

# HIKOBAE 「ひこばえ」

A Theatrical Performance

about the Aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake

*Presented by the Permanent Mission of Japan to the UN & the HIKOBAE Project  
in association with the Stella Adler Studio of Acting*

A Play in Eight Acts (no intermission)

Performed in English and Japanese with Subtitles

Opening Remarks by H.E. Mr. Tsuneo Nishida, Permanent Representative of Japan to the UN  
Mr. Hidekiyo Tachiya, Mayor of Soma City, Fukushima Prefecture

Post-Performance Remarks by H.E. Ms. Asha-Rose Migiro, Deputy Secretary-General  
Ms. Akiko Ito, Vice-President of UN Japanese Staff Association in New York

## SYNOPSIS

In early March, 2011, Alan, an American doctor interning at Soma General Hospital in Soma City, Fukushima Prefecture, is halfway through his year-long internship. As he has been unable to get comfortable with his life and work in Soma, he has decided to return to America earlier than planned – until the magnitude 9.0 Great East Japan Earthquake and the resulting Tsunami strike.

Alan's friend, a local firefighter named Eiji, goes missing. After the tsunami, explosions begin in the Fukushima nuclear power plant. Disintegrating lifelines, frigid temperatures, and radiation invade the lives of Alan, the other doctors, patients, and nurses, including Eiji's girlfriend, Saki. Under such difficult conditions, the hospital staff are barely able to sleep, but remarkably, all are able to act with courage and conviction.

A doctor from Minami Soma City, a neighboring town whose residents were ordered to evacuate, rushes to the hospital with a boy named Reo, diagnosed with acute kidney failure. Through treating Reo, Alan starts to experience a change of heart. When the Mayor brings Eiji's coat, found near the coast, the worst is feared. Then a miracle occurs...

## STAFF

Executive Producer.....Toshi Shioya (ACTORS CLINIC)

Director.....Ryosei Kajiwara

Producer: Osamu Miura, Tom Oppenheim (Stella Adler Studio), Associate Producer: Steve White (Stella Adler Studio), Screenplay: Itaru Era, Production Coordinator: Kazuki Takase

## CAST

Alan Parker (American intern at Soma General Hospital).....Adam Gerber  
Eiji Murai (Soma firefighter).....Ryohei Suzuki  
Saki Koizumi (nurse at Soma General Hospital).....Shuri  
Ken Kawazoe (Doctor from Minami Soma City).....Toshi Shioya  
Kanji Ogata (Mayor of Soma city/Director of Soma General Hospital).....Shinya Owada  
and Shinsho Nakamaru, Sachiko Matsuura, Chika, Satsuki Nakagami, Ryo Ikeda, Kazuko Sakagami, Gaku Yamamoto, Tsubasa Kikuchi, Yuta Saito, Hatsuo Yamaya

ACTORS CLINIC The Actors Clinic was founded in 1994 by Japanese actor Toshi Shioya. After gaining extensive acting experience in Japan, Hollywood, Australia, and other countries, Shioya decided to follow the advice of film producer John Chapman and create his own curriculum based on the Stanislavski system. Since then, a number of his graduates have gone on to have successful careers, and Shioya's work as a film director has received critical acclaim.

The Stella Adler Studio of Acting Stella Adler, the founder of the studio, is the sole American actor to have been coached by Stanislavski. The studio's mission is to create an environment with the purpose of nurturing theatre artists who value humanity, both their own and others, as their first and most precious priority providing art and education to the greater community. Focusing on the question of what it is to be human, their vision is to produce actors who are both artistically gifted and socially minded.

### **A Message from the Mayor of Soma City**

Soma city has decided to provide continuous support to the children who were orphaned in the events of March 11. All told, approximately 5,000 people in the coastal area were affected by the events, and 471 lost their lives. My heart bleeds for all of them, especially the volunteer firefighters who lost their lives while trying to rescue others. As the Mayor of Soma, I am deeply grateful for their work, which allowed 90 % of the population to be rescued. Ten of those firefighters lost their lives in the Isobe area of Soma City.

Those volunteer firefighters could have run away, but they could not bring themselves to leave those in need. The mother of one of the deceased firefighters, who was 37 years old, told me

that even though his children asked him to evacuate with them, he still went to the affected area to guide people to safety. He told his children, “this is my job and I cannot run away.”

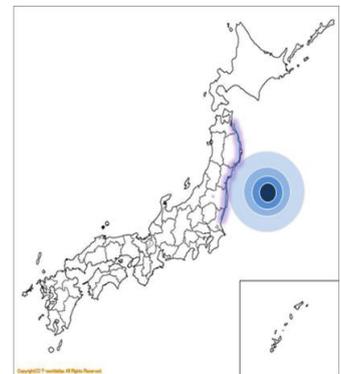
Those firefighters were very young, and their children are still small. So I wonder how we can continue to provide for them until they are 18 years old. As I cannot continue to be Mayor for the next 18 years, I am doing my best to raise funds for them and would like my successors to keep taking care of them.

(Note: Proceeds from the Hikobae Project will be donated to the Soma City Education Fund.)

## **Japan’s Recovery Efforts after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami of March 11, 2011**

### **1. Damage**

On March 11, 2011, the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred, registering 9.0 on the Richter scale. More than 15,850 people were killed, including 265 fire fighters, and more than 3,280 are still missing as of March 1, 2012. At least 6,023 people were injured and over 71,124 citizens have been temporarily displaced. 128,774 houses were destroyed and 971,840 houses were partially damaged. This was one of the most serious natural disasters that Japan, or the world, has experienced in its modern history.



### **2. Emergency Response**

As northeastern Japan has experienced a number of major earthquakes and tsunami in the past (notably 1896, 1933 and 1983), the local authorities and citizens had conducted a number of emergency drills and exercises. For example, Michinoku Alert, an exercise conducted by the Self-Defense Force (SDF) in 2008, mobilized 10,000 SDF personnel and 18,000 people in six local prefectures. This training contributed to the rapid deployment of the SDF following the March 11 quake, enabling a number of helicopters and fighter jets to conduct early reconnaissance and warning operations. Additionally, the Ground SDF 21 Regiment was deployed and conducted rescue and relief operations in Iwate Prefecture as early the morning after the quake, rescuing a community completely isolated by the tsunami. However, the scale of the disaster was beyond expectation. Within weeks, the total number of SDF mobilized in the relief efforts reached nearly 100,000, almost ten times more than the amount mobilized in the 2008 exercise.



### **3. Nuclear Accident**

In the Tohoku area (Northeastern Japan), there are four nuclear power plants with fourteen units. While ten of them were able to sustain the shock of the quake as well as the tsunami and achieve

automatic shutdown, four units (reactors) in Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station were not able to reach the state of cold shut down. Due to the loss of power in the earthquake and the crippling of the emergency diesel generators by the subsequent tsunami, the cooling system failed to function and the core rods were exposed, leading to the core meltdown of three units. The fourth unit, which was shut down for maintenance, experienced explosions, making the situation more challenging.

On April 17, Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) announced the "Roadmap towards Restoration from the Accident at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station," which aimed to bring the levels of radiation to a steady decline and control the release of radioactive materials. In December 2011, all units of the Fukushima Daiichi Power Station reached the state of cold shutdown. The central government, local authorities and TEPCO are now doing their utmost to decontaminate the affected areas.

#### 4. International Support

After the events of March 11<sup>th</sup>, Japan received offers of assistance from 163 countries and regions as well as 43 international organizations. As of February 6, 2012, 126 countries, regions, and international organizations have provided assistance, and 29 of them have sent rescue teams.



Operation TOMODACHI, conducted jointly with the US Forces, mobilized 24,500 soldiers, 24 ships, 189 aircraft. It supplied 280 tons of food, 770 million tons of water, and 4.5 tons of fuel to the affected regions.

The people of Japan will not forget the generous assistance provided from all over the world.



*Above: Some examples of countries which sent their rescue teams to the affected areas.*

#### 5. Japan's Unwavering Commitment to the World

Despite this tragedy of unprecedented scale, Japan remains committed to contributing to the world. In his speech at the UN General Assembly in September 2011, Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda expressed Japan's firm resolve to stay engaged in international affairs. Since then, Japan has announced a number of initiatives to learn from its own experiences from the disaster.



These initiatives include a series of conferences on disaster response and mitigation as well as nuclear safety. The conference jointly hosted by the Government of Japan and the International Atomic Energy Agency is scheduled to take place in Fukushima from December 15 to 17. Prime Minister Noda also outlined Japan's plan, currently underway, to send Self-Defense Forces to South Sudan. Japan has also reversed its course on

Official Development Assistance, increasing Japan's budget for international aid. Prime Minister Noda stated that:

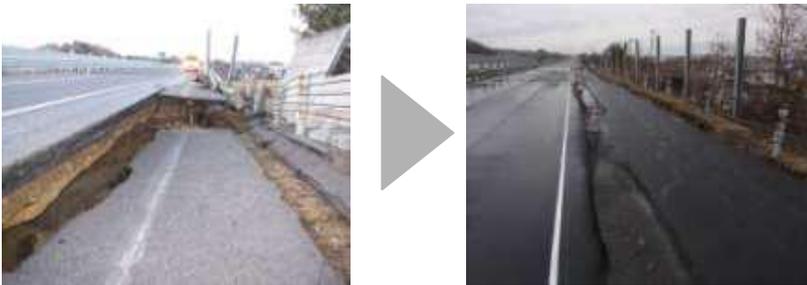
*...in its experience of the massive earthquake in March, Japan became newly aware of the importance of bonds with the people of the world... I am resolved to implement Japanese diplomacy working hand in hand with the all of the world leaders here at the United Nations, with the determination to make a substantive contribution to overcoming the challenges the world is facing and to shaping a brighter future for humanity... I believe in the strength of the Japanese people, which comes to the fore most prominently in times of crisis. I am certain that such resilience, both human and technological, which does not yield in the face of enormous difficulties, will be the very source of Japan's future contribution to the international community.*



Self Defense Force's activities in South Sudan (Kyodo News)

## 6. Recovery and Reconstruction

The image of the orderly fashion in which Japanese people coped in the days following the disaster inspired people around the world. The repair of key infrastructural damages began immediately and progressed steadily. For example, nearly half of the Tohoku Expressway, the main artery which connects Tokyo and Northeast Japan, was damaged by the earthquake. However, the traffic restriction was lifted on March 24th, following the completion of emergency restoration measures.



At Sendai Airport, cooperation between the US Armed Forces and the Japanese Self-Defense Force made early reopening possible. The entire runway was restored and in use by March 29, and passenger flights from Tokyo and Osaka to Sendai resumed operation on April 13. Since then, 96% of debris in the affected areas has been cleared, and major lifelines are restored in most areas.



The government and people of Japan are now focused on mid-term and long-term reconstruction of the affected area. The Reconstruction Agency was established on February 10, 2012. At the Agency's inaugural press conference, Minister Tatsuo Hirano emphasized that the priorities of the Agency are to focus on the reconstruction of earthquake and tsunami affected areas, rebuild communities, and address the many difficulties faced by the people, especially those of Fukushima. The area still suffers from negative perceptions and rumors which affect business, and a large number of residents cannot return to their homes due to radiation. In addition, the Agency also needs to ensure the employment of those who lost their jobs after the disaster.

Designating the affected areas as "special zones for reconstruction," the Government is introducing special measures such as a five-year tax reductions (or exemptions) to promote business in the region. The central government has requested local municipalities to submit Reconstruction Acceleration Plans and 222 are now formulated, ranging from relaxation of rules on taxes to the use of public housing.

The Government is also trying to bring more foreign investment and visitors to Japan. This is part of the "open reconstruction" policy advocated since last April. Specific measures include exemptions of visa applications for those who want to visit affected prefectures and the promotion of visits of foreigners with special expertise. As most of the agricultural, fishery and industrial products from Japan are ensured by strict standards on radiation monitoring, the government is trying to eradicate any concerns held by foreign visitors and investors to Japan.



*Video message from the Champion Soccer Team "Nadeshiko" Japan expressing Japan's appreciation to the world*

The support Japan has received from the international community is a gift stemming from *kizuna* (bonds of friendship). In gratitude, Japan will continue to actively contribute to international affairs through its official development assistance as well as other means, including lessons learned from the Great East Japan Earthquake. Japan will turn this tragedy into an opportunity to promote such global issues as post-disaster reconstruction, risk reduction, and the shift to a "green economy." Through achieving its own reconstruction, Japan hopes to offer to the world a model for addressing these challenges.