

Chairman Tanaka Opening Remarks, 8 April 2014

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude and congratulations to the members of the organizing committee for giving me the opportunity to address this international conference in Tokyo which commemorates the 50th anniversary since Japan became the first country outside the United States and the European region to join OECD in 1964. On behalf of Japan, I would also like to offer my sincere appreciation to Dr. Luis Echavarri, the Director General of OECD/NEA for providing Japan with the opportunity to fully participate in the organization's activities.

OECD/NEA for years has provided leadership and fostered cooperation among countries involved in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. It has also promoted related science and technology activities in such areas as accelerator, radiology and industrial use. A particular OECD/NEA activity is the Data Bank which as a shared asset provides member countries with nuclear data and the calculation code which are the base of nuclear energy technology. Many organizations in Japan have benefited from this Data Bank and I would like to express my appreciation for that assistance.

But while this conference marks the 50th anniversary of Japan's accession to the OECD, the topic of discussion is 'global nuclear safety enhancement' in the aftermath of the March 11, 2011 nuclear accident at the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. The title of this conference connotes that despite 40 years of nuclear safety work by Japan within the context of OECD/NEA, this was insufficient. Within OECD/NEA, we have various organizations: the Committee of Nuclear Regulatory Activities (CNRA), the Committee of the Safety of Nuclear Installations (CSNI), and the Committee on Radiation Protection and Public Health (CRPPH). Through their activities—with Japan as a core member and active participant—we have made strenuous efforts to improve nuclear safety. But then the Fukushima Daiichi accident happened. After comprehensive investigation and analysis, the "OECD/NEA Nuclear Safety Response and Lessons Learnt", report was compiled and copies distributed today to member states.

The executive summary of this report highlighted several important points in which the NRA was directly involved and I would like to quote: "The Fukushima Daiichi NPP

accident identified significant human, organizational and cultural challenges, which include ensuring the independence, technical capability and transparency of the regulatory authority.” Until now it had been taken for granted by the international community that nuclear power generation countries would have independent regulatory agencies. But after more than 50 years and after reflecting on the causes of the Fukushima Daiichi accident, Japan finally decided to establish a Nuclear Regulation Authority (NRA) as an independent nuclear regulatory organization.

The NRA which was inaugurated on September 19, 2012, may still, from an international perspective, lack some competencies as a regulatory agency, but we have already addressed the following issues:

- First, the development of new regulatory requirements for NPP and nuclear cycle facilities enacted 8 July and 18 December, 2013, respectively, based on lessons learnt from the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi NPP Accident

- Secondly, review of existing nuclear facilities based on new regulatory requirements which currently include 17 nuclear power plants and 8 nuclear fuel cycle facilities

- Three, supervision of clean-up activities for the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station where we face new and unprecedented difficulties

- Number four, development of new guidelines for emergency preparedness and response in radiological emergency, following the more than one thousand evacuation-related deaths due to the Fukushima Daiichi accident

- Furthermore, a proposal of practical measures for displaced residents to return to their hometowns and resume their old lifestyles.

With regard to these efforts, there will be a detailed presentation in a later session by Commissioner Fuketa, so I shall not go into detail but rather explain the situation surrounding nuclear power in Japan and the role and policies of the NRA.

The first challenge for the NRA is to regain public trust in nuclear safety regulations which collapsed in the wake of the Fukushima Daiichi accident. Knowing that there is no easy road, the NRA undertook in-depth discussions and developed a code of conduct: independent judgment based on science; transparent organization and judgment; continuous improvement and responsibility for nuclear safety; timely and proper response for emergency; and effective and rational regulation.

Based upon these fundamental policies, we are currently conducting confirmative reviews with the new regulatory requirements. In addition to the 6 reactors to be

decommissioned at the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, elsewhere in Japan there are 48 units of existing light water reactors and 2 units under construction. Out of these, for PWR, there are 12 units at 6 sites and for BWR, there are 5 units at 4 sites currently undergoing confirmative review. These reviews were intensive, under the leadership of NRA Commissioner Shimazaki and Commissioner Fuketa. Currently the Sendai Nuclear Power Plant of the Kyusyu Electric Power Company is preparing for revision of application.

Following the Fukushima Daiichi accident, new requirements have been fundamentally strengthened to include requirements for siting, prevention and mitigation of severe accidents caused by extreme external factors such as natural hazards, prolonged SBO, internal water flood and fire. Since the new requirements impose back fitting of existing nuclear power plants, such facilities are also under conformity review equivalent to new plants. We are often criticized for being slow in our confirmative reviews, but conducting such reviews spontaneously for 17 reactors is extremely challenging. I personally believe that the extensive NRA staffs in these situations deserve a high level of praise, even based on international standards.

Accident investigation reports both from Japan and abroad repeatedly underlined a critical lack of safety culture among Japanese operators as a background to the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi NPP accident. There was also a widespread perception in these reports of an unfortunate ‘mindset’ not only among operators but everyone connected to the nuclear energy industry, the so-called “nuclear village”.

The NRA believes that eliminating such a little attention to safety culture in the nuclear village is the top priority. We are therefore determined to sustain our independent position and conduct confirmative reviews based on science and technology and a transparent manner.

I hope this international conference will confirm this viewpoint: that what is essential to safety culture is a questioning attitude and a willingness to learn lessons. We cannot ensure nuclear safety without unending efforts to enhance nuclear safety culture, and regulatory conformity is the minimum safety prerequisite based on the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident.