



Koji Omi

Former Minister of Finance  
Member of the House of Representatives  
(Liberal Democratic Party)

Koji Omi was born in 1932, in Gunma Prefecture, Japan. After graduation from Hitotsubashi University (Commerce), he joined the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) in 1956.

On assignment abroad with MITI, he served as Consul at the Japanese Consulate General in New York. Returning to Japan, he successively served as Director of the South Asia & Eastern Europe Division, Trade Policy Bureau; as Director of the Small Enterprise Policy Division, Small & Medium Enterprise Agency (S & MEA); as Director of the Administrative Division, the Science and Technology Agency; and as Director-General of the Guidance Department, S & MEA.

In 1982, Koji Omi resigned from MITI to run in the House of Representatives (lower house) election. First elected in 1983, he is now serving his eighth term. As a member of the House of Representatives, he has occupied the posts of Parliamentary Vice-minister for Finance; Director-General of the Commerce & Industry Policy Bureau, LDP; Director-General of the Science & Technology Policy Bureau, LDP; Chairman of the Standing Committee on Finance; Director-General of the Election Bureau, LDP; and Acting Secretary-General, LDP.

He currently serves as Member of the House of Representatives, previously serving as Minister of Finance (Sept. 2006 – Aug. 2007), three times as Cabinet Member, Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy, and for Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs (2001-2002), and Minister of State for Economic Planning (1997-1998).

Koji Omi is considered as a key political figure and one of the most influential in the field of science and technology in Japan, his achievements including the central role he played in enacting the Fundamental Law of Science and Technology in 1995. This law contributed greatly toward making Japan a science and technology-oriented nation. As Minister of State for Okinawa and for Science and Technology, he advocated and promoted the founding of the Okinawa Institute of Science and Technology, an international and interdisciplinary graduate university. He also founded the Science and Technology in Society (STS) *forum* with the aim of building a worldwide network among scientists, policymakers and business people. The STS *forum* has been successfully held annually in Kyoto, Japan since 2004, to discuss the “lights and shadows” of science and technology for the sake of humankind.