BOSAI's Wisdom to Connect with the World　-　The Future of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction

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Eight years have passed since the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami occurred and seven years have passed since the International Research Institute of Disaster Science (IRIDeS) was established at Tohoku University in Sendai, Japan. Memorial events and activities were carried out in various places in the region to pass down experiences and lessons to next generations. In particular, it has been remarkable to see such efforts towards the 10th anniversary in 2021.

In the 21st century, climate change as well as the increase of earthquakes have been causing a great deal of human and economic losses. Looking at the characteristics of the recent disasters, there are some repeating patterns from the past. On the other hand, I see that there are some emerging ones. The following events occurred last year could be among those. First, the death toll of the heavy rain that hit western Japan extensively exceeded 200 people. Second, more than 3,000 people were stranded at the Kansai International Airport which is built on a manmade island due to storm surge and severe typhoon winds blown a large tanker into a bridge connecting the airport with the mainland. Third, a powerful earthquake hit wide areas on Japan’s northernmost main island of Hokkaido, causing the loss of power to all 3 million households. Lastly, the non-seismic induced tsunamis caused significant damage with surprise in Indonesia. Impacts of disasters have become more complicated as our society has become more complex and interdependent. Thus, we need to develop a new disaster risk reduction strategy which is resilient to those new hazards and socio-economic changes. IRIDeS will conduct research on this.

As a significant worldwide disaster risk reduction event, IRIDeS contributes to the World BOSAI Forum. The Second World BOSAI Forum will be held in Sendai, November 9-12, this year. As a Chair-person of the Local Organizing Committee, I would like to invite you to the Forum where we will discuss above-mentioned issues with various stakeholders. This time, one of the focuses is on the Global Target E of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction. I very much look forward to your active participation to the Forum.