

Dr. Keisuke Isogai
Director General
Research Promotion Bureau
Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT)
Tokyo, Japan

Lausanne, 19 March 2019

Dear Dr. Isogai,

On behalf of the Linear Collider Board (LCB) members, I would like to express our gratitude for the letter to the LCB for its meeting on March 7, which explained the evaluation process that Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan (MEXT) followed and the resulting conclusion from the process at this moment, concerning the hosting of the International Linear Collider (ILC) in Japan.

The international particle physics community has been supporting the proposal made by the Japanese colleagues to host the ILC as an international project with Japanese initiative. There is now a unanimous agreement in the community that a Higgs factory is needed as the next step in order to reveal physics beyond the current Standard Model. While the ILC at 250 GeV is at an advanced state in terms of technical and engineering readiness, alternative options for both linear and circular e^+e^- colliders, with great potential for detailed Higgs studies and beyond, have been proposed for the discussion on updating the European Strategy for Particle Physics currently underway.

In the United States of America, participation in the ILC hosted in Japan was featured in the future planning, namely in the report by the Particle Physics Project Prioritization Panel. The ILC has also a significant impact on the European Strategy. The LCB has been discussing, since the beginning of 2017, what would foster the ILC to be considered as one of the high priority projects in the European Strategy.

After several discussions, the LCB agreed on three desirable points to be mentioned in a Japanese statement on the ILC, which were also endorsed by the International Committee for Future Accelerators (ICFA) at its meeting in November 2017 in Ottawa. Those three points were reiterated in the LCB Chair's summary of the meeting on 5th December 2018, where the LCB discussed a realistic timing for the Japanese statement on the ILC. The Summary says:

“After the discussion, the LCB members reach the following conclusion. In order to adhere to the plan, it would be crucial to have a statement from the Japanese government in time for the March 2019 LCB/ICFA meeting, expressing its strong interest to host the ILC in Japan and intention to initiate international discussion, together with an indication of possible Japanese contribution along the lines suggested in the LCB conclusion endorsed by the ICFA in Ottawa in November 2017.”

The LCB is pleased to acknowledge that the MEXT positively addressed some of those points by stating its interest in the ILC project and the intention to continue the discussion with other governments, in the letter and in the March 2019 presentation.

The speech given by the Hon. Takeo Kawamura (Member of the House of Representatives and Chair of the Federation of Diet Members for the ILC), at the evening reception on March 6, on the position of the federation and their effort, particularly on the subject of Japanese contribution, was very much appreciated.

The LCB took note on the same occasion that the endorsement by the Japanese academic community, through the process conducted by the Science Council of Japan (SCJ), is important for the Japanese government to draw a positive conclusion for hosting the ILC. The LCB will pay close attention to the progress of the SCJ discussions and hopes for a positive outcome in a timely manner.

The ILC hosted by the Japan is extremely attractive and the community will continue to support the initiative. However in the present situation, the LCB expects that other collider options will also be considered in the forthcoming community discussion. While it is understood that the MEXT needs further consultation and evaluation of domestic and international development of the matter, with growing support for the ILC from various sectors in Japan, the LCB still hopes that the Japanese government could issue a statement proposing to host the ILC in sufficient time for the ILC to be well integrated into the European strategy discussion.

I would like to thank you again for kindly letting us know the present view of the Japanese government and we sincerely hope that further effort will bring the ILC to a satisfactory conclusion in the very near future. Please note that the LCB has no objection for sharing the content of this letter with relevant parties.

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'T. Nakada', written in a cursive style.

Tatsuya Nakada
Chair of the Linear Collider Board