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## United Nations University and University of Tokyo to Sign Memorandum on Joint Sustainability Research

**Event:** Academic Exchange Memorandum Signing Ceremony  
**Signatories:** United Nations University (Rector Konrad Osterwalder) and University of Tokyo (President Hiroshi Komiyama)  
**Date:** 16 July 2008 (Wednesday), 11:30 AM – 12:10 PM  
**Venue:** United Nations University Headquarters, Tokyo

- “Sustainability” embraces a complex diversity of interrelated factors, including the natural environment and socioeconomic systems. Sustainability problems that previously were regarded primarily as scientific issues (such as climate change) have now become urgent political concerns, while social issues (such as economic development) have wide-ranging impacts on sustainability.
- Universities, with their academic neutrality and research objectivity, are well situated to inform political and social change toward a sustainable society. Thus, in line with the Sapporo Sustainability Declaration, issued by the recent G8 University Summit held in Hokkaido prior to the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit, the Integrated Research System for Sustainability Science (IR3S), administered by the University of Tokyo, and the United Nations University (UNU) will establish a Joint Sustainability Initiative (IR3S/UNU-JSI) as a joint partnership effort, with the ultimate objective of contributing to the achievement of global sustainability.
- In addition to enhancing the alliance between the UNU and the University of Tokyo through interactions among researchers and students at IR3S/UNU-JSI, this partnership will focus on such tasks as developing a joint sustainability science education programme and conducting collaborative research projects.
- Alliances with sustainability research groups worldwide will be enhanced through the UNU’s global network. Furthermore, the initiative will explore the possibility of creating an organization to jointly address the issues of developing countries, especially in Africa, which aligns with UNU Rector Osterwalder’s vision of establishing “twin” research institutes (with locations in both a developed country and a developing country).
- Specific activities to be implemented under the agreement will include (1) the exchange of faculty, researchers and staff; (2) collaborative research; (3) joint educational programmes; (4) joint seminars and symposiums; (5) projects to promote sustainability science; and (6) the exchange of academic information and materials.
- On 16 July, the UNU and IR3S will sign an academic exchange memorandum to initiate this joint partnership effort.
- Attendees at the signing ceremony will include Hiroshi Komiyama, University of Tokyo President/IR3S Executive Director; Konrad Osterwalder, Rector of the United Nations University; and Kazuhiko Takeuchi, United Nations University Vice-Rector and University of Tokyo Professor/IR3S Deputy Executive Director.

Media representatives are cordially invited to attend this signing ceremony. To confirm your attendance, or to arrange an interview with the signatories, please contact Naoko Yano, UNU Office of Communications (tel: 03-5467-1311; e-mail: [media@unu.edu](mailto:media@unu.edu)).

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