

Kojiro Irikura's Speech at the Bruce Bolt Medal Ceremony of the 2011 Annual Meeting of Seismological Society of America on April 23, 2011 held in Memphis, USA

Thank you very much Christa for your kind introduction about me.

A huge earthquake attacked the Tohoku and Kanto regions in Japan on March 11, 2011. It was much bigger than expected among Japanese seismologists and too many people were killed or still missing, totally 27,493 as of today. Further, extremely severe accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant extended disasters. It has been not solved yet. Plenty of people were still suffering as evacuees.

The seismological community in Japan could not do any warning to general people for tsunami disasters due to this earthquake. I am very regretful for making no contributions to the prevention of such tragedies in Japan as one of Japanese seismologists.

Therefore, I thought I should decline the Medal named Bruce Bolt at this moment. He was one of the creators of engineering seismology and contributed earthquake disaster mitigations not only in United States and over the world through his career. I sent an email to Susan Newman to ask her to the board to tell my will to decline the Medal. I received lots of warm responses from outgoing SSA President Rick Aster and incoming SSA President Christa von Hillebrandt Andrade, and the Board member Pau Somerville. They encouraged me say "If you feel too modest to accept it on your own behalf, accept it on behalf of all who bear this great responsibility and carry this concern".

So, I finally decided to receive the Medal on behalf of all who bear the responsibility to seismic disaster reduction in Japan as a symbol of hope as they suggested.

I wish people who are suffering from disasters would be restored their usual lives.

I really appreciate what you have helped and encouraged us.

Thank you very much.