

Ministerial-level Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance to
Tsunami-Affected Communities
(Summary and Evaluation)

January 13, 2005

Main Points

- The Ministerial-level Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance to Tsunami-Affected Communities was held in Geneva on January 11. Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Shuzen Tanigawa attended this meeting as the Japanese representative.
- In response to the United Nations (UN) Flash Appeal, the donors pledged contributions of approximately US\$756 million to be given through international organizations to meet emergency needs for the immediate six months (equivalent to 77.4% of the Flash Appeal amount (approximately US\$977 million)).
- Japan was the first donor country to give a speech. Japan pledged a contribution of US\$250 million, equivalent to approximately one-third of the total contribution mentioned above, including contributions to the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). This contribution was highly appreciated by the various international organizations and countries concerned.

The Ministerial-level Meeting on Humanitarian Assistance to Tsunami-Affected Communities was held under the auspices of the UN at the UN European Headquarters in Geneva on January 11. The following is a summary and evaluation of the meeting.

1. Overview of the meeting

- The meeting was held to explain the status of assistance from the international community and to raise contributions for future assistance. The UN convened this meeting, which was attended by affected countries, donor countries and international organizations. Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Shuzen Tanigawa from Japan attended the meeting.
- Statements were made by the sponsor, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator Jan Egeland, as well as international organizations and affected countries (Republic of Indonesia, Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, Republic of Maldives, Republic of Seychelles, Kingdom of Thailand and Republic of India). Statements were then given by sixty donor countries (including Japan, the European Union presidency holder (Luxembourg), United States (US), United Kingdom (UK), Kingdom of Norway, Federal Republic of Germany, French Republic, Canada, Kingdom of the Netherlands and Australia). Japan was the first donor country to make a speech.
- The donor countries made explicit pledges to contribute a total of approximately US\$756 million in response to the UN Flash Appeal (an appeal for approximately US\$977 million), which was launched on January 6. These contributions are equivalent to approximately 77.4% of the Flash Appeal amount.
- Japan pledged a contribution of US\$250 million by way of international organizations (including the IFRC and ICRC) and gave a breakdown of the contribution by organization. Japan's assistance was particularly prominent, as it was the largest amount pledged by the donor countries (it accounted for approximately one-third of the amount pledged by countries, and approximately 30% of the total amount excluding that allocated to the IFRC and ICRC).
- In addition to assistance in the emergency phase described above, the major donor

countries expressed their intention to offer assistance with a view to rehabilitation and reconstruction in the medium to long term.

- The affected countries expressed their gratitude for the assistance provided by the international community thus far and requested further assistance. The affected countries also stated that they were managing the funds as necessary to ensure the assistance is implemented effectively.
- The participants underlined that it was important to have early warnings for tsunami as well as measures to prevent and stop the damage they cause.

2. Evaluation

(1) This meeting was attended by many ministers from concerned donor countries, including Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Andrew S. Natsios, UK Secretary of State for International Development Hilary Benn, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office of Germany Kerstin Müller and Minister for Development, Cooperation and Humanitarian Action Jean-Louis Schiltz (Luxembourg) as the EU presidency holder, as well as the affected countries including Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives. A total of 65 countries, including 60 donor countries, gave statements at the meeting. This meeting was attended by representatives of UN-related organizations such as the World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), and international organizations including the IFRC, ICRC and International Organization for Migration (IOM). It was a high-level, successful humanitarian assistance meeting without recent precedent.

(2) Pledges were made at this donor meeting to contribute approximately US\$756

million, which accounts for about 77.4% of the US\$977 million or so that was requested in the UN Flash Appeal on January 6. The pledges were explicitly made as assistance for meeting emergency needs. It is extremely unusual that such a vast amount of assistance was pledged explicitly at the donor meeting approximately two weeks after the disaster occurred and only five days after the appeal was launched. This demonstrates that the international community, including Japan, deeply recognizes the gravity of the tsunami disaster and the necessity of carrying out immediate relief activities. UN Under-Secretary-General Egeland, who sponsored the meeting, expressed his satisfaction and gratitude for the assistance and solidarity of the international community.

- (3) In these circumstances, Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Tanigawa attended the meeting as Japan's representative and was the first of the donor countries' representatives to give a statement, ahead of attending ministers from other countries. Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Tanigawa pledged that Japan would make a vast contribution amounting to US\$250 million and that the actual contribution would be implemented at the earliest possible date. The content of Japan's assistance and proactive stance toward assistance was unrivaled by other donor countries, and was exceptionally appreciated by international organizations and countries concerned (representatives of the UN, various international organizations and affected countries individually expressed their gratitude to Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Tanigawa, and Under-Secretary-General Egeland expressed his appreciation for Japan's contribution in his press conference).

(Note)

Outline of speech given by Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Tanigawa

- The spirit of sympathy and solidarity of the international community and the central role played by the UN are important. Japan is providing as much assistance as possible from the three aspects of financial resources, human resources, and knowledge and expertise.
- In terms of financial resources, of the maximum of US\$500 million in immediate grant assistance to be offered, Japan will extend a total of US\$250 million in bilateral grant aid to the three countries of Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Maldives. Japan will contribute the remaining US\$250 million to international organizations (a specific breakdown of the contributions was also presented).
- Japan's assistance aims to meet emergency needs and will be implemented at the earliest possible date. Japan urges other countries to implement the assistance they have pledged as quickly as possible.
- With respect to knowledge and expertise, Japan will make efforts to establish rapidly a tsunami early warning mechanism for the Indian Ocean countries. A concrete framework of cooperation will be discussed at the special session of the UN World Conference on Disaster Reduction that will be held in Kobe, and Japan will actively provide its knowledge, expertise and technology to this end.
- Regarding human resources, Japan has dispatched the Japan Disaster Relief Team to the affected countries of Indonesia, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Maldives, and conducted search and rescue operations and transport support by mobilizing the capabilities of the Self-Defense Forces (SDF).
- In addition to immediate relief assistance in the three fields mentioned above, Japan will also extend its assistance to the maximum possible extent in close cooperation with countries and international organizations concerned, to provide assistance based upon medium and long-term rehabilitation and reconstruction plans.