



WORLD SLEEP FEDERATION

WORLD FEDERATION OF SLEEP RESEARCH & SLEEP MEDICINE SOCIETIES

Dear Colleagues,

April 6, 2011

Worldsleep2011, 6th Congress of the World Sleep Federation

I have already expressed deepest condolences and sympathy to our friends and colleagues in sleep research and sleep medicine in Japan following the earthquakes and tsunami that hit the Kanto-Tohoku area of Japan on March 11. Anyone who has seen the videos of that day cannot help but imagine the sheer terror and destruction of this event with subsequent major loss of life. Increasingly, however, the eyes of the world have been on a potential secondary nuclear disaster in the Fukushima nuclear reactor north of Tokyo.

While the events in Fukushima have been of great concern to the Japanese people and the international community, the reality is that there has been a great deal of scientific misrepresentation in the worldwide media exaggerating the risks of the damage from this reactor. In turn this has affected international travel to all areas of Japan. This is obviously of great relevance to Worldsleep2011, the 6th Congress of the World Sleep Federation. The WFS and local organisers have received many inquiries whether the meeting will go ahead. I have also personally seen emails forwarded by colleagues that are quite disturbingly wrong about the risks, location and viability of the Congress.

On behalf of Masako Okawa, head of the Worldsleep 2011 committee and the WFS Executive, I would like to clearly state that the Congress will go ahead as planned including the training course for young investigators and satellite meetings.

At present the deadline for abstracts closes on April 30, 2011 but we are discussing a short extension of this date due to the uncertainty following the events of last month. Dr. Okawa, Honma, Kadotani and the other members of the organising committee are continuing to work hard on the program and social events. The local organisers and our hosts, the Asian Sleep Research Society deserve our full support and I hope those of you who intended participating in the Congress have not changed your mind because of misinformation about the radiation risk. I have attached some information on an appended page about **the actual risk** and a map of Japan pointing out the distance from Kyoto to Fukushima power plant.

In my view the correct response to this disaster is not put off travelling to Japan but show support by visiting this wonderful country and in particular enjoy the many wonders of the region around Kyoto. I look forward to meeting many of you in October in Kyoto.

Kind regards,

RON GRUNSTEIN, President, World Sleep Federation

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