

INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP ON TSUNAMI DISASTER MITIGATION and INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON TSUNAMI DISASTER MITIGATION IN THE FUTURE, KOBE 2005

The International Workshop on Tsunami Disaster Mitigation was held on January 17, 2005, in Kobe, Japan, organized by Port and Airport Research Institute (PARI). The Workshop was followed by the International Symposium on Tsunami Disaster Mitigation in the Future under the auspices of Ports and Harbors Bureau, Ministry of Land, Infrastructure and Transport (MLIT) and PARI. The workshop and symposium was organized by the Task Committee on Storm Surge and Tsunamis under the UJNR Panel on Wind and Seismic Effects. Over 200 people including the media attended each event.

In the workshop, the urgent field surveys on the 2004 Indian Ocean Tsunami were reported and the state-of-arts of research and technologies on tsunami disaster mitigation were presented. Symposium discussions centered on tsunami disaster mitigation in the future. Recommendations from the Workshop and Symposium include:

1. Tsunami resilient communities need to be created with development of countermeasure menus on disaster mitigation.
2. A multi-disciplinary workshop should be held to develop the steps required to build a tsunami resilient community. The disciplines should include the cultural, social, economic, engineering, and other fields involved in reducing the impact of tsunamis on coastal communities.
3. December 26 should be identified as "International Tsunami Awareness Day."

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Figure 1. Speakers and Panelists of International Tsunami Symposium

INAUGURATION OF E-DEFENCE

Based on the lessons from Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, the National Research Institute of Earth Science and Disaster Prevention (NIED) constructed the world's largest shaking table facility, known as E-Defense. The Hyogo Earthquake Engineering Research Center was established on 1 October 2004, to manage research projects using E-Defense and to operate and maintain the facility.

Experimentation plays an important role in the assessment of accuracies of damage and collapse predictions, validation of the effectiveness of retrofit techniques, and verification of new design and construction methods for enhanced capacity. E-Defense has the unique capacity to experiment with life-size buildings and infrastructural systems in real earthquake conditions, and stands as a tool of ultimate verification. E-Defense should help expedite the transfer of various research outputs into the practice of earthquake disaster mitigation.

Because of its unique function to serve as a tool of ultimate verification, many countries and regions that also have strong mission of earthquake disaster mitigation have expressed interest in E-Defense; various collaborative efforts are being discussed. In particular, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan and the National Science Foundation (NSF) of the United State are negotiating an overall agreement on research collaboration between the earthquake engineering communities in the two countries. Under this scope, NIED and NEES Consortium Inc. (NEESinc), an organization that operates the integrated facilities on earthquake engineering in the US, are discussing an agreement on solid and long-term research collaboration and a new U.S.-Japan program jointly using E-Defense and NEES facilities.

NIED held its Inauguration Ceremony and Symposium on 15-16 January 2005 just prior to the 10th anniversary of Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake. More than 250 persons participated. Six Professors from Mexico, Turkey, USA, China and Japan made the invitation lectures relating with the future collaboration using E-Defense.

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Figure 2. Inauguration Ceremony of E-Defense, 15 January 2005