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FORMER U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATOR DR. DALE KLEIN  
SHARES 'LESSONS OF THREE MILE ISLAND' WITH IEEJ

TOKYO, March 31, 2015—Dr. Dale Klein, former chairman of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, told an IEEJ audience today that the 1979 Three Mile Island accident offers lessons for Japan's recovery from the March 2011 accident at Fukushima Daiichi.

Klein, who is vice chancellor for research at the University of Texas System, is also chairman of the Nuclear Reform Monitoring Committee, and independent board of advisors to the Tokyo Electric Power Company, owner of Fukushima Daiichi.

While there are important differences between the two accidents, Klein said, there are equally important parallels and lessons to be drawn. In particular, he said, Japan should guard against over-reaction, and take steps to educate the public so that regulations remain rooted in science and in reasonable appraisals of risk.

"We must understand that for the general public, radiation is frightening because it is mysterious and invisible," Klein said. "What is essential is that there is a source of information that is trusted by the public as honest and independent. And the information must be presented in ways that can be grasped by non-scientists, comparing radiation levels to experiences in their everyday lives – for example, their exposure to radiation in an airplane ride or from eating bananas."

But Klein also urged industry to do more to share information on best practices, noting that, had the operators of Three Mile Island been aware of the successful management of a similar incident at another power plant, the TMI accident might have been avoided or made less severe.

"JANSI – the Japan Nuclear Safety Institute – has an opportunity to help all the nuclear utilities to share best practices," Klein said. He also urged industry and regulators to keep an open line of communication, noting that regulatory independence need not and should not lead to isolation.

Recognizing that decisions about Japan's nuclear future must be made by the Japanese people alone, Klein noted the importance of nuclear power to energy security and the fight against climate change.

"I remain an optimist," he concluded. "I have been deeply impressed by the resilience and determination of the Japanese people. And I know that your organization will continue to play an indispensable role in conducting research and providing data, information and reports that are essential for the formulation of good policy. With the contributions that you and others are making, I have every confidence that, in the long run, Japan and its people will meet the many challenges ahead, and prevail."

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Full text of Dr. Klein's remarks may be found at:  
<http://eneken.ieej.or.jp/data/6019.pdf>

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