

Opening Remarks

Masahiro Kawasaki

President

Japan Science and Technology Corporation

It is my great pleasure and honor to open the International Conference on Systems Biology, The 9th International Symposium hosted by JST. I wish to offer my cordial welcome for all the participants here today.

While Systems Biology is rather new research theme, it is one of very important research areas in much-talked-about post genomic research. The importance of this research is endorsed by the Council for Science and Technology through its panel for strategic promotion of "post genome" research and it is drawing increasing attention from science policy perspective.

This symposium is the first international one on Systems Biology, and I sincerely hope this symposium will serve as a catalyst to promote research in this area and to enhance international communication among researchers.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Organizer, Dr. Kitano, and all members of the Advisory and Program Committees for their excellent arrangements of this symposium. I also would like to thank the distinguished speakers and chairpersons of the sessions for their cooperation.

The Japan Science and Technology Corporation, or JST in short, has been holding its international symposium once a year since 1993, as one of important tools for the promotion of advanced research. JST selects an organizer and a theme as a set for each symposium among relevant basic research programs conducted by JST, namely CREST, Core Research for Evolutional Science and Technology, ERATO, Exploratory Research for Advanced Technology, PRESTO, Precursory Research for Embryonic Science and Technology, and ICORP, International Cooperative Research Project. Dr. Kitano is the Project Director of "Symbiotic Systems" of the ERATO program from 1998 to 2003. And most of members of the Organizing Committee members are in the project.

In the fiscal year 2000, JST allocates about a half of its total fund of 103 billion Yen, roughly one billion dollars, to the four basic research programs of ERATO, CREST, PRESTO and ICORP. The basic research programs are the largest activities of JST today.

I'm convinced that the theme of this symposium "System Biology" covers the most exiting and challenging cross-disciplinary fields of Science and that it is timely to discuss recent rapid progress and new concepts among prominent researchers of the world.

I strongly expect that this symposium will provide a significant momentum for you all to develop interests in new field of science. I also hope that you will find a key to your research agenda and at the same time you will explore a new dimension of cooperation through the symposium.

Again I hope that this symposium will be successful and fruitful to you all. Thank you.

