

First response upon receipt of the IAEA  
SEISMIC SAFETY EXPERT MISSION Report on  
the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Station  
Chair, Nuclear Safety Commission (NSC) of Japan  
Atsuyuki Suzuki

20 August, 2007

1. The deepest gratitude of the Nuclear Safety Commission of Japan goes to the IAEA seismic safety review mission experts and all other competent IAEA staff for releasing its solid review report (Volume 1) in a limited time after the energetic site investigation of about three days at the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Station, Japan. The report should convey a significant message to all individuals in the country and internationally who have been concerned about the impacts of the Niigataken Chuetsu-oki Earthquake in 2007.
2. The Report states that an individual dose for exposure of the public was well below the authorized limits established by the regulatory authority for normal operating conditions, although a very minor amount of radioactive materials were released to the environment. The Report continues that every unit in operation was safely shutdown in the automatic mode while the three fundamental safety functions of (a) reactivity control, (b) removal of heat from the core and (c) confinement of radioactive materials were ensured, and concludes that safety related structures, systems and components of the plant seem to be in a general condition much better than expected for such a strong earthquake, with no visible damage. The observations are in line with the positions that the NSC made public earlier on 30 July 2007 (NSC Decision No. 2007-8).
3. Inadequate immediate actions after the Earthquake, such as the delayed information dissemination, have given the local residents in particular deep concerns about, and consequent inconvenience due to, the possible radioactive contamination in the environment. The aftermaths are reported to still remain. It is the NSC expectation that the IAEA Report be widely understood worldwide and that the reality of no environmental concerns about radiation and radioactivity be known to everybody in the nation and internationally.
4. The Report estimates that the limited damage to the safety related structures, systems and components despite the earthquake ground motions far exceeding the design basis is probably due to the conservatism introduced at different stages of the design process. The detailed evaluation is still needed. The existence of the uncertainties associated with the seismic safety evaluation is always to the NSC awareness and the new Seismic Guide authorized in September 2006 has stressed its significance. The Niigataken Chuetsu-oki Earthquake in 2007 has reassured the importance of conservatism to consider in the design.
5. The Report also notes that the potential interaction between large seismic events and full functionality of the components should be analyzed and inspected prior to restart of the safe

plant operation. This would be taken seriously, as the NSC noted the necessity of examination with no prejudgment in the aforementioned NSC Decision on 30 July.

6. A modest and unbiased learning attitude is more than important for the seismic safety knowledge of nuclear facilities. It is our nation's responsibility as a most earthquake-ridden country to share internationally the lessons learned from the Earthquake. The NSC continues its effort to improve seismic safety of nuclear facilities, with due consideration to the IAEA Report