



News Release

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For more information:
David Bolger
dbolger@spfusa.org
703.969.7900

Leadership Change at Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA

Washington, D.C. – Today, Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA (Sasakawa USA) announced that Admiral [Dennis Blair](#) will retire as Chairman of the Board, effective October 1, and Chief Executive Officer Ambassador [James Zumwalt](#) will step down, effective August 31. As their replacement, the Sasakawa USA Board of Directors has appointed Sasakawa USA President Dr. [Satohiro Akimoto](#) to succeed Admiral Blair as Chairman of the Board, effective October 1, and assume Sasakawa USA's management and administrative responsibilities, starting September 1. Admiral Blair and Ambassador Zumwalt will continue to support Sasakawa USA's mission as Distinguished Senior Fellows.

"Under Jim's leadership over the past 2 ½ years, Sasakawa USA has enhanced its role as a generator of policy ideas and has expanded its programs to educate key American audiences on the mutual benefits of the U.S.-Japan relationship," said Admiral Blair, who began as CEO at Sasakawa USA in 2014. He added, "We are fortunate to have someone of Satohiro Akimoto's caliber and experience to lead Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA at a critical moment in the U.S.-Japan relationship."

"I am honored to continue the efforts of Admiral Blair and Ambassador Zumwalt to strengthen the U.S. Japan alliance," Dr. Akimoto said. "I look forward to continuing to work with them both." Dr. Akimoto has been president of Sasakawa USA since January 1, 2019. He has worked in the areas of business, research, intellectual dialogue, and student exchanges between Japan and the United States in various roles in the private sector in the U.S. and Japan.

While continuing to serve as a Sasakawa USA Distinguished Senior Fellow in order to complete ongoing projects, Admiral Blair will focus on a new position on the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill faculty. Ambassador Zumwalt will devote more time to public speaking, policy briefings, and writing about the U.S.-Japan relationship.

About Sasakawa Peace Foundation USA

[Sasakawa USA](#) is an independent American non-profit, non-partisan institution devoted to research, analysis, and better understanding of the U.S.-Japan relationship. Through research and education programs, Sasakawa USA facilitates people-to-people exchanges and dialogue between American and Japanese policymakers, influential citizens, and the broader public. Follow us on Twitter, @SasakawaUSA.

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