Congratulations on the 30th Anniversary of the Robotics Society of Japan

President of the IEEE Robotics and Automation Society
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It is my great pleasure and honor to extend this greeting message to my dear colleagues in Japan, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the founding of the Robotics Society of Japan. The Robotics Society of Japan is without doubt one of the leading robotics organizations in the world. Through its publications, conferences, and many other activities, it has not only contributed to the advancement of robotics as both a technology and intellectual endeavor, but has also helped to foster a sense of community and common purpose among robotics researchers worldwide.

The IEEE Robotics and Automation Society (RAS) and the Robotics Society of Japan have a long-standing cooperation as cosponsors of the IEEE/RSJ International Conference on Intelligent Robots and Systems (IROS). Professors Fumio Harashima and Toshio Fukuda, two of our most active and well-respected members in RAS, organized the first IROS conference twenty-five years ago in 1988, and this past October, the IROS conference celebrated its Silver Jubilee. From its Japanese roots, the conference has grown steadily over the years, and now includes more than 1,500 international participants presenting over 800 papers. It regularly rotates its venue among the three major regions of the world, making it a truly worldwide gathering of robotics researchers and practitioners.

RSJ President Sadao Kawamura and I had the opportunity to renew our friendship, and also to reaffirm our commitment to the IROS conference as one of the leading conferences in the field. We are shown in the picture at IROS 2012 in Vilamoura, Algarve, Portugal. It is our joint hope and expectation that the IROS conference will continue to make strong contributions for the next twenty-five years and beyond.

The IEEE Robotics and Automation Society and the Robotics Society of Japan share many goals to foster technological innovation in robotics. We promote visionary research initiatives that can act as engines of economic growth while also confronting the great societal challenges of our time. We can think of no other technology that will impact as many lives, in an immediate and positive way, as robotics. Just as computers and communications technology transformed the world in a mere two decades, we are on the cusp of another transformational period in history: within a few decades robots will permeate our lives, as much as computers and communications devices do today. We are happy to join with our colleagues in Japan in advancing this noble cause.

Congratulations again to the Robotics Society of Japan on its 30th anniversary, to its Board of Directors and officers, and to all its members for their impressive achievements and for their outstanding service to Japan and to the international robotics community.