countries, in the future. President Aquino

expressed his appreciation for the role that the Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS) program and the Ship for South East Asia Youth Program (SSEAYP) have played in achieving this goal, and expressed his hope for their continuation. Prime Minister Noda responded with his willingness to continue youth exchange programs. He said that Japan will invite 400 Filipino college students to Japan as "Philippine-Tohoku Goodwill Ambassadors" who will join exchange programs with college students, among others, in disaster-affected areas.

(2) Contribution to the regional and international community Prime Minister Noda stated that Japan and the Japan-U.S. Alliance have played an essential role to maintain the stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region, and President Aquino welcomed it. The two leaders shared the recognition that, as countries sharing strategic interests in the region and as allies of the United States of America, their active participation in regional cooperation frameworks such as Japan-ASEAN meetings, ASEAN+3, East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is imperative for realizing a prosperous and stable Asia. Especially with regard to EAS, they confirmed that they will closely cooperate with each other in the run-up to the Summit in November this year for the further development of this Forum.

(Maritime security)

President Aquino affirmed the Philippines' commitment to the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) and to the peaceful resolution of maritime disputes over the South China Sea, while stressing the need for a rules-based regime for addressing and resolving disputes and promoting cooperation. The two leaders welcomed the adoption of the Guidelines for the Implementation of the DOC and expressed their hope for the early formulation of a legally-binding Code of Conduct (COC) that is consistent with established international law.

The two leaders confirmed that the South China Sea is vital, as it connects the world and the Asia Pacific region, and that peace and stability therein is of common interest to the international community. As leaders of countries sharing sea lines of communication, they also confirmed that freedom of navigation, unimpeded commerce, and compliance with established international law including the UNCLOS and the peaceful settlement of disputes serve the interests of the two countries and the whole region. They shared the recognition that these same interests should also be advanced and protected in the South China Sea.

(Promotion of regional economic integration)

In order to promote the regional economic integration, the two leaders decided to further enhance common economic rules. In this regard, the two leaders expressed their hope for the further reinforcement of the economic relationship between Japan and ASEAN member states, through the early conclusion of the negotiations on the chapters relating to trade in services and investment, as well as by steadily implementing the Agreement on Comprehensive Economic Partnership among Japan and Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (AJCEP). The two leaders stated their support for the acceleration of the inter-governmental study process and work towards commencing the negotiations of the East Asian Free Trade Area (EAFTA) and the Comprehensive Economic Partnership in East Asia (CEPEA).

(Regional cooperation on disaster prevention)

President Aquino commended the Government of Japan's efforts to contribute to the establishment of the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) and affirmed the importance of sharing expertise on disaster prevention between Japan and ASEAN Member States, and of establishing an ASEAN-wide information-sharing network regarding Disaster Management Network for the ASEAN Region with a view to enhancing regional capabilities for the prevention of disasters including Tsunami. Prime Minister Noda stated that the Government of Japan, based on the experience of the Great East Japan Earthquake, will hold an international high-level conference on natural disaster in 2012 and will host the Third World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2015. President Aquino welcomed Japan's hosting of these important events.

(The Korean Peninsula)

The two leaders expressed their grave concern over the continued development of nuclear and missile programs of North Korea, including its ongoing uranium enrichment program, as being in violation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. They reiterated their commitment to fully implementing the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. They urged North Korea to fulfill its commitments and comply with its international obligations, including its denuclearization. The two leaders also urged North Korea to promptly address humanitarian concerns of the international community, such as the abduction issue. In this context, they reaffirmed the importance of concrete actions to develop an environment conducive to the resumption of the Six-Party Talks, while expressing support for inter-Korean dialogue as a continuing process.

(Climate change negotiations)

The two leaders confirmed the importance of establishing a fair and effective international framework with the participation of all major economies based on the Cancun Agreements and through a transparent and inclusive process. The two leaders decided to work together constructively for the success of the 17th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP17) meeting which will be held in the Republic of South Africa from 28 November to 9 December this year. Prime Minister Noda renewed Japan's willingness to promote the East Asia Low Carbon Growth Partnership and to work with the Republic of Philippines in achieving the objectives of the Partnership, to which President Aquino expressed his support.

(UN Security Council reform)

The two leaders confirmed the importance of the two countries' joint efforts to achieve the early realization of UN Security Council reform, which would include the expansion of both permanent and non-permanent seats. President Aquino reaffirmed his firm support for Japan's bid for permanent membership in the UN Security Council, to which Prime Minister Noda expressed his appreciation.

(UN Peacekeeping Operations)

The two leaders expressed satisfaction that the two countries have actively participated in UN Peacekeeping Operations in order to contribute to peace and stability of the international community, and reaffirmed that the two countries will promote cooperation and support on the ground. They also shared the importance of enhancing the capacity of personnel in the field of peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Issued in Tokyo, 27 September 2011

Yoshihiko Noda
Prime Minister of Japan

Benigno S. Aquino III
President of the Republic of the Philippines

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