

Biography of Mr. Tomihiro Taniguchi
Deputy Director General for Nuclear Safety, IAEA

Mr. Taniguchi joined the Ministry of International Trade and Industry in 1968, immediately after his graduation from the University of Tokyo, where he majored in nuclear engineering. During thirty years of distinguished career at MITI, primarily at the Agency of Natural Resources and Energy (ANRE), he consistently contributed to establishment and development of regulatory regime that is conducive to enhanced efficiency and safety in the area of nuclear energy utilization. Serving at division director level in the 1980s, he initiated the process of structural improvement of regulatory system, reforming the system to render it more efficient, effective, responsive to the risk involved, and consistent with international nuclear energy development. His work at MITI continued in the 1990s, along the track, he laid in the 1980s. As the Deputy Director General in charge of nuclear policy, he was the Japanese Government's chief administrative officer on all aspects of commercial use of nuclear energy, including, safety, and regulation. He not only continued to pursue the course of systemic structural reform of the regulatory system, but also took on a larger task of meeting the challenges presented by a changing environment surrounding the nuclear power industry. In the process of overall restructuring of the industry, it was his responsibility to forge a positive link between competitiveness and safety by renewed policy emphasis on efficiency, reliability, openness, and transparency. Sociopolitical complexity of the nuclear power industry in Japan further honed his administrative skill as he sought a sustainable development of the symbiotic relationship between industry and local community. He was also an instrumental part of Japan's effort to establish close cooperative relationships in the nuclear energy sector with neighboring countries of Asia, such as China and the Republic of Korea. He was consistently involved in international efforts to making rules and creating order in what can only be described as a transitory era for the nuclear industry worldwide.

In the course of his career at MITI, he built up twelve years of resident overseas working experience in international organizations and research institutions. This includes senior-level management and advanced research activities in the areas of energy, technology, and industry. Three separate assignments in wide ranging areas at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, spanning from the mid-1970s to the 1990s, demonstrate his exceptional aptitude to serve in international organizations. His assignment as the Deputy Director General for Trade Negotiation at MITI also proves the high appreciation within the Japanese Government of his command of international affairs and negotiation skill. These and other international responsibilities, he has so far assumed, have helped to widen his perspective in policy formulation and decision-making.

Prior to his appointment to Deputy Director General for Nuclear Safety in August 2001, Mr. Taniguchi has served as the Executive Director of the Nuclear Power Engineering Corporation (NUPEC), whose mission is to support MITI and the nuclear industry in the areas of safety and technology. The corporation, with over 300 staff, promotes effectiveness, efficiency, and public acceptance in the operation of commercial nuclear facilities with particular emphasis on safety, technology, and managerial reform. In recognition of his expertise and experience in nuclear safety issues, he has recently been appointed to the newly created Nuclear Safety Subcommittee of the Minister's Advisory Council for Comprehensive Energy Policy. With experience as a researcher at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the early 1970s and also as a visiting researcher at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in the 1990s, he has maintained academic interest and involvement as well. He has been giving lectures, on regular basis, as a Visiting Professor at the University of Tokyo, his alma mater, since 1998.