

Dear Members and Colleagues:

On behalf of the Japanese Behçet's Disease Study Group supported by The Japanese Ministry of health, Labor and Welfare, it is our great pleasure to announce to you the 15th International Conference on Behçet's Disease. It will take place in Yokohama, Japan from July 13th to 15th, 2012 under the auspices of the International Society for Behçet's Disease.

As you may know, the northeastern coast of Japan was recently affected by both an earthquake and tsunami. Those dual natural events precipitated the subsequent nuclear power plant failure. Albeit that series of events was one of the worst in recent history, the majority of damages and hardship was limited to the northeastern coastal portion of the main island. Although cleanup and repair work is ongoing in the worst hit areas, cities and prefectures farther south of the affected towns were not seriously affected, and have quickly recovered to the status of business-as-usual. Yokohama was fortunate not to have been seriously affected by the disasters and has been safe for travel, work, and residence.

Yokohama City is second only to Tokyo in population and has been known as a port city for over 150 years. Yokohama lies on the Tokyo Bay. Due to its proximity to Tokyo, Yokohama is of major commercial, economic and historical importance, resulting in it being a modern international port city today. Yokohama boasts many wonderful attractions such as Landmark Tower, Yokohama Bay Bridge, Motomachi, Yamashita Park and the largest Chinatown in Asia, making it one of the most popular tourist destinations in Japan! It is in this setting that we look forward to hosting the first International Conference on Behçet's Disease to be held in Japan in over twenty years.

Interest in developments in Behçet's Disease research and clinical applications has never been higher. Also, global economic trends are having an effect on all facets of life, and research and development have not been immune to these factors. It is in this light that cooperation and sharing of resources, information and advances is all the more important and prudent. It is with this in mind that we feel that calling for clinicians and health professionals to participate in this upcoming 15th International Conference on Behçet's Disease (ICBD) is important.

We look forward to participants engaging in our forums for the exchange of ideas and presentation of the latest developments in Behçet's Disease. There will be invited speakers, oral presentations, poster presentations, and debates.

We are confident that, with your cooperation and attendance, the 15th ICBD will be a success. We, therefore, look forward to welcoming you to Yokohama in July 2012!

Professor Yoshiaki Ishigatsubo,

President of The Japanese Behçet' s disease Study Group supported by The Japanese Ministry of Health

President of the 15th International Conference

Honorary Professor Goro Inaba,

President of the 3rd International Conference

Honorary President of the 15th International Conference

Professor Shigeaki Ohno,

Appointed President of the ISBD

Honorary President of the 15th International Conference

Professor Fumio Kaneko

Former President of The Japanese Behçet' s disease Study Group supported by The Japanese Ministry of Health

Honorary President of the 15th International Conference