

## **Sympathy for the Victims of the Sumatra Earthquake and Devastating Tsunamis**

The great earthquake with magnitude of 9.0 occurred off the west coast of northern Sumatra on December 26, 2004. The tsunamis generated by this earthquake killed more than 300,000 people and injured more than 5 million in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India, Thailand, and other areas of Southeast Asia, South Asia, and Africa. The victims include thousands of people who were visiting the region when the earthquake happened, including Japanese as well as Europeans and North and South Americans.

Being a seismologist as well as a vice-president of international affairs, I am deeply concerned with such natural disasters. There are many lessons and warnings to be learned from them. We need to develop scientific studies and education to reduce such disasters. Furthermore, we need to take the initiative and help public opinion realize the importance of monitoring geohazards and issuing alerts and warnings.

Kyoto University has a good record of education and research accomplishment in the field of disaster sciences. This is the time to contribute our knowledge to disaster reduction both worldwide and on the national scale. The members of the Board of Kyoto University convey their most sincere condolences to families, communities, and governments of the more than 300,000 people that lost their lives in this catastrophic earthquake.

**Kojiro Irikura, Vice-President of Kyoto University**

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