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JAPANESE SOCIETY OF DEVELOPMENTAL BIOLOGISTS

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Dear invited speakers and foreign participants,

As you already heard from many news programs and reports, we had the worst recorded earthquake in the northeast area of Japan last March. After that we have been receiving a lot of words of comfort and offers of help from our friends in foreign countries. We really appreciate all of the concern of you overseas colleagues for us. We are all in deep grief, but we are doing our best for the recovery.

We will have the JSDB meeting in Okinawa in May as scheduled. We think this meeting is extremely important for us to maintain and facilitate our scientific activities. As you may already have heard from news in your countries, we are suffering a nuclear power plant accident caused by the earthquake and tsunami. We know that some news is somewhat exaggerated and you may worry about visiting Japan so soon after the earthquake and accident. Actually we also worry about the accident in the nuclear power plant since the plant has not been brought under control yet. However, we would like to say that efforts are currently being made to control the nuclear plant and the contamination of radioactive materials is essentially limited to local areas near the nuclear plant. So please trust that most parts of Japan are safe at present.

Indeed, Okinawa is the furthest place from the earthquake center and the nuclear power plant and does not suffer any problems related to the earthquake and accident. I would truly appreciate if you would come to Okinawa and discuss with Japanese scientists about high quality science (and enjoy yourself by staying in the warm and relaxing semitropical place), which definitely will be of big help to us and encourage us to keep scientific activities as high as possible. Recently, our society decided to support travel expenses to Okinawa of the scientists/students affected by the disaster in order to encourage their weakened scientific motivation. Thus, we hope that you will participate in our annual meeting in Okinawa. Your attendance would encourage the people attending from the affected area.

We are looking forward to seeing you soon.

Best wishes,

Kiyokazu Agata, D. Sci.

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