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NATURAL DISASTER REDUCTION: EFFECTS OF DISASTERS
ON MODERN SOCIETIES

Technical session

Addendum

Disaster management in metropolitan areas

Summary of presentation by Mr. Shinjiro Mizutani, Chairman,
Aichi/Nagoya International Conference on the International
Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, 1993

1. In the metropolitan regions of many countries, infrastructure has been constructed without adequate consideration given to disaster prevention and environmental assessment. This seems to lead to severe damages caused by natural disasters and, as a result, to increase the risk of complex emergencies.

2. To confront these existing conditions and with the future state of metropolitan areas in mind, the Aichi/Nagoya International Conference 1993 was held in November 1993 under the theme of "Disaster management in metropolitan areas for the 21st century". A total of 1,100 experts from 46 countries and nine international organizations participated. Based on the reports and discussions of that Conference, and bearing in mind that the promotion of disaster prevention and risk managements in metropolitan areas should be done on the basis of an accurate risk assessment, the following measures were put forth:

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- (a) Development of risk assessment and management methods which meet the current needs and capabilities of each region and country;
- (b) Formulation and implementation of a land development project which takes regional disaster management into account;
- (c) Establishment and dissemination of an effective building code in order to ensure the safety of hospitals, schools and other important public facilities;
- (d) Enhancement of information exchange regarding disaster management, which includes disaster information and prediction of prevention technology, and the establishment of information networks on a global scale;
- (e) Disaster mitigation on lifeline systems;
- (f) Promotion of the development of self-help organizations and voluntary activities for disaster prevention, as well as strengthening their communication with public organizations.

3. Working towards the above points in terms of disaster management, especially in metropolitan areas in developing countries for the remainder of the Decade, a discussion will be held on what should be promoted and realized.

4. Taking into account the proposals made at the Aichi/Nagoya International Conference, and from the short-term as well as long-term point of view, the following proposals will be presented: (a) promotion of the development of self-help organizations and voluntary activities for disaster prevention, as well as supporting activities, to ensure the safety of important public facilities such as hospitals and schools during the short term; (b) development of risk assessment and management methods which takes into account both the natural and social environment of a region and promotion of land development planning based on such assessment; and (c) improvement of information systems with regard to disaster management, and the establishment of an information network on a global scale.

5. Also proposed is the promotion of a study to encourage disaster reduction, to be carried out by an international research team under the theme of "Risk assessment and management". An information network and centre focused exclusively on disasters is also highly important so as to utilize and disseminate the developed technology and the results thereof.
