Brief Summary

Professor Kenji Ishihara was born in Tokyo, Japan on 16th April 1934. Having graduated from the University of Tokyo in 1957, he went on to complete his PhD there in 1963. After a period of research at the University of Illinois under the advice of Professor R.B. Peck, he returned to the post of Associate Professor at the University of Tokyo. In 1977 he took up the position of Professor of Civil Engineering and remained at the University of Tokyo for 40 years. During this time he was active in the International Society for Soil Mechanics and Foundation Engineering (ISSMFE). He was particularly effective in advancing the work of Technical Committee TC4 – Earthquake Geotechnical Engineering and in establishing the new discipline of earthquake geotechnology. His work with ISSMFE culminated in his appointment as President of the Society for the term 1997-2001.

Professor Ishihara was the 1993 Rankine Lecturer delivering "Liquefaction and Flow Failures During Earthquakes" and the Terzaghi orator at the time of the 14th International Conference on Soil Mechanics and Geotechnical Engineering in Hamburg in 1997. He was the recipient of H.B. Seed Medal in 1998 from A.S.C.E. Honorary doctorate was given to him from Technical University of Bucharest, Rumania in 1995, and from the Technical University of Istanbul in 1999. He received the Japan Academy prize in 2000 and was elected in 2010 to Foreign Associate of the United States Academy of Engineering. In 1996, he published his textbook "Soil Behaviour in Earthquake Geotechnics" (published by Oxford University Press), which summarizes his life's work. This book was translated in Russian in 2006. This book is a testimony to his most productive research and engineering life.

Professor Ishihara has published over 250 technical papers and three books in Japanese. He has traveled as a consultant and lectured widely throughout the world. His work has focused on modeling of cohesionless soils, dynamic pore pressure and liquefaction, and earthquake stability of foundations and dams. Much of his work is based on field evidence and the assessment of real problems of soil behaviour during earthquakes. He was instrumental in the research into the geotechnical effects of the Kobe earthquake and has been involved in revision of the earthquake-resistant design codes in Japan.

On his retirement from the University of Tokyo in 1995 he took up the post of Professor of Geotechnical Engineering at the Tokyo University of Science and then at Chuo University in 2001.