

世界津波の日国連イベント（ハイブリッド開催）
秋葉復興大臣ビデオメッセージ
（日本時間 2022 年 11 月 4 日 21:00-23:00）

Distinguished guests and participants from all over the world,

I am AKIBA KENYA, Minister for Reconstruction of Japan. It is a great honor to speak to you at the UN's World Tsunami Awareness Day on behalf of the Government of Japan.

The Reconstruction Agency is a government organization which was established to achieve a speedy recovery in the Tohoku region which was devastated by the Great East Japan Earthquake that struck on March 11, 2011.

I was born in Miyagi Prefecture in the Tohoku region, a prefecture that suffered tremendous damage from the earthquake disaster eleven and a half years ago. On that day, Japan's coastal areas were ravaged by a giant tsunami that destroyed towns and killed many people.

In relation to the theme of this event "Early Warning and Early Action Before Every Tsunami," today I would like to share an anecdote about "saving lives" from tsunamis based on a true story from the time of the earthquake disaster.

Kamaishi City in Japan's Tohoku region has been hit by tsunamis many times in the past. Based on this experience, even before the earthquake disaster, the City of Kamaishi put emphasis on educating the local community about disaster preparedness. One of the maxims goes, "If there is a tsunami, '*Tsunami Tendenko*.'"

"*Tendenko*" means "evacuate on your own initiative; save your own life." The maxim teaches that if a tsunami strikes, "by running away on your own initiative and believing others will do same, in the end, we will meet again alive."

The City of Kamaishi had in fact promoted awareness for "*Tsunami Tendenko*," including to children. As a result, during the disaster, many people, put "*Tsunami Tendenko*" into practice and many lives were saved because each person made an individual decision to evacuate to higher ground.

In 2015, Japan strongly advocated the establishment of World Tsunami Awareness Day in the sincere hope that as many people as possible will gain a better understanding of tsunamis and adopt the practice of evacuating immediately if an earthquake hits.

As part of the support based on this thinking, since 2017, Japan has assisted school education on tsunami risk reduction and evacuation drills in the Asia-Pacific in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). So far, more than one-hundred

thousand teachers and children have participated in this program.

As an example of our support for early warning, Japan has also assisted in the installation of tsunami early warning systems in the Indian Ocean through UNESCO. More recently, we also made improvements to tsunami alert systems in Indonesia and Vanuatu.

As a disaster-prone country, Japan will continue to share with other countries the knowledge and expertise gained from disaster, and is committed to contributing to building resilience, sustainable development and human security around the world in both tangible and intangible aspects, including early warning.

We cannot escape the hazards of tsunamis, but with wisdom and effort, we can minimize the damage they cause. I sincerely hope that today's event will be a valuable opportunity to facilitate further international cooperation on tsunamis and to raise awareness about tsunami preparedness, especially among future generations.

Thank you for your attention.