

June 15, 2011



Dear Friends,

Three months have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake struck our country. This was the largest earthquake and tsunami ever recorded in Japan and was a catastrophe that brought unprecedented devastation to the afflicted areas.

We received many warm words of encouragement and generous provision of relief from 159 countries and regions around the world. As the governor of Tokyo, Japan's capital, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to all of you for your kind actions. I also felt very proud as a Japanese to learn that the calm response of our citizens in such trying times has been highly lauded by the people of the world. The nation is now working as one for the recovery of the stricken regions and Tokyo is also doing everything in its power to support such efforts.

Tokyo suffered very little direct damage from this disaster. With regard to the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident, this is unlike the accident at Chernobyl, which resulted in widespread damages; we are not detecting levels of radioactive materials that will impact health, and the lives of the inhabitants of Tokyo are currently unaffected by this incident. It's business as usual here in Tokyo. Please dispel any concerns you may have about visiting and staying in our city as there are no problems with the water, air, food, public transport and other urban functions, and public safety here remains as high as it has ever been.

You can thoroughly enjoy the charms of Tokyo again as well. Tourist attractions such as Tokyo Disney Resort and the Edo-Tokyo Museum have resumed operations, and events such as the gala summer affair, the Sumidagawa Fireworks Festival, will be held. And as the over 50,000 restaurants in our city are open for business as before, please also find the time to enjoy the exquisite food that has delighted the palates of visitors throughout Tokyo's history.

People visiting Tokyo from abroad after the earthquake have given us strong words of encouragement, saying, "Tokyo hasn't changed a bit," "It is much safer than what I've seen and heard through the media," and "I'll let my friends know about this situation when I return home."

I hope you will visit Tokyo and Japan, and experience the Tokyo of today—a Tokyo that is no different from what it was like before. Please also see with your own eyes how Japan is taking the path to recovery, united in its efforts to overcome this tragedy. I would also be very grateful if you could then return home and inform others about the strength and vibrancy you found in our city and nation.

The people of Tokyo await you with our established spirit of warm hospitality. Feel safe about visiting Tokyo and Japan. We look forward to welcoming you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "S. Ishihara". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Shintaro Ishihara
Governor of Tokyo