



Japan CSO Coalition for 2015 WCDRR

Press Release

March 16th 2015

Reconstruction after *Nuclear* Disaster?

Speech by JCC2015's co-chair at the Ministerial Roundtable "Reconstruction after Disasters: Build Back Better" during the 3rd UN WCDRR

During the 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai, Japan, Mr. OHASHI Masaaki, co-chair of Japan CSO Coalition for 2015 WCDRR (JCC2015), the largest Japanese CSO network active for disaster risk reduction, made a 3-minute speech at the Ministerial Roundtable "Reconstruction after Disaster: Build Back Better", held 10:00-13:00 on 15th March.

"It is clear for us that if the people's experience of, and lessons from, the Chernobyl nuclear disaster were properly shared with us beforehand, the magnitudes of our scarcity and dismay could be much less", said OHASHI, who has extensive experience in humanitarian assistance in Kosovo, Bangladesh and Tohoku region in Japan.

The concept of "Build Back Better" is only appropriate when the preparation for nuclear and industrial disasters is prioritized by governments who aim to construct such facilities for future power generation.

"I sincerely hope that UNISDR and/or the appropriate UN organizations, together with concerned governments will seriously look into how the Build Back Better approach is applied to nuclear and industrial disasters", concludes OHASHI.

For OHASHI's full speech, see back page.

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Japan CSO Coalition for 2015 WCDRR

Speech by OHASHI Masaaki, JCC2015's co-chair, at the Ministerial Roundtable “Reconstruction after Disasters: Build Back Better” during the 3rd WCDRR on 15th March 2015

Honorable Chairperson and ministers, thank you very much for allowing me to speak here. My name is OHASHI, chairperson of the largest NGO network in Japan, Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC). I serve as co-chair of Japan CSO Coalition for 2015 WCDRR (JCC2015). I would like to congratulate the 3rd WCDRR on behalf of Japanese CSOs, because this conference is going to adopt the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction. The inclusion of nuclear disasters as man-made hazard in the new framework is the most significant progress in the era of global economy and environmental crisis. I also highly appreciate the Build Back Better approach with a pre-disaster plan, as mentioned the Issue Brief of this Ministerial Roundtable on Reconstructing after Disasters: Build Back Better.

However, I feel that this approach is very appropriate to natural disasters, while not so much to nuclear disasters along with other increasing industrial disasters. In general, there is a strong “safety myth” with nuclear power plants and other industrial facilities, as was so in Fukushima, Japan. We applaud Japanese Government representative’s remark yesterday (14th March) on indication to clearly break away from “safety myth” on nuclear power plants. Situations in Fukushima have proved that this mind-set of “safety myth” is the biggest obstacle to realize disaster risk reduction, as well as application of the Build Back Better approach to industrial disasters.

The Fukushima nuclear disaster, which occurred on 11th March 2011, is still on-going, as 120,000 people are evacuating, vast areas are not habitable for coming decades and nuclear-polluted water is leaking in the ocean. We still remember utter panic and desperation of local residents in Fukushima, as well as people in Japan caused by repeated explosions of nuclear reactors and massive leaking of nuclear radiation, which widely polluted our neighboring lands, rivers, sea, forests, air, and even foods. It is clear for us that if the people’s experience of, and lessons from, the Chernobyl nuclear disaster were properly shared with us beforehand, the magnitudes of our scarcity and dismay could be much less. Unfortunately, this was never done by any governmental or international organizations.

Therefore, we urge that our bitter and terrible on-going experience of the Fukushima nuclear disaster should be properly documented and globally shared with those peoples who are residents around nuclear power plants to prevent and reduce nuclear hazards.

Energy and industrial policies, as well as the export of nuclear power plants, are essential for some governments and their industrial circles, because these are directly related to their economy. This may often lead to “safety myth” and difficult obstacles for risk reduction of industrial disasters and for the application of the Build Back Better approach from the pre-disaster stage.

Asia has now grown to be the global production center which requires a lot of energy. So, Asia faces high possibilities of industrial disasters. I sincerely hope that UNISDR and/or the appropriate UN organizations, together with concerned governments will seriously look into how the Build Back Better approach is applied to nuclear and industrial disasters. Thank you. [ENDS]