

Opening Address

Chair of OC, ICNTRM2026

Good morning, distinguished guests, colleagues, and friends.

On behalf of the International Nuclear Track Society and the Organizing Committee, it is my great honor and pleasure to welcome you to the 29th International Conference on Nuclear Tracks and Radiation Measurements.

First, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all of you, especially those who have traveled long distances to be here, Japan as the Far East. We are thrilled to welcome around 90 participants representing 15 countries and regions from all over the world—including Bulgaria, China, France, Italy, India, Kuwait, Nigeria, Portugal, Russia, South Korea, Switzerland, Taiwan, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and of course, Japan. In Japan, especially, Chiba, Fukushima, Maizuru, Nagoya and Kobe.

As you may have noticed, August in Kobe is exceptionally hot and humid. I truly appreciate your passion and dedication to our research field, which is even hotter than the Japanese summer outside! From this conference onwards, we introduced a hydration time alongside the coffee break.

Once upon a time, our common research field of solid-state nuclear track detectors brought together researchers from surprisingly diverse backgrounds—from cosmic rays and nuclear physics to cancer therapy, radon monitoring, and nano-pore materials science. Although our specific applications differ, we were all connected by a single, unique tool: the 'track' recorded in solids. That's all water under the bridge now.

To understand the challenges we face today, I want to reflect on the past. Here you can see the history of our conference. Twelve years ago, when we held our 26th conference here, I didn't see the value in looking back. Today, twelve years later, my perspective has shifted.

Our conference history began in Strasbourg in 1957, long before I was born. At that time, nuclear emulsions were the primary experimental method. Solid-state nuclear track detectors emerged around 1976, and the subsequent discovery of PADC (CR-39) significantly shaped our field's development. Later, the 11th conference was held in Bristol in 1981, which I learned was attended by at least two Japanese researchers. I have a conference book. Before looking at the contents, I would like to note one important fact: research using nuclear emulsions has continued to the present day, centered on Nagoya University in Japan, and it has yielded results even more amazing than the Egyptian Pyramids.

Here you can see the photo of conference proceedings from Bristol. Let's have a quick look inside.

Here is the table of contents. We can spot "Benton" here. At the bottom. "Somogyi" is an invited speaker, and the chairperson is "Price"—truly a dream team from my generation.

On these next two pages, the text is quite small, but let's try highlighting 'CR-39'. As you can see, most of the presentations feature 'CR-39' in their titles. This was a time when research into CR-39 literally exploded, with a total of 179 papers presented at this 1981 conference.

Allow me to introduce two Japanese researchers: Professor Doke and Professor Ogura. The two met at this conference by a chance and, upon returning to Japan, set up a study group. This group is still active today, and it was there that I began my studies on CR-39.

Needless to say, this conference is not solely devoted to CR-39, but covers the broader field of Radiation Measurements. However, I would like you to bear in mind that research into CR-39 in Japan began with just two parsons. I myself have been researching CR-39 for a relatively long time, but I still feel that we have not yet managed to fully realize its potential.

The size of our gathering today—around 60 experts—is perfect. It is small enough for everyone to talk to one another, yet diverse enough to spark brand-new ideas.

Over the next several days, I hope we can not only discuss the subatomic tracks in our detectors, but also create new "tracks" of friendship and international collaboration here in Kobe. Please enjoy the fruitful scientific presentations and discussions, as well as, the beautiful view of Kobe, and our wonderful local foods.

In the last but never in the least, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our conference sponsors: Chiyoda Technol, Nagase Landauer, and Nuclear Fuel Industries. Exhibition booths for all three companies are set up just outside the hole, so please be sure to stop by and visit them.

Thank you very much, and welcome to Kobe University, once again!

Thank you for your kind attention!

T. Y., Kobe University
31st August 2026, slightly modified for HP