

## **The Current Scenario of Higher Education and Employment opportunities for People with Disabilities**

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The National University Corporation, Tsukuba University of Technology, successfully held its 10<sup>th</sup> international symposium at the Tsukuba University of Technology University Hall on October 1, 2009. The theme was “The Current Situation in Higher Education and Employment for People with Disabilities.” Two years before, we held an international symposium on the employment opportunities and educational schemes for students with disabilities in educational institutions in Asia. This year, the symposium focused on the exchange of information on the present conditions of higher education and employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Thailand and Korea. We had two presenters: Pimpa Kachondham, Ph.D., dean of Ratchasuda College, Mahidol University, Thailand, and Sun-Kyoo Kim, Ph.D., president of Korea Employment Promotion Agency for the Disabled (KEPAD), Korea. Their presentations were titled “Disabled Students Services (DSS) in Higher Education in Thailand” and “Status of Higher Education and Employment of the Disabled in Korea,” respectively.

The audience participated in lively discussions with the lecturers, and they recalled interesting stories about the steps taken by different countries for promoting higher education and employment. The presenters expressed their expert opinions and discussed future prospects. Thus, we were able to understand with greater clarity the differences in the education and employment schemes for people with disabilities in different countries.

I sincerely thank the participants of this symposium and the people who have supported it. In addition, I am happy that we were able to compile a number of valuable reports that would substantially contribute to future studies.

I look forward to the next challenge.