

President Toshio HIRANO's 2015 New Year's Greeting

Focusing on the period of the mid-term goal for the 3rd Quarter
That World Tekijuku will shine forth into the 22nd century

First of all, let me wish all of you a Happy New Year!

Last year in my greeting, I spoke about my dream for 2031, that in 2031 Osaka University would celebrate its 100th anniversary as one of the top ten research universities in the world. The first General Meeting of the World Tekijuku Project Committee was held last July. At that meeting, the basic ideas of the working group were established and methods for realizing World Tekijuku were discussed.

The 2nd General Meeting of the World Tekijuku Project Committee will be held on January 21.

The idea of World Tekijuku is to contribute to the development of a spiritually affluent human society by creating harmonious diversity. There is diversity in the world — differences in language, race, gender, customs, culture, and religion. This diversity is essential for creating groundbreaking innovation and a spiritually affluent human society; however, diversity has also brought about negative results such as obstacles and conflicts. The history of humanity is also the history of development borne of diversity and of conflicts and wars caused by diversity.

In today's increasingly globalized world, unprecedented in size in human history, the negative side of diversity has grown even stronger and various conflicts are taking place throughout the world. There is even a possibility that the 21st century, when globalization is expected to reach a critical point, will be the century of an explosion in diversity. In the globalized society of the 21st century, overcoming barriers caused by diversity will become important for humanity's development.

I have written a haiku expressing my ideas:

*Last year
This year
Generation succeeds generation
Soaring in a sky of dreams*

Creating Harmonious Diversity

A university is a center of scholarship. The role of a university, to contribute to society through education and research, never changes; however, I think universities in the 21st century will have an additional role — to make a great contribution to a more globalized society by creating harmonious diversity through scholarship.

Scholarship, along with sports and economic activities, is a kind of language common to all humankind. These languages common to all humankind have the power to overcome barriers. Exchange among humans by means of scholarship makes it possible to achieve the maintenance of diversity, and, at the same time, to overcome barriers caused by diversity. That's why we must further promote person-to-person exchange via scholarship on a world scale.

As World Tekijuku, Osaka University must cultivate its power and contribute to the world through scholarship so that society will become both more spiritually rich and peaceful. To this end, OU must make efforts to enhance its scholarship level to become one of world's top universities.

The source of power of universities lies in diversity in persons, research and education organizations, as well as research and education. Maximizing individual power becomes a driving force for the development of our university. However, in addition to changes in scholarship, increased diversity, shrinking subsidies for national universities in a society with a low birth rate and aging population, the university environment has become quite severe. We need more than ever to pursue maximizing the power of the university as a whole.

Following the change of legal status to that of a national university corporation, government grants for national university operating expenses to Osaka University, if combined with those to the former Osaka University of Foreign Studies, decreased 3.6 billion yen — from 42 billion yen in 2004 to 38.4 billion yen in 2014. This decreased amount equals the grants allocated to the three graduate schools of Science, Medicine, and Engineering in 2014.

From 2016 when the period of the mid-term goal for the 3rd quarter starts, the allocation of government grants for national university operating expenses is expected to become so competitive that it may influence the survival of universities. On December 17 last year, at the working group meeting of the Council for Industrial Competitiveness hosted by the Prime Minister, Mr. Shimomura, Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), presented the basic idea of university reform focusing on the 3rd mid-term plan. The materials for his ideas were distributed to heads of research and education organizations at the end of last year. They have already been posted on the government's official website. (<http://www.kantei.go.jp/jp/singi/keizaisaisei/wg/innovation/dai4/siryoku.html>)

We need to pay attention to the government's plan to classify universities into 3 categories and competitively allocate 30 to 40 percent of government grants for national university operating expenses to them. The plan contained the idea of designating a few universities as "Designated Research Universities" (temporary name). The plan has many items on which Osaka University will have to make critical decisions in considering the direction the university should take in the future. In that sense, this year is not just a year, but a very critical year in directing Osaka University's course for the next 10 or 100 years.

However, such a fast-changing situation can be thought as the chance of a lifetime. Not looking to the short-term, but to the mid- and long-term, all OU members need to seriously think of the future of OU and make every effort to maximize the power of the university in its entirety. We also need to cooperate with each other without insisting on our individual opinions, coalescing wisdom and power and thereby working to maximize the power of individuals and that of the university as a whole. By doing so, we can think this is precisely the chance to make Osaka University's dream come true. To this end, all OU members must share this dream and a sense of value, blending wisdom with power.

Consider this year looking back on last year

Focusing on the goal of the 100th anniversary of Osaka University's founding, last year we established "Global University, World Tekijuku" in order to consider the role of the university. A variety of concepts about it are being reviewed by sub committees set up under the general assembly, sub committees for campus plans, hospital plans, funds, and the 3rd mid-term goal & mid-term plan.

We established Osaka University Institute for Academic Initiatives (2012-2015) in 2012 and implemented various initiatives. Around the same time, the government came up with the policies focusing not on academic projects but on strengthening education and research at universities as a whole. Ahead of the announcement of such policies, Osaka University obtained Grants for Promoting National University Reform in 2012 and has been actively involved in cross-border education and research management achieved through the Institute for Academic Initiatives.

In 2013, Osaka University obtained grants for the program for promoting the enhancement of research universities and established international joint labs. In this way, we have been working on further improving the quality of research. In 2014, Osaka University was selected as a university recipient of support from the MEXT's Top Global University Project and has been engaged in globalization, education reform, and the improvement of management system which are necessary for realizing the idea of World Tekijuku.

And then, as special measures for enhancing the president's leadership in allowing more flexibility in personnel and salary system through an annual salary system and cross-appointment system, special government grants for national university operating expenses were added to allocated budgets.

These grants have enabled the smooth running of the Institute for Academic Initiatives. Currently, 5 education divisions and 4 research divisions are conducting cross-border education and research activities. In order to strengthen function to analyze and review education and research activities and function in the making of strategic proposals, we made an institutional research (IR) team in the institute's strategy planning office to develop a system for implementing institutional research in a comprehensive manner.

The international joint labs started under the International Joint Research Promotion Program in 2013 increased to 22 with outstanding researchers from 13 countries taking part. The cross-

appointment system is going well. As of the end of last year, 12 people including 9 international researchers were engaged in education and research activity at Osaka University.

The construction of new buildings and seismic retrofitting also went well last year. Specifically, the buildings for the Center of Medical Innovation and Translational Research, and the Interdisciplinary Research; the multipurpose warehouse which can be used as a disaster facility and student support institute; the Cybermedia Center's IT Core Building; the buildings of the Quantitative Biology Center and the Main Library Automatic Book Vault — completed. The Ultrahigh Voltage Electron Microscope Building is nearly finished.

Also, a large-scale renovation was made in the Suita Branch of the International House, the Suita International Student Dormitory, the Toyonaka Archery Ground, the Law and Economics Lecture building, the main building for the Research Center for Nuclear Physics, the Institute of Social and Economic Research's Building A, the Graduate School of Engineering's Building M1, the Main Library's main building, the Main Library's book vault building, and Tekijuku.

We improved the lifeline on the three campuses according to our annual plan. Osaka University Tokyo Office in Toranomon and The Photon Pioneers Center in Osaka University Osaka University Institute for Academic Initiatives at RIKEN Harima Branch were opened. Later I will discuss other buildings will be constructed or renovated later this year. Through improvement in the education and research environment, the movement toward becoming World Tekijuku is being undertaken.

The outstanding performance of Osaka University students has also pleasantly surprised us. Five Osaka University students, the greatest number in Japan, were commended for their achievements for two consecutive years in the Science Intercollegiate sponsored by the MEXT. Seven female students selected as recipients of Tobitate! [Fly away!] Study Abroad Program were much talked about as "Handai Nadeshiko" [Active Japanese women at Osaka University.] The book *How to Eat a Doughnut Without Eating the Hole* published by students in the Shosekika Project became a bestseller. ITODANI Tetsuro, a graduate student, won the title Ryu-oh in Japanese professional shogi. Their brilliant activities represent cheerfulness of Osaka University and its bright future. I hope students will continue to try in a variety of fields and make their dreams come true.

It's also important to remember the necessity of making a university where people, irrespective of gender, can demonstrate their abilities and personality to the fullest. Diversity in a university community is essential. In order to make Osaka University a great source of people regardless of gender, last year I appointed a vice president in charge of gender equality promotion. To make a full-fledged start this year, we are asking for your help. Next, let me talk about the tasks to address in 2015.

Education Reform

In order to nurture world-class personnel, from 2017-18, we will start a new curriculum focusing on education goals, diploma policies, and curriculum policies of undergraduate and graduate schools. In order to promote international student exchange, we will introduce a quarter system (3 semesters and a long holiday) in order to, through intensive and hands-on classes, deepen students' understanding.

In order to accept outstanding students matching schools' admission policies, the Global Admissions Office (GAO) will take the initiative in preparing for World Tekijuku entrance examinations in which applicants' research at senior high school will be assessed. The Council of Deans and Directors and the Education Reform Promotion Committee will discuss a new curriculum, World Tekijuku entrance examinations, and the quarter system. In order to achieve the implementation of these in 2017, Executive Vice President Higashijima will take the lead in reviewing by committees. Implementing these things may place a burden on you; however, this reform is necessary to achieve World Tekijuku. I ask for your kind understanding and cooperation in realizing a global viewpoint.

In order to increase regular international students, we will conduct Special Entrance Procedures for Privately-Funded Undergraduate International Students Living Overseas from 2016. Students who passed this exam will take part in an intensive Japanese course from October through March at Osaka University. Then, from April, they will take lessons in Japanese together with other students. In order to increase regular international students at graduate

schools, we will expand double degree and joint degree systems mainly in courses conducted in English by the CAREN (Center of Asian Research and Education Network).

In order to increase the number of Japanese students who study abroad, we will provide courses for improving students' practical English skills and economic support for their studying abroad. We will allow Japanese students to take part in liberal arts courses conducted in English at our International College so that they can communicate with international students. We will promote sending and accepting students and exchange among faculty by making use of the University of California/University of California Education Abroad Program, Osaka Office (UC/UCEAP Osaka Office) set up in last December. On advice from University of California, we plan to start preparing for an Osaka University summer school.

In order to achieve education reform quickly, last year, we established the Education Reform Promotion Committee, a committee consisting of vice deans in charge of education. In this direction, we will restructure education-related organizations and establish a study innovation organization in order to implement education reform at undergraduate and graduate schools in an integrated fashion. By making use of the edX platform, Osaka University will deliver its courses overseas from this spring.

With the intent of providing OU students with overseas experience at an early stage at the discretion of the president, some 300 students were sent overseas to study in the last academic year. I'd like to ask education and research organizations to positively develop programs for sending students overseas. Furthermore, we will develop human resource development programs that only Osaka University, a comprehensive research university with a School of Foreign Studies, can provide. We have the potential to develop human resource programs in an environment where students can choose from 24 languages while majoring at one of 10 schools. In short, there are more than 240 possibilities available.

We have started preparing for the Multilingual Expert Nurturing Program in which students at the School of Foreign Studies can learn subjects at four schools: the schools of Letters, Human Sciences, Law, and Economics, which will start in 2015.

With the aim of having a World Tekijuku Graduate School (temporary name) in April 2017, the Committee for Reviewing the Establishment of a New Graduate School was established in December last year. This outstanding graduate school will have faculty members who lead the Division of Cognitive Neuroscience, Neuroscience Robotics, and fields integrating different fields for creating new academic fields promoted by the Institute for Academic Initiatives. This graduate school aims to nurture outstanding next-generation researchers capable of going out into the world. Under this committee, we will set up a basic idea group headed by a vice president in order to conduct comprehensive deliberation. Your understanding and cooperation are greatly appreciated.

Research Promotion

We will continue to comprehensively support not only young researchers who will support Osaka University in the future, but also researchers who are currently leading the university.

As measures for supporting young researchers, we will examine, in particular, the improvement of the career development support program. This is a program for supporting up to 100 young researchers, 39 years in age or younger, with their research expenses. We will provide faculty members whose projects were not selected for economic support for a year from the university's own financial resources. We'd like to support diversity in research and strengthen each germ of research as much as possible.

In the research division at the Institute for Academic Initiatives, in addition to the existing three divisions: Drug Development, Cognitive Neuroscience Robotics, Photon Science and Technology, the Global History Research Division was set up in October last year. Placing Osaka University at the core of the international network for global history research, we'd like to promote the sharing information with overseas and interpersonal exchange. We will continue to improve the research division in the Institute for Academic Initiatives.

As a core center of globalization of research environment, international labs were opened under the International Joint Research Promotion Program. Setting a goal to increase the number of such international joint labs to 100, we will promote the program. Conducting advanced research with international researchers at OU, for both researchers and students, will lead to

grass-roots globalization and research development. I hope you will make use of this program together with our flexible personnel and compensation plans such as special faculty member system, performance-related annual salary system, and cross-appointment system.

University-industry collaboration & ICT Promotion

Concurrently with the change of legal status to corporation, substantive university-industry collaboration started as well. Ten years have passed since then. Now, that collaboration has graduated to a new stage aiming for open innovation. Thus, the role of Joint Research Course & Collaborative Research Center as well as intellectual property strategies need to change according to such a change.

The Center of Innovation (COI) project that started in 2013, in expectation of social needs in 20 years, innovation for solving such challenges is being requested. This project has become a new one that will have leaders from outside. This project is, under the theme of improving the sense of humanity, being facilitated through cooperation between companies and researchers in different fields.

This year, a government and private innovation program based on the revision of the Industrial Competitiveness Enhancement Act will start fully fledged. Osaka University will act for the coming 10 years with its allocated grant of 20 billion yen. As a core center of this project, at the end of last year, we established Osaka University Venture Capital Co. as a subsidiary wholly owned by the university. This is the first national university's investment project. This project has a great social mission to give birth to a new industry in cooperation with private companies on the basis of technology and wisdom at the university. This is also a good opportunity for Osaka University to increase its awareness of innovation. We look forward to proposals and cooperation from you.

This year the information communication network system for supporting education, research, and university management will advance and become a large-scale restructuring stage. It is necessary to improve services and promote restructuring in an efficient and unified way. We'd like to promote this project in close cooperation with related organizations.

International strategies

In order to achieve transition from international exchange to international strategies, we will set up the organization for promoting international strategies. Based on newly developed international strategies, we will promote university-wide approaches.

In April last year, we reexamined the role of our current overseas centers, categorizing these centers as regional centers: North America Center, European Center, ASEAN Center, and East Asia Center. As part of our efforts to promote the realization of global campus as soon as possible, the University of California (UC/UCEAP) Office was established on the Toyonaka campus at the end of last year.

By making use of these facilities as a new foundation and by organically coordinating multilateral and bilateral international network, international joint labs that started in 2013, as well as many university-university-agreements and school-to-school agreements that Osaka University has already concluded, we will promote the establishment of World Tekijuku. Specifically, through multilateral and bilateral international network such as the Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU), The Association of East Asian Research Universities (AEARU), the Six Japanese-German University Presidents' Conference (HeKKSaGOn), we will plan and implement president meetings, workshops, and projects.

Especially with regard to APRU, Osaka University will reconsider the university's mission in the 21st century as "The university as an Agent for Global Transformation." Osaka University will play a leading role as a host of an annual presidents meeting to be held in Osaka in June so that presidents and related people from 45 universities can deepen their understanding of higher education in Japan.

Establishing flexible personnel and compensation plans

Excellent personnel are the most important asset for a university. Based on that idea, Osaka University has aggressively promoted a flexible personnel system. Last year we introduced a performance-related annual salary system and cross-appointment system for accepting excellent

international researchers. A new annual salary system for faculty members will be adopted for those who will be employed in or after April. In this way we will respond to a sign of the times.

There has been a great progress in understanding of the cross-appointment system introduced before the rest of Japan and this is advantageous to employing international faculty members. We will implement a fundamental review of the use of systems and support measures.

In addition, we will institutionalize URA (university research administrator) as the third type of a job for faculty and staff from the next academic year. By making use of professional survey results, we will strengthen the infrastructure of education and research at Osaka University.

Although I've outlined the first stage of reform measures for personnel affairs, there is still much room for improvement. I hope education and research organizations will adopt a progressive approach in acquiring and nurturing outstanding personnel by making use of these management and personnel acquisition measures as well as by making constructive proposals on personnel affairs and organization management.

Financial review and securing new financial resources

For the period of the mid-term goal for the 3rd quarter starting from 2016, the government is studying competitively allocating 30 to 40 percent of government grants for national university operating expenses. Osaka University and other national universities will be exposed to a competitive environment. In order to respond to such changes in government grants for national university operating expenses, last year we set up a working group to come up with response measures. Upon approval from heads of education and research organizations, we decided to change the method for allocating the 2015 budget. We will spend this year to examine the allocation of budget for the period of the mid-term goal for the 3rd quarter in preparation for the coming period of great competition.

In order to secure financial resource for education and research at university, it becomes more important for all OU members to make every effort to obtain outside research funds. The university leadership has gained new competitive funds such as subsidies for enhancing national university reform, subsidies for the program for promoting the enhancement of research universities, budgets that can be used at the discretion of the president, and grants from the Top Global University Project.

By making use of these financial resources, we have implemented a variety of support measures for achieving the idea of World Tekijuku. They include management and personnel acquisition measures to make Osaka University one of the world's top 10 research universities. The university leadership will do its best to obtain competitive funds from outside in order to achieve the idea of World Tekijuku.

On that basis, we need to enrich the university's own financial resources, the Osaka University Foundation for the Future. Two years ago, in order to make Osaka University one of the world's top 10 research universities, we launched Osaka University Foundation for the Future, the 100th Anniversary Dream Fundraising Project. Last year, the funds that they received exceeded 3 billion yen; however, I'd like to reach Osaka University Foundation for the Future's donation target of at least 10 billion yen by 2031.

In addition, in order to expand the circle of people, we established an Alumni Office last year. The Alumni Office will draft and implement plans for maintaining relationships with those who graduated or completed studies at Osaka University, deepening their exchange, and developing together. I want them to feel that it was good to graduate from Osaka University

Publication strategies and University-Community Collaboration

In order to establish the brand of Osaka University, we will proactively promote branding strategies focusing on Tekijuku, the main root of Osaka University and World Tekijuku. With the goal of getting a positive image for Osaka University recognized in the world and achieving name recognition, we will improve our website, focusing on public relations activities via the internet. We will strengthen public relations such as sharing activities at OU and its allure with the public via the email magazine *Handai Global* as well as the publication of research results in *Nature* and *Science* magazines.

Furthermore, bestowing titles on OU graduates who are active on the world stage and cherishing relationships with international students who graduated from Osaka University, we

will continue to work on making OU international network.

We will promote the enhancement of the brand of Osaka University in Japan, too. Through public relations activities in the Tokyo metropolitan area using Osaka University Tokyo Office as a base, holding of university explanatory sessions and symposiums, and cooperation with newspaper companies and other companies in running ads and providing articles, we will aggressively promote alumni networking in Japan.

Under the theme of “Live Locally, Grow Globally,” Osaka University, as part of its aggressive social contribution, has shared results of education and research at the university with the general public through providing courses, lectures, and symposiums open to the public. In order to further develop these activities, we will promote outreach activities. For the purpose of gaining understanding and trust of the general public, we will raise the awareness of outreach of OU members and continuously implement and improve outreach activities. Moreover, Osaka University will contribute to the local community by promoting the cooperation with municipal governments including Toyonaka City, Minoh City, Suita City, Osaka City, and Osaka Prefecture. Additionally, by strengthening cooperation between Nakanoshima Center and Tekijuku, we will increase the presence of Osaka University in Osaka.

Reform of the Administrative Structure

In line with the improvement of systems for education and internationalization, we will improve office work systems at education and research organizations in coordination with the planning function at the Administration Bureau so that reform measures in education and globalization can be carried out smoothly. In order to secure young personnel who will be responsible for future reform, we will clarify our employment policies and employ those who love Osaka University and have professional expertise in international response. At the same time, we will focus on developing qualifications and abilities of personnel who are able to assume roles in reform in implementing personnel allocation and the development of abilities.

Furthermore, we will also improve the incentive schemes for individuals who achieved excellent results as well as the allocation of budgets for academic initiatives that can be used at the discretion of the administration office's head. We started sending internal notices in both Japanese and English in October two years ago. We intend to expand the scope of documentation in English.

Environmental improvement

In order to maintain the structural soundness of our facilities, we commenced project-based countermeasures for dealing with aging facilities two years ago, ahead of other national universities. In the 2014-2015 academic year, we took action on 34 cases in 22 education and research organizations. By making use of this system, according to the plan, we will continue to work on improving our facilities in order to maintain a comfortable campus environment.

As I mentioned earlier, at Osaka University, one can see a cloud of dust in some places because of the construction of new buildings and seismic retrofitting being conducted. 95 percent of seismic retrofitting at Osaka University will be completed by the end of March this year. The Building M3 at the Graduate School of Engineering will be completed in January, the new building complex of information basic research and welfare in May, and Osaka University Hospital Oncology Center building in June.

Furthermore, large scale renovation in buildings of A12, Plasma Experiment, and U5 at the Graduate School of Engineering; the Graduate School of Science's Building E, Cybermedia Center's main building, and the Graduate School of Pharmaceutical Sciences' Building 1 will be completed in March.

In this way, the environment for research and education at Osaka University has been greatly improved. This year, we will also come up with details for the improvement of the School of Foreign Studies.

As steps in the improvement of dormitories and staff quarters, we will start the improvement of “World Tekijuku Village,” housing for international students and Japanese students as well as faculty members, which can be said to be a symbol of realizing the idea of World Tekijuku. This village will be regarded not only as a residential space, but also as a basis for cultivating people who will be active in global society. In this project, in the first plan starting from 2017, 297 units

in student dormitories, 200 units in staff quarters, 200 units in nurse residences will be built. Eventually, this will increase to 2,000 units in student dormitories, 600 units in staff quarters, and 200 units in nurse residences.

In order to eliminate passive smoking on campus, the working group for smoking control was established in 2012. According to the road map established at their meeting, outdoor smoking places on campus are being gradually decreased. Last year, quit smoking booths were installed on the three campuses. By April this year, all outside smoking places will be removed. Things are advancing toward the total ban of smoking on campus from April 2017.

In addition to the three childcare facilities on campus, next academic year, a long-awaited day-care facility for accepting sick and convalescent children will be opened. We are proceeding with the development of favorable environment for faculty and staff.

Risk management

In order to maintain a mentally and physically comfortable environment, we will continue to work on taking measures for safety and health and preventing and responding to harassment issues.

As a result of the revision of the Industrial Safety and Health Act in June last year, stress checks will be made compulsory from December this year. From the next academic year, we will implement stress checks for faculty and staff members. We will take measures against mental stress in the early stage in order to improve mental health measures.

We also work on fair handling of public research funds and strengthening research ethics for scientists, in particular, giving thorough education of fair handling of public research funds. In April last year, in order to thoroughly implement fair handling of public research funds, we appointed persons to be in charge of increasing compliance. We organized the system and made efforts to make researchers abide by the code of conduct as researchers and clarify responsibilities of the Administration Bureau, education and research organizations, and individual researchers.

This year, under the cooperative system as a whole, we will work together so as not to have any more misconduct. We also plan to organize the system for preventing misconduct in research within this year. I ask for your understanding and cooperation in this matter. I also strongly ask you to discipline yourselves and avoid inappropriate behavior as university people. We will continue to respond harshly to instances of misconduct.

At the end of my greeting

Since I took up a post as president in August 26, 2011, I have made efforts to have opportunities for discussion with faculty and staff members and students as much as possible. University leadership visited education and research organizations to listen to their activities and exchange opinions. I will continue to have a dialogue with you and incorporate your opinions in university management as much as possible.

As I said earlier, prior to the period of the mid-term goal for the 3rd quarter that starts in 2016, 2015 is a very important year in determining the future of Osaka University. This year, we will make a great decision on our future and deal with a variety of projects appropriately and swiftly. We, the leadership, will not spare any effort for making the period of the mid-term goal for the 3rd quarter go smoothly. I ask for your kind understanding and cooperation.

In 2031, Osaka University will celebrate its 100th anniversary as one of the top ten universities in the world and make a contribution to the development of spiritually affluent human society. As we share the dream and ideas, we will work together to achieve them in 2015. I want to make every effort to climb new mountains one by one and reach the top of the mountains that we have decided to climb.

*On the first sunrise of the new year,
Osaka University's dream is now rising.*

In closing, I wish for your continued good health and success. Thank you very much.

January 5, 2015
President of Osaka University Toshio HIRANO