

**[Provisional Translation]**

**Reconstruction Promotion Committee  
FY2012 Report on Discussions**

February 2013

Reconstruction Promotion Committee

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Based on the hearings conducted hitherto during the deliberations of this Committee and the field surveys that it has carried out, this report provides an overview of the two years since the disaster, as well as a report on challenges for the future, focusing on the six issues raised in the Interim Report published in September 2012.

The Great East Japan Earthquake, which struck on March 11, 2011, was a major disaster on a scale unheard-of in Japanese history, in terms not only of the immense seismic energy involved, with a magnitude of 9.0 being recorded, but also the widespread geographical extent of the damage and its compound nature, encompassing not only an earthquake, but also a tsunami and a nuclear power plant disaster. How has Japanese society responded to this unprecedented situation? To mark the occasion of the second anniversary of the earthquake, the Reconstruction Promotion Committee has compiled this report concerning the process of recovery and reconstruction in the aftermath of this catastrophic disaster.

## 1. The Great East Japan Earthquake and the Characteristics of Reconstruction

### (1) The Institutional Framework for Reconstruction

Let us look at what institutional framework has been put in place for reconstruction in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake in its historical context, comparing it with modern precedents in the form of the Great Kanto Earthquake and the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake.

The 1923 Great Kanto Earthquake, in which the tremors from a magnitude 7.9 ocean plate earthquake involving the slippage of the Sagami Trough also caused a conflagration due to strong winds, is the largest complex disaster in Japanese history, claiming 105,000 victims (many of whom died as a result of the fires). The initial vision for reconstruction from this disaster, which was proposed by Minister of Home Affairs, Shinpei Goto, was ambitious. At a time when the entire national budget was 1.5 billion yen, he planned to secure an immense reconstruction budget of 4 billion yen—2.7 times the national budget—and to push through town plans that sought to transform Tokyo into a world-class imperial capital. In order to achieve this, he sought to establish a Reconstruction Board that was independent from existing ministries and agencies and that had considerable authority. However, Goto's grand vision soon floundered. As well as having the budget cut down to approximately 600 million yen, the Reconstruction Board was abolished during the

political upheaval that took place four months later. Reconstruction projects were carried out by the Reconstruction Bureau, which was positioned as an external bureau of the Ministry of Home Affairs, as well as by local government bodies. Although the budget for reconstruction was reduced substantially, it was still equivalent to 40% of the national budget (the main revenue source was government bonds) and it was possible to build the foundations of Tokyo as a modern city through the implementation of some town plans.

The 1995 Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake was an urban disaster that claimed 6,434 victims (many of the deaths resulted from collapsing buildings), due to a magnitude 7.3 earthquake involving movement along 40km of an active fault immediately below the city of Kobe. In light of the setbacks experienced in relation to Goto's vision following the Great Kanto Earthquake, rather than establishing a separate body for reconstruction, a Reconstruction Committee was established, chaired by former Vice-Minister of the National Land Agency, Atsushi Shimokobe and linking the capital and the disaster-afflicted area, with government-wide support being provided for implementing the proposal of speedy response measures. This was the smoothest cooperative framework that had ever been implemented in Japan. There was abundant local power and therefore reconstruction was swift. However, as the national government's reconstruction expenditure of approximately 10 trillion yen (funded by government bonds) was restricted to projects for the purpose of rebuilding and restoring to the original standard, it was difficult to use the budget for creative reconstruction focused on establishing something better than before. However, quite a few of the various new responses proposed and pioneered in the process of reconstruction in the aftermath of the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake were implemented institutionally in reconstruction following the recent Great East Japan Earthquake.

The Great East Japan Earthquake was an extensive disaster covering an area stretching more than 500km north to south, resulting from an ocean plate megaquake with a magnitude of 9.0, and was a complex disaster involving an earthquake, a tsunami, and a nuclear power plant disaster. As stated in the overview entitled *The Great East Japan Earthquake: Learning from Megadisaster*, published by the World Bank at the end of 2012, "In coping with the Great East Japan Earthquake, Japan's advanced disaster risk management system, built up during nearly 2,000 years of experience with natural risks and hazards, proved its worth. The loss of life and property could have been far greater if the country's policies and practices had been less effective." As symbolized by the fact that there were no victims in the city of Kurihara in Miyagi Prefecture, where tremors of 7—the highest level on the Japanese seismic intensity scale—were recorded, the damage to

Japanese society from the seismic motion itself was limited. In contrast, the massive tsunami claimed approximately 18,000 victims in total, counting both deaths and missing persons. Although no deaths resulted directly from the accident at the nuclear power plant run by Tokyo Electric Power Company, this has destroyed the basis of people's livelihoods and continues to cause them anguish in a variety of ways. In addition, the radiation hazard will prevent reconstruction from even starting in the contaminated areas for many years to come.

When this triple blow of a catastrophe struck, there was some level of awareness that nonpartisan cooperation in reconstruction would be required, even amid a severe political situation, and it is fortunate that, after the disaster of 3/11, nonpartisan agreement among political parties including the Democratic Party of Japan, the Liberal Democratic Party, and the New Komeito led to the passing and implementation of the Basic Act on Reconstruction in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake in June, followed by the three supplementary budgets and, towards the end of the year, the Reconstruction Funding Act, the Act on Special Zone for Reconstruction, and the Act on the Establishment of the Reconstruction Agency.

A month after the disaster, in light of the extensive, wide-ranging nature of the Great East Japan Earthquake, the government established the Reconstruction Design Council, consisting of a panel of experts, in order to consider the overall shape of the responses required for reconstruction. In May, this Council set forth the *Seven Principles for the Reconstruction Framework*, and in late June completed and submitted to the Prime Minister its report, entitled *Towards Reconstruction—Hope beyond the Disaster*. Following these, the Government formulated the *Basic Guidelines for Reconstruction* at the end of July and compiled various measures, which were translated into reality in the form of the third supplementary budget and various laws over the months leading up to the end of the year. This was the first time that a comprehensive design for reconstruction had been compiled in response to a major disaster. Moreover, rather than adopting a mechanism based on a government-wide response that did not involve establishing a new organization to implement reconstruction projects, as was the case after the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake, it was decided to establish the Reconstruction Agency (functioning at a higher level than the Reconstruction Bureau, an external bureau of the Ministry of Home Affairs established after the Great Kanto Earthquake) to tackle the challenge of reconstruction in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake. Positioned alongside the existing ministries and agencies, the Reconstruction Agency is expected to handle the task of coordinating reconstruction with support and cooperation from existing ministries and agencies, and to make the process of

promoting reconstruction smoother, working closely with the actual districts affected by the disaster. This time, the reconstruction projects will cost in the region of 25 trillion yen, approximately double the cost of rebuilding and restoration following the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake, and Japan's first-ever reconstruction tax (10.5 trillion yen) has been established in order to fund the projects.

## (2) The Characteristics of Reconstruction Measures

Let us now list the characteristics of the reconstruction policies relating to the Great East Japan Earthquake that have been adopted under the aforementioned scheme.

- (i) Whereas national expenditure after the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake focused on restoration, the goal this time is to promote proactive and creative reconstruction, which is an historical development. In order to break free from repeated tsunami damage and create safer towns, the reconstruction measures include encouraging relocation to higher ground, on the one hand, and recommending multiple defenses (a combination of several means of mitigating disaster) within the same area, on the other. Moreover, support is also being provided for proactive measures by local authorities affected by the disaster, focusing on the reconstruction of daily life and industry, as well as the introduction of renewable energy and provision of care in a society with long life expectancy.
- (ii) When undertaking projects focused on promoting group relocation from dangerous areas, the cost burden was conventionally divided up so that three-quarters was funded by the national expenditure, with the remaining quarter being covered locally. However, in the case of reconstruction in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake, the local portion is funded through the Special Local Allocation Tax for Post-Disaster Reconstruction, which effectively reduces the fiscal burden on local government to zero. The financial burden on local government arising from infrastructure such as seawalls is also being eliminated in the same way.
- (iii) At one time it was not permitted to invest national expenditure in restoring private property, such as individual houses, but due to the Act on Support for Reconstructing Livelihoods of Disaster Victims enacted in 1998 following the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake, it has become possible to provide up to 3 million yen of support for house restoration. In addition, quite a few local authorities provide more generous financial aid on top of this.
- (iv) In addition to the measures outlined above, the Drawdown Fund for Reconstruction has been created in order to facilitate a flexible response to needs in the disaster-afflicted areas, with a view to supporting the rebuilding of the lives

and jobs of disaster victims.

- (v) The Act on Special Zone for Reconstruction was enacted in December 2011, making it possible to implement deregulation to promote reconstruction and preferential measures in such areas as the tax system. Based on this Act, Grants for Reconstruction have been established to consolidate the wide-ranging projects required for reconstruction and regional development, as well as to finance the whole of the local financial burden and to make the execution of projects more flexible.
- (vi) Through the establishment of the Reconstruction Tax for the first time in Japanese history, it has become possible to adopt abundant financial measures to promote reconstruction, despite the severe economic and fiscal constraints in Japan of late.

### (3) New Social Trends

- (i) Following the Great East Japan Earthquake, there has been a new wave of endeavors such as support among local authorities as counterparts across wider areas, as well as what is called “scrum support” based on assistance agreements signed by local governments prior to the disaster. There are many small-scale local authorities in the disaster-afflicted areas, with a small number of staff, quite a few of whom tragically lost their lives as a result of the tsunami. Therefore, support from local authorities in other areas who share common knowledge and experience of duties is very beneficial and is highly appreciated.

Moreover, as well as the abundant support from neighboring local authorities in the disaster-afflicted areas as back-up bases, such as the cities of Tono and Ichinoseki in Iwate Prefecture, the cities of Tome and Osaki in Miyagi Prefecture, and the cities of Iwaki, Fukushima and Koriyama in Fukushima Prefecture, a valuable contribution has also been made by local authorities including Yamagata Prefecture, which accepted evacuees.

- (ii) Although attention focused on the extensive damage to the supply chain resulting from this major disaster, not only has the recovery by private sector companies been extremely fast, but also many companies and groups have extended substantial ongoing support to the disaster-afflicted areas, and this has come under the spotlight as demonstrating an increase in the contribution to society made by the private sector.
- (iii) It is said that 1.38 million volunteers gathered in the disaster-afflicted areas during the first year after the Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake. Despite the geographic remoteness of the area and the fears for radioactivity, more than a million people have engaged in volunteer activities in relation to the Great East Japan Earthquake. Moreover, one should not overlook the fact that more sophisticated

organizational activities have been undertaken by experienced leaders. Groups such as foundations, private companies, universities and high schools have also participated in volunteer activities.

- (iv) In relation to the Great East Japan Earthquake, front-line units, such as the police and firefighters as well as the Self-Defense Forces, played a major role in emergency response activities, and there was also an unprecedented increase in international support. Nearly 200 countries and regions, and international organizations dispatched rescue teams, provided money and goods, and expressed their heartfelt sympathy. Many musicians and athletes helped to raise morale in the disaster-afflicted areas. Incidentally, the donations provided to four major organizations, including the Japanese Red Cross Society, totaled approximately 360 billion yen, while donations from foreign governments and international organizations amounted to more than 17.5 billion yen; in addition to this, a great deal of financial support was provided by the private sector.

The nuclei of reconstruction are the people and local authorities of the disaster-afflicted areas. Even amid the prolonged period of adversity since the disaster, people in the disaster-afflicted areas are tenaciously redoubling their efforts towards reconstruction. The reconstruction process in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake is for the nation and its people nationwide to execute a variety of measures to support the above.

Although this major disaster is exceptionally severe and complex, we want the Japan of today to give rise to a new history of reconstruction, by linking the affected areas with the rest of the country, without flinching at the scale of the task. We would now like to remember once again a phrase in the Seven Principles for the Reconstruction Framework: to “simultaneously pursue reconstruction of the afflicted areas and revitalization of the nation.”



## 2. The Current Status of Reconstruction

### (1) Support for Those Affected by the Disaster

Since the disaster, those affected by it have sought refuge across the country. According to data compiled by the government with the cooperation of prefectures and municipalities nationwide, the number of evacuees was as high as 470,000 in the immediate aftermath of the disaster, and although that figure has tended to decline since then, it still stood at 316,000 as of January 2013. Through such endeavors as the prompt construction of temporary housing and the leasing of private housing, which is a new initiative, most evacuees had been transferred to temporary and leased housing by around September 2011, and the number of evacuation shelters dropped to just one from the initial figure, which was in excess of 2,000. In terms of the status of residence in temporary and leased housing, approximately 112,000 people are living in temporary housing, with around 155,000 living in private housing and about 30,000 in public housing or similar.

As the disaster victims are spending a longer time as evacuees, measures to prepare for this are required. Measures to improve their residential environments are being implemented, such as the installation of additional heating equipment, as well as of handrails and slopes to take into account the fact that there are many elderly people. Moreover, as it is necessary to prevent the weakening of communities and the isolation of disaster victims, support hubs with integrated functions, such as general consultation services, in-home services, and regional exchange services, are being established in order to support the daily lives of disaster victims in temporary housing. In addition, while monitoring services and psychological care are also being provided, finely-tuned support continues to be required, in order to enable disaster victims to find a reason for living and a purpose in life, so that they can rebuild their livelihood.

### (2) Regional Recovery and Reconstruction

With regard to regional recovery and reconstruction, the major lifelines were restored first of all by the efforts of persons concerned including disaster victims, followed by emergency restoration of public infrastructure such as roads. Then, with a view to full-scale regional recovery and reconstruction, the removal and processing of disaster waste (rubble) progressed. In addition, restoration of public infrastructure to protect national land such as the coastline, and reconstruction projects based on consensus among residents, such as relocation to higher ground

and the rebuilding of housing, are about to get underway in earnest. While there are regions where recovery and reconstruction are progressing, coastal regions where homes and other buildings were washed away by the tsunami are still at the stage of working toward the finalization of an overall town development plan, and there are even regions that are yet to embark upon recovery and reconstruction projects.

Major lifelines and public services, such as electricity, gas and water, were mostly restored between April and June 2011. Moreover, emergency restoration of public infrastructure such as roads, railways, coastlines, rivers and harbors has almost been completed, except in some areas where homes and other buildings were washed away and the area designated as the Restricted Area due to the nuclear disaster.

It is estimated that more than 16 million tons of rubble have been generated in coastal municipalities in the three disaster-stricken prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima. By August 2011, almost all of the rubble strewn around residential areas had been removed. With regard to the processing of this rubble, in addition to the successive establishment and operation of temporary incinerators in disaster-afflicted areas, progress is being made with its recycling in reconstruction projects and public works, as well as disposal in areas outside the prefectures afflicted by the disaster. As of December 2012, approximately 44% of the 16.28 million tons of rubble had been processed and disposed of, and further efforts are being made in this field while evaluating the progress status, with a view to processing being completed by the end of March 2014. However, in the case of tsunami deposits, although it is intended to make use of this in materials to be used for reconstruction, only approximately 16% of the estimated 10.39 million tons of these deposits have been processed and disposed of.

In relation to public infrastructure, full-scale restoration is being undertaken from the perspectives not only of restoration, but also of disaster mitigation and regional development that is resilient to disaster, and is broadly progressing in line with the work schedules compiled by the government; however, there are disparities in the progress status depending on the status of damage and the content of each project, so it is hoped that further efforts will be made to promote implementation with a sense of speed.

For example, with regard to measures on the coast, such as seawalls to ensure the safety of disaster-afflicted areas, priority is being given to sections of areas where facilities essential to regional recovery and reconstruction, such as airports and sewage treatment plants, are located nearby; early completion of this is anticipated with most of the work being finished by the end of FY2012, and work will then begin successively in other sections with the aim of completing it within about five years.

In terms of relocation to higher ground and the rebuilding of communities, although this is required on a much larger scale than in the case of past disasters, national measures and financial resources have already been arranged for this. At present, disaster-stricken municipalities are devoting their energies to formulating reconstruction plans and reaching consensus among citizens, and as of the end of December 2012, in more than 80% of districts expecting to implement projects focused on promoting group relocation for disaster mitigation, consent had been secured from landowners at relocation sites and the people concerned had confirmed their intention to relocate. Moreover, town plans have been decided on in at least 60% of districts in which land readjustment projects are envisaged. Albeit gradually, work on reconstruction projects has started in some districts, and it is expected that the development of land and construction will get underway in earnest in due course. It is hoped that the pace of projects will be accelerated further, so that the evacuees currently living in temporary housing can begin to lead their lives in their rebuilt houses as soon as possible. It goes without saying that independent rebuilding is also underway, separately from these projects, with some individuals themselves finding land to which they can relocate, or rebuilding their disaster-stricken houses.

### (3) Industry and Employment

With regard to mining and manufacturing industry, the industrial production index for the disaster-afflicted region as a whole fell by 30 percentage points after the disaster, but it subsequently recovered and the gap between this region and the rest of Japan is currently narrowing.

In terms of policy responses, while support is extended by means of subsidies for companies establishing bases in this region in order to restore the supply chain, and via group subsidies for facilities and equipment for companies such as small and medium-sized enterprises, temporary stores and plants are being developed and provided without charge, in order to facilitate the prompt resumption of business.

In relation to agriculture, while a broad target has been set of restoring it within three years, the removal of rubble and desalination of agricultural land damaged by the tsunami is progressing, and support is being provided for restoring agricultural facilities such as drainage pump stations. As of the end of September 2012, it had become possible to resume farming on approximately 38% of the afflicted agricultural land.

In terms of the fisheries industry, thanks to financial measures and support for the reconstruction of severely damaged fishing ports, fishing grounds, fishing boats, aquaculture facilities and seafood processing facilities, the quantity of fish landed at major fish markets between September and November 2012 had recovered to

approximately 68% of the level recorded during the same period prior to the disaster. The resumption of operations by disaster-stricken seafood processing facilities is lagging behind that of fishing grounds and fishing boats, so their prompt restoration is a matter of urgency.

With regard to the tourism industry, reconstruction support campaigns and tourism PR events are taking place and the situation is improving, but the total number of guests (primarily tourists) staying at accommodation facilities in the three disaster-stricken prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima continues to be lower than the nationwide level.

In relation to employment, in the three disaster-stricken prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima, the active opening ratio declined to 0.46 in April 2011, but as of November 2012, it had recovered to around 1.0. However, although in some areas the number of effective job seekers has increased compared with the pre-disaster situation, in the same month of FY2010, the situation continues to be harsh in coastal areas and there is a mismatch, with job openings in the construction industry growing, for example, while it is difficult for inexperienced people to find employment in that industry; accordingly, employment creation and the elimination of this mismatch continues to be a crucial challenge.

#### (4) Reconstruction from the Nuclear Disaster

With regard to the nuclear disaster in Fukushima and other areas, unlike the tsunami disaster, the threat from radioactivity continues to exist even now and there are areas in which reconstruction cannot even be undertaken. In addition, many people have evacuated separately to far-away areas and quite a few disaster victims are unable to decide whether to go back to the places where they used to live, since the risks and impact of radiation have not necessarily been established scientifically and therefore people's attitudes to radiation have not converged. The tasks remaining are to provide support for the return and settlement of people and support for long-term evacuees. Even now, the number of evacuees in Fukushima Prefecture as a whole amounts to approximately 157,000, while the number of evacuees from areas such as the Evacuation Order Area is around 110,000.

In the aftermath of the accident at the Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, the Evacuation Order Area and the Restricted Area were established. Regarding these areas, subsequent revision and designation as "Areas being prepared for the lifting of the evacuation order," "Areas with restrictions on residence," and "Areas to which it will be difficult to return" are underway.

In response to the status of such revisions, it will be necessary to promote

decontamination, compensation, restoration of infrastructure, industrial development and employment measures, and the resumption of agriculture. Moreover, other challenges include measures to deal with anxiety about health, such as radiation monitoring, risk communication and providing support for surveys and management of health among prefectural citizens, as well as enhancing food inspection systems and dealing with reputational damage from harmful rumors.

As extensive decontamination is required, this is being prioritized in the areas where it is necessary, from the perspective of protecting human health. The soil removed in the decontamination process must be collected, transferred, stored and disposed of safely, but deciding on storage sites for this soil is not easy. In areas where municipalities play the center role of decontamination efforts, discussions concerning decontamination implementation plans are progressing; in areas such as Restricted Areas, where the national government is to undertake decontamination directly, decontamination implementation plans within those special areas have been formulated, taking into account the opinions of each municipality, and decontamination work has begun.

With regard to the impact on and anxiety about health due to radiation, a plan has been drawn up that involves radiation monitoring, the provision of grants to the Fukushima Prefectural Citizens' Health Management Fund, and the formulation of a common understanding and communication with the populace, in order to promptly eliminate health anxieties. A flexible response will continue to be required from now on, including health management measures in response to the recent accident, such as health surveys among the younger generation, including babies and children.

With a view to eliminating reputational damage from harmful rumors, the national government is monitoring radiation and disseminating information both within Japan and overseas. Nevertheless, the situation is such that concerns about this matter have not necessarily been eradicated.

### 3. Future Tasks and Proposals

#### (1) Sharing Examples of Initiatives by Local Citizens and Strengthening Links Among Them

- As the reconstruction of the disaster-afflicted areas will take a long time, it is important that the people living in those areas become actively involved as agents of reconstruction.

However, in the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, reconstruction is not yet actively under way. As described at the outset of this report under the section concerning *The Characteristics of Reconstruction*, although many reconstruction measures and abundant initiatives are being implemented in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake, compared with the situation following previous disasters, there are those at the site of reconstruction who say that they cannot get a sufficiently real sense of this support.

The factors behind this include the fact that the reconstruction following this particular disaster involves regional development and the rebuilding of housing on an unprecedented scale and, in addition to the time required to reach a consensus among residents for the town development needed for this, it does take a considerable amount of time to implement numerous and extensive development projects. There are many intricate problems, such as the fact that it is necessary to maintain and rebuild communities, as people will be living as evacuees in the long term, as well as the fact that the reconstruction of local industry is required with a view to the future in the disaster-afflicted areas and the fact that a hitherto-unprecedented situation in the form of the nuclear disaster must be dealt with. Furthermore, the problem common to all these is that there are cases in which reconstruction measures have not adequately permeated through the places where reconstruction is actually taking place, so they are not fully understood, and it is also conceivable that the measures put in place are not necessarily being used effectively.

Of course, among the local authorities are some that are fully conversant with reconstruction measures and initiatives, and are making effective use of them. However, there are quite a few local authorities that are not sharing the knowledge and experience of these successful initiatives, despite the fact that they are facing the same challenges. Although the prospects for resolution would already look brighter if they referred to these successful initiatives

(examples of excellent practice) implemented by other local authorities, and that issues can be resolved through the effective use and flexible operation of systems, these facts are being overlooked. It is hoped that efforts will be made to achieve improvements in regard to this point, and that the areas affected will exchange information that will serve as a positive stimulus, so as to speed up the pace of reconstruction.

- Furthermore, there are cases in which the inability to achieve the consensus building among residents that is essential to regional development has formed a bottleneck hindering the progress of reconstruction. In order to facilitate a consensus among residents, it is important for disaster victims to exchange opinions with each other unreservedly and to develop a shared awareness in order to foster relationships of mutual trust.
- In order to effectively move forward with reconstruction, it is imperative to promote the two-way sharing of information among the various agents of reconstruction, such as between the national government and local authorities, between one local authority and another, between official bodies (national and local governments) and those supporting the disaster victims, between official bodies and disaster victims, and among disaster victims themselves.

(Tasks)

—Sharing of information among the government, local authorities and those supporting the disaster victims, etc.—

- In promoting reconstruction, it is important to ensure that local authorities share information with each other and actively incorporate examples of excellent practice being undertaken by other local authorities into their own initiatives, but there are many local authorities that do not have opportunities to keep an eye on the initiatives of other local authorities. The appropriate division of roles between the national government, prefectural governments and municipalities is crucial.

Amid this situation, in order to effectively share pioneering initiatives and examples of excellent practice, it is important to implement efforts such as fine-tuning the concrete topics for discussion at meetings among local authorities affected by the disaster to discuss challenges and response measures, as well as to encourage staff members to participate in a broad range of training courses, including those focused on areas of which they are not currently in

charge. Moreover, in terms of sharing examples, it is also effective to increase the abilities of experts in the process of conducting regular exchanges of opinions among stakeholders with different areas of expertise or concern (citizens, those supporting the disaster victims, companies and business operators, universities and experts, and administrative officers, etc.)

- While the national government and prefectural governments have developed various sets of measures, such as those relating to employment or living support, not to mention reconstruction, these are complex and wide-ranging. It is therefore important to provide clear and comprehensive information that takes into account the needs of the recipients. Amid a situation in which such diverse measures are needed for diverse tasks, staff who are capable of understanding the overall vision for reconstruction and can respond to this in an integrated manner are required.

Furthermore, when providing information to the various local authorities and disaster victims, it is important for the national government and prefectural governments to understand the causes of and background to the tasks they are facing, and to grasp the reality of the situation in the disaster-afflicted areas. It is desirable that, through such endeavors, they adopt an approach of sharing each other's troubles and worries. In this sense, it will be effective to make use of advisors who, for example, gain an understanding of the actual condition of the area and keep bodies such as the Reconstruction Agency informed of the situation.

- Moreover, as volunteer activities and donations continue to be required in the disaster-afflicted areas even now, it is important to facilitate the nationwide dissemination of such information as the actual condition of the areas affected by the disaster.

—Sharing of information among disaster victims—

- In building new communities, one must not forget to gather and share the opinions of local citizens and to seek to form ideas. In doing so, as approaches to such matters as welfare and medical care change and develop, it is imperative to make concerted efforts to provide local citizens with details of these new situations and perspectives. To this end, it is crucial for stakeholders such as administrative bodies and disaster victims to have a common awareness and to make effective use of organizations such as community



development councils as forums for promoting reconstruction together. By means of interactive exchanging and sharing of information between administrative bodies and local citizens via such councils, it is possible to incorporate soft perspectives as progress is made with the rebuilding of the community.

- It is important that those with close links to disaster victims provide information in their dealings with these victims, and the publication of local newspapers created by those supporting the disaster victims at temporary housing is an effective means of sharing information.
- Amid a situation in which many disaster victims are living in temporary housing or have evacuated outside their native prefecture or region, the disparities between disaster victims in terms of access to information are growing and it is becoming difficult for the evacuees to keep the sense of a common awareness among themselves. Even in such circumstances, it is important for each local authority to strive to provide a steady flow of information to disaster victims.

It is essential, first of all, for the local authorities responsible for areas from which or to which people have evacuated to ensure that they have a grasp of information about the whereabouts of such disaster victims. Accordingly, further support is required to ensure that evacuees provide information about their whereabouts, such as by calling on them to register with the Nationwide Evacuee Information System operated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

- It is necessary to devise special ways of providing information to disaster victims evacuated nationwide. For example, one form of communication to share the most up-to-date information could be for people from disaster-afflicted areas to form groups to tour the municipalities to which their fellow citizens have evacuated, to provide information about their areas in their local dialects.
- The perspective of sharing information in ways that are easy for citizens to use is imperative as an initiative with a view to realizing the information-based society of the future. For example, one advanced initiative involves the sharing of information using equipment such as tablet computers, which can be adapted for a variety of purposes, and it is hoped that efforts will also be made to

promote measures to ensure that disaster victims can use such devices adequately.

## (2) Early Realization of Regional Development and the Rebuilding of Housing

- The early realization of regional development and the rebuilding of housing, which will become the cornerstone for rebuilding the lives of local citizens, is a major task. However, these are large-scale reconstruction projects on a hitherto-unparalleled scale, being undertaken across disaster-afflicted coastal areas stretching 700km from north to south. These are complex and difficult projects because, as well as consensus among citizens being a prerequisite for regional development, there are many projects of different types, which involve the fundamental reshaping of urban areas or villages.
- Initiatives being attempted in order to speed up projects include (1) flexible operation of diverse project techniques; (2) phased implementation of project procedures and construction work, starting with districts in which development is possible; and (3) the effective use of the CM method (a method that involves contracting out multiple projects in bulk to a construction manager (CMR), which undertakes all parts of the process from survey and design to carrying out the construction work). Moreover, in order to secure land and buildings, mechanisms are being devised to enable disaster-reconstruction housing to be developed early, with attempts being made to use a purchase method in which the landowner proposes the conditions, in accordance with the conditions of the land use plan being pursued by the contractor, or to use fixed-term leaseholds. Furthermore, in each municipality, work schedules and roadmaps for projects are being formulated and disclosed, in order to implement process controls, expedite work, and provide information.

### (Tasks)

- Local citizens are the agents of reconstruction. In implementing regional development, it is crucial for the local citizens themselves to have a role in and become agents of reconstruction with dignity, and it is important for citizens to have an image of the new region, including its scenery. Accordingly, it is vital to strive to ensure communication between local citizens and those with expert knowledge, such as town planning and civil engineering.

In order to do so, it is important for administration to promote substantial dialogue, making effective use of bodies such as community development councils; thus, it is necessary to provide continuous support for organizations such as community development councils, as the agents working holistically on such matters as the return of evacuees, the rebuilding of communities, welfare, child rearing and lifelong learning. In doing so, administrations need to

promote active participation by women and families bringing up children, as well as to reflect their opinions. Moreover, it is vital to promote smooth consensus-building at community development councils, by such means as creating an environment that enables local citizens to play a central role, becoming leaders and mediators who can pave the way for reaching a consensus.

- In order to implement difficult projects speedily, it is essential to secure the personnel required for reconstruction. Organizations such as administrative bodies and private sector groups are therefore already making systematic efforts to dispatch personnel from across the country to assist the disaster-stricken local governments. However, as even more personnel are required in the disaster-afflicted areas, continuous support in securing those personnel is needed. A wide range of personnel, from engineers working on physical projects to experts working on more intangible initiatives, is required.

Moreover, it is important to engage in human resource development, such as providing training, taking into consideration the burden on staff. It is hoped to provide training not only in the specialized fields of each staff member, but also in realms outside their field of expertise, such as providing staff dealing with civil engineering with training in medical care and welfare. Moreover, rather than focusing solely on administrative officers, it is hoped to devise ways to make it easier for a diverse range of actors to become involved, such as the private sector and elderly people.

- Steps should be taken to ensure that reconstruction plans are revised in a flexible manner and that accordingly the schedules for the various projects can be revised accordingly as required. For example, there could be cases in which the interaction between local citizens and administrative bodies does not go smoothly, leading to the opinions of disaster victims not being taken into consideration, and therefore the project schedule and scale designed is difficult to implement. In such cases, the tasks that need to be tackled include examining ways to streamline procedures and processes, to facilitate flexible revisions to reconstruction plans, including reworking them.
- The general direction of regional development projects is emerging, to some extent, such as the securing of sites for group relocation, but it is necessary to speed up the regeneration of daily life at the relocation sites, including such matters as work and convenience of lifestyles. Moreover, with a view to the

early regeneration of industry in the area as a whole, including the effective use of the districts from which people have relocated, it is hoped to take such steps as swiftly elevating industrial sites.

- It is important to ensure that the development of disaster-related public housing with local authorities playing a central role is carried out on the basis of comprehensive deliberations focused on regional development as a whole, taking into account such diverse aspects as lifestyles, welfare and industry. In developing disaster-related public housing, consideration should be given to long-term future effectiveness, taking into account differences in the characteristics of each area, as well as the development of more compact cities and integrated community care. Consideration could also be given to approaches to disaster-related public housing complexes which include facilities to support daily life, such as medical care and welfare facilities.
- In implementing projects, it is crucial to eliminate bottlenecks that can hinder their smooth execution. For example, appropriate calculation of estimated prices and streamlining of procedures for bringing forward budgets due to unforeseeable reasons are among the responses adopted in relation to problems with tenders and the soaring price of materials, but flexible responses will continue to be required. Moreover, with regard to the handling of land where the landowner is unknown, which is one of the factors contributing to the difficulty in securing land for projects, it is necessary to encourage further creative solutions, such as streamlining procedures for the expropriation of land.

### (3) Integrated Community Care Evolving from the Recovery of Daily Lives

- In light of the fact that spending a prolonged period as evacuees will impose a major burden on the disaster victims, it continues to be necessary to provide support for maintaining and rebuilding communities, as well as for matters relating to their health. Moreover, in the regional development process, one must not forget to make effective use of the perspective of integrated community care, which involves the integrated provision of health, medical and nursing care, welfare and living support services.
- There are places where monitoring services or consultation services are provided regarding a diverse range of issues faced by disaster victims, including their lifestyles, health and work; leading examples of these include the disaster victim support centers in the Heita district of Kamaishi City, Iwate Prefecture and Higashimatsushima City in Miyagi Prefecture, as well as the disaster-related public housing built in Soma City. Moreover, there are also good examples of collaboration between a diverse range of actors, such as local companies and NPOs in the reconstruction process, as well as learning support initiatives for children.

#### (Tasks)

- “Now” is a time in the lives of the disaster victims that means just as much—or even more—to them as the reconstruction that will come in due course, so it is important to provide support that will enable them to lead purposeful lives. Such support could provide pioneering examples of approaches to care in the Japan of the future.
- It appears likely that evacuees will spend a prolonged period living in temporary housing. Amid efforts focused on regional development, it is necessary to provide backing for initiatives that will contribute to the creation of new communities, such as relocating to different temporary housing areas with a view to forming and maintaining communities, for example.
- The deployment of living support counselors and centers providing support and consultation services to disaster victims is an initiative that is crucial for disaster victims right now, and ongoing measures are essential. Emergency employment creation projects, among other initiatives, are also beneficial as a measure to secure personnel in the interim.

Moreover, it is necessary to continue to implement support measures that provide a tailor-made response according to the circumstances of each individual disaster victim with anxieties about such matters as physical or mental health or child rearing, as well as the circumstances of those requiring particular support and assistance, for example, elderly people, people with disabilities, foreign nationals, infants and young children, and pregnant women.

In doing so, it is necessary to create an environment in which NPOs and other private sector support groups can provide continuous support for disaster victims.

- There is a serious shortage of personnel in the fields of medical care and welfare in the disaster-afflicted areas, particularly in Fukushima Prefecture. In restoring disaster-stricken medical facilities, the restoration of community medical care functions is a compelling issue, including private sector medical institutions. Moreover, it is desirable for local authorities in areas where depopulation is progressing and houses are spread over an extensive area to cooperate with neighboring local authorities in the surrounding area in relation to such matters as medical care and welfare. Moreover, an initiative focused on the integrated promotion of cutting-edge research and the reconstruction of medical care in the disaster-afflicted areas is being implemented, in the form of the Tohoku Medical Megabank project. In order to rebuild frameworks for the provision of medical care and welfare services in the medium to long term, as well as to implement wide-ranging support for disaster victims on an ongoing basis, it is essential to secure personnel in a variety of occupations, including physicians, dentists, pharmacists, nurses, care managers, and personal care assistants. Moreover, it is necessary to make effective use of groups that support the securing of personnel and put in place an environment that makes it easy to secure such personnel.

- As integrated community care is still a leading-edge challenge, its permeation within regions and among citizens is inadequate. In order for local citizens to indomitably take up the challenge of regional development based on this new concept, it is desirable to be proactive in providing them with information that offers clear imagery and a vision for the future.

In particular, in regional development centered on integrated community care, it is necessary to incorporate into it measures to prevent the isolation of elderly people and promote local interaction, while listening to the opinions not

only of those involved in regional development, but also practitioners in the fields of medical care and welfare and local citizens, with a view to securing the future of the community. In order to do so, as well as to enhance the existing support hubs, it is essential to train and secure personnel who can play a key role in providing integrated community care in the future. Furthermore, it is also necessary to construct networks of medical institutions and related organizations, such as nursing care providers, and to strengthen collaboration among them.

- Many women are playing an active role on the site of reconstruction, but on the other hand, few women are currently participating in the policy- or -decision-making process within the various organizations involved. It is vital to increase the number of female leaders in the position to be able to make decisions and to properly incorporate into reconstruction the opinions and viewpoints of women as essential and responsible agents of reconstruction.
- In the process of reconstruction, it is important to link into regional development the views of people who seem to have difficulty in making their opinions heard, particularly the children and young people who will form the next generation of citizens and families bringing up children; it is desirable to secure their participation as agents in the reconstruction process in their regions. Moreover, it is important to secure playgrounds for children in the disaster-afflicted areas and continue events with roots in their communities, so that they can feel a connection to the area.
- While disaster victims are leading a very difficult life in which the repercussions of the disaster are still felt, local cultural and artistic activities fulfill an important role in providing disaster victims with emotional support and are also a means of strengthening community ties. Accordingly, it is important to promote smooth regional reconstruction by passing on the traditional culture of the disaster-afflicted areas and repairing and restoring cultural assets, as well as providing support for new cultural and artistic activities.



#### (4) Support for Local Industry and Jobs with a View to the Future of the Disaster-afflicted Areas

- It is essential, in addition to reconstructing and introducing new local industry, to restore the livelihood and prosperity of local shopping districts, to reconstruct local industry with a view to the future. Through various support measures implemented by the national government and local authorities, endeavors being conducted to this end include development of joint ventures and business groupings in local industry sectors and shopping districts, support to revive small, medium-sized and micro-enterprises, initiatives to increase efficiency and diversification in the management of agricultural land and fishing ports as they are rehabilitated, and empirical research on advanced technology in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries industries; it will be necessary to continue to support endeavors with a view to the future.
- It is important to create new industry through such endeavors as encouraging managerial innovation in primary industries and the tourism industry, promoting research and development by universities, research institutes and companies, and stimulating regional development with a view to the future of the disaster-afflicted areas from a nationwide perspective, including such issues as the aging of the population coupled with a declining birthrate and population decline. It is hoped to introduce renewable energy and create new industries, such as biomass power generation, and to take the opportunity offered by reconstruction to encourage social entrepreneurship.

#### (Tasks)

- As there is a close relationship between regional development and the siting of factories, efforts should be made to promote well-balanced restoration and reconstruction in rebuilding houses and regenerating industry. For example, in the case of land designated as facing a tsunami risk, consideration should be given to mounding and raising of land for industrial sites, so that it can be utilized as soon as possible.
- With regard to the creation of new industries, it is necessary to make further efforts to match business operators with relevant organizations. In terms of exploring such possibilities, it is time to promote initiatives that narrow down the focus to strengths that make use of the characteristics of each municipality, in light of the future vision for the area. Moreover, it is important to develop new businesses in collaboration with universities, and to carefully implement

measures that cultivate an environment conducive to success by assembling entrepreneurs in the disaster-afflicted areas, offering venues for activities, and the sharing of information, in order to facilitate the emergence of new entrepreneurs in the disaster-afflicted areas.

- In order to create places to work, it is vital to eliminate mismatches through the steady implementation of employment support, as well as to regenerate disaster-stricken business operators and establish new businesses.
- Expanding the use of renewable energy is a major task and it should be pursued further. For example, consideration is being given to using agricultural land not being used for farming due to the effects of the nuclear disaster as sites for solar power generation. However, in order to do so, flexible operation of the relevant legal systems would be required, such as the Agricultural Land Act; in addition, it is necessary to respond based on consensus among local citizens regarding the vision for the future of the region, taking into account the actual situation and intention of promoting agents and districts.

In addition, due to concerns that it will take longer to expand the use of renewable energy in areas afflicted by the nuclear disaster than in other areas, it is necessary to put in place an environment that will compensate for those disadvantages.

- With regard to primary industries, although there are regional variations, the restoration of agricultural land and fishing ports is progressing, and in some areas initiatives are being implemented, such as those focused on consolidating and increasing the scale of agricultural land in conjunction with its restoration, as well as on building advanced hygiene management systems at fishing ports. However, there has not been adequate progress in terms of achieving the rational use of agricultural land by core farmers, nor in upgrading and promoting collaboration between the agriculture, forestry and fisheries industries and related industries, so these remain a challenge. Moreover, as well as restoring disaster-stricken facilities, the recovery of lost marketing channels for the agricultural, forestry and fisheries produce of this region is an issue. Furthermore, with regard to increasing the scale of management and large-scale verification trials of advanced technology to facilitate a switch to high-earning crops, initiatives that take into account everything up to the sale of the agricultural produce are required.

- In relation to the tourism industry, various endeavors have already been initiated, but there are those in disaster-afflicted areas who say that the effects of those endeavors are not necessarily perceptible. As well as nationwide efforts to increase awareness of safety, with a view to dispelling harmful rumors, it is necessary to implement endeavors to upgrade the industry in ways tailored to the local situation, in order to ensure that individual initiatives are organically linked to produce a coherent whole. For example, one challenge involves town development, human resource development and improvement of transport access, from the perspective of tourism promotion.
- Group subsidies continue to be required due to the ongoing necessity of restoring commercial functions in conjunction with progressing regional development. However, an exit strategy should also be formulated, with a view to realizing sustainable regional development.
- With regard to the double loan problem wherein existing debt burdens make new financing difficult to obtain, a mechanism has been created through which the industrial reconstruction consultation centers and industrial reconstruction organizations in each prefecture, and the Rehabilitation Support Organization for Companies Damaged by the Great East Japan Earthquake provide advice and support, and it is necessary to further promote the effective use of these bodies.

## (5) Reconstruction from the Nuclear Disaster in Fukushima and Other Areas

- An unprecedented situation, in the form of the nuclear disaster, is compelling many disaster victims to spend a prolonged period living as evacuees, as well as leaving considerable lingering anxiety about such matters as the health impact of radiation.

There are many and wide-ranging issues to be tackled in the process of reconstruction from the nuclear disaster, and discussions to resolve those issues are being undertaken by the national government, and prefectural and municipal authorities, with the national government conducting deliberations and responding to those issues. First and foremost, no effort should be spared in implementing measures to deal with the basic tasks, namely the early restoration of a habitable environment, responses focused on the early return and settlement of citizens, and eliminating anxiety about radiation.

- The national government should be keenly aware of the special circumstances arising from the disaster that resulted from the accident at the nuclear power plant, and conduct with responsibility the reconstruction from the nuclear disaster in Fukushima and other areas; in addition, the national government, prefectural governments and municipalities should establish a strong sense of ownership and work in partnership to deal with these issues.

### (Tasks)

- It is important for the national government, prefectural governments and municipalities to work in partnership and provide finely-tuned support, while respecting the wishes and feelings of each citizen, to ensure that disaster victims, including those compelled to endure long-term evacuation, can have hope for the future and make plans for the future such as their early return to and settlement in their hometowns. It is desirable to determine the best approach through dialogue.
- It is necessary to strive to establish safety standards on radiation and to disseminate information using easily-comprehensible materials. Moreover, with regard to risk communication, dialogue-based techniques should be adopted to promote awareness, rather than a one-sided approach. For example, it is imperative to disseminate a rational and scientific understanding that radiation does not result from the nuclear accident alone, but also exists in the natural world. It should also be known that Japan has particularly strict safety

standards from an international perspective.

- It is necessary to take response measures against reputational damage from harmful rumors on a nationwide basis including in the disaster-afflicted areas, such as grassroots activities focused on the consumer side, ongoing PR activities, school education, and various training courses. Moreover, it is necessary for Tokyo Electric Power Company to make swift and steady progress in providing fair and appropriate compensation to producers and business operators who have suffered losses due to reputational damage from harmful rumors; in addition, it is important to support initiatives focused on the resumption of business and the expansion of marketing channels.

- Decontamination is an important prerequisite for evacuees intending to return to make plans for their future lives. One hears fervent requests for the disclosure of work schedules to the point when it will be all right for people to return home, and of the decontamination policy for areas including forests. However, given that matters relating to radiation and decontamination are delicate and involve uncertainties, there are many tasks that need to be resolved. It is necessary to implement appropriate initiatives at each stage, while ensuring that dialogue among administrative bodies and citizens takes place.

In addition, with regard to decontamination, there are many aspects in the process of development. In the event of new research or technological progress, it is necessary to introduce them in a flexible manner.

Moreover, with regard to the management and processing of contaminated waste and soil removed in the decontamination process, it is necessary to provide clear and easily-comprehensible explanations to the populace about its necessity, safety and standards. Furthermore, when carrying out the actual work, including the establishment of the requisite facilities, it is vital to engage in thorough dialogue with local citizens, secure their consent, and undertake this work swiftly.

- With regard to the reconstruction from the nuclear disaster in Fukushima and other areas, there is an intricate web of factors including compensation and decontamination, and therefore it is difficult for local citizens to grasp the situation. It is necessary to devise ways to present the overall picture of measures being taken in an easily-comprehensible manner.

Moreover, it is vital for the national government to continue to respond with responsibility to health management measures, in relation to the impact of the

nuclear power plant accident on the health of disaster victims and the verification thereof.

- People on the ground are very apprehensive of the possibility that the nuclear disaster might be forgotten by society as a whole. It is necessary for the national government to disseminate the message on a continuous basis that it continues to devote its energies to dealing with this challenge.

## (6) Keeping Records of the Disaster and Passing the Lessons Learnt on to the Next Generation

- NPOs, research institutes and private sector groups that believe it to be vital to pass records concerning the Great East Japan Earthquake on to the next generation are undertaking autonomous initiatives at the grassroots level. The Great East Japan Earthquake Archive is under construction, with the National Diet Library taking a central role in this endeavor. Endeavors in the disaster-stricken prefectures include the construction of web-based information systems and the creation of archives of tsunami-related data and materials.

### (Tasks)

- A diverse range of actors, such as the national government, local governments, volunteer groups and NPOs, and research institutes, are engaged in initiatives and deliberations focused on gathering, preserving and making use of the immense quantity of records concerning the Great East Japan Earthquake, including initiatives concerning the restoration of community ties and the spiritual foundations of the region. The challenges in creating archives include how to provide other regions and the next generation with an understanding of the reality and lessons of the disaster by properly incorporating, preserving, and making available to everyone such information.
- A diverse range of actors, such as the national government, local governments, NPOs, and research institutes, are collecting and preserving information and data concerning the Great East Japan Earthquake, and it is important to appeal to them not to discard such information and data.
- It is necessary to ensure that users can easily search for and use information, in order to promote its use. Accordingly, it is vital to give consideration to technical measures, such as standardizing data formats, as well as to matters relating to the handling of individual rights.
- In promoting the construction of an archive, it would be both practical and effective to focus primarily on the Great East Japan Earthquake Archive initiative being undertaken by the National Diet Library, which is already underway. First and foremost, it is important for the National Diet Library to play a central role in collaborating with NPOs, companies and research institutes, and the smooth development is expected. On the other hand, the

frameworks for collaboration among the various ministries and agencies, as well as between the national government and regional bodies, cannot be described as adequate at present. It is important to devise mechanisms for promoting collaboration.

- With regard to official documents relating to the Great East Japan Earthquake, it is vital to store the requisite documents and ensure transparency so that people outside an organization can see which organization holds which documents. In accordance with existing rules for the management of official documents, the basic approach should be to ensure thorough adherence to appropriate preservation of documents, without allowing a person who created a document to destroy it arbitrarily.
- Deliberations are required concerning the mourning for the victims of the disaster and the repose of their souls, as well as other initiatives focused on conveying experiences and lessons from this disaster and making use of them in disaster prevention.



## 4. Closing Remarks

Already, we are nearing the second anniversary of 3/11, when the unprecedented Great East Japan Earthquake struck. Spring is coming around again. One wonders when the sounds of reconstruction will echo around the Tohoku region in unison. We have continued to ask questions about the status of progress with reconstruction at each critical juncture.

As discussions around a table in the capital do not facilitate a real sense of progress, we have—sometimes singly, sometimes working together—repeatedly visited the actual sites to view them and investigate the situation there. We have bombarded the people in charge with a barrage of questions about the whys and wherefores, and have listened intently to the pleas of local people. In addition, we have submitted to the Reconstruction Agency requests for all conceivable improvements.

Amid this situation, we have gained a variety of insights. With our own eyes, we have seen burgeoning growth on wasteland. Slowly, but steadily, the vision for reconstruction is beginning to become clearer, emerging from the chaos. The problem is that the status of local reconstruction—examples of both success and failure—is not being communicated outside each area, and therefore such examples do not expand the forefront of reconstruction efforts from one dimension to two dimensions, and eventually into three dimensions.

Now, the most important thing is to open up local reconstruction to external experiences and for the sites of reconstruction to make use of external wisdom towards reconstruction. It is undoubtedly incredibly difficult to create something from nothing. However, the situation will improve remarkably if something can be linked to another.

Hoping that the sounds of reconstruction continue to resound throughout the region, watching the sky grow brighter, wherever we might be, we will continue unstintingly to devote our energies to reconstruction. We wish to continue to watch over the reconstruction process as it progresses, praying that the rays of hope continue to shine over the disaster-afflicted areas of East Japan.