

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Kenichi Suganuma**  
**“Progress in the preparation for WCDRR and welcome remarks”**  
**14 July 2014, “Organization of the World Conference”**

- **Establishment of a post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction**

Every year, disasters take place in different parts of the world, causing the loss of many human lives and damage to the economy. Disaster Risk Reduction is essential for the achievement of sustainable development and poverty eradication. Japan has so far gone through a number of disasters, such as typhoons, earthquakes, tsunamis, volcanoes, and landslides, while implementing disaster risk reduction measures for a long time. Against this background, Japan has been providing cooperation for the promotion of disaster risk reduction in the world, through both multilateral and bilateral cooperation.

Japan hosted the World Conference of Natural Disaster Reduction in 1994 in Yokohama, and the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005 in Kobe, Hyogo. Following these conferences, Japan is now honored to host the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction “WCDRR” in March 2015 in Sendai, and is delighted to invite you all there.

- **Substantial and logistic preparation**

Let me brief you shortly the location plan for the WCDRR.

The main venue is a new convention facility, where the inter-governmental segment and the multi-stakeholder segment will be organized. The facility is now under construction, and will be completed in December. The WCDRR will be the launching event for this convention hall.

The Sendai International Center, which is adjacent to the new facility, will serve as supplementary parts of the conference, such as function rooms for the secretariat, which include dining, exhibition on counter-disaster technologies of our country, other meetings, and business center.

- **Public Forum**

The Public Forum will be open to anyone, as well as many stakeholders.

A number of fora will be held at the Hagi Hall of Tohoku University, Sendai Civic Auditorium, Tokyo Electron Hall Miyagi, and Mediatheque. At the Hagi Hall, for example, a forum that highlights reconstruction, including lessons learned and good practices from Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, will be organized. Sendai Civic Auditorium and Tokyo Electron Hall will provide various large and small venues for symposiums by multi-stakeholders. In addition to them, Mediatheque will be used as an exhibition space for multi-stakeholders. Applications for symposiums at the public fora and exhibitions at Mediatheque have been invited on our conference website since 11<sup>th</sup> July till 16<sup>th</sup> September.

- **Study tours**

During the conference, a variety of study tours will be organized. The Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will be convened in a disaster-affected area, which was

hit by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami four years ago, in March 2011.

In recovering from the devastating disasters, we have been focusing on reconstruction in a more resilient manner, which is what we call “build back better.” We have been addressing various disaster countermeasures, which include relocation of residences and communities on to the hills and construction of sea dikes and seawalls. In order for you to see these efforts, we are now planning a number of study tours such as half-day tour around the conference venue, and one-day tour in Tohoku. I hope we can take this opportunity to introduce our efforts for DRR and BBB(Build Back Better) to you.

- **A briefing session for the embassies in Tokyo**

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, a briefing session for the embassies and the offices of international organizations in Tokyo will be held at the Ministry of the Foreign Affairs in Tokyo. General information and some logistic information on the conference, the conference venues, side-events and public forum, study tours, and accommodation will be provided there.

- **Participation at the highest possible level**

As decided by the UN General Assembly resolution A/RES/68/211, the Third World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction will be convened “at the highest possible level”. In order to prioritize disaster risk reduction in national policies and budgets, thereby implementing effective DRR measures, a political commitment is of extreme importance. In this sense, on behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to call for the participation in the World Conference from high-level representatives, such as heads of state or government and ministers, as well as many practitioners involved in disaster risk reduction.

- **Closing**

Furthermore, I would like all of you to take this opportunity to visit some other disaster-affected areas in Tohoku, where you will see how towns and communities has been making effort for build back better, and explore their rich natural and cultural wealth. I brought a brochure prepared by Sendai City today, so please take a look for your reference.

The entire Japan, including the host city Sendai, pulls together now to welcome you next year, and I am looking forward to seeing you again in Sendai.

Thank you for your attention.