

Panel: Building Public Confidence in Nuclear Safety (Grand Ballroom III)

Date/Time: Tuesday, February 19, 2013 / 12:30-13:45

Talking Points for: Suzuki Tatsujiro, Japan Atomic Energy Commission

- The most serious impact of the Fukushima accident is loss of public trust which has been affecting national policy debate on overall energy policy. Japan needs to improve “transparency” in policy making process to restore public trust both domestically and internationally.
- Lack of transparency has resulted in loss of public trust not only in nuclear safety but, more importantly, in overall nuclear governance in Japan.
- According to the public polling conducted by the Internet TV company (niko-nama TV) in August 2012, about 70% of the public was in favor of phasing out of nuclear power plants, including about 10% was in favor of immediate shutdown of all nuclear power plants. This reflects “deep mistrust” among the general public against government and nuclear industry.
- In order to enhance transparency, JAEC adopted new internal rules for management of its operation, and issued a statement on “Towards confidence building measures with the public,” on December 25, 2012, in which JAEC recommended four principles for improving public trust. They are:
 - Accountability of policy decision
 - Disclosure of accurate information
 - Transparency and Fairness and public participation in policy making process
 - Clear and understandable communication (for the general public)
- Besides, in its statement, JAEC recommended that the government, with collaboration with local governments and utilities, need to establish a forum where local public and stakeholders can share the information to improve transparency of policy making process and public confidence.
- Internationally, JAEC think it is important to enhance transparency of its plutonium programs. “No plutonium surplus policy” should be strictly followed so that existing stockpile should not increase further and possibly reduced first before reprocessing takes place.

* The views expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Asan Institute for Policy Studies.