

Chief Representative SAKAMOTO Takema Speech
for the
Signing Ceremony for Record of Discussions of
JICA-PHIVOLCS Technical Cooperation Project for Capacity
Development for Monitoring and Information Dissemination of
Earthquake, Tsunami and Volcano
JULY 16, 2024, 2:00 PM | PHIVOLCS Central Office

Honorable DOST¹ Secretary, Renato Solidum
PHIVOLCS Director, Teresito “Toto” Bacolcol

Dear Colleagues, Friends and Participants,

Magandang Hapon po sa inyong lahat!

First, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of you for having this significant event with many beloved *Kasama* and *Kaibigan*, including our Honorable Secretary Solidum.

I understand all the cabinet members are very busy preparing for the upcoming SONA² of President Bong-Bong Marcos. However, Secretary Solidum, former Director of PHIVOLCS decided to attend this milestone event for his “baby” project. His attendance is truly, highly appreciated, as it clearly shows how important and timely this new collaboration is.

I hope our various collaboration in the area of DRRM³, especially ① the recent completion of “the Project for improving Flood Forecasting and Warning System for Cagayan de Oro River Basin” with PAGASA, and ② the kick-start of this new TCP⁴ on “Capacity Development for Monitoring and Information Dissemination of Earthquake, Tsunami and Volcano” with PHIVOLCS, can be showcased as an exemplary model of our two nations’ overall partnership.

¹ DOST : The Department of Science and Technology

² SONA : State of the Nation Address

³ DRRM : Disaster Risk Reduction and Management

⁴ TCP : Technical Cooperation Project

In this regard, we are honored to recognize DOST's most trusted and reliable partner for a long period since 1970s, closely working, with the spirit of *Bayanihan* to enhance the country's resilience to various disasters.

Today, observing "National Disaster Resilience Month⁵" in the entire Philippines, it is our great pleasure to be able to sign the Record of Discussions (R/D) for the said new TCP, marking further collaboration with PHIVOLCS even in preparation for the possible "Big One."

With the signing of R/D today, it is expected this new project will be officially launched during the Asia-Pacific Ministerial Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (APMCDRR) on October 14 -17 in Manila, hosted by the Government of the Philippines this year. This new project begins at a very momentous time.

According to Risk Analysis Reports by PHIVOLCS and the University of the Philippines Diliman, and other studies, the movement of West Valley Fault may have risks of a devastating over 7-magnitude earthquake of 50,000 deaths and trillions of pesos in economic losses in Metro Manila alone.

We cannot underestimate the risks in this context, which directly affect economic losses and, more importantly, invaluable human lives. Therefore, JICA decided to further cooperate to enhance PHIVOLCS's capability in providing accurate and timely earthquake information, tsunami warnings and advisories.

Previously, JICA has collaborated on many projects with PHIVOLCS, PAGASA and other related agencies, through SATREPS⁶, Grant Aid and Follow-Up Cooperation projects. All of these aim to help agencies better monitor, analyze and share important information and warnings about earthquake, tsunami, weather, flood and more.

These have been achieved through the transfer of Japanese technical know-how, for example, in developing real-time seismic observation system and tsunami simulation

⁵ By virtue of Executive Order No. 29, series of 2017, *National Disaster Resilience Month* shall be observed for the whole month of July every year by all Filipinos through the conduct of activities relative to building disaster resilience covering disaster prevention and mitigation, disaster preparedness, disaster response, and disaster rehabilitation and recovery.

⁶ The Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS) promotes international joint research between Japanese institutions and those in recipient countries. It focuses on addressing the social needs of these countries, gaining new knowledge, and applying research to solve global issues like environmental and energy problems, disaster prevention, and infectious diseases. Also, SATREPS aims to enhance human resource development and research capabilities in recipient countries. See link for details: <https://www.jica.go.jp/english/activities/schemes/science/satreps.html>

system. Also, JICA contributed through the donation of equipment, such as seismic intensity meters and tsunami wave detectors to PHIVOLCS.

Today's new technical cooperation project will further contribute to capacity development of PHIVOLCS to enhance their skills in determining and analyzing earthquake parameters, forecasting tsunami levels with more accuracy and in a shorter period. This new project also aims to improve the quality of the advisory warnings. In this way, we expect to be able to protect the lives of thousands of people by providing enough time for evacuation in the event of natural disasters.

Also, we are excited to share Japan's expertise in estimating earthquake magnitudes and tsunami heights, enhancing PHIVOLCS's capability with innovative methodologies. In Japan, we continuously refine our estimates and forecasts using Japan Meteorological Agency's tools and techniques for data collection and seismic activity monitoring. It is our great pleasure to share such advanced know-how and tricks with Filipino friends by dispatching JICA experts from Japan.

Last but not least, while the Philippines may continue to face challenges from natural disasters, rest assured, JICA will maintain and expand our engagement through various cooperation efforts in the field of DRRM.

We are living in the same disaster-prone countries.

We are natural partners.

JICA is called "a friend closer than a brother".

"Kasama nyo kami"!

Today's new Technical Cooperation Project will address the Philippines' goal of inclusive, sustainable, and resilient development for "*Bagong Pilipinas*".

Mag Bayanihan tayo!

Sama sama tayo!

Thank you very much for your attention.

Maraming salamat po at Mabuhay.

Good afternoon to all of you.