

Address by Mr. Shuzen Tanigawa,
Senior Vice –Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
At the World Conference on Disaster Reduction

Kobe, Japan
January 20, 2005
(Provisional translation)

Mr. Chairman,

At the Special ASEAN Leaders' Meeting on January 6, Prime Minister Koizumi proposed that a special session on the Indian Ocean tsunami disaster be organized here at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction and that discussions be conducted on building a tsunami early warning system for the Indian Ocean. I look forward to hearing many useful ideas on this subject during this session.

Mr. Chairman,

Japan is prepared to provide the highest level of knowledge and technological information that we have regarding the construction of a tsunami early warning mechanism through both bilateral cooperation and support for international organizations. At the same time, to strengthen preparedness against tsunamis that may occur in the Indian Ocean region in the future, and in response to requests from countries in that region, we are prepared to provide tsunami warning information obtained from observation data that can be put to use today, using existing information networks, as a temporary measure until a fully operational tsunami early warning mechanism is achieved for the Indian Ocean.

It is important that the construction of a tsunami early warning mechanism in this region be implemented with the widespread cooperation of the countries in the region and the countries and international organizations that possess knowledge relevant to such an undertaking. In an effort to share the experience and knowledge gained from the tsunami warning system in the Pacific Ocean with countries that have been affected by this recent tsunami disaster, a joint thematic session was held yesterday by the relevant specialists from the Japanese government agencies and UNESCO. In this session, specialists from the affected

countries and from international organizations had an opportunity to discuss the issues, and a report was compiled based on their discussions. We hope that the countries that border the Indian Ocean will promptly take action to initiate the tasks that this report indicates are necessary for the construction of a tsunami early warning mechanism. We also earnestly hope that the countries and international organizations that possess knowledge relevant to this undertaking will promptly launch support activities in response to requests from these nations, in accordance with the procedures and methods stipulated in this report and within a framework of international collaboration.

The content of this report is also reflected in the draft "Common Statement of the Special Session on the Indian Ocean Disaster" which has been prepared by the Secretariat based on the various proposals that have been expressed thus far at this conference. Japan supports this draft common statement.

Japan will give the fullest level of support in the three areas of financial resources, human resources, and knowledge and expertise toward efforts to address the unprecedented magnitude of damage caused by the Indian Ocean tsunamis. Of the US\$500 million in grant aid that we pledged for immediate emergency response efforts, \$250 million was disbursed in full yesterday and the remaining \$250 million is scheduled to be disbursed this week through the UN and other international organizations. Of the US\$8 million required for programs to be conducted by the ISDR in close cooperation with UNESCO to provide knowledge for the construction of a tsunami early warning system, Japan will provide support in the amount of \$4 million, which will be disbursed this week. We also plan to actively engage in bilateral cooperation and to rapidly implement training courses through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Thank you for your attention.