Message from Minister for Foreign Affairs

More than a year has now passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake, and thanks to the kind support of the international community, the Tohoku region is steadily moving forward along the path of recovery and development.

The earthquake resulted in profound sorrow and unprecedented challenges for Japan, but we have been encouraged by global recognition of Japanese values typified by the fortitude and resilience of Tohoku residents as they refused to give up hope in the wake of the disaster.

I hope that the displays in the Japan Pavilion and the Japan Day program on June 20 will give the people of the world a real sense of the powerful revival taking place in Tohoku as well as the attractions and new possibilities of this region as it forges ahead with green innovation and smart city projects.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Japan Day
June 20, 2012
Rio+20 Japan Pavilion
(within the Athletes’ Park)
In iwate, a great number of people lost their lives to the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami on March 11, 2011.

On behalf of the people of iwate, I would like to express my deepest gratitude for the warm and encouraging sympathy, condolences, and support we received from all over the world during this disaster.

Now, with this indescribable situation before our very eyes, we are determined to ensure that this tsunami is the last one that causes loss of human life. We will overcome the pain and sadness of the destruction so that we can return to a society in which people can live and work safely.

Hiraizumi, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and pride of iwate, was built according to Buddhist thought. It left us magnificent temples and gardens, and conveys to us the idea that we should live together respecting every life.

We, the people of iwate, have gained the strength to carry on from the sympathy and encouragement we have received throughout the world. Together we can gather that strength, and with hope, we can strive step by step towards reconstruction with the ideas of Hiraizumi in our hearts.

Over a year has passed since the March 11, 2011 earthquake and tsunami. This disaster took away our family, friends, work, property and memories in one split second.

Yet in the middle of such turmoil, we received unconditional support and encouraging messages from our friends in the international community. Giving us hope and courage to get back on our feet. On behalf of Miyagi Prefecture, I would like to express my sincerest gratitude for your generous assistance.

Since the disaster, affected areas are making gradual progress towards recovery. Efforts are being made to restore Miyagi’s sightseeing spots. Our spirit of hospitality remains unchanged and we wait in eagerness for visitors from abroad.

I pledge to bring our people together as one to overcome this disaster and rebuild a Miyagi the world will be proud of. As the road to recovery is long and many continue to live in difficult situations, I ask for your continued support and cooperation.

It has been over a year since the disaster struck, we have received immeasurable support from around the world. Such heartfelt support has greatly helped, inspired and encouraged the people of Fukushima. I express my sincere appreciation to all our friends. Thanks to your support, Fukushima Prefecture has regained its vitality and vibrancy. Damage caused by the disaster still remains but life in most of the regions has now returned to normal.

Humankind has never experienced this type of disaster where the natural catastrophes of an earthquake and tsunami were followed by a nuclear disaster which in turn caused reputational damage to the whole prefecture. We must reflect earnestly on why this type of multifaceted disaster occurred, and pass down the lessons we learn from it to future generations.

The slogan “Future, From Fukushima” will show the world a new style of society that balances community development along with global environmental conservation, as well as demonstrate the importance of mutual support among local residents and the promotion of regional culture and pride.

Lastly, I hope for your ongoing interest in Fukushima for your continued support.