

The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction

The Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) was held from 14 to 18 March 2015 in Sendai, Miyagi, Japan.

WCDRR is an UN-hosted conference, serving as a platform to discuss international strategies for disaster risk reduction. Japan promotes international cooperation to reduce disaster risk, drawing on its know-how and related experience in the area. Japan became the host country for the third conference, following the first conference (1994, Yokohama) and the second conference (2005, Hyogo [Kobe]) due to its active and international response towards disaster risk. 187 United Nations (UN) member states participated in this conference, with more than 6,500 participants including the Heads of State of seven countries, vice-president-level officials from six countries, deputy prime ministers from seven countries, and ministerial-level officials from 84 countries. Adding in the number of participants for events related to the conference, a total of 150,000 people from inside and outside Japan participated, making the event the largest-ever international conference held in Japan.

Japan set three goals for this conference:

- (1) To incorporate the perspective of disaster risk reduction into the planning and implementation of various policies (mainstreaming disaster risk reduction);
- (2) To disseminate information on Japan's know-how and technology related to disaster risk reduction; and
- (3) To disseminate the message of Japan's reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake, and to revitalize the affected areas.

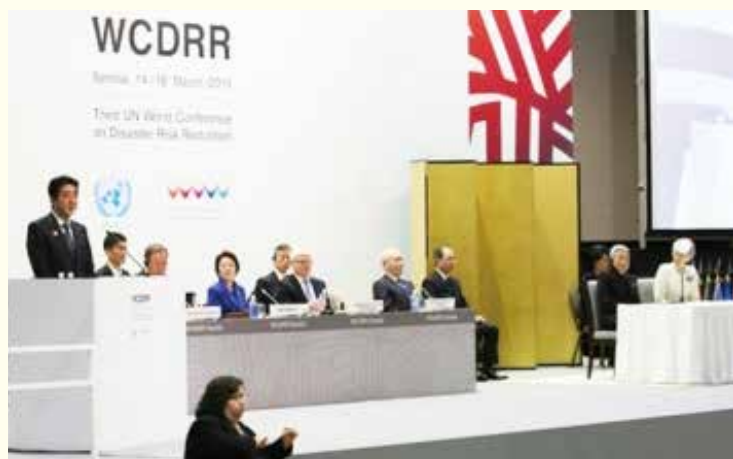
At the conference, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 was adopted to serve as the post-Hyogo Framework for Action, which had been established at the second conference to provide international guidance in disaster risk reduction. In addition, the Sendai Declaration was adopted, which reflects ideas proposed by Japan, including the importance of investment in disaster risk reduction, commitment by diverse stakeholders, and the concept of "Build Back Better." Furthermore, the conference confirmed the need to include the perspective of disaster risk reduction into the post-2015 development agenda, scheduled to be adopted in September 2015.

Prime Minister Abe announced Japan's new cooperation initiative, the "Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction," which will serve as Japan's basic policy on cooperation for disaster risk reduction. Through this initiative, Japan demonstrated its will to contribute further to the international community by making use of its advanced knowledge and technology concerning disaster risk reduction.

In FY2013, two years prior to the third conference, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs conducted the "Evaluation of the Assistance under the Initiative for Disaster Reduction through ODA." Its objective was to evaluate the assistance that Japan had implemented since the Second UN WCDRR, and to make use of this evaluation as a reference for developing Japan's disaster risk reduction policies in the lead-up to the third conference.

The results of the evaluation led to recommendations such as "mainstreaming disaster risk reduction," "strengthening the strategic use of 'non-material' assistance," and "formulating a new initiative with a clear message." At the third conference, policies that took these recommendations into consideration were announced. From the standpoint of the PDCA cycle, this evaluation has become a case in which evaluation results were useful for subsequent policy planning.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will continue to proactively carry out evaluations that will be used effectively for policy planning.



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