



STATEMENT OF SOLIDARITY

「日本の人々とともに」

“We stand as one with the people of Japan”

TOKYO, 21 MARCH 2011 - In every corner of the globe, from the mountains of Nepal to the streets of New York, the women and men who comprise GCAP – the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, the world's largest network of anti-poverty coalitions – have been touched by the images of destruction from Japan and the human stories that lie behind each fact and photo.

We stand united with the people of Japan as they grapple with disasters of mind-boggling proportions. Our thoughts and prayers are with our Japanese colleagues, their friends and families. Our condolences are with each family that has lost a life or lives in uncertainty about the fate of their loved ones. We feel for the mothers and fathers who worry about the potential impact of radiation released from the Fukushima nuclear plants.

The images of devastation are indeed staggering: a young woman sits crying among the rubble of a town that has been reduced to debris, a fishing vessel sits on a rooftop, masked rescue workers carry a shrouded corpse from a collapsed building. Together we cry with hope as an 80-year old woman and her grandson are rescued nine days after their home collapsed around them.

As Japanese and their friends across the globe alike digest the impact of a tsunami and 9.0 earthquake that has shaken the Japanese nation to its core, we must take a moment to reflect and share information about how best to assist the recovery.

International Solidarity

The Japanese government is perhaps uniquely placed to deal with crises of this magnitude. Japan rebuilt after the 1995 Kobe earthquake and Tokyo has generously contributed money and expertise to disaster relief efforts from Haiti to Pakistan.

Yet no country should have to face a disaster in isolation. 128 countries – including many which are themselves impoverished and underdeveloped – have offered assistance to Japan.ⁱ More than 30 international organisations are also working in partnership with Japan and local non-profit groups to aid the recovery. At GCAP, we commend the way in which the nations of the world can come together in a moment of suffering and crisis, but we can not help but wish that our political leaders showed the same resolve each and every day when confronting the poverty and environmental crises that afflict our planet.

Contributing to the Recovery Effort

Individuals and groups that wish to assist relief and humanitarian efforts are encouraged to support Japanese organisations that have local expertise. In-kind donations are discouraged as they may strain the limited distribution resources of relief groups on the ground. Financial donations may be made to the [Japan Platform \(JPF\)](#) or [a relief fund operated by JANIC, the Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation](#). More details can be found on the GCAP website, www.whiteband.org.

Next Steps

As Japan moves from the initial stage of disaster relief towards reconstruction, while simultaneously working around-the-clock to prevent additional fallout from Fukushima nuclear reactors, we wish to encourage the Japanese government and world leaders to consider the following:

1. Full Transparency and the Right to Information

Japanese citizens, and indeed people across the globe, have a right to accurate and prompt information regarding the public health and safety ramifications of damage to the Fukushima nuclear reactors. We call on the Japanese government to make every effort to fully update the public as information becomes available.ⁱⁱ

2. Adequate Provision of Emergency Services

While the logistical challenges posed by a disaster of this scope are substantial, the Japanese government and international community have a responsibility rooted in international and humanitarian law to rapidly provide water, food, medical care and other essential services to the survivors.ⁱⁱⁱ In particular, relief and recovery initiatives must undertake additional efforts to assist the most vulnerable, including the elderly, disabled, foreigners who may be isolated due to language and cultural barriers, women and children.

3. Monitoring and Accountability

Global and local civil society have a responsibility to monitor international inflows of aid and domestic relief allocations to ensure that funds reach the intended beneficiaries and projects are effectively implemented. The Japanese government and aid agencies must fully support such monitoring efforts.

4. Post-Disaster Assessments

In order to prevent future disasters or mitigate their impact, the United Nations should hold hearings to assess the following, taking into account lessons from Japan:

- the safety of nuclear power
- links, if any, between these natural disasters and climate change^{iv}

In Solidarity

To the people, nation and government of Japan, we say “You are not alone!”. To those who strive to assist the survivors as well as to bury the dead, we are with you. From Australia, Chile, China, Haiti, India, Indonesia, New Orleans, New Zealand, Pakistan, Russia, Sri Lanka and Turkey – to name just a few places -- our mothers and daughters, fathers and sons, sisters and brothers know calamities all too well. We share the pain and suffering of your country and people. Stay strong. We are with you.

About GCAP: The Global Call to Action Against Poverty challenges the structures and institutions that perpetuate poverty. More information at www.whiteband.org.

Media Contacts

Nehmi M. Klaassen Amsterdam, GCAP Media Officer nehmi.klaassen@whiteband.org	Masaki Inaba Tokyo, GCAP Japan (Ugoku/Ugokasu) +81 90 264 8110 masaki.inaba@gmail.com	Michael Switow Singapore, GCAP Global Council +65 9070 1724 switow@gmail.com
--	--	---

-
- i ["Factbox: Japan disaster in figures" \(Reuters, 19 March 2011\)](#)
- ii “Japan’s Tragedy – Tohoku Earthquake and Fukushima Nuclear Plants: Japanese are not informed of the truth,”
Takeichi Saito, Takeichi Saito, Representative, Iwanai Nuclear Plant Study Group (PLACE LINK ON GCAP WEBSITE)
- iii [“The Agenda for Development”](#) (United Nations; section on [“Humanitarian Issues and Development”](#))
- iv [“Global warming may bring tsunami and quakes: scientists” \(Reuters, 17 Sept. 2009\)](#)
[“Learning from Japan: Promoting Education on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction” \(The Brookings Institution, 14 March 2011\)](#)