Distinguished guests, participants, Ladies and Gentlemen. It is my great honor to join this online Workshop today and deliver the opening remarks on behalf of the Japanese Government.

The Trilateral Ministerial Meeting on Disaster Management by the Governments of Japan, China, and Korea launched in 2009 in Kobe, Japan. Since then, Japan hosted the Meeting for three times, including the most recent 7th Meeting that was held in July 2022 in a virtual format.

In the Joint Statement of the Ministerial Meeting, the importance and significance of trilateral cooperation on disaster management was recognized, noting the geographical proximity of the three countries and more frequent and catastrophic natural disasters that we commonly face.

It was also recognized in the Joint Statement that the three countries will give full play to the existing international and regional education and training institutions located in the three countries, including the Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), the National Disaster Reduction Center of China (NDRCC), and the Global Education and Training Institute (GETI).

In this connection, I welcome today's Workshop, organized jointly by those three institutions with the support from the TCS, as an important element of implementation for the Joint Statement.

The Asian Disaster Reduction Center (ADRC), which represents the institutes residing in Japan, was established in 1998 with the mission of
enhancing the disaster resilience of its member countries, building safe communities, and creating a society where sustainable development is attainable.

The ADRC now has the membership of 31 countries all across the Asia and the Pacific region, including Japan, China and Korea. It is located in Kobe, Japan, in response to the tragic earthquake that struck Kobe and around in 1995 and now serves as the hub of international and regional cooperation on disaster risk reduction.

The subject of Workshop today is "Tools and Technologies for Earthquake Risk Management." As we witnessed the 1995 Earthquake in Kobe and 2011 Earthquake in Tohoku, Japan is one of the most earthquake-prone countries in the world and Japanese policies on disaster risk reduction have been developed as we learn from the past earthquake disasters.

More importantly, this year marks the 100th anniversary of the Great Kanto Earthquake, which hit the Tokyo metropolitan area and caused catastrophic impact to the country. Japan has progressed its earthquake-countermeasures since then, including adoption of seismic-resistant building standards as the first of its kind in the world.

The continuous policy progress and implementation over the 100 years have made Japanese society quite resilient to earthquake disasters. It is well recognized that, in the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, majority of housing damages were caused by the tsunami, while the number of buildings collapsed by the earthquake tremor was limited after years of efforts in seismic retrofitting and enforcement of new building codes.

It was also reported in the Great East Japan Earthquake that many schoolchildren in the tsunami-affected areas in Iwate Prefecture were able to evacuate safely from the coastline, thanks to evacuation drills and disaster risk reduction education at schools, based on the past lessons.

In the Workshop today, Mr. IKEDA Makoto, Senior Researcher at the ADRC, will share Japan's experience on earthquake risk reduction, along with the other speakers from China and Korea.

I sincerely hope that today's Workshop will be a precious opportunity for increasing the understanding of existing tools, technologies and effective
practices for risk reduction among the countries prone to earthquakes. I also expect that, through this Workshop, mutual collaboration among the three institutes and the three countries will be further promoted for sharing knowledge and practices on disaster risk reduction measures with other countries.

I conclude my remarks by wishing the successful organization of the Workshop and extending my appreciation to all the speakers and the organizers, including the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat, which provided logistic and substantive support for the preparation.

Thank you for your attention.