

Remarks by H.E. Mr. HAYASHI Hajime,
Ambassador of Japan to the UK,
at the awarding of the Foreign Minister's Commendation
to Dr Philip King
on 15th March 2024

Dr King,
Distinguished Guests,

Today, I have the privilege of awarding the Foreign Minister's Commendation to Dr Philip King for his outstanding contribution to promoting Japan-UK cooperation in the field of science and technology. Though I'm sure those present here today are well aware of his many achievements over the years, and indeed many of you have worked alongside him during this time, I would like to touch upon just a few of them now.

After gaining his degree and doctorate in Physics from the University of Oxford, Philip joined the ISIS facility at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory as an instrument scientist. Here he provided his valuable experience and expertise as the Muon Group Leader before becoming a science Division Head. Until March last year, Philip was Director of the RIKEN-RAL Muon Facility, a long-standing collaboration between ISIS and Japan in muon science, and one of the leading examples of Japan-UK scientific collaboration. He is currently working as Associate Director for Partnerships and Programmes at the ISIS Neutron and Muon Source, a post he has held since February 2023, and is also a Fellow of the Institute of Physics.

As many of you will know, RIKEN is Japan's largest research institute, famous for high-quality research in a diverse range of scientific fields. RIKEN encompasses a network of world-class research centres across Japan, and the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory is one of its key partners. RIKEN and RAL signed their first international research cooperation agreement on muon science back in 1990. They have enjoyed more than 30 years of successful collaboration on a wide range of scientific research using muons, including projects looking at condensed matter and chemical physics, along with applied research into battery materials.

During this time, more than 500 papers have been published, and researchers from more than 90 Japanese institutes have participated in experiments and other activities at the RIKEN-RAL muon facility. Collaboration has also been initiated with research institutes around the world, and cooperation in muon science has been established with a number of Southeast Asian countries, notably Indonesia, including the training and nurturing of young researchers.

Since joining more than ten years ago, Philip has been instrumental in the development of this joint research between Japan and the UK, and has welcomed many scientists from both countries conducting joint research using the muon experimental facility. Philip has also been actively involved in the training of the facility's technicians. Throughout this time, he has been an integral part of managing this long-standing research relationship between Japan and the UK, and the longevity of this partnership is testament to Philip's hard work, expertise and communication skills.

Last year RIKEN held a RIKEN-RAL commemoration ceremony at the Rutherford Appleton Laboratory in the UK to celebrate over 30 years of research collaboration with the UK, bringing together leading figures in the UK and Japanese scientific fields. Here, a new research cooperation agreement was signed between the RIKEN Nishina Centre for Accelerator-Based Science and RAL ISIS for an ongoing partnership to further develop the research collaboration between the two organisations, thus building on the fantastic work that Philip and his colleagues have already achieved.

In conclusion, it is certainly difficult to fully cover all of Philip's many contributions and achievements towards scientific cooperation between Japan and the UK. However, his sterling efforts in this field are clear for all to see, and I am very pleased to be able to award the Foreign Minister's Commendation to him in your presence. Please join me in congratulating Dr Philip King on this richly deserved award.

Congratulations!