

Remarks for H.E. Kaoru Ishikawa
JST and CIHR MOU Signing Ceremony
Canadian Institutes of Health Research
January 4th, 2012 at 10:00 am

Dr. Alain Beaudet, President of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research;
Dr. Michiharu Nakamura, President of the Japan Science and Technology
Agency;

Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen:

I would like to extend to you my wishes for a Happy New Year.

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to be a part of this significant and important event; the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Japan Science and Technology Agency and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. Last year marked the 25th anniversary of science and technology cooperation between Japan and Canada, and this Memorandum, which provides joint funding for the promising fields of stem cell research, will ensure that our cooperation is strong and future-oriented.

In March 2011, Japan experienced a devastating earthquake and tsunami; I humbly believe that the scope of this natural disaster demonstrates the need to balance mankind with the forces of Mother Nature. Some say that we've placed too much trust in science and technology, but this is a view I do not share. I believe in the possibilities of the future, and the future will not open doors unless we move forward. That is why I still trust in the progress of science and technology; that science and technology can play a valuable role in striking the balance between man and nature.

Today I am very pleased to see this collaboration between the Japan Science and Technology Agency and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research. This type of partnership, I feel strongly, is made truly successful by the full emancipation of people and capacities. And, I must say that emancipation of people and capacities can be realized only through our countries' shared history of building and promoting parliamentary democracy, maintaining traditions of solid governance and legal stability and predictability, and upholding the freedoms of speech and expression.

These are the values that spur innovation in our diverse and fast-growing global community. I am happy to note that invaluable partnerships such as this Memorandum can serve as a model for others as we move forward in the areas of human health and sustainability.

Thank you for your kind attention.