



The 2nd Kobe University Brussels European Centre Symposium

Preface

The 2nd Kobe University Brussels European Centre Symposium, "Building Safer & Resilient Society against Mega Disaster", was held successively on September 19th 2011 at Vrije Universiteit Brussel with their kind assistance and support. This symposium was held with an intension of disseminating information on the damage and recovery from the 3.11 Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, hereinafter referred to as GEJET, to European academic communities. GEJET has shaken not only Japan but also the global society by illustrating what will happen if we were confronted with a very large scale, compound disaster that the nature can bring. Just a few days earlier, the kick-off symposium of our Brussels European Centre titled "A New Era of Japan-Europe Academic Cooperation" was launched in Brussels from 3rd to 7th of March 2011.

Holding this 2nd symposium, I would like to express my gratitude to all participants to the symposium including His Excellency Ambassador Kojiro Shiojiri, Mission of Japan to the EU, Ms Manuela Soares, Director of Environment Directorate of the European Commission, Ms Paola Albrito, Head of Europe Office of the ISDR of the United Nations and Professor Paul De Knop, Rector of Vrije Universiteit Brussel, who all expressed their concerns for the people in the disaster stricken areas and delivered a strong message for the hope of recovery and reconstruction through human strength and cooperation. I would also like to thank all the speakers who contributed to the better understanding of the disaster and shared with us what happened at the site and what is still going on in the areas.

I hope the symposium produced not only a better understanding of the facts concerning GEJET and its aftermath but also an opportunity to reconsider and search for ways to collaborate together in building a safer and resilient society against disasters.

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