

Congratulatory Addresses from the Guest

from Fukushima Prefecture

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to Fukushima Prefecture.

I am delighted that APRIM 2023 will be held here in Fukushima, welcoming many people from around the world with the honor of the attendance of Her Imperial Highness Princess Akishino.

Her Imperial Highness has visited Fukushima many times, giving the people of Fukushima warm words of encouragement. On behalf of the people of Fukushima, I would like to express my heartfelt gratitude to Her Highness.

I would also like to express my deepest respect and sincere appreciation to Mr. Junichi Watanabe, Chair of the Local Organizing Committee, and everyone involved for their tremendous efforts in organizing the APRIM 2023.

More than 12 years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake and nuclear disaster. Thanks to the warm support from people around the world, we have been able to make steady progress towards revitalization. I would like to take this opportunity to once again express my heartfelt appreciation for all the support we have received.

Astronomy has been closely linked to our daily lives since

ancient times, including the calendar, and has contributed greatly to the development of mankind. This study also has a deep connection with our prefecture, and during the Edo period the Aizu Domain pursued it enthusiastically. The remains of the observatory used at that time has been designated as the first Japan Astronomical Heritage. In recent years, the challenging spirit of the University of Aizu and the prefectural companies that participated in the Asteroid Explorer “HAYABUSA 2” mission has brought dreams and hopes to the people of the prefecture and to the world.

In addition, the prefecture is actively promoting research and development in the aeronautics and space industries on its path to revitalization. I sincerely hope that APRIM will be a beacon of hope for the future by encouraging such efforts and providing an opportunity for young people in Japan and abroad to develop an interest in astronomy and space.

I hope that you will take this opportunity to enjoy the various charms of Fukushima, starting from its beautiful nature, profound history and traditional cultures to the seasonal peaches that Fukushima, the “Fruit Kingdom”, is proud of and other delicious foods, as well as the Japanese sake, which has been highly acclaimed both in Japan and abroad. I also hope that you will be able to “see” and “feel” how Fukushima is continuing to make steady progress towards revitalization.

In conclusion, I would like to express my best wishes for the success of APRIM 2023, and my sincere hope for the continued growth of the International Astronomical Union and the good health of all those gathered here.

Masao Uchibori

Governor of Fukushima Prefecture