



I would like to congratulate Nagasaki Association for Hibakushas' Medical Care (NASHIM) on the 30th anniversary of its establishment.

My ties to NASHIM began with local support for the Chernobyl nuclear accident.

In February of 1990, five years after the incident, during a visit to Moscow by an economic mission led by the then chairman of the Nippon Foundation Yohei Sasakawa, the former Soviet government requested cooperation to help victims in continuation from the previous year.

Chairman Sasakawa, who had expressed his support locally, asked for our cooperation upon returning to Japan. Morizo Ishidate, the then chairman of the foundation, and director Kenzo Kiikuni asked Itsuzo Shigematsu, director of the Radiation Effects Research Foundation, for guidance, and in August of the same year, Dr. Shigenobu Nagataki and others visited the area, and it is my understanding that this is what kickstarted the relationship between Nagasaki and Chernobyl.

While there had been the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the accidents at Bikini Atoll and Three Mile Island, the incident at Chernobyl, the first ever nuclear power plant accident of its magnitude after World War II, was a global problem.

At the time of the accident, I was involved in international efforts in China, then later in Afghanistan and the WHO headquarters, where I gained new experience and responses in my field of expertise, disaster and health emergencies.

I am aware that NASHIM has begun accepting trainees in addition to providing intervention from Japan out of a need to develop local human resources within Japan.

Not only is it a great honor to have helped the Foundation in some way, but my visit to Chernobyl a few years ago made me realize this exchange was not one of mere technical collaboration, but one of close solidarity between the people of Nagasaki and Chernobyl still living today, and so I would once again like to express my respect for these fruitful international efforts you have continued for all these years.

While local support concluded after ten years, related efforts at NASHIM and Nagasaki University have since spread to other areas across the globe.

I admire the ability of the Nagasaki base to deliver its message.

I would like to once again express my gratitude for contributions made by those involved in NASHIM in the committees and lectures we were involved in as well as the Nippon Foundation in relation to radiation after the Great East Japan Earthquake, an unprecedented complex disaster our nation experienced.

While I admit that I sometimes feel pessimistic whenever I see how long the road toward spreading the correct information and understanding of radiation and radioactivity and how to use these properly is, I would like to once again express my sincerest gratitude toward NASHIM's many years of contribution.

I would like to once again recognize the significance, importance, and brilliant achievements of NASHIM, and look forward to its further developments, efforts, and contributions to the world.

Congratulations on this day.
Sasakawa Health Foundation
Etsuko Kita, Chairperson