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# Foreword

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Four months have already passed since the occurrence of Great East Japan Earthquake. I would like to express my deep condolences to the many people who lost their lives in this great earthquake and also to the bereaved families. I would also like to express my sincere sympathies to everyone still living in evacuation shelters in the disaster area. The government is committed to working as one to do our utmost to support the victims of this tragedy.

The recent earthquake has had a considerable impact on all aspects of society in Japan. We have witnessed the reality that science and technology bring about tremendous influence on people's lives. In this context, we will draw lessons and reflections from this disaster, and at the same time, we bear in mind that science and technology would also be the driving force of recovery and reconstruction from the disaster. We must deepen our discussions on the future role that science and technology should play and make sure to actually carry out that role.

This White Paper is under the title of “Science and Technology to be Created and Promoted together with Society” and it looks at the relationship between science and technology and society. The relationship between them is moving closer together, and there is an increasing role that science and technology are supposed to play in order to solve various problems at home and abroad. Against this backdrop, we provide a record of the current situation and challenges in science and technology communication activities, as well as a record of the current situation and challenges regarding efforts toward mutual understanding based on dialogs, participation in the policy making process and the building of a new relationship between society and science and technology. The importance of this issue has been already discussed to some extent, but I would like to tackle it with firm understanding that it is the specific challenges for the relevant parties to take real action instead of remaining in principles and attitudes.

Currently, in the government, we are reviewing the 4<sup>th</sup> Science and Technology Basic Plan that is under development based on the profound impact that the Great East Japan Earthquake has had on society and the economy. We will continue to consider the state of science and technology policy in the future with gaining the understanding and participation of the Japanese public.

I hope that this White Paper will help the Japanese public to understand the current state of measures in relation to the promotion of science and technology. I also hope that it will become a reference for all relevant parties about their efforts in the future.

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