



**INTERNATIONAL  
ACADEMY  
OF ASTRONAUTICS**

**PRESS-RELEASE**

**Press Release 15-03**

**October 11<sup>st</sup>, 2015**

## **IAA Attributes the Von Karman Award for 2015 to**

### **Dr. Hiroki Matsuo**

The International Academy of Astronautics (IAA) has attributed the Theodore Von Karman Award for 2015 to Dr. Hiroki Matsuo, Japan Manned Systems Corporation's Science Adviser, in recognition for his life-time efforts in advancing space research and applications, his leading role both in launch vehicle development and in interplanetary endeavors such as Halley's Armada and Hayabusa, his outstanding leadership of Japanese space policy through chairing the Space Activities Commission, his fruitful dedication to education, as well as his remarkable contributions to international cooperation and to the International Academy of Astronautics.

The Von Karman Award, created in 1983, recognizes outstanding lifetime achievements in space related scientific activities. It is awarded annually without restrictions concerning nationality or gender. Most prestigious of the Academy's individual awards, it is named in honor of the Academy's founder and first President, a scientist of the highest international reputation.

Dr. Matsuo spent the next 36 years at ISAS, the Institute of Space and Astronautical Science, an inter-university research institute responsible for overseeing Japanese scientific space research. He finished his career at ISAS as the director general in 2003.

He played a key role in both the development and launching of OHSUMI, the first Japanese satellite, and was also a key figure in the following M launch vehicle family. Further, he was engaged in nearly every scientific satellite mission of ISAS. Japanese interplanetary flight finally became a reality in 1985 when Japan joined Halley's Comet exploration as a member of the so-called Halley's Armada. The mission performed very well. The recent HAYABUSA's miraculous story was only possible on the basis of the technology acquired through the Halley's mission. He inaugurated the HAYABUSA (asteroid sample return) and KAGUYA (lunar surface observer) missions himself.

From 2003 he served as a commissioner and then Chairman of the Space Activities Commission. Overseeing JAXA, which was founded by the merging the three existing space organizations in 2003, he successfully guided Japanese space activities while also regularly chairing the Asia-Pacific Region Space Agency Forum until his retirement in 2010. Among various activities his commission investigated the launch failure of the H-IIA-6 rocket and the function termination of the earth observation satellite MIDORI II. This commission clarified the causes, and reviewed the development process of JAXA in general. Since then no launch failures have occurred.