

PRESS RELEASE

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Ambassador Caroline Kennedy Statement on Visit to the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant

Earlier today, I visited the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Station. I am grateful to the Tokyo Electric Power Company and relevant Japanese government authorities for making this visit possible.

I was struck that more than three years after the tragic events of March 11, 2011, the destructive force of the Great East Japan Earthquake and the resulting tsunami are still visible. TEPCO and Japan face a daunting task in the cleanup and decommissioning of Fukushima Dai-ichi. Decommissioning will take years of careful planning and arduous work, under difficult conditions. Today, I was able to see firsthand these challenges, and I gained new appreciation for the dedication and determination of the workers at the Fukushima site.

Immediately following the Fukushima Dai-ichi accident, the United States—through the Department of Energy, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and other agencies—began supporting the Government of Japan and TEPCO in response efforts, decommissioning, and cleanup activities. We are committed to providing support as long as it is necessary. At Fukushima Dai-ichi, I saw examples of the assistance we provided, as well as the continuing partnerships between TEPCO, U.S. Government agencies, U.S. national laboratories, and U.S. companies. The United States Government will offer our experience and capabilities, in particular, toward the near term resolution of ongoing water contamination issues. We welcome Japan's steps toward ratification of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage which will make it easier for American and other international firms to add their expertise to Fukushima cleanup and decommissioning efforts.

Tomorrow, I will have an opportunity to visit a wind turbine and a power substation in the Fukushima Floating Wind Farm Demonstration Project. This project is one of the symbols of the Tohoku region's recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake. It is one of many examples of how the Japanese people have realized new opportunities, even in the midst of great tragedy. Such projects are creating new employment and industries, as well as potential trade opportunities. The United States looks forward to continuing a strong cooperative relationship with Japan in the energy security and clean energy arenas, in addition to our ongoing assistance in the Fukushima region.