

Greetings from the IAU

from IAU President

Your Imperial Highness Crown Princess Akishino, Honored guests, -Watanabe-san, Hayashi-san, and fellow astronomers, I bring greetings from the International Astronomical Union on the happy occasion of the third Asia-Pacific Regional Meeting to be held in Japan. Japan is one of the seven founding Notinal Members of the IAU, with the 4th largest number of Individual Members. Astronomy is deeply rooted in our histories and cultures, forging bonds across societies. The IAU began in 1919 to share discoveries among professional astronomers, and has expanded to promote and safeguard the science of astronomy in all its aspects, including research, communication, education, and development, through international cooperation. The IAU has over 12,000 members from 85 countries.

Japan has played a prominent role throughout the history of the IAU. Besides APRIM, Japan in 1997 hosted the triennial IAU General Assembly. Japan has had 2 Past Presidents, Yoshihide Kozai and Norio Kaifu (who also served as Vice-President), and Vice-Presidents Shin Hirayama, Yusuki Hagihara, and currently Junichi Watanabe.

Japan's contributions to astronomy and space physics are extensive. The JAXA explorer Hayabusa2 to the asteroid Ryugu

successfully returned samples to Earth. The IAU designates official names for celestial bodies, and with the exploration team named surface topography revealed by this mission. The National Astronomical Observatory of Japan's Subaru 8-m telescope in Hawaii will embark on a new survey of the early universe with a state-of-the-art Prime Focus Spectrograph led by the Kavli Institute in Tokyo. Japan is active in solar astronomy, hosts a Gravitational Wave Project Office and the Nobeyama Radio Observatory, and is a partner in the Atacama Large Millimeter Array and the Thirty Meter Telescope under development.

Our Office of Astronomy Outreach, hosted jointly at NAOJ, is highly regarded worldwide for its operations over the past decade. It has over 100 National Outreach Coordinators in many countries, and has impacted hundreds of thousands of people. Its efforts include Communicating Astronomy with the Public, developing astronomy communicators, supporting Women and Girls in Astronomy, translating astronomical knowledge into native languages, and raising awareness of the importance of dark and radio-quiet skies and our place in the Univers.

I look forward to this week's conference, as Japan continues to lead in astronomical endeavors. Thank you.

Debra Elmegreen

IAU President