

Highlighting JAPAN

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Pulling Together

Thank you for
being at our side



A member of the Japanese Red Cross feeds a baby at the Ishinomaki Red Cross Hospital in Miyagi Prefecture, March 12.

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REUTERS/AFLO

The Great East Japan Earthquake occurred at 2:46 p.m. Japan time on March 11, centered in the Pacific Ocean off the Sanriku coast in northern Honshu. The magnitude 9.0 quake was the largest in Japan's history and the world's fourth largest on record after the 1960 Great Chilean Earthquake (magnitude: 9.5), the 1964 Great Alaskan Earthquake (magnitude: 9.2), and the 2004 Indian Ocean Earthquake (magnitude: 9.1).

After the earthquake, massive tsunamis pounded the Pacific coast of northern Honshu, with waves estimated as at least 20 meters high at their peak. Coastal areas in northern Honshu had used data from past temblors to prepare for tsunamis and had constructed breakwaters and conducted emergency drills in advance, but the size and the force of the waves far surpassed expectations. The tsunamis swept away houses, cars and boats with an unstoppable force, leaving massive ruins along the northern Honshu coast. As of April 11, the severity of the dev-

astation was clear: the death toll had risen to 13,100 and another 14,300 people were still missing; some 48,700 buildings had been destroyed.

Thankfully, immediately following the earthquake, a chain of support arose not just around Japan, but also worldwide. To date, 134 countries and regions and 39 international organizations have generously pledged assistance to Japan. In addition, huge numbers of people worldwide have pitched in to hold various fundraising activities and charity events.

One month after the earthquake, Prime Minister Naoto Kan contributed the following message to foreign newspapers:

"I take very seriously, and deeply regret, the nuclear accidents we have had at the Fukushima Daiichi plant. Bringing the situation at the plant under control at the earliest possible date is my top priority. Leading a unified effort by the government, I have mobilized all available resources to combat the risks posed by the plant, based on three principles: first, give the

highest priority to the safety and health of all citizens, in particular those residents living close to the plant; second, conduct thorough risk management; and, third, plan for all possible scenarios so that we are fully prepared to respond to any future situations. For example, we continue to make the utmost efforts to address the issue of outflow of radioactive water from the plant into the ocean. In addition, the government has taken every possible measure to ensure the safety of all food and other products, based on strict scientific criteria. We have taken great precautions to ensure the safety of all Japanese food and products that reach the market and will continue to do so. To assure domestic and foreign consumer confidence in the safety of Japanese food and products, my administration will redouble its efforts to maintain transparency and keep everyone informed of our progress in the complex and evolving circumstances at the Fukushima Daiichi plant.



shima Daiichi plant.

"I pledge that the Japanese government will promptly and thoroughly verify the cause of this incident, as well as share information and the lessons learned with the rest of the world to help prevent such accidents in the future.[...]"

"The Japanese people rose from the ashes of the Second World War using our fundamental strength to secure a remarkable recovery and the country's present prosperity. I have not a single doubt that Japan will overcome this crisis, recover from the aftermath of the disaster, emerge stronger than ever, and establish a more vibrant and better Japan for future generations."

"I believe that the best way for Japan to reciprocate the strong *kizuna* (bonds of friendship) and cordial friendship extended to us is to continue our contribution to the development of the international community. To that end, I will work to the best of my ability to realize a forward-looking reconstruction that gives people bright hopes for the future. I would wholeheartedly appreciate your continued support and cooperation."



Prime Minister Naoto Kan surveys the destruction caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake in Rikuzentakata, Iwate Prefecture, April 2.

World Rushes to Japan's Aid

Members of a Taiwanese rescue team search for survivors in Ofunato, Iwate Prefecture, March 17.

AP/AELO

Immediately after the Great East Japan Earthquake struck, offers of aid from around the world came pouring into Japan. Overwhelmed by the scale of the disaster, the Japanese government gratefully accepted these offers. Search and rescue teams from many countries and regions and a number of international organizations rushed mostly to the coastal areas of the Tohoku region that were hardest hit by

the tsunami. The countries and regions that dispatched teams were South Korea, Singapore, Germany, Switzerland, the United States, China, the U.K., Mexico, Australia, France, Taiwan, Russia, Mongolia, Turkey, Indonesia, South Africa, Israel, India, Italy, and even New Zealand, where many lives were lost less than a month earlier to the magnitude 6.3 temblor in Christchurch on February 22.

New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs Murray McCully stated, "Japan and New Zealand are very close partners, and it is natural that we support each other in times of great adversity, as we saw with the Japanese response to the Christ-

A U.S. Marine and a resident of Oshima island in Miyagi Prefecture carry a table from a building destroyed by the March 11 tsunami.

LANCE CORPORAL GARRY J. WELCH



Jordanian boys attend a vigil outside the Japanese Embassy in Amman, March 20.



At a culture center in Bilbao, Spain, people help to fold 1,000 paper cranes in support of the earthquake disaster victims in Japan, March 26.



Pakistani families take part in a rally organized by the Pakistan-Japan Cultural Association, March 20.



Actor Jackie Chan and scores of other artists attend a news conference in Hong Kong before a charity event in support of the earthquake disaster victims in Japan, March 24.

church earthquake."

President Barack Obama wrote the following in a letter to His Majesty The Emperor on March 24: "The devastation and loss of life caused by the catastrophic earthquake and tsunami that struck your nation on March 11 is heartbreaking, and our prayers are with you in this time of grief. ... I speak for all Americans in expressing admiration for the courage, strength, and determination with which the people of Japan are responding to this crisis. I have every confidence that Japan will rebound from this tragedy even stronger than before and set an example for other nations through your resilience."

In a summit meeting with Prime Minister Naoto Kan on March 31, French President Nicolas Sarkozy said,



At the Fritz-Walter-Stadion in Kaiserslautern, players of the German national football team observe a minute's silence in memory of those who lost their lives to the earthquake disaster in Japan, March 26.

have taken heart from things such as video messages posted on Internet video sites.

In Washington, D.C., the U.S. capital, a charity auction and fundraising activities have been con-

"I have respect for and have been moved by the composed response and the courageous actions of the people of Japan in the face of the most serious national crisis since the end of World War II. Japan has been among the first to offer generous assistance to other countries facing great difficulties in the past, and the international community now needs to reciprocate Japan's generosity."

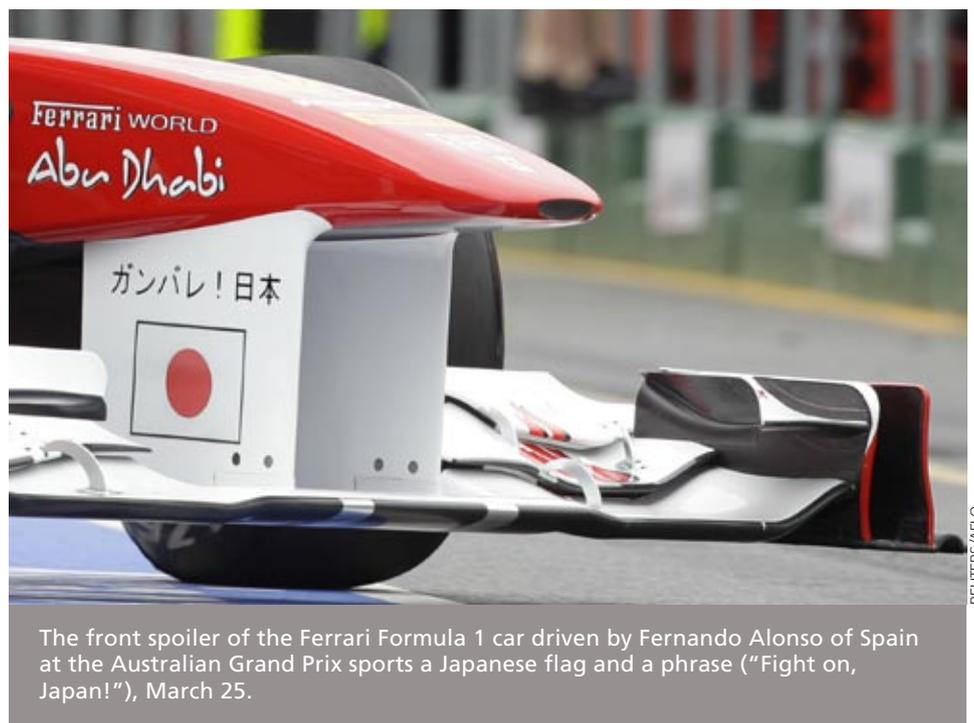
President Sarkozy added that France, as a nation which itself has advanced energy technologies, is prepared to provide whatever further assistance Japan requires.

Standing with Japan

Ordinary people, too, have sent much aid and many messages to Japan in response to this disaster. There has been wide coverage in the national media of the kinds of aid given and, in addition, many Japanese

ducted during the National Cherry Blossom Festival held from March 26. Hundreds of citizens also participated in the Stand with Japan Walk. The National Cherry Blossom Festival in Washington, D.C. started ninety-nine years ago, in 1912, when Tokyo gave 3,000 cherry trees as a symbol of friendship between Japan and the United States.

There is a custom in Japan of folding paper into the shape of a crane, making what's called *orizuru*.



The front spoiler of the Ferrari Formula 1 car driven by Fernando Alonso of Spain at the Australian Grand Prix sports a Japanese flag and a phrase ("Fight on, Japan!"), March 25.

These paper cranes symbolize prayers for recovery from illness, long life and peace. People around the world are making paper cranes as symbols of their prayers for the victims and for rebuilding from the earthquake. Large numbers of flowers and paper cranes were left in front of the main gate of the Japanese Embassy in Moscow. Children from a Russian orphanage visited the embassy and presented a gift of a thousand paper cranes, symbol-

regions, from the people that have come to Japan for training or received aid from Japan. In the Palestinian territory, the Gaza Strip, which even now is in a tense situation, fifty former JICA training participants



Members of a South Korean charity organization raise funds in downtown Seoul in aid of the victims of the earthquake disaster, March 17.

izing their hopes that the children in the disaster-stricken areas will recover quickly.

Also, through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), which provides support for developing countries, a variety of encouraging messages have been sent from more than 100 countries and

gathered on March 21 to mourn the victims of the disaster in Japan.

Besides these, there are many other kinds of aid and messages continuously arriving in Japan. The Japanese people have accepted each one of these events with sincere gratitude.

Stay Informed

In the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake, the Japanese government has made a concerted effort to release information promptly and with utmost transparency to all segments of the public and the international community. You can access this information in English at the URLs listed below.

In addition, for regular updates about the latest news releases in English, follow me on Twitter: <https://twitter.com/norishikata>.

Countermeasures for the Great East Japan Earthquake: <http://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/incident/>

Environmental radioactivity levels: http://www.mext.go.jp/english/radioactivity_level/detail/1303962.htm

Prime Minister's Office Twitter page: http://twitter.com/JPN_PMO

Prime Minister's Office Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/Japan.PMO>

Press Conference by the Chief Cabinet Secretary on Internet TV (English interpretation): <http://nettv.gov-online.go.jp/eng/>

Press Conferences and Briefings: http://www.mofa.go.jp/j_info/visit/incidents/press/

Noriyuki Shikata, director of Global Communications at the Prime Minister's Office of Japan



Toward Reconstruction

Japan Self-Defense Forces

The Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) began rescue efforts immediately after the earthquake of March 11 and to date have rescued approximately 19,000 people. About 100,000 of the approximately 230,000 JSDF personnel have joined the efforts. The activities are wide-ranging, from tasks such as searching for the missing, delivering relief goods and supplying water to the installation of bathing facilities and consolation music performances. Pictured, children relax in a makeshift public bath set up by Japan Ground Self-Defense Force personnel at an evacuation center in Yamamoto, Miyagi Prefecture, March 25.



AP/AFLC

Temporary Houses

Temporary houses are now being constructed for those people whose houses were damaged or lost as a result of the earthquake disaster. The first of these were occupied by victims in Rikuzentakata, Miyagi Prefecture, on April 9. In the first two months after the quake, a total of some 30,000 temporary houses will be built in Chiba, Ibaraki, Fukushima, Miyagi and Iwate Prefectures, and another 30,000 are scheduled to be built over the following three months. Pictured, a worker carries timber to build temporary houses for disaster victims in Otsuchi, Iwate Prefecture, April 3.



AP/AFLC



REUTERS/AFLC

Volunteers

Many citizen volunteers have also participated in a range of support activities. Pictured, boys play soccer watched over by a volunteer at a school, which now acts as an evacuation shelter, in Rikuzentakata, Iwate prefecture, April 7.

Visit by the Emperor and Empress

As of April 11, the number of disaster victims who have evacuated to roughly 2,300 evacuation centers nationwide, including those who lost their homes due to the earthquake and ensuing tsunami and those who live in the evacuation zone designated due to the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, is about 150,000 people. On March 30, Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress of Japan visited the Tokyo Budoh-kan in the capital's Adachi Ward, which is housing some 300 evacuees. Their Majesties spent around 40 minutes kindly speaking to the evacuees with the likes of "Are you able to sleep well?" and "Are you coping physically?"



REUTERS/AFLO

On March 16, the Emperor delivered a message about the earthquake by video, which has been released on the Imperial Household Agency website: www.kunaicho.go.jp/eindex.html.

Fundraising Activities

As of April 10, monetary donations given to the Japan Red Cross Society and the Central Community Chest of Japan for the purpose of supporting the disaster-stricken areas had reached a total of 140 billion yen. Collection boxes have been placed at many convenience stores, restaurants and other shops, and the sight of people soliciting donations on the street can be seen all over Japan. Pictured, Ladies Professional Golfers' Association of Japan golfers collect donations in support of victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake in front of Hakata Station, Fukuoka, March 20.



AFLO

Charity Soccer Match

On March 29, a charity soccer match between the Japan national team and a J. League select squad was held at the Nagai Stadium in Osaka. The stands holding a sellout crowd of over 40,000 spectators overflowed with banners and flags with various messages such as "Kizuna" (bonds of friendship), "Nihon ni egao wo" (Bring smiles to Japan) and "Ganbaro, Nihon" (Let's do our best, Japan!).

Pictured, Yuto Nagatomo (5), who plays for Inter Milan of Italy, raises his mourning band after Japan national teammate Yasuhito Endo scored during their charity match at Nagai Stadium in Osaka, March 29.



REUTERS/AFCO

Encouragement from Koshien to All of Japan

From March 23 to April 3, the National High School Baseball Invitational Tournament was held at the Hanshin Koshien Stadium in Nishinomiya, Hyogo Prefecture. Teams from thirty-two high schools selected from around Japan competed in the tournament. Held twice a year at Koshien Stadium in spring and summer, the tournaments are the stuff made of dreams for high school students playing baseball in Japan. Collection boxes were also placed at the event, with part of the proceeds from admissions going to the disaster-stricken areas as donations.

After the earthquake struck, baseball team members of tournament entrant Tohoku High School from disaster-stricken Sendai City continued volunteer activities including the delivery of relief goods and the supply of water at an evacuation center near their school, and moved to Hyogo four days prior to the opening ceremony. Unfortunately, the team exited the tournament in the first round, but tele-

vised scenes of the players giving their best in the match gave great encouragement not only to the disaster victims at evacuation centers but also to many Japanese people.

Pictured, Tohoku High School baseball players line up after their first-round game in the 83rd National High School Baseball Invitational Tournament, March 28.



TOSHIHIRO KITAGAWA/AFCO

On April 11, exactly one month after the Great East Japan Earthquake, Prime Minister Naoto Kan released the following message on behalf of the people of Japan.

絆

Kizuna - the bonds of friendship

Thank you for the *Kizuna*.

One month has passed since an earthquake of unprecedented scale struck Japan taking thousands of precious lives. Even today, evacuation shelters are still the only refuge for more than 150,000 people.

In the tsunami-devastated regions there was no food, no water, no electricity and the survivors had no communications. At that desperate time people from around the world rallied to our side bringing hope and inspiring courage.

Every blanket and every cup of hot soup brought warmth and strength to the cold and exhausted who had lost everything. Rescue teams heroically searched for survivors in the heaps of broken rubble, while medical teams worked tirelessly caring for the injured.

We are still receiving a tremendous outpouring of encouragement, prayers and support from people worldwide. We deeply appreciate the *Kizuna* our friends around the world have shown and I want to thank every nation, entity, and you personally, from the bottom of my heart.

Reconstruction has already begun and we are putting every effort into stabilizing the situation at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.

Through our own efforts and with the help of the global community, Japan will recover and come back even stronger. We will then repay you for your generous aid.

With this in our hearts, we now stand together dedicated to rebuilding the nation.

As our feelings of deep gratitude to you grow into feelings of hope, we, the people of Japan, express our sincere thanks to you all.

菅 直人

Naoto Kan
Prime Minister of Japan

A Friend In Need Is A Friend Indeed.



Children laugh and play outside an evacuation center in Ishinomaki, Miyagi Prefecture, two weeks after the March 11 earthquake.

Front Cover: Service members from U.S. Naval Air Facility Misawa join local residents in efforts to retrieve a vehicle that was swept away by the tsunami in the port town of Misawa, Aomori Prefecture, March 19. (U.S. NAVY/MATTHEW M. BRADLEY)

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<http://www.gov-online.go.jp/eng/publicity/book/hlj/index.html>

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