

# This Week's Update – Japanese Nuclear Energy Policy (September 24, 2010)

GEPR Editorial Staff

1) Journalist Takaaki Ishii contributed "[At the Mercy of Politics: Safety Improvement Work at Chubu Electric Power's Hamaoka Nuclear Power Station](#)".

In May last year, then Prime Minister Naoto Kan requested shut down of Hamaoka nuclear power station of Chubu Electric Power, saying that it is very likely to be the Tokai earthquake. As a result, the Company begun safety improvement works mainly tsunami measures on a scale of 140 billion yen. He reports the present condition at Hamaoka.

2) On September 14th, Energy and Environmental Council of the Government of Japan, published "[Innovative Strategies for Energy and the Environment](#)". It determined the aim of the country to have zero nuclear power generation by the 2030s. Regarding this document, the government at first said it will "aim for decision by the cabinet council" with strong binding effect, however, on September 17th, changed it to ambiguous challenge, probably due to domestic repulsion. [c.f. Cabinet decision document "[About future energy and environmental policy](#)" (in Japanese) ]

There is less interest towards Japan due to slump of its economic power, however, switch of energy policy of a country with 3rd largest quantity of generation of nuclear in the world in 2010, drew attention.

- On September 17th editorial column, the Washington Post wrote "[Japan's zero-nuclear dream](#)". It views zero-nuclear negatively and as a "dream".

- The British Financial Times in its editorial column of September 17th "[Noda's nuclear phase-out is decisive – but not final](#)", evaluates this policy as decisive, though its handling may change with future change of government, an economical argument and so on.

3) We introduce the report published in August by Richard Armitage, the former deputy secretary of state, and Joseph Nye, Professor at Harvard University, together with CSIS. "[The U.S.- Japan Alliance](#)"

The report proposes such as use of nuclear power generation, the international joint ownership of the lessons of the Fukushima accident, and the sale of the American shale gas.