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Office of Communications
53-70 Jingumae 5-chome
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-8925
<http://unu.edu>

Contact:
Aska Maki
03-5467-1212
media@unu.edu

Dr. Kazuhiko Takemoto of Japan Named Director of New UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability

7 January 2014, Tokyo — The United Nations University (UNU) is pleased to announce that Dr. Kazuhiko Takemoto has been appointed as Director of the new UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS), effective 1 January 2014.

Dr. Takemoto brings to the position some four decades of comprehensive experience in environmental policy development and research management, and as an international environmental diplomat.

The Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability (UNU-IAS) is being formed through the consolidation of UNU's two current Japan-based research and training units: the UNU Institute of Advanced Studies (established in 1996) and the UNU Institute for Sustainability and Peace (established in 2009). The merger is underway and will be completed in 2014, with the new institute to be located in the UNU Headquarters Building in Tokyo.

The UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability builds on a strong tradition of UNU research and capacity development in Japan, which is undertaken in collaboration with a global network of professionals and scholars. Its research programme will focus on high-level policymaking based on aspects of environmental research, including the science of sustainability, biodiversity and environmental governance.

"I am delighted that Dr. Takemoto, so well known to us and to many others in the world of international environmental research and action, will be joining us. His arrival greatly strengthens our team", said Dr. David Malone, Rector of the United Nations University.

Since 2010, Dr. Takemoto has worked with the UNU Institute of Advanced Studies as a Senior Fellow and Programme Director, overseeing the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and International Satoyama Initiative (ISI) and the Institute's Operating Unit Ishikawa Kanazawa. He also has acted as Programme Leader of the Fukushima Global Communication programme of the UNU Institute for Sustainability and Peace.

Prior to joining UNU, Dr. Takemoto held a variety of environment-related positions in the Japanese Government, most recently serving (2008–2010) as Vice-Minister for Global Environmental Affairs in the Ministry of the Environment (MOE). In that role, he was responsible for developing national strategies for international negotiations on global environmental issues such as climate change, biodiversity and trans-boundary air pollution.

Dr. Takemoto previously had served in MOE as Director-General of the Environment Management Bureau (2005–2008), Deputy Director-General of the Global Environment Bureau (2003–2005), and Director of the Waste Management Division (2002–2003).

Dr. Takemoto Named Director of UNU Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability

Before that, he worked in MOE's predecessor, the Environment Agency, in various posts, as well as with the International Institute for Applied Systems Analysis (IIASA, Austria; 1995–1996), The World Bank (1989–1992), and the Shizuoka Prefectural Government (1980–1982).

He also has served as Vice-Chair of the OECD Environmental Policy Committee, as Co-Chair of the Ministerial Round Table of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD), and as Director of the Secretariat of the Asia-Pacific Network for Global Change Research (APN).

Dr. Takemoto holds a Bachelor of Engineering degree from The University of Tokyo and a Master of International Public Policy degree from the School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS), Johns Hopkins University. He recently received a PhD degree from The University of Tokyo.

"I am very pleased and honoured to contribute to the new Institute, and to work with our team towards a sustainable future", said Dr. Takemoto.

The United Nations University, established in 1975 as the academic arm of the United Nations system, operates as a network of research and teaching institutes and programmes, with a presence in more than a dozen countries worldwide. The UNU mission is to contribute — through collaborative research and postgraduate education, dissemination of knowledge and advisory services — to efforts to resolve the pressing global problems of human survival, development and welfare that are the concern of the United Nations, its Peoples and Member States. In its role as a think tank, UNU provides knowledge-based policy advice to the United Nations system and to UN Member States.

For more information, see the UNU website (<http://unu.edu>).

Journalists with inquiries, or who would like to request an interview with UNU-IAS Director Dr. Kazuhiko Takemoto or UNU Rector Dr. David Malone, may contact Aska Maki, Communications Assistant, UNU Office of Communications (media@unu.edu; +81-3-5467-1212).

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