

Funding Agency Presidents Meeting in the Framework of STSforum

(October 3, 10:00 – 12:20)

Opening Remarks (~ 2 Min.)

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Dear colleagues,

let me start by extending a warm welcome to you!

I am very delighted to come together with you to our second Funding Agency Presidents meeting which my colleague Dr. Mamine from JST and I co-chair. When, during my last visit to Japan in July, Chairman Omi asked Professor Kitazawa and me to chair this meeting again, we both happily agreed. Just recently, at the end of September, it was made official that Professor Kitazawa will not be the president of JST from October 1st this year. I deeply regret this since we have become good friends during the last years.

Nevertheless, I am sure that under a new president the good and dynamic cooperation and friendship with Japan will continue in the future. I met JST's new president Dr. Michiharu Nakamura already yesterday and we had a very inspiring conversation.

The aftermath of the March 11 natural disaster in Japan and its impacts underline that international cooperation is more important than ever. I am convinced that Japan will be able to overcome the unfortunate loss and damage and will remain one of the leading nations in many fields of research in the future. Due to the Fukushima incident fields of research will change in many countries in the years to come. Germany – as you know – already decided to abandon nuclear energy completely by 2022. This decision is based on a broad consensus among the German population. The so called “German Ethics Commission for a Safe Energy Supply” – with members from politics, science, the church etc. – laid ground for the decision by Chancellor Merkel. The “Ethics Commission” is one example which shows that science and funding agencies play and should play valuable roles in such kind of emergency situations.

With these words I would like to pass over to Dr. Mamine, Executive Director of JST who will give further introductions on our first discussion point "Roles of Funding Agencies in Emergency Situations".