

March 11, 2014

Statement by Dr. Kazuyuki Katayama, Consul-General of Japan in Detroit,  
On the Occasion of the Third Anniversary of the Great East Japan  
Earthquake

Three years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake struck on March 11, 2011, resulting in a tremendous number of irreplaceable lives lost and unprecedented damage, mainly in the Tohoku region of Japan. On this occasion, I would like to express my heartfelt sympathy to all those affected by the disaster.

We were overwhelmed by the immediate outpouring of compassion and support from the international community, particularly the U.S., including both Michigan and Ohio. Taking this opportunity, I would like to express our sincere gratitude once again, on behalf of the Government and people of Japan.

Tragically, two American JET (Japan Exchange & Teaching Program) participants Ms. Taylor Anderson and Mr. Monty Dickson, dispatched to Ishinomaki City and Rikuzentakata City respectively, died in the tsunami. Earlier this month, I had an opportunity to participate in the film event: “Live Your Dream,” which portrayed the lives and dreams of these two JET participants. Viewing together with their family members, the film’s director, students and others, I was extremely moved to recognize that the bereaved family—still coping with the reality of profound grief—as well as many other friends in the U.S. have shown enduring support and compassion to Japan. The Japanese people will never forget this kind outreach.

Since his inauguration as Prime Minister in December 2012, Mr. Shinzo Abe has visited the affected area thirteen times and implemented ground-based initiatives to accelerate the restoration of the stricken areas. Seventy percent of the public work projects, such as highland relocation of evacuees and construction of housing, has already begun. The Government of Japan will complete the highland relocation of evacuees in two-hundred areas and construction of over 10,000 houses in twelve months, although

many live greatly inconvenienced lives even now. In addition to the rebuilding of infrastructure and residential accommodations, it is extremely important to address the mental health of the victims, especially including the well-being of children. The Government of Japan continues to take initiatives at the front line to address the serious issues of radiation, contaminated water, nuclear reactor abandonment, amongst others at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station.

Taking the policy "Without the reconstruction of Fukushima, there will not be a rebirth of Japan" as its fundamental consideration, the Government of Japan seeks to develop strongly in the future, with the people of Japan, hand in hand with citizens of the international community. As we do so, I humbly request your continued support.

Kazuyuki Katayama  
Consul General of Japan in Detroit