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Chairman

The International Society for Complex Environmental Studies (ISCES)

WELCOME ADDRESS

Dear ladies and gentlemen

Distinguished participants

The Chinese have been pioneers in many areas of life. Like many others, I sincerely admire and respect their original insights and discoveries. They are achievements that have changed the thought models and actions of mankind in both culture and science. They are part of the permanent global intellectual capital of mankind.

The goal of complex environmental studies is to understand reality as functional whole and to depict it just as it is. It goes without saying that demands for correct and upgraded knowledge in this field increase greatly as the very result from new skill requirements and health issues related to new types of work, new ways of organizing work, new types of technologies and new types of chemicals. Time is a key factor in this kind of a holistic approach.

Research of the combined actions and combined effects of the environmental factors is not only an important and topical scientific challenge but also concerns people's wellbeing, leisure time, housing and work. Considering all these phenomena it is very urgent to conduct such holistic multidisciplinary studies and gather such knowledge that is both relevant and helpful.

Based on what I just said above I am happy that this fourteenth ICCEF Conference – Environments, early damages, and diseases - takes place here in Wuhan, China – the cradle of human culture.

In terms of the number of participants and members, the International Society for Complex Environmental Studies (ISCES) scientific organization and the ICCEF conference may appear small. But in the light of the content of its operation and the importance of the theme they can be considered highly

significant. The interval between the conferences is two years, and it would be ideal if the main theme and contents of the next conference could be agreed on during the present conference.

From the very beginning, from 1984 onwards, the scientific organization relies in its activities on international cooperation and on the production and presentation of information, which helps us understand life as it is in reality.

The collection and analysis of information, development work based on the information, and drawing conclusions from the results require a multifaceted and multidisciplinary approach. We are generally dealing with a whole in which many different or similar factors may have either a direct or an indirect impact either simultaneously or at different times. This work poses us many challenges.

I would like to use this occasion to thank the authorities of China, the Tongji Medical College, School of Public Health, the Huazhong University of Science and Technology (HUST), and the Hubei Provincial Center for Disease Control and Prevention. In particular I would like to thank the local organizing committee, the international organizing committee, the participants and our esteemed cooperation partners including secretaries, students and volunteers.

I am also greatly indebted to Professor Tangchun Wu and Professor Weihong Chen. As everybody can see, our contacts and mutual cooperation have been smooth and productive.

Dear ladies and gentlemen

Based on the conference program I am convinced that in the next few days we can expect to experience and learn many new things. Besides the Chinese friendliness we have the opportunity to enjoy high level and topical presentations on the subject.

I am delighted to see many old and new friends here. I believe our conference will be a useful and memorable occasion for all of us.