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**Decommissioning Nuclear Facilities**

**Japanese and German Experts to Discuss on 21 April in Osaka**

Following the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in 2011, there have been extensive decommissioning and decontamination works in the region. Serious consideration has been given to shutting down at least five of the oldest Japanese nuclear power plants. In Germany, the Krümmel Nuclear Power Plant and the seven oldest reactors were closed after the accident. Germany's aim is to disconnect its nine remaining reactors from the grid by 2022.

The need to dismantle nuclear facilities presents an enormous challenge for research and development. This issue will now be addressed at a German-Japanese symposium on 21 April in Osaka which will be attended by 150 science and business experts. It is being organised by the German Research and Innovation Forum Tokyo (DWIH Tokyo), the Technical University of Dresden, the University of Fukui and the Japanese-German Center Berlin.

At the interface between science and business, the DWIH Tokyo provides a platform for exchange between Germany and Japan on ongoing decommissioning projects, technologies for dismantling and decontamination, nuclear waste management and final disposal.

According to Prof. Dr. Horst Hippler, President of the German Rectors' Conference, "Researchers and business representatives want to discuss the areas in which research collaboration between the two countries can be stepped up and how research results can be applied more quickly and effectively in both countries."

"In Germany and Japan, it is now a matter of offering young researchers and engineers interesting and reliable prospects for research and qualification in the nuclear sector. With the imminent retirement of many key workers, Japan may face a spectacular loss of knowledge in the nuclear field in the next fifteen years. International collaboration in this field is also vital for Germany so that it can maintain its high standards of expertise in nuclear technology. The TU Dresden is very interested in advancing its research together with its Japanese partners," said Professor Antonio Hurtado, Director of the Institute of Power Engineering at the Technical University of Dresden.

"The German and Japanese experts will travel to Fukui and Fukushima after the symposium for research purposes and visit several reactors currently being decommissioned there, including Fukushima Daiichi," added Wolfgang Brenn, Head of Project Management at the Japanese-German Center Berlin. "This will also promote further networking."

The DWIH Tokyo provides a forum for German research organisations and companies performing research. It is being funded by the Federal Foreign Office and run by the German Rectors' Conference and the German Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

**The programme for the symposium**