

*Status of Recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake:  
Establishment of Special Zones for Reconstruction and the achievement  
of the Cold Shutdown Condition of the Nuclear Reactors*

Steps taken towards reconstruction

Following the Great East Japan Earthquake of 11 March 2011, Japan is continuing its relentless efforts towards reconstruction. Such efforts are paying off. Japan is now on a steady path to recovery.

On November 21, the Government approved the third supplementary budget, totalling 12.1 trillion yen (about 1.21 trillion SA rands). On December 7, it enacted the law aimed at creating a system for designating "special zones for reconstruction." Such designated zones will enjoy preferential treatment to facilitate the reconstruction process, including special measures for drastically streamlining regulations and procedures (concerning, for example, land use and the granting of fishing rights) and tax and financial incentives (an example of which is waiving taxation for start-ups for the first five years of business). Eligible local governments that seek to be designated as a special zone will submit a reconstruction plan for government approval and implement it if approved. Special measures and incentives will be applied to both domestic and foreign enterprises based on the non-discrimination principle. The Government of Japan welcomes inward investment by foreign enterprises and visits to Japan by South Africans as partners for this "open reconstruction." This is another example where the Government of Japan is working hard with the affected local governments towards reconstruction.

Completion of "Step 2" of the Fukushima Daiichi Roadmap

Steady progress was also made in the Roadmap towards recovery from the accident at the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO)'s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. On July 19, the Nuclear Emergency Response Headquarters (NERH) confirmed that the goal of Roadmap's Step 1 - to achieve steady decline in radiation levels - had been achieved. NERH also amended the roadmap itself so as to subdivide the goal of Step 2 - to put the release of radioactive materials under control and significantly hold down radiation levels - into ten targets (categories), including the target of bringing the reactors to "a cold shutdown condition" (a condition in which (i) the RPV bottom temperature is, in general, below 100 degrees centigrade, and (ii) the

release of radioactive materials from the PCV is under control and public radiation exposure from additional releases is significantly held down). In its 22nd meeting on December 16, the NERH announced the completion of Step 2 as scheduled. The reactors at the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station has been brought to "a cold shutdown condition" and stabilized. On the same day, the NERH's Government-TEPCO Integrated Response Office was replaced by the Government-TEPCO Meeting for Medium- to Long-term Measures. This new body will formulate a mid- to long-term roadmap on which the organizations involved will base their work on the site and conduct R&D towards decommissioning the reactors. We will continue to report on the progress regularly and thus make ourselves fully accountable.