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Statement regarding International Surgical Week
28 August to 1 September 2011
Yokohama, Japan

The Executive Committee of the International Society of Surgery has had extensive discussions regarding International Surgical Week, and the catastrophic events that have unfolded in the North East of Japan, last month. The disaster area is approximately 250 km (160 miles) from Yokohama. The Committee has examined developments in very great detail, in conjunction with the Local Organising Committee in Japan. Despite the magnitude of the disaster, the Japanese people, both victims and rescuers have shown tremendous fortitude and resourcefulness.

With four months to go before the planned International Surgical Week:

- The human disaster has been managed, and efforts continue with housing and support. Massive reconstruction has started, and continues at an increasing pace.
- The after-quakes and shocks are diminishing in strength and frequency.
- Efforts to control the Fukushima reactor continue, and while it may be some time before total control is achieved, cooling and management is now achieving some success. An exclusion zone is in place.
- The radiation levels in the rest of the country, including Tokyo and Yokohama are continuing to fall, in many cases to pre-disaster levels, and are not deemed by the World Health Organisation, or the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to constitute any hazard to health. Food is not affected.
- Most Health Care workers have returned to their normal employment, and the rest of the country is increasingly functional. Electricity supplies to the Yokohama area are not expected to be disrupted.
- All airlines have resumed normal scheduled services to Tokyo, and both the airline industry and the travel industry have indicated that there is no additional risk at this time.

The Executive Committee has therefore decided that the International Surgical Week of the International Society of Surgery will go ahead, and will take place in Yokohama from Sunday 28th August to Thursday 1st September 2011 as scheduled.

This Congress will, however, also serve as a tribute to the efforts of the medical community of Japan, and our Surgical Colleagues there who have worked so hard to deal with the effects of the disaster. It is hoped that there will be a special session on the lessons learned. More than 1600 abstracts have been received, and it is hoped that most invited speakers will be attending, offering the usual very high standard of Surgery.

We urge you to attend this critically important Congress, both its scientific content, and as a tribute to the victims of the earthquake and tsunami, the resilience of the people of Japan, and our trusted and loyal partners in the Japanese surgical community.

Ken Boffard
President
International Society of Surgery