

ACDR2011 Opening address
Shigeru ITOH
Chairman, ADRC

Your Excellency Minister, Mr. Mahinda Amaraweera,
Your Excellency Senior Vice Minister, Mr. Shozo Azuma
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honor to deliver opening remarks as Chairman of the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC) here in Colombo.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to your participation in this Asian Conference on Disaster Reduction 2011 as co-chair of the conference.

Also I would like to express deep gratitude to Sri Lankan government, especially Ministry of Disaster Management and Disaster Management Center for hosting and supporting this conference.

Recently, countries around the world have experienced natural disasters of unprecedented scale and nature, which include floods in Sri Lanka, China, Australia and US, as well as earthquakes in Haiti, New Zealand, and Japan.

In Particular, the March 11 Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami has caused devastation in north-eastern parts of Japan along the Pacific coast, which left more than 23,000 people killed or missing. In this regard, ADRC has recently conducted an international Expert group meeting titled “Toward Creative Reconstruction from Great East Japan Earthquake”.

The earthquake is actually devastating. It becomes a national disaster. Japanese people have made their best efforts for rebirth of the nation. Through the course of recovery process from now, they would learn a lot of lessons, strategies and technologies. Japan could share those precious results with our member countries through ADRC activities. It is clear that disaster is not only

Japanese concern but our member countries' in future.

Ladies and gentlemen,

ADRC, since its inception, has been promoting multilateral cooperation for disaster risk reduction in close cooperation with its member countries, UN and other international and regional organisations, NGOs, academia and the civil society.

For that objective, we have been promoting systematic compilation and dissemination of disaster-related information, human resource development, and capacity building at various levels from national to community level. This conference, ACDR, is one of such activities.

Therefore, I hope this conference will provide opportunities for countries to share recent experiences and learn from each other. Moreover, it is expected to further promote implementation of the Hyogo Framework of Action, HFA

I would like to conclude my remarks by promising that ADRC will continue to work with its member countries to further strengthen countries' capacity against future disasters and make necessary preparations. We will make every effort to achieve our common goals, sustainable development through building the resilience of nations and communities to natural disasters.

Thank you very much.