

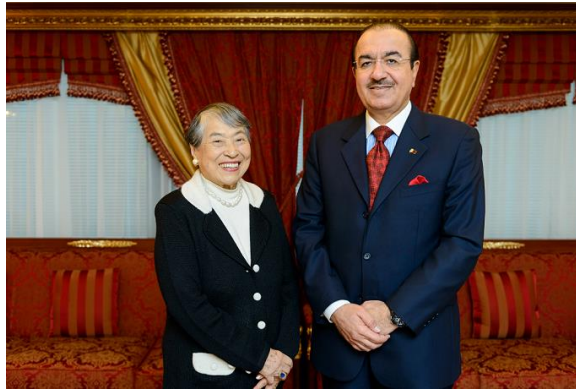


صندوق الصداقة القطري  
QATAR FRIENDSHIP FUND  
—— كاتارل فريند基金 ——

# PRESS RELEASE

## Qatar Friendship Fund to Support Japanese Women Towards Disaster Risk Reduction

- *New project will provide opportunities for women to influence disaster planning*
- *H.E. Yousef Bilal, Qatar's Ambassador to Japan, welcomes 'important' initiative*
- *Third female governor in Japan's history joins the project, pledges full support*



H.E. Yousef Bilal, Qatar's Ambassador to Japan (right), and Ms. Akiko Dōmoto, JWNDRR President (left)

A new project launched by the Qatar Friendship Fund will provide women in Japan with greater opportunities to influence the nations' disaster preparation and recovery processes, H.E. Yousef Bilal, Qatar's Ambassador to Japan, has announced.

A quarter of a million dollars has been awarded to the new initiative, which will seek to ensure that the experiences of the thousands of women affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake are reflected into future planning efforts. Ensuring women are represented in key policy-making bodies and processes (both national and international) will also be an important feature.

"Fifty-four percent of those that lost their lives when the disaster struck the East Coast of Japan in 2011 were women and girls. For those that survive such a tragedy, being able to share their experiences and contribute to a safer future is paramount," H.E. Bilal said.

"Beyond the disasters themselves, it is important to make sure that both women and men feel that they are part of the rebuilding process. In this regard, QFF can act as a bridge and an enabler. I am delighted that we are supporting this critical initiative."

The project will be managed by the Japan Women's Network for Disaster Risk Reduction (JWNDRR) and the Japan Association for Women's Education (JAWE). It is also set to benefit from the expertise and leadership of Ms. Akiko Dōmoto, the current President of JWNDRR.



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Ms. Dōmoto was governor of Chiba Prefecture in Japan from 2001 to 2009. She was the first female governor of Chiba and only the third female governor in Japanese history. Having worked closely with women in the Tohoku region after the disaster, she explained the significance of the new project and how she hopes these indispensable lessons will be learned:

“It is essential for local leaders, teachers, and families to have correct knowledge in their possession when it comes to reducing the risks posed by disasters and offering the same level of protection to all, regardless of age or gender,” she declared.

“To be effective in reducing the damage caused, injuries sustained, and the loss of precious lives, we cannot compromise. Our friends in Qatar have given us great support and encouragement, and our long-term activities will work towards cultivating leadership skills that reduce the impact of future disasters for all,” said Ms. Dōmoto.

The new project will focus on long-term policy advocacy within multilateral negotiations processes; organizing an international symposium at the 3rd UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (WCDRR) to be held in Sendai City next March 2015; training and knowledge dissemination through online outreach and gender-sensitive capacity building workshops for community leaders in areas most affected by the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake.

According to the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the most effective efforts to promote gender equality in disaster planning and recovery efforts have indeed centered on advocacy and awareness building. With women and children sometimes cut off from warnings in public places, these campaigns have proved essential. With support from the Qatar Friendship Fund, JWNDRR and JAWE are set to make a pivotal contribution towards turning these campaigns into action, both in Japan and internationally.

**ENDS**

#### **Notes for editors:**

##### **About Qatar Friendship Fund**

The Qatar Friendship Fund is a gift from the State of Qatar to the Japanese people to support relief efforts following the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake. QFF was launched by His Highness the Father Emir, Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al-Thani in 2012, and operates under the auspices of H.H. Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, the Emir of the State of Qatar. Under the direct leadership of H.E. Dr. Khalid Bin Mohammed Al-Attiyah, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, QFF is chaired by H.E. Yousef Bilal, Qatar’s Ambassador to Japan, with the support of a Japanese advisory board. The Fund aims to nurture hope for victims and offer direct assistance in a prompt, effective and sustainable manner. QFF underscores the strong friendship between the Japanese and Qatari people and, over a three-year period (2012-2014), will continue to focus on supporting the strategic priorities of child education, fisheries and healthcare.

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