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Speech on the 89th Anniversary of the Founding of the JCP

**Looking forward to a new Japan
beyond the crisis**

Disaster, nuclear power plants, and Japan's future

Shii Kazuo
JCP Executive Committee Chair
August 1, 2011

Looking forward to a new Japan beyond the crisis ---Disaster, nuclear power plants, and Japan's future

Commemorative speech by Japanese Communist Party Chair Shii Kazuo
on the 89th anniversary of the founding of the JCP
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Public coming closer to JCP position

To everyone in the hall and to everyone watching the live internet broadcast, I am Shii Kazuo, Japanese Communist Party Chair.

We mark the 89th anniversary of the founding of the JCP amid the worst postwar disaster with the nuclear power plant accident.

Nearly five months have passed since the triple disaster struck, and fresh moves toward reconstruction are seen in many places thanks to the tremendous efforts of people in the disaster-hit area. For example, fishing operations have resumed and fish markets have been reopened.

However, more than 90,000 people are still having to stay in temporary shelters, and are suffering from anxieties about their uncertain future. The dangers associated with the aftermath of the Fukushima nuclear accident are far from over. Rather, serious dangers are spreading nationwide.

I extend my deepest condolences to all the people who lost loved ones and express my sincere sympathies to the people continuing to suffer from the disaster.

The JCP is determined to do the utmost in supporting victims and promoting reconstruction, so that everyone in the affected areas can resume a safe and secure daily lives as soon as possible.

Disaster Brought Solidarity among People and Appreciation for JCP's Relief Efforts Based on its Founding Principle of Social Solidarity

People are seeking stronger social ties, breaking from individual "self-responsibility" argument

Today I want to talk about major changes which are taking place among the public at large, triggered by the March 11 disaster. The disaster has reshaped their views on politics and society, and the ways in which they lead their lives. The JCP is

responding to this worst postwar disaster in Japan guided by its founding principle that the party must dedicate itself to give relief and help provide security to the people. These efforts have aroused a sympathetic response from the general public and this has generated increased cooperation between the general public and the JCP.

In what way has this disaster changed people's political consciousness?

The NHK program "Asaichi (The first thing in the morning)" on May 30 featured the changes in women's ways of living after the disaster. The program reported that the Great East Japan Disaster caused a change in women's lifestyles and values not only among female victims in disaster-hit areas but also among women in the rest of Japan. These are some of the salient features of the changes brought about:

Views on marriage are changing. In Osaka, far removed from the disaster-hit area, people who signed up at marriage agencies to be married sharply increased. A woman in her thirties explained how her views on marriage changed. "Before the disaster, I was kind of seeking protection and comfort in marriage. But since I saw the people in the disaster area thinking of others first, I want to become someone who can protect others, not one who only waits to be protected."

There is more eagerness to help others. The program interviewed a woman who took part in volunteer activities for the first time in her life. Although she was a very reclusive person since early childhood, the images she saw of the disaster-hit area motivated her to take action. Together with her friends, she organized sending dry ice to the damaged area. She said, "Before, I was very passive and thought I couldn't make a difference, but now I believe it's important to take action."

There is more openness towards neighbors. A resident in Urayasu City in Chiba Prefecture told the reporter that for seven years since she moved there, she had not been very friendly with her neighbors. But the earthquake changed her greatly. On the day the earthquake struck, the elderly woman nextdoor helped her and her small child. Since that day, she came to think that mutual help among neighbors was essential to help assure the safety and well being of children. She began to take part in activities organized by the neighborhood association. Now, she is aware of the people who live near her. The earthquake changed her views about and relations with her neighbors.

A common thread that runs through these experiences is that we are finding the importance of establishing bonds with others. I am sure a similar change is seen where you live.