Address by H.E. Mr. Yoshihiko Noda,
Prime Minister of Japan, at Seoul Nuclear Security Summit
March 27, 2012

1. Morning Session
(Introduction)
Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for giving me the opportunity to speak.

A little over a year has passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake. I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the countries worldwide for the heartwarming encouragement and support kindly rendered to us. From this encouragement and support we drew great courage, and the reconstruction is now making steady progress in the affected areas.

This accident, while caused by a natural disaster, also provides a number of findings and lessons useful for preparations against an incident caused by man, such as the one triggered by a terrorist attack against a nuclear power plant.

Let me elaborate now on measures to be taken inside Japan and our cooperation in international efforts, saving the lessons learned from the accident at TEPCO’s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant for the luncheon session.

(Internal Measures to be taken to Strengthen Nuclear Security)
In light of the accident, we will fundamentally strengthen domestic nuclear security measures, with the Nuclear Regulatory Agency, to be newly established, having a central role in the system. I would like to introduce some of these new measures at this session.

First, we will overcome the vulnerabilities in our nuclear facilities that were exposed in the recent accident.
During the accident, it became evident that total loss of power, including D/C power supply, is something that threatens the safety of the entire nuclear facility. This type of situation had not been adequately anticipated. We will augment power supplies and reinforce vulnerabilities in the power supply system. These measures will enhance preparedness against potential terrorist attacks as well.

Additionally, in our efforts to bring the accident under control, workers had to battle higher than expected radiation levels. In order to allow rapid response even in a high-radiation environment, Japan will build up a larger stock of equipment such as
radiation-shielded vehicles, survey meters, and radiation protection suits.

The accident also revealed that training for on-site personnel had been insufficient, and demonstrated the importance of having not just the hard tools, such as necessary materials and equipment, on hand, but also the soft tools, such as trained and knowledgeable people. In particular, effective on-site coordination among various organizations is vital. Japan will strengthen its response procedures and inter-agency coordination manuals, and carry out rigorous training. We will also conduct additional joint field drills between police forces and divisions/regiments of the Ground Self-Defense Forces (GSDF), as well as between the Japan Coast Guard and the Maritime Self-Defense Forces (MSDF).

Next, we will strengthen our special counter-terror security measures. First, from the perspective of strengthening the manned guard structure, we will increase the number of armed security personnel and strengthen the system of patrols. While maintaining respect for personal privacy, we will also continue to examine our system to determine the trustworthiness of persons at nuclear facilities. Second, with regard to improving the protection of facilities and security equipment, we will introduce redundancies in central alarm stations and enhance protective measures for important equipment outside of inner areas, among other measures. Third, with regard to information security, to protect against cyber attacks, we have strengthened measures to block the computer systems of nuclear facilities from outside networks.

(Co-operative Efforts to Strengthen Nuclear Security Worldwide)
Turning to our efforts to enhance nuclear security worldwide, one should note that nuclear security, like non-proliferation and disarmament, cannot be achieved through the efforts of one country alone. International co-operation involving close coordination among all relevant countries is essential to avert the risk of theft from countries with weak protection for use in terrorist acts against other target countries.

Future research and development, should progress be made in nuclear detection and forensics technologies, will also contribute towards the advancement of nuclear non-proliferation efforts.

Related to this, the nuclear development programmes of Iran and North Korea are matters of grave concern. North Korea’s launch of a missile under the guise of “a satellite”, as recently announced, is against the non-proliferation efforts of the international community and would be a violation of relevant UN Security Council
resolutions. As such, the international community strongly urges North Korea to exercise restraint and cancel the launch.

In order to lay the groundwork for promoting international co-operation in the area of nuclear security, Japan commits itself to the following three co-operative efforts. First, we will expand human and material assistance to developing countries. In particular, through our “Integrated Support Centre for Nuclear Non-proliferation and Nuclear Security” established in late 2010, Japan will expand its hosting and training of human resources.

Second, we will strengthen coordination with like-minded countries. At this summit, Japan commits to lead the coordination of efforts to reduce risks in the area of transportation and to participate in a wide variety of efforts led by other countries. Japan will stand at the forefront of nations in spreading the message of nuclear security.

Third, we will strengthen co-operation with the IAEA. In addition to continuing contributions to the IAEA’s Nuclear Security Fund, Japan will share best practices in implementing IAEA recommendations with other countries.

Halting the production of weapons-grade fissile material carries great significance from the perspective of both nuclear disarmament and nuclear security. I call on all relevant countries to work for the early commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT).

(Conclusion)
This unprecedented disaster had an immense impact upon the economy and society of the affected region. However, I am confident that the humankind, having achieved its development based on science, has the capability and wisdom to take the experience of this accident and put it to use for its future development.

In order to protect the achievements of science and technology from terrorist attacks, all of us gathered here today have a responsibility to share with each other our knowledge and lessons learned from the disaster, to co-operate together, and to use our resources effectively so as to hand over today’s security and prosperity to our future generations.

Let me conclude my remarks by expressing my determination to fulfill this responsibility.
The accident at TEPCO’s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant was caused by an unprecedented natural disaster in the form of an enormous tsunami, while arguments regarding nuclear security relate to a “man-made accident”, such as in the form of a terrorist attack upon a nuclear facility.

Further examination of the complementary nature of measures for nuclear security and safety is required, but there are legitimate common lessons that can be extracted regardless of what the original cause of a nuclear accident may be.

(Three Lessons Learned)
The technical points for reconsideration and the lessons learned are wide-ranging, but I would like to take this opportunity to share with all of the leaders here three important lessons. These are warnings relevant not only to an accident caused by a natural disaster but also to an accident that originates from other events, such as a terrorist attack upon a nuclear facility.

The first is the importance of preparing for unanticipated risks. In order to develop a response plan in preparation for future crises, it is necessary to make a series of “anticipations” based on a certain set of assumptions. However, if a certain anticipated risk level is firmly recognised as the worst possible scenario, then the flexibility to deal with accidents that exceed the anticipated level is lost.

The accident at TEPCO’s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant was precisely one of those cases. Prior to the earthquake, the highest anticipated tsunami wave level was a little over 5 meters, but the actual height of the tsunami that struck exceeded 15 meters. Storing back-up generators and pumps in places that were ultimately submerged by the tsunami when it struck, failure to anticipate an accident as severe as one involving damage to the reactor core, the confusion seen in the process of evacuating the residents – all of these were the product of naive anticipations.

Once a nuclear accident occurs, regardless of its cause, the consequence is wide-ranging with long-term negative impacts. As such, a thoroughly prepared contingency plan based on the premise of preparing for the unanticipated risks is necessary.

The workings of nature are beyond human comprehension, but there is also no limit to
human imagination. We should keep in mind that the man-caused act of sabotage will test our imaginations far more than any natural disaster.

The second is not to treat lightly the details on the ground. In the course of responding to the accident, although emergency power supply vehicles had been secured, they were prevented from getting to the scene by traffic jams and impassable roads damaged by the earthquake. Even once they had arrived on-site, incompatible plugs and sockets prevented them from being connected. Then no one present on the site could operate the vents manually under high radiation levels. These kinds of problems occurred one after another on the ground.

Nuclear disasters are a battle against time. If all power is lost, in less than the span of a day the core can be damaged, which can result in a major crisis. In reality, however, an unfortunately large amount of precious time was spent in establishing coordination among the police, Self Defense Forces, and other relevant actors.

I cannot help but think that if those concerned had used field drills to carefully verify exactly what should be done, and if this had been shared in advance, response to the accident would have proceeded much more smoothly.

The third is that “safety requires incessant effort.” The moment you declare that you have reached the highest level of safety, you begin to be seduced by “overconfidence” and “the myth of safety”. We must always be asking ourselves the tough question, “How will we deal with the worst case scenario?”

Unfortunately, Japan was lulled by the “myth of safety,” and to the question, “What will we do if we lose all power?” did not manage to come up with an obvious answer, “deploy emergency power supply vehicles”.

No matter what the event may be, there is never any absolute security, and there is no end to the effort to ensure safety. Every person who works towards nuclear security should take this to heart.

(Conclusion)
Whether the challenge we face is a “natural disaster” or a “terrorist attack”, the “wisdom” of the human race is tested. We must all co-operate closely and combine our wisdom, so as not to make light of nature or lose this “battle of wits” against terrorists.

Our greatest challenge in dealing with accidents and disasters is the “weathering” of
our memories. In fact, transmitting our knowledge and lessons to future generations is the most important and difficult task, and I would like to stress that it is a duty to past disastrous events that every leader must consciously undertake.

At the end of this year, in co-operation with the IAEA, Japan is planning to host an international conference in Fukushima to enhance nuclear safety around the world. We expect this conference to play a large role in the transmission of knowledge and lessons, and hope to have the participation of a large number of countries.