

Speech by Mr. Yasunobu Ishii
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The Nippon Foundation
At the Opening Ceremony
Of Postsecondary Education Network International
(PEN International)
For Students who are Deaf or Hard-of-Hearing
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Bauman Moscow State Technical University

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentleman

Good evening everybody. It is a great honor for me to be here today, to say a few words on behalf of The Nippon Foundation on this auspicious occasion, the opening ceremony of Multi-media Lab at BMSTU.

The Nippon Foundation is a grant-making organization based in Japan that provides financial assistance for activities that improve the quality of living of people all over the world. Our assistance is extended in such fields as healthcare, agriculture, education and disability.

The Nippon Foundation's support for deaf education began with helping overseas deaf or Hard-of Hearing students studying in the United States. But we have now expanded our focus to support higher educational institutes in various countries, so that students can study in their home countries.

There are two reasons why The Nippon Foundation decided to support PEN-International.

The first reason has to do with the remarkable growth of Information Technology. The Information Technology field is playing an increasingly important role in the world, and there are

many opportunities for the person that acquires expertise in this field, regardless of whether he or she happens to have a physical disability.

The second reason for our involvement with “PEN-International” is, as I mentioned earlier, to provide a support structure that is closer to home.

In the past we have provided support in the form of scholarships that enable deaf or Hard-of-Hearing students in developing countries to study abroad in the United States. But while this approach finances a lucky few of deaf or Hard-of-Hearing students to study in the United States, countless others have been left behind. These students have been unable to obtain post-secondary education of satisfactory quality in their home countries. This led us to question whether there shouldn’t be a local support for deaf or Hard-of-Hearing.

It was at that time that we had the wonderful fortune of obtaining the cooperation of Professor Fedorov, Dr. Stanevsky of BMSTU, Dr. Davila and Dr. Decaro of NTID, as well as the support of everyone here today, and our friends from Tianjin University of Technology of China, Tsukuba College of Technology of Japan and our other new partner, the college of St. Benilde of the Philippines.

I have heard that the Bauman Moscow State Technical University is one of the best universities in Russia in the field of Technology. It is thanks to you all that we were able to launch this project at such an outstanding university to create a worldwide network of science and technology universities. This is truly a remarkable endeavor.

Lastly, I would like to emphasize that we do not see our assistance to PEN-International as a charity, but as an investment for the

future. Therefore, it is our hope that Russia, the United States, Japan and other countries will share their expertise and know-how in the improvement and development of universities around the world.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you all, and wish you further success on this project.

Thank you.