

Top Management's Commitment and Highlights

## CSR and the Public



### CSR for a Better Society

What is the purpose of a company? My answer is that companies exist to serve society and contribute to creating a better society. A company can serve society in a number of ways, such as through its business operations and related processes, as well as through activities unrelated to business, and carrying out this role with sincerity is the essence of a company's corporate social responsibility (CSR).

If the question becomes whether a better society can be achieved solely through the CSR activities of individual companies, however, the answer would have to be no. Even regarding environmental issues, a society that is truly better cannot be realized until all kinds of organizations and each citizen, not just companies, recognize and fulfill their responsibility to society.

### Getting involved in the creation of the public community

The word "public" has been drawing renewed attention lately. Here, "public" refers to matters that are important to everyone. The post-war model of Japanese society was one in which individuals and companies pursued their own interests while public affairs were left entirely up to the government. In stronger words, it could be said that the government maintained a monopoly over the public sphere.

However, we now live in a time in which we can no longer say that public affairs are of no concern to companies or individuals and should be left to the government. This trend is becoming increasingly apparent with the general shift of functions from the public to the private sector. This calls for the building of a new social model under which everyone—government, companies, NPOs, and ordinary citizens—bears collective responsibility for the public community.

### Role of the sustainability report

One of the new requirements of companies will be to get involved in the creation of this sort of social model, under which everyone bears collective responsibility for the community, and it is the role of the sustainability report to communicate such aspirations and successes to the broader society. It is even more important that the report spurs readers to take part in the same model in order to build ties to support the public community between, for example, companies that make environmental-friendly products and the consumers who choose them, or between companies that provide opportunities for social contribution and the citizens who take up such opportunities.

I believe the growth and strengthening of these ties are at the same time the key to both creating a better society and enabling the CSR activities of individual companies to be of genuine benefit to society. It may seem a bit presumptuous of me to say this, but I would be delighted if our report is helpful in this respect.