
**Speech by Charge d'affaires ad interim, HADA Tsuguyoshi at the
Grant Contract Signing Ceremony for National Disaster
Management Project**

NDMO Office, Nasilivata House 2:00 pm, 04 February 2020

Ms. Vasiti Soko Director, national Disaster Management Office,

Fiji Government Officials,

Distinguished guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good Morning, Yadra Vinaka, Namaste.

On behalf of the people and Government of Japan, it is my pleasure to formalize with the Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Infrastructure, Transport, Disaster Management and Meteorology, the Japanese Government's Grant Assistance for Fiji's National Disaster Management Office. I wish to convey my sincere appreciation for hosting this Grant Contract Signing Ceremony and

to the National Disaster Management Office, for all the cooperation which has materialized in the formalization of our assistance today.

I am very pleased to say that the Government of Japan will be providing one hundred eighty thousand Fijian Dollars (FJ\$179,968) for the procurement of nine High Frequency Radio sets for nine selected sites in Vanua Levu.

Fiji is listed as one of the countries that has a high risk of natural disasters according to United Nations World Risk Index. This fact has emphasized the need for National Disaster Management Office and its stakeholders to carefully map out strategies to navigate Fiji through challenging times brought about by natural disasters. The Government of Japan commends the commitment by the Fijian Government to collaborate with Japan in developing Fiji's first National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy, to provide a comprehensive and systematic approach to DRR for sustainable development.

In times of disasters, communication and accurate information is critical in dispatching assistance, search and rescue operations and relief efforts. NDMO conducted a recent survey of its radio communication systems in the Northern Division and confirmed the current radio communication systems untenable due to the age of the system and unavailability of parts.

The findings of this survey prompted NDMO to seek support to improve its communications system not only for times of natural disasters, but to also provide a platform to disseminate weather forecast and impending weather conditions. This information is useful for grass-root communities who rely on agriculture and fishing as a source of livelihood. Japan is committed to support Fiji's efforts in implementing its DRR policy and this project is a significant step towards realising tangible results. Last month, we formalized the Exchange of Notes for the "Stand by Loan for Disaster Recovery and Rehabilitation". This facility allows the Government of Fiji to have access to up to Fifty Million US Dollars

(US\$50million) to support disaster recovery and rehabilitation efforts. Japan has provided a multi-sectoral and disaster related assistance in Fiji and we are pleased to be working with NDMO on this crucial disaster communication initiative.

The Government of Japan has supported the initiative as it is in line with Japan's global cooperation for disaster management including the "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030", adopted at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in 2015.

It is my sincere hope that under the support of the line Ministry, that NDMO facilitate the successful completion of this project and serve its objectives for the benefit of Vanua Levu communities.

I conclude with confidence that this project will further strengthen friendship between the people and governments of Japan and Fiji.

Thank You, Vinaka Vakalevu, Dhanyavaadh.

The End.