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Good morning, ladies and gentlemen.

My name is Toshiaki Ohno with Kuribayashi Shokai Co.,Ltd. in Muroran City in Hokkaido, and I am responsible for the maintenance of oil spill response equipment and materials at No. 5 Hokkaido Stockpile Base of the Petroleum Association of Japan (PAJ) which is established in Muroran refinery of Nippon Mitsubishi Petroleum Refining Co., Ltd.

I would like to speak briefly on my impressions of participating in the exercise jointly organized last December by Saudi ARAMCO, Arabian Oil Company, and Petroleum Association of Japan, and to comment on a few where I feel that some improvement is necessary.

The image that I initially had of Saudi Arabia was that of very faithful Muslim country where the two Holly mosques are located and the world biggest oil producing country so on. But above all she had serious oil pollution damage during the Gulf War in 1991 and showed her great ability to deal with the oil spill. Therefore I was very much interested in the kind of oil spill equipment and training system in use in Saudi ARAMCO. At the same time, I was convinced that it would be a learning experience for me to participate in this exercise, seeing firsthand a world-class oil spill response system in action.

Overall, I was very much impressed by the speed of response in the joint exercise—organizing response headquarters, and simultaneously assembling experts and exchanging information on national levels. I think that I am not the only one to feel the difference compared with exercises we have ever had in Japan in terms of speed and drive in deploying equipment, vessels, and aircraft on a real-time basis, according to a realistic scenario.

In particular, the oil dispersant spraying demonstration using small air-crafts was spectacular. I got a strong impression of the level of skill and technique Saudi ARAMCO possesses.

The role of our PAJ team in the exercise was deploying oil boom in J-formation under the commander's instructions, and Saudi ARAMCO team launching oil skimmer to the concentration of the oil in the apex of the

boom.

Unfortunately, due to strong winds on that day the headquarters changed their instruction to us to survey the sea surface. Still, the exercise, starting from PAJ's oil spill equipment transport from PAJ Al-Khafji Base to oil dispersant spraying, ended in success and achieved its goals.

Thank to a kind offer from Saudi ARAMCO ,the part of exercise which we had been unable to do was postponed to the next day and we could deploy oil boom. However, the winds remained strong, making deployment oil boom extremely difficult. We also discovered the difficulty of a joint exercise, mainly caused by inadequate communication between Japanese and Saudi ARAMCO team.

This is one of most important issues that we believe must be addressed for joint exercises in the future. We felt frustrated and regretted that we were unable to take swift action due to lack of adequate communication, in another expression we could not make ourselves understood in English promptly and adequately.

Especially in inclement weather, the unexpected can happen during boom deployment, and the leader must make decisions swiftly. Also, people at the site must keep in communication while operation, and any shortfall in teamwork can lead to serious errors.

Although the problems caused by lack of teamwork applied also to the early stage of our exercises held at stockpile bases in Japan, we were able to resolve the problems through more active and frequent participation in exercises and the development of mutual trust.

In view of what I experienced, I propose that joint exercises from now on should not be limited to the deployment of equipment but include active participation, commencing with installation of equipment and materials, in order to strengthen teamwork among operators and increase communication among them.

Although our first participation in the joint exercise exposed issues that must be resolved and was far from perfect, it was fruitful in the sense that we were able to see for ourselves the level of oil spill response of Saudi ARAMCO. I firmly believe that we will be able to take the first step towards greater success.

I also believe that we must deepen our ties with Saudi ARAMCO and make greater efforts at manpower training by boosting the skill level at all bases in Japan.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge our indebtedness to the people of Saudi ARAMCO, Arabian Oil Company, and the Petroleum Association of Japan in allowing us to participate in this exercise, and to thank you all on behalf of all at the stockpile bases in Japan.

We intend to make a great effort to make use of this experience and to contribute in whatever ways we can to PAJ's oil spill response activities.

Thank you very much for your attention.