Tohoku Earthquake Response of 2011

JHUMUNC 2017
Tohoku Earthquake Response of 2011

**Topic A: Post-Earthquake Situation and Domestic Response**

**Topic B: Foreign Aid and Relations**

**Committee Overview**

The Committee on Tohoku Earthquake Response of 2011 will be a stimulating and engaging experience as we discuss the domestic and international response to the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami that occurred on March 11, 2011. The impact of this catastrophic event, while profoundly devastating the Tohoku region of Japan, was felt worldwide and continues to affect the world today. This committee has been summoned to address an incredibly catastrophic event that will require effective and efficient responses that not only deal with the aftermath of this disaster, but also demonstrate foresight in preventing another disaster of this magnitude from occurring.

This committee is composed of twenty-one of the most knowledgeable and capable experts on the issue at hand. The members of this committee include high-level government officials and leaders of international organizations who are irreplaceable in undertaking the necessary and proper response to this unfortunate event. The purpose of this committee is to stimulate debate on the proper domestic response to the earthquake and tsunami, discuss foreign involvement in providing assistance to those directly affected by this catastrophic event, and examine the enduring effects of this disaster. Since this committee consists of government leaders and industry representatives with varying views on the proper steps to take in response to the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, timely discussions must occur and effective solutions must result. Delegates will have to ensure that they provide the best relief, support, and assistance in response to this catastrophe. The Committee on Tohoku Earthquake Response of 2011 will inaugurate on March 15, 2011.

**Parliamentary Procedure**

This committee will follow standard JHUMUNC parliamentary procedure. The committee will remain primarily in a moderated caucus with the option to motion for an un-moderated caucus. Throughout committee sessions and the progression of debate, various crisis simulating real-time situations will be reported to delegates. This dynamic will allow experts to develop and exchange ideas in a formal and professional setting, while keeping collaborations current and impactful in order to facilitate timely and necessary responses to the situation at hand and its developments throughout the committee’s process.

Officials in this committee are considered to be the most qualified and knowledgeable on the issue and thus are required to provide articulate and dynamic solutions to address the catastrophe and adapt to the ever-developing nature of a
real-world crisis. The goal of this committee is to respond to the catastrophic damages incurred by the Tohoku Earthquake in a timely and effectively manner. As such, directives—by individuals, in collaboration with other delegates, and from the entire voting body—will be favoured to response to the issues at hand. Further, all motions will be addressed in order from most to least disruptive.

**Delegate Biographies**

**Yoshihiro Katayama**

Katayama previously served as Governor of Tottori Prefecture and currently serves a Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC). The MIC is responsible for various organizations involved within the Japanese administrative system on the local and national level. Functions of the MIC include management of the economic and social activities of the nation, such as local autonomy, fire, and emergency services, and telecommunications.

**Yukio Edano**

Edano serves as Chief Cabinet Secretary and Minister of State for Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs. As Chief Cabinet Secretary of Japan, Edano is responsible for directing the Japanese Cabinet Secretariat and coordinating the policies of ministries and agencies in the executive branch during times of national crisis. As such, he will have a large role in leading initiatives to deal with the damages of the earthquake. The Chief Cabinet Secretary is traditionally upheld as the primary successor to the prime minister in the event of the prime minister’s inability to carry out their duties.

**Satsuki Eda**

Eda previously served as President of the House of Councillors and currently serves as the Minister of Justice. The Ministry of Justice is responsible for the Japanese judicial and penal system. It is composed of six bureaus that include the Civil Affairs, Criminal Affairs, Correction, Rehabilitation, Human Rights and Immigration, and the Minister’s Secretariat. As such the Ministry of Justice is responsible for a multitude of legal services such as the maintenance of household, property and corporate registrations and immigration control.  

**Takeaki Matsumoto**

Matsumoto previously served as State Secretary for Foreign Affairs and currently serves as Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Minister of Foreign Affairs acts as chief adviser to the prime minister in matters of planning and implementation. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is responsible for Japanese foreign policy and relations. It is composed of directing the Minister’s Secretariat and 11 bureaus (Foreign Policy, Asian and Oceanian Affairs, North American Affairs, Latin American and Caribbean Affairs, European Affairs, Middle Eastern and African Affairs, Economic Affairs, International Cooperation, International Legal Affairs, Consular Affairs, Intelligence and Analysis Service).

**Ritsuo Hosokawa**

Hosokawa currently serves as Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare. The

---

Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare is a large and complex organization that oversees a multitude of institutions that include the Health Service Bureau, Department of Food Safety, Labor Standards Bureau, Social Welfare and War Victims’ Relief Bureau. Thus functions of the Ministry of Health, Labor and Welfare include providing health and welfare services for its citizens, establishing labor standards and policies, managing the state budget, and promotion of health and labor science research.3

Banri Kaieda

Kaieda currently serves as Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry. The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry is responsible for all agencies involved with economic activity and planning. Thus, the METI is responsible for the duties of various institutions including Regional Bureaus of Economy, Trade and Industry, the Industrial Safety and Inspection Departments, the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy, Small and Medium Enterprise Agency, Japan Patent Office, and various bureaus (Minister’s Secretariat, Economic and Industrial Policy Bureau, Trade Policy Bureau, Trade and Economic Cooperation Bureau, Industrial Science and Technology Policy and Environment Bureau, Manufacturing Industries Bureau, Commerce and Information Policy Bureau).

Akihiro Ohata

Ohata previously served as the Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry and currently serves as Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT). The MLIT is responsible for a significant amount of Japan’s laws and orders as it sustains the highest number of employees of all the ministries. Besides overseeing sixteen bureaus, including the Policy and City Bureau, the MLIT is also responsible for overseeing four external agencies: Japan Transport Safety Board, Japan Tourism Agency, Japan Meteorological Agency, and Japan Coast Guard.4

Goshi Osono

Hosono currently serves as Special Advisor to the Prime Minister and Nuclear Disaster Minister of Japan. As special advisor to the prime minister, Hosono was tasked with covering TEPCO’s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident that resulted from the tsunami. Additionally, he was responsible for such tasks as review of the nuclear safety regulation for nuclear reactors, evaluation of the health outcomes due to radiation, and restoring overall safety and health regulations.

Toshimi Kitazawa

Kitazawa currently serves as Minister of Defense. As head of the Ministry of Defense, Kitazawa oversees various organizations including internal bureaus such as the Bureau of Defense Policy, Councils such as the Self Defense Forces Personnel Ethics Review Board, Facilities such as the National Defense Academy, Extraordinary Organs such as the Joint Staff Office, Common Institutions, Common


Units, Local Branch Bureaus, and Incorporated Administrative Agencies.  

**Takaharu Ando**

Ando currently serves as the Commissioner General of Japan’s National Police Agency (NPA). The NPA, as the central coordinating agency of the Japanese police system is tasked with determining the general standard and policies of law enforcement. The NPA, as administered by the National Public Safety Commission, does not have an individual body of police officers but may take command of prefectural police forces during times of national emergencies and large-scale disasters.

**General Ryochi Oriki**

Oriki currently serves as the Chief of Staff of the Joint Staff. He is the highest-ranking officer of the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF). The JSDF are the unified military forces of Japan. Oriki serves as the primary advisor to the prime minister and minister of defense regarding military forces. Similarly, the chief of staff executes the order of the minister of defense as directed by the prime minister. Responsibilities of the chief of staff include supervising the service branches operation and assuming command in event of natural disasters, emergencies, and war, with limited powers during time of peace.

---

8 “We are committed to establishing close relations with local communities.” Ministry of Defense, n.d. www.mod.go.jp/e/about/organization/reorganized/p4-5.pdf

**Makoto Iokibe**

Iokibe currently serves as president of the National Defense Academy of Japan. The National Defense Academy (NDA) aims to “educate and train future leaders of the three Japan Self-Defense Forces.” The NDA is thus in charge of training Japan’s Army, Navy, and Air Force.

**John Victor Roos**

Roos currently serves as the United States Ambassador to Japan. As ambassador to Japan, Roos is responsible for addressing and resolving the security, economic, and global challenges that Japan and the United States face. Roos has thus led the coordination of American response and relief efforts following the Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami. He is also responsible for heading Operation Tomodachi and responding to the Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear power plant disaster.

**Tsunehisa Katsumata**

Currently Katsumata serves as the Tokyo Electric Power Co. Chairman. TEPCO is the main Japanese electric utility company that services Japan’s Yamanashi Prefecture, Shizuoka Prefecture, and Kanto region. As chairman, Katsumata, is responsible for addressing and resolving the issues associated with safety incidents and

---

its three main form of energy: nuclear power, fossil fuels, and hydropower.\textsuperscript{12}

\textit{Masao Yoshida}

Yoshida currently serves as the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant Manager for TEPCO. Yoshida’s decision to continue using seawater to cool the reactors despite headquarters orders has been praised for preventing a much greater catastrophe from occurring.\textsuperscript{13}

\textit{Mitsuhiko Hatori}

Hatori currently serves as the Director-General of the Japan Meteorological Agency and is the Permanent Representative of Japan with The World Meteorological Organization. The JMA is a government agency that is in charge of preventing and limiting the causes of natural disasters as well as monitoring Japan’s transportation.

\textit{Yukiya Amano}

Amano is the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency and was previously Chair of the Agency’s Board of Governors. The IAEA’s mission is to maintain a safe nuclear technology environment and to hinder the spread of nuclear weapons. With his experience as Director General for the Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Science Department and his time on the U.N. Expert Group on Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Education, Amano has extensive knowledge to uphold IAEA’s mission.

\textit{Yūhei Satō}

Sato is the current Governor of Fukushima Prefecture, who was elected in November 2006 after his predecessor was charged with bribery.

\textit{Herman von Rompuy}

Rompuy is the current President of the European Council and the first to hold this position. Before he was president of the European Council, Rompuy was prime minister of Belgium with considerable experience from years of serving in Belgian Parliament.

\textit{Vasily V. Titov}

Titov is the Director of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA) center for Tsunami Research and has been a senior tsunami modeler for NOAA’s Pacific Marine Environmental Laboratory. PMEL and NOAA aim to observe the interactions between the ocean and earth to better understand tsunamis.

\textit{Tadateru Konoe}

Konoe is the 14\textsuperscript{th} President of the Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) and is also the President of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC). He was previously chairman of the board of directors in JRCS Academy, where he established six nursing colleges and created several other new programs. Konoe also puts a strong emphasis on creating stronger international ties with other organizations.


McGovern has been the American Red Cross President since 2008. Since she was appointed, McGovern has made the Red Cross more financially stable and increased the Red Cross’ presence on social media to ensure people stay safe during emergencies. On 10 March 2011, she was appointed as the only nonprofit member of the President’s Management Board. Before the Red Cross, McGovern taught at Harvard Business School and was president of Fidelity Personal Investments.

**Topic A: Post-Earthquake Situation and Domestic Response**

**Introduction**

On Friday, 11 March 2011, at 14:46 JST a massive 9.0 magnitude earthquake hit the Tohoku region of the Japanese mainland. Shortly after the initial earthquake shocks, Japan’s coastline was hit with multiple tsunami waves causing a cooling system failure at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant and resulting in a level 7 nuclear meltdown. This cataclysm led to devastating human and economic losses, significant shortages of food, water, and medical care, and unpredictable future effects for decades to come. This committee has been commissioned to respond to the damage and destruction following this catastrophic event.

**Historical Background**

Despite Japan’s history with the destructive capacities of earthquakes and tsunamis, the series of unfortunate events in 2011 proved to be one of the most devastating natural disasters experienced in Japan as very few experts predicted the magnitude of the impact and damage that would result. A smaller earthquake was forecasted to strike the Northern region of Honshu, but scientists did not predict what was to come. The earthquake resulted from the collision of two of Earth’s tectonic plates, the Pacific and North American plate. These plates lie on a subduction zone in the Pacific Ocean where the Pacific Plate subducts under the North American Plate at a yearly rate of 88 mm per year. The energy
released from this collision resulted in the earthquake that struck the Tohoku region, 130 Kilometers east of the epicenter. While the rattling from the earthquake only lasted for approximately six minutes, it resulted in catastrophic damages that are still being accounted for today. The earthquake further triggered a massive tsunami as the vertical displacement of the seawater created tsunami waves that stretched beyond the earthquake region. Waves for this displacement reached as far as the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant causing multiple meltdowns and radioactive contamination.

**Japan’s History with Earthquakes**

Japan is located on the collision point of four major plates: the Eurasian Plate, the North American Plate, the Philippine Plate, and the Pacific Plate. The movement of these plates has caused many earthquakes, which has made Japan one of the most experienced countries with earthquakes.

Japan’s earthquake history dates back many centuries, when people associated earthquakes to mythical explanations rather than scientific ones. One of the most destructive earthquakes documented occurred in Tokyo on 11 November 1855. This 7-magnitude earthquake killed almost 20,000 people as transcribed in woodcuts that have survived to this day. Similarly, on 1 September 1932, the Great Kanto Earthquake hit Yokohama and Tokyo. This 7.9-magnitude earthquake resulted in more than 140,000 people killed from collapsing buildings, tsunami waves, and fires. On 17 January 1995, a 6.9-magnitude earthquake hit the city of Kobe. The Japanese government’s response during the aftermath of this earthquake was highly criticized for being too slow to act and failing to accept sufficient international help.

**The Japanese Economy**

Japan’s economy before the Tohoku earthquake was on the road to recovery after 20 years of deflation and recession. In 2010, GDP had increased by 3%, a good sign for the struggling Japanese economy, which struggled with massive debt, rising commodity prices, and an aging labor population. The total property damage after the Kobe Earthquake was about 2 percent of GDP. In comparison, the 11 March earthquake, which included a huge tsunami and nuclear power plant breakdown, is predicated to have a higher cost of property damage and significantly add to Japan’s debt. Japan’s nuclear industry is a large part of its economy. Before the Tohoku earthquake, Japan had a total of about 50 nuclear reactors that generated electricity for most of its citizens. Without these generators, Japan may have to consider other energy resources to power the nation such as the importation of oil. Importing oil could lead to major trade deficits since Japan exports more goods than it imports.

Japan’s economy has faced many challenges, prior to the Tohoku earthquake and resulting tsunami however, the economy appeared to be finally on the mend. Thus, response to the earthquake’s devastation will no doubt require swift and comprehensive solutions from the Japanese government in order to avoid impending economic disaster.

---

Previous Earthquake Disasters

Throughout the years, governments all around the world have formulated domestic and international countermeasures to natural disasters. Despite structured protocols, earthquake responses often lack the efficiency and efficacy needed to minimize socio-economic loss. As the international community faces more and more occurrences of natural disasters, lessons are learned, protocols are updated, and past failures are reflected upon. Three of history’s most costly earthquakes have reshaped the globe’s perspective on proper emergency relief and have changed the paradigm by which governments now approach natural disasters.

1960: Republic of Chile

On 22 May 1960, a 9.5-magnitude earthquake struck the coast of Chile; fifteen minutes later, a massive tsunami triggered a second wave of destruction. Due to inefficient alert systems and delays in sensors of seismologic centers, communication with the central government and local municipals were limited for 12 hours after the initial earthquake. When information finally trickled in, too many reports were directed to different personnel, leading to inefficiency and duplicity. This created a council that lacked a comprehensive and concentrated strategy for emergency relief. While the executive plan was developing, emergency response teams on the ground also floundered seeing as none possessed the manpower or the right equipment to provide immediate relief. Learning from their mistakes, Chile has created the Oficina Nacional de Emergencia del Ministerio del Interior to avoid the pitfalls of the 1960 Chilean earthquake response.\(^{15,16}\)

1976: People’s Republic of China

The 7.8-magnitude Tangshan Earthquake of 1976 remains one of the most lethal natural disasters to occur in 20\(^{th}\) century Asia. Tangshan, deemed “unlikely for earthquakes” by seismologists, lacked proper infrastructure and emergency response teams when the earthquake struck. Despite bureaucratic efforts in constructing a dispatch plan, the physical lack of manpower and equipment at the site made first response operations impossible to implement within 24-48 hours of the disaster. Moreover, the Chinese government’s refusal to accept international aid limited the amount of supplies and aid available to send to Tangshan, heavily obstructing the efficacy of emergency shelters within the disaster zone.\(^{17}\)

2010: Republic of Haiti

Despite the massive quantities of international aid donated to Haiti, the nation still experienced tremendous difficulty recovering from its 7.0-magnitude earthquake. Many blame the lack of a strong government and the under-regulation of both domestic and international NGOs for Haiti’s failures. Statistics show that only 1% of all aid donated to Haiti was actually used by the Haitian government to implement emergency response services,\(^{15}\)


reconstruction, and overall recovery. The other 99% funded sectors of international NGOs unregulated by a weak central government. Those NGOs that spearheaded the relief effort suffered from lack of communication and leadership themselves, often creating inefficiencies by duplicating data collecting, shelter construction, and medical relief efforts. Therefore, Haiti continues to suffer from the earthquake’s damage years after the disaster.¹⁸

Post-Earthquake Situation

As officials and rescue teams continue to respond to the aftermath of the 9.0 magnitude earthquake that hit northeastern Japan on 11 March 2011, the effect of the earthquake is still being felt throughout Japan. Current damage estimates continue to rise with the Japanese government currently estimating at least ¥25 trillion (approximately US$240 million) of total damage. The northeast region was the most prominently affected with Sendai, the city closest to the epicenter, being the worst hit. The earthquake was followed by numerous aftershocks that reached as far south as Tokyo. To date, this has been the most powerful earthquake to hit Japan in recorded history and the seventh-largest earthquake in recorded history.

Seismologists have reported that the “2011 Great East Japan Earthquake,” as named by the Japan Meteorological Agency, has had “a significant physical impact on the Earth.”¹⁹ Their results indicate that given the immense impact, the earthquake moved Japan’s main island of Honshu 2.4 meters to the east while simultaneously shifting the Earth’s rotational axis by approximately 10 centimeters. This impact has been described to have shortened the length of a day by 1.8 millionths of a second.²⁰ Scientists have noted that due to precautions and the establishment of an extensive network of sensors after the 1995 tremble in the city of Kobe, much more physical detail and data on the earthquake is available for future scientific improvements that can better predict and mitigate the impacts of such disasters.

Aside from the scientific damage reported, the physical damaged was apparent across the north-eastern region of Japan as cars, ships, homes and whole buildings were destroyed. Within hours of the first earthquake the death toll reached the hundreds with multiple aftershocks. Furthermore, the tsunami increased the number of reported deaths, injured and missing people dramatically. Extensive and severe structural damage was seen throughout north-eastern Japan as thousands of building, roads, and railways were destroyed and fires and floods damaged many more areas. Prime Minister Naoto Kan described this event as “the toughest and the most difficult crisis for Japan” since World War II.²¹

¹⁹ Farivar, Cyrus. “Quake shifted Japan by over two meters.” Deutsche Welle, 14 March 2011.
Tsunami Destruction

Despite the heavy destruction and rising damage caused by the initial earthquake shock, a series of aftershocks triggered a monstrous 7.3-meter tsunami, with waves reaching heights of 40.5 meters, striking the Fukushima prefecture. The impact of this tsunami resulted in Japan’s worst nuclear accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Full meltdowns were experienced at reactors 1, 2, and 3 when the earthquake and tsunami knocked out the cooling systems thus causing the operating reactors to overheat and discharge radioactive material into the atmosphere. Over the course of a couple of days two explosions were seen at the nuclear plant near the zone of the earthquake. The first occurred at reactor No. 1 and the second occurred at reactor No. 3, both were a result of explosive hydrogen gas that reacted because of overheated reactor cores. As a result of the blasts and radioactive contamination, numerous people have been displaced and the number of missing or unaccounted for individuals continues to rise.

The aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami continues to impact the lives of the residents and survivors as Japan heavily relies on nuclear power and as a result of the nuclear meltdown many of the country’s nuclear reactors are to remain closed until further directed. This closure has resulted in thousands of residents being left without power and electricity. Difficult conditions have hampered rescue efforts and made delivery of supplies much more challenging as those who survived and reside in the impacted areas are left to wait to be rescued while enduring extreme deprivation.

Domestic Response

Soon after the earthquake and tsunami, the prime minister formed an emergency response team that quickly pushed the Ministry of Defence to deploy 110,000 Japanese Self-Defence Force troops and 28,000 National Police and the Fire and Disaster Management Agency officers. In addition to rescue efforts, $50 billion was allocated for debris removal, temporary housing, and restoring infrastructure to quickly alleviate the immediate effects of the disaster. The Japanese Government proactively appealed to volunteer agencies, like the Japanese Red Cross and the Japan Civil Network for Disaster Relief in East Japan, as well as foreign countries for help.

The government’s response to the nuclear crisis, however, was lacking. The government evacuated 200,000 citizens that lived about 20 km from the Fukushima plant but cooling efforts had to be stopped since the amount of radiation was increasing at a frantic rate. The lack of leadership left a few courageous workers and soldiers behind to try to handle the situation for the greater good.

Despite distraught emergency responses to the impacts of the earthquake, Japan had worked to improve its crisis management system after the Kobe earthquake in 1995, Japan’s last major earthquake. Japan adopted stricter building codes, implemented tsunami warning sirens, and built 45 feet high seawalls along 40% of the coastline. Japan also regularly

---

communicated with its citizens to teach them about earthquake safety by providing earthquake drills and information about evacuation centers.

Japan’s Emergency Response Forces

Japan, since it is especially prone to natural disasters, has established a comprehensive 3-tier system of emergency response on the national and local level. At the very top of the pyramid, the Central Disaster Management Council (CDMC) serves as the chief national disaster response team. Comprising the prime minister, the Minister of State for Disaster Managements, and other experts in the field of disaster relief, the CDMC analyzes daily data from cosmetology stations around the nation and executtively implements countermeasures accordingly. More specifically, the CDMC’s primary function is to carry out Japan’s Basic Disaster Management Plan and Earthquake Countermeasure Plans when emergencies arise. Once convened, the CDMC may coordinate plans with not only the local police/fire departments, but also special emergency response forces under its command. These emergency response forces then serve to carry out the plans determined by the CDMC.24

Japan Self-Defense Forces (SDF)

Established in 1954, the Self-Defense Forces (SDF) is Japan’s main defense force under the command of the Department of Defense. Their duties include not only military defense of Japan but also emergency relief operations and supply aid. When disaster strikes, local municipal mayors and prefectural governors may request the Minister of Defense for dispatch of SDF forces; in cases when immediate dispatch of SDF units are necessary, the Minister of Defense may request for an “exceptional” dispatch of SDF troops, bypassing the request system. Concurrently on the national level, the Nuclear Disaster Countermeasures Headquarters and the Earthquake Disaster Warning Headquarters may request the SDF. Once dispatched, SDF units utilize airborne, land, sea vehicles to transport supplies, move bodies, provide rescue ops, etc.25

Emergency Fire Response Teams (FDMA)

Under the command of the Fire and Disaster Management Agency, the Emergency Fire Response Team (FDMA) serves to provide disaster relief during times when local fire brigades lack the necessary manpower and equipment to combat fires. Split into multiple teams (Firefighting, Rescue, Emergency, Logistical Support, Special Disaster, Special Equipment, Air Squadron, and Marine Squadron), the FDMA units are stationned all throughout Japan and are registered to local fire brigades. To date, there have been 2800 FDMA teams added onto 15% of Japan’s local fire companies.26


Japan Coast Guard (JCG)

Similar to Marine Squadron (FDMA) teams, the Japanese Coast Guard (JCG) specializes in maritime search and rescue operations. Although it possesses special jurisdiction over sea-vessel accidents, the JCG collaborates heavily with local police and firefighting units to cover as much open water as possible. JCG teams are highly specialized for maritime rescue, and have at their disposal helicopters for aerial rescue ops and scuba units for deep-water recovery. In addition to their role as maritime emergency rescue units, the JCG also works to educate the public on the dangers of the sea.  

Japan Medical Association Teams (JMAT)

While the SDF, FDMA, and JCG units are rescue and supply orientated, the Japan Medical Association Teams (JMAT) specialize in providing medical aid after survivors are rescued. Conceived by the Japan Medical Association’s Committee on Emergency and Disaster Medicine, JMAT has grown to over 230 teams stationed around Japan. JMAT often set up in evacuation sites, local clinics and hospitals to provide first aid treatments to those in need. If need be, doctors on the teams may write their prescription of treatment on tag cards which are then transported with patients to larger hospitals away from the disaster zone.

Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS)

The Japanese Red Cross Society (JRCS) exists as one of the oldest relief groups in Japan. Since 1888, the JRCS has grown in size to include almost 500 response teams with approximately 7000 medical staff. Their rich history of medical and disaster relief includes the Niigata Chuetsu earthquake (2004) and theUsu volcanic disaster of 2000. Similar to JMAT, the JRCS works primarily within relief shelters and evacuation sites to provide medical attention to wounded survivors. Specifically, the JRCS has the invaluable role of collecting, transporting, and distributing blood to makeshift surgery stations and other medical centers around the disaster zone.

Questions to be Addressed

1. What are the damages, both domestically and worldwide?
2. How can the committee address damages in terms of resource allocations?
3. How can the committee address the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant leak?
4. What damages can be prevented or mitigated?
5. How can the committee ensure that Japan is better prepared for future disasters?
6. What infrastructure and economic investments must be made to mitigate damage from future earthquakes?

---

Topic B: Foreign Aid and Relations

Introduction

Immediate and lasting damages from the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami have been unprecedented. The effect of this 9.0 magnitude earthquake and the subsequent tsunami have been not only felt in Japan’s mainland, but also around the world as alerts were put in place for Chile, Hawaii, Alaska and other regions along the Pacific. The widespread impact of this earthquake has resulted in substantial international support, as scientists and rescue teams from around the world traveled to Japan to study and assist with rebuilding. Hundreds of foreign governments and organizations have offered assistance to Japan as the effects of this catastrophic event surpassed all estimates and death, destruction, and chaos plagued Japan. This committee will thus analyze and determine what affect this catastrophic event had on foreign aid and relations.

Historical Background

Japan, known for its earthquake prone nature, has faced similar damages before, but never at this magnitude. Following the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, Japan has immediately seen an influx of support and assistance from foreign countries and international organizations. The Japanese government has requested the assistance from foreign parties in the form of search and rescue teams. Shortly after the natural disaster, the Government of Japan (GOJ) declared a state of emergency and began directing rescue operations. All the ministries and department of the GOJ, local offices of disaster response, and experts related to the disaster were called to aid in addressing the issues at hand. In efforts to address the issue effectively and efficiently, the GOJ has reached out to experts and leaders from other countries including US President Obama, French President Sarkozy, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

Foreign Government Response

Along with the domestic efforts being made by the Government of Japan, national experts and domestic organizations, Japan has received countless messages of support and condolences following the 2011 Tohoku Earthquake and Tsunami. Numerous international leaders offered assistance immediately after hearing of the first impact made on 11 March 2011.

Commonwealth of Australia

Australia’s search and rescue team was one of the teams directly requested from the Japanese government to aid with disaster relief. As such, the Australian government has offered their on-going support and aid. Australia has thus far sent their 72-person search and rescue team, sniffer dogs, a wide-body C-17 military transport (which will provide airlift support, help move fresh water to those in need, and aid in mobilizing Japanese troops and equipment to the quake-

---


zone) and has offered field hospital and victim identification specialists.\(^{32}\)

**Dominion of Canada**

Canada’s search and rescue team was one of the teams directly requested from the Japanese government. The Government of Canada has expressed their deepest condolences to the people of Japan and has offered assistance on whatever is necessary. Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon announced that Canada is offering chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) technical expertise and equipment in response to earthquake and tsunami-stricken Japan along with help from the 17-member Disaster Victim Identification team, Canadian Forces assets, Government of Canada relief stocks, and emergency medical and engineering capabilities.\(^{33}\)

**People’s Republic of China**

Immediately after hearing that the north-eastern coast of Japan was hit by an earthquake and tsunami, the Chinese government mobilized its forces to begin outbound humanitarian emergency relief operations. The initial stage of these operations included sending relief materials such as blanket, tents, and emergency lights to the earthquake and tsunami-hit areas in Japan. The Chinese Ministry of Commerce (MOC) also pledged that China would provide 20 million Yuan of emergency humanitarian aid to Japan.\(^{34}\)

Chen Zu has volunteered whatever medical aid needed to Japan at moment’s notice and China has offer full solidarity and willingness to offer further aid.

**New Zealand**

New Zealand was another one of the teams from whom the Japanese directly requested aid in the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami disaster. New Zealand generously sent a 65-personnel search and rescue help team along with 15 tonnes of rescue equipment and monetary donations to the Japanese Red Cross.\(^{35}\)

**Republic of Korea**

The Japanese also directly requested aid from South Korea in the aftermath of the earthquake and tsunami disaster. Following this request, a small advance emergency rescue team including rescue dogs arrived in Japan a day after the initial earthquake impacted the north-eastern coast. Two days later an additional 102-person rescue team arrived in the Fukushima region aboard three air force C-130 planes and 100 more rescue workers are on standby to deploy to Japan.

**United States of America**

The United States proves to be Japan’s strongest ally, as it is one of the first nations to reach out and offer assistance following the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami disaster. As such, it was one of the initially requested teams to aid with disaster relief and response by the Japanese government. Both President Barack Obama


\(^{34}\) “Flight delivering China’s humanitarian assistance to Japan takes off from Beijing.” English News, 14 March 2011.

and Vice President Joe Biden have sent statement of condolence and offered whatever aid necessary to the Japanese people. Washington is prepared to provide any additional help requested and the United States embassy in Tokyo has distributed an initial sum of US$100,000 for immediate disaster relief assistance. The United States launched a comprehensive military assistance operation, Operation Tomodachi (“friendship” in Japanese), headed by the U.S. Marines to aid in the aftermath of the disaster. The US Agency for International Development has sent two search and rescue teams (the Urban Search and Rescue California Task Force 2 and Virginia Task Force 1) which comprise of 150-personal and 12 rescue dogs trained to detect survivors to aid in disaster relief in the most affected region of Sendai. Along with the aid from Washington, countless other officials have extended their support and assistance as California Governor Jerry Brown directed that resources be made available to the Japanese government.36

**United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**

On 13 March 2011, a British rescue team put together by the Department for International Development arrived in Japan to assist in the search of survivors of the earthquake and tsunami in the affected region. The search team consists of 59 search and rescue experts, 4 medics, 2 sniffer dogs, and 11 tonnes of equipment and supplies. This particular rescue team, the UK International Search and Rescue (ISAR) team, will serve a vital role in disaster response as it is one of only 17 world classified “heavy teams,” that travel with their own specialist lifting, cutting and digging tools.37 Along with the aid provided to help address the aftermath of the destruction, UK leaders are working to help identify whether any of the 17,000 Britons living in Japan were in the affected region.

**Additional Foreign Response**

Along with the countries listed, hundreds of other foreign governments and organizations have offered support for the Japanese people and extended assistance in relief efforts. To date the Japanese government has received offer of assistance from over 90 countries and has accepted assistance based on assessed need, with the focus on specialized urban search and rescues teams as well as medical teams.38

**Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Response**

Various non-governmental organizations got involved in the initial relief operations as they offered their support through monetary and supply donations. These organizations included religion based groups such as the Jewish Federation of North America, the Roman Catholic Church, the United Methodist Committee on Relief, the Disciples of Christ Church, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, along with many others. Various other donor and volunteers include UNICEF, Samaritan’ Purse disaster relief team, volunteer medical assistance teams

---


from Canada, corporations (such as Wal-Mart, JPMorgan Chase, AT&T, Samsung Group, Delta Air Lines), various international Red Cross societies (including Red Cross Society of the Republic of China, Philippine National Red Cross, Canadian Red Cross, US Red Cross), and private donations from hundreds of people such as actor Jackie Chan, Softbank CEO Masayoshi Son, and baseball player Ichiro Suzuki.

Japanese Aid Requests

Immediately after the initial shock of the earthquake and tsunami that hit the Honshu region of Japan, the Government of Japan requested only a handful of foreign search and rescue teams to aid with disaster response. Of the 68 search and rescue teams from 45 countries that offered assistance to Japan, Japan made a request for aid from Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, United Kingdom, Canada and the United States.

The Government of Japan has also requested, through the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), that the International Charter on Space and Major Disasters be activated in order for satellite imagery of the affected regions be successfully shared among rescue teams.39

Current Foreign Relations

During the Kobe earthquake, the Japanese government refused help from other countries because of their concern with language issues. This decision, however, did not show to benefit them and hence they sought to strengthen their foreign relations, especially with the United States, after the Kobe earthquake. As such, in the aftermath of the Tohoku earthquake, Japan has been open to aid from other nations.40

The United States has grown to become Japan’s biggest ally. Over the past few years, they have worked together on security strategies to defend against increasing Chinese and North Korean aggression. Because of constant U.S. support, Japan’s approval of this security relationship stands at 75%. Japan, like many other nations, heavily relies on foreign oil and, as such, it relies on the United States protection of their sea-lanes to transport this vital natural resource.41

Japan’s relationship with China, however, is not as strong. In 2010, there were territorial disputes over the Senkaku/Diaoyu islands. This disagreement with China made Japan closer with other Asian nations that were also becoming wary of the growing Chinese influence. Because of this, there have been many anti-Japanese protests in China of which the Chinese government is hoping to quell by improving their relationship with Japan.42

Japan and Russia also face a territorial dispute. Russia has occupied Japanese lands since World War II. Even though this dispute is still ongoing, Japan needs Russia for its large supply of liquefied natural gas, especially in the face of decreased nuclear power capacity. The use

www.disasterscharter.org/web/guest/home

41 “Japan-United States of America Relations.” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, n.d.
www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/
42 “China-Japan Relations.” Lowy Institute for International Policy, n.d.
www.lowyinstitute.org/issues/china-japan-relations

Japan and South Korea have had many territorial and historical disputes in the past. These disputes, however, have not stopped them from getting closer as both nations are wary of China’s relations with North Korea. China has supported North Korea even though they have shown active aggression towards the South Koreans, as shown through their attack on a South Korean warship in 2010.\footnote{“Japan-Russia Relations.” Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, n.d. www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/russia/index.html}

Because Japanese culture cares strongly about girī, giving selflessly, Japan has been known for its generosity towards developing nations in Asia, especially Indonesia and the Philippines. The world will not hesitate to give to Japan in their time of need.
Past UN and International Action

Despite Japan’s differences with other nations, many different countries have come to Japan’s aid since the earthquake hit on 11 March. At least 91 countries and 9 international organizations have come to Japan’s rescue. Out of all these donors, Japan’s biggest supporter during this disaster has been the United States.

This assistance included sending 75,000 individuals, radiation experts, and 25 navy ships. Apart from the operation, the U.S. also gave Japan blankets, food, and sniffer dogs. Out of all the other countries, the U.S. by far spent the most helping Japan. Operation Tomodachi alone cost $90 million.

A Chinese representative said that they “will continue to provide necessary aid to Japan as required by the Japanese side” even though there have been disagreements over territory. After this statement, China sent a search-and-rescue team made up of 15 members, 2,000 blankets, 900 tents, and 200 emergency lights.

Questions to be Addressed

1. What further aid is needed?
2. How can Japan strengthen its relationship with China to receive further assistance?
3. What are the priorities in aid requested? (i.e. physical supplies, monetary support, or military assistance?)
4. What are the priorities in terms of recovery actions (i.e. rescue missions, response to the nuclear crisis, reconstruction, etc.)?

Bloc Positions

Asia

Many Asian countries have responded to the Japanese request for aid in reliefs. Because of their proximity, Eastern Asian countries were quick in organizing rescue teams, which departed for Japan within three days, bringing along with them tons of supplies. Nations, that includes China, India, Indonesia, and South Korea, all sent rescue specialists and medical teams to Japan. They not only supplied blankets, drinking water, instant food, and power supply system, but also provided financial assistance to disaster relief, ranging from US$300 million to US$900 million.

Western Europe and the United States

While Britain, Germany, France sent out rescue teams, heavy lifting equipment, and air carriers, they also offered nuclear specialists. The United States launched a military response “Operation Tomodachi (Friend)”, which includes dispatching a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier, 145 Chemical and Biological Incident Response Force personnel and 18,000 personnel to the

---


Iwate prefecture. However, their activities were limited to 80km away from Fukushima to avoid radiation exposure to American troops. On the other hand, US has ranked top in donations to the Tohoku Earthquake by ¥3 billion. Besides that, UK, France, Switzerland have also donated around ¥700 million to disaster relief.

**NGOs and Corporations**

Other than supports from governments all over the world, Japan also receives help from NGOs. For example, the Japanese Red Cross responded to the earthquake within the first few hours by distributing food, emergency kits, and blankets. They not only provided medical treatments and shelters, but also emotional support. Many technology companies also participated in helping Japan to recover. China’s Alibaba.com initiated a program that allowed millions of users to buy supplies for earthquake relief with shipment fee covered by Alibaba.com. In Japan, electronics companies like Mitsubishi, Panasonic, and Sony not only donated cash, but also distributed their products for free to the earthquake victims.

---

