Greeting from Professor Yuichiro Anzai:

It is my great pleasure and privilege to greet to you all at this occasion of the international RIKEN Symposium on Neuroinformatics Research in Vision.

As all of you know well, the brain is a very complex, but certainly well-structured information processing system, with a tremendously many numbers of neurons and their interconnections.

To clarify its structures and functions in scientifically satisfiable fashion, it is very important to approach the system with many different methodologies. Neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, unintrusive instrumental techniques, behavioral and cognitive sciences, neuropsychology, computational neuroscience, mathematical modeling, molecular biology and genetics, and many other. Though this diversified approach sounds complicated, actually it is not, since the information processing system called BRAIN should be clarified and understood scientifically from many different points of view. The integration of scientific results from those viewpoints gives us new knowledge that is fantastic in its own, and is applicable to lots of fields including medicine, health care, engineering, media and environmental design and even education. The function called VISION, the main topic of the symposium fits very, very well to these points, as you all know.

Among various methodologies, I have long been interested in what you call here ‘’neuroinformatics” and ‘’cognitive neuroscience”. The brain is so complex that it is difficult to understand it within the traditional reductionist approach. We need to understand the brain as a SYSTEM, particularly an information processing system. In the area that I have been interested in, we pursued the cognitive mechanisms of memory and learning functions. Under a simple memory behavior at the behavioral level, fairly complex mechanisms for interaction of information among various neural networks. INTERATION is the key for understanding cognitive functions of the brain.

Anyway, I would like to congratulate the success of your symposium. Not only attacking the brain itself, but also accumulating data and knowledge in a large-scale databases and platforms that I believe RIKEN neuroinformatics group is now leading Japan, is very important for the advancement of brain science. I believe that the symposium gives fruitful impact for the brain science and brain scientists. Also I hope that the meeting today will provide new future directions for us. I appreciate all the participants, committee members, Dr. Ito, Dr. Amari and other people at RIKEN Brain Science Institute, particularly Dr. Usui, Principal Investigator of the laboratory for neuroinformatics and all of his colleagues, for giving us this great opportunity for mutual communication on neuroinformatics, neuroscience, brain science, and large-scale databases and platforms.

Thank you very much and see you soon.

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