

- His Imperial Highness, The Crown Prince Hironomiya,
- His Excellency, Mr. Anisul Islam Mahmud, Member of Parliament Honorable Minister, Ministry of Water Resources Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
- His Excellency, Dr. Han Seung-Soo, United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Disaster Risk Reduction and Water
- Prof. Gordon McBean, President, International Council for Science (ICSU)
- Prof. David Johnston, Chair of Science Committee, Integrated Research on Disaster Risk (IRDR)
- Prof. Takashi Onishi, President, Science Council of Japan

Distinguished Guests, and Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great honor to welcome you all and host the Tokyo Conference on International Study for Disaster Risk Reduction and Resilience at this Ito Hall, The University of Tokyo

As all the participants may well understand, the year 2015 is a very important year for people around the world to think about what direction mankind should take for the future. Following the 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction to be held in Sendai, Japan in coming March, the UN General Assembly will decide on post Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in September. The 21st UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21) will be convened in Paris in December to adopt a new framework to reduce emissions of green-house gasses.

This series of international conferences may be debating different issues, but they will be sharing the one grand theme: *sustainable development*. When we engage in the act of development, various types of risk inherently exist within it, deriving from issues of population, land use, economy, governance, etc. This inherent risk in the act of development may trigger crises of human security when joined by extreme natural phenomena, posing critical danger and possibly causing devastating damage to food, energy, water, and biodiversity as well as human lives. It is thus important to holistically understand the relationship between issues of human society and human security.

To make a fresh start in this very important year, 2015, it is critically important to ponder the relationship between disaster risk reduction and sustainable development at this Tokyo Conference. I would expect fruitful and productive fruitful discussions. Thank you for your cooperation.