

Opening Remarks by H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan
at the UN Climate Summit 2014: “Resilience, Adaptation and DRR”
23 September 2014, New York

There is no doubt that climate change has affected human society and natural ecosystems and thus contributed to natural disasters. Measures toward adaptation, including those against the risk of disasters, are essential to building a resilient world that is adaptable to climate change.

Once a disaster strikes, it can wipe out years of hard-won development achievements in an instant. The first casualties of natural disasters are those who tend to face vulnerabilities, such as children, the elderly, and persons with disabilities. It is necessary to work toward disaster risk reduction from the perspective of human security in order to protect the vulnerable from disasters.

Japan has led the international community as an advanced country in disaster risk reduction with the knowledge and technologies that we have acquired through overcoming numerous disasters.

In concrete, Japan has provided assistance through the combination of both structural measures – such as disaster-resilient infrastructure improvement and flood countermeasures and forestation to prevent and mitigate disasters – and non-structural measures – such as improvement of legal systems, disaster risk education, and human resource development.

In the international arena, Japan has twice hosted the UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction. At the last conference in 2005, Japan contributed to the formulation of the Hyogo Framework for Action, which is an international guideline for disaster risk reduction.

Furthermore, at the morning session today, I announced Japan’s “Adaptation Initiative” to strengthen and support developing countries’

adaptive capacity in a holistic manner. Japan will strengthen assistance for adaptation policy from planning to implementation. We will place a particular focus on supporting small island countries, which are especially vulnerable to the impact of climate change. Japan will also promote the sharing of experience and knowledge through international networks. I hereby commit to providing assistance for human resource development for 5,000 people in the field of adaptation over the coming 3 years as a part of my pledge made earlier today.

Ladies and gentlemen,

In March next year, the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will be held in the city of Sendai, which was affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake. This conference is important as it will adopt the Post-Hyogo Framework for Action, which is a new international guideline for disaster risk reduction beyond 2015.

At the same time, I hope that this conference will provide an opportunity to share Japan's advanced technologies and systems for disaster risk reduction with the international community in such a manner that developing countries can introduce for themselves. Furthermore, it will also provide an opportunity to share our experiences by showcasing to you in person our successful reconstruction after the Great East Japan Earthquake.

I strongly hope that those of you gathered here today, as well as heads of state and government and other ministers from around the world, will participate in the conference. I look forward to your cooperation for its success.

In addition to the formulation of an effective Post-Hyogo Framework for Action, it is important to clearly place disaster risk reduction within the post-2015 development agenda. We cannot promote the mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction without mobilizing resources for disaster risk reduction in addition to establishing a guideline.

2015 will be a year to formulate the Post-Hyogo Framework for Action, the post-2015 development agenda, and a new international framework for climate change. 2015 will be the year in which the UN, marking its 70th anniversary, will be tested whether it can fulfill its role in setting global norms for global challenges such as these.

I believe the UN can do it. Let me conclude by calling upon all of us to join our efforts for that purpose.

I thank you.