

## **METI Minister Amari Released Comments One Year since Niigata Chuetsu Offshore Earthquake**

**On July 15, Minister Akira Amari of the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) released comments on the occasion of the first anniversary of the Niigata Chuetsu Offshore Earthquake of July 16, 2007. The comments were entitled “Securing Thorough Safety of Nuclear Power.”**

Amari once again expressed his heartfelt condolences for the victims killed by the quake, also pledging to do his very best to help the rest of the people who suffered damage to return to their previous way of life.

Regarding the Kashiwazaki Kariwa NPS (which was damaged by the quake and which still has its operation suspended), Amari pointed out that although much greater seismic motion was recorded than had been assumed earlier, with a fire breaking out in the transformer, the three functions that constitute the basic functions of atomic energy – stop, cool down, and confine – had been secured, and that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and others had evaluated the plant's safety functions highly.

At present, METI is carrying out strict tests of the plant's seismic safety and the soundness of the facilities. Also, the Tokyo Electric Power Co. (TEPCO), the operator of the plant, is conducting reinforcement work on the plant to improve its seismic load factor. These efforts are aimed to show the Japanese public in a visible manner that concrete efforts are being made to secure the safety of the nuclear facilities.

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