

The Panel of Experts on Collaborating with Communities of Japanese Immigrants and
Descendants (“Nikkei”) in Central and South America
Greeting by State Minister Kentaro Sonoura

I myself am State Minister in charge of Central and South America. I participated in the Convention of Nikkei and Japanese Abroad in November last year, and also visited Chile and Peru in January this year. I noted that Nikkei communities themselves are building bridges between Japan and other countries in their own right by disseminating the Japanese language and Japanese culture, and through medical services as well as through sports and other exchanges. Personally, what I am particularly keenly aware of is the necessity to create opportunities for the new generation to come into contact with Japan in order for this bridge-building to continue.

In addition, in Golden Week (end of April - beginning of May) this year, Japan House will open in São Paulo, which has the largest Nikkei community in the world. Japan will strive to strengthen groups that are fond of and knowledgeable about Japan, while collaborating with Nikkei communities to communicate Japan’s wide-ranging appeal.

Your suggestions will form the basis for Japan as a whole to make efforts to deepen collaboration with Nikkei communities, and I kindly ask for your cooperation.

(END)