

(FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE)

Tokyo, Japan February 8, 2012 – To commemorate the Great Eastern Earthquake one year later, 500,000 people will join hands in prayer and solidarity at sunrise on March 11 along a line stretching 500 km across Northeastern Japan, announced Project HUMANBAND on Route 3.11, the organizing group founded by doctor and clinical philosopher, Masaki Kamei.

The participants will hold hands and form an unbroken strand of humanity the golden light of dawn, draped across the entire swath from northern Aomori to southern Chiba prefectures where the tsunami wreaked so much devastation one year ago. We will greet the rising sun and, connected physically and spiritually, we will offer silent prayers and sing the well-known Japanese love song for our homeland, "Furusato." We will promise anew to step forward and rebuild.

In Fukushima prefecture, so unnerved by the nuclear accident, the event will be led by journalist Mitsuko Shimomura, whose ancestors hail from the area. The participants will be joined by 50,000 volunteer photographers who will capture the day in pictures that will be pieced together to make the world's longest commemorative photograph.

The event is meant to trigger a deeper commitment in Japan to revive and rebuild the nation. By creating such a vast human connection, each individual becomes a point, each point becomes a line, which becomes a surface and onward to amassing great strength. Together we can make the impossible possible. Let us deliver a strong message to Japan and to the world: A promise of lessons to be learned; a message and a prayer for life; human connections and human bonds.

"We aim to make this event an annual one and to perhaps make it known as the modern famous route of Fukushima, and perhaps even a source of tourism in the coming future," said Shimomura, who is the director of HUMANBAND on Route 3.11 Fukushima.

Details of the project

1. At sunrise on March 11th, volunteers will join hand and hand together in Fukushima where multiple tragedies struck one year ago affecting many. Well will join hands for 33 seconds (3 x 11). During this 33 seconds, looking at the sunrise, each will offer silent prayers; prayers for the deceased to rest in peace, prayers of being thankful to be alive, and to thank for the support from Japan and around the world we received. A prayer that will be in each one of our hearts. The participants will be wearing a special sash and two types of pins, to symbolize the prayers and thoughts that each individual holds.
2. After the prayers, for 30 minutes, the volunteer photographers will be taking pictures of each individuals joining hands.
3. A joint chorus of the song "Furusato" (homeland) will be sung.
4. These pictures will be connected into one piece – the world's longest commemorative photograph.
5. Participation fee is 1,000 yen, including a special sash and 2 types of pins. To register, fill out the entry form at the website below.

For further information, visit:

<http://ikikata-jyuku.com/humanband/index.html>

<http://www.humanband.jp/>

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Attachment:

- Letter of Plea by Mitsuko Shimomura
- Fukushima Course Map
- Fukushima Course 1 & Course 2