



KAKEHASHI Project

Jewish Americans (American Jewish Committee) Report

1. Program Overview

【Objective】 In this program, participants selected by the American Jewish Committee (AJC) were invited to Japan to trace the history of the Jewish people and Japan and thereby promote active exchanges and cooperative relationships between Japan and the Jewish community in the United States. The program also aimed to deepen U.S.-Japan relations and strengthen the network of participants.

【Participants】 Total: 17 participants, including 15 working youths selected by the AJC and 2 AJC staff members

【Locations】 Tokyo, Kyoto, Fukui

【Program Schedule】

■ Pre-study Program (Online)

Oct. 26 (Thu) 【Pre-departure Orientation】 Project objective and mission, rundown of the schedule, overseas travel warning, COVID-19 precautions, etc.

Set Period Prior to Arrival 【Video Viewing】 Lecture “Japan and the United Nations”, “Lecture on Japan” (selected from Web Japan)

■ Inbound Program

Dec. 7 (Thu) Gathering in the hotel

Dec. 8 (Fri) 【Courtesy Call】 Mr. Gilad COHEN, Ambassador of Israel to Japan

【Observation】 Nijubashi at the Imperial Palace, Meiji Jingu Shrine

【Cultural Exchange】 Jewish Community of Japan

Dec. 9 (Sat) 【Observation】 Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery

Travel from Tokyo to Kyoto

Dec. 10 (Sun) 【Observation】 Kinkakuji Temple

【Cultural Experience】 Uji Municipal Tea House Taihoan (tea ceremony experience)

【Observation】 World Heritage site of Byodoin Temple (garden & museum)

Dec. 11 (Mon) Travel from Kyoto to Fukui

【Observation】 Port of Humanity Tsuruga Museum

【Courtesy Call】 Mr. YONEZAWA Koji, Mayor of Tsuruga City, Tsuruga City Hall

【Observation】 Tour of the Tsuruga Red Brick Warehouse
【Observation, Experience】 Tsuruga Konbu shaving
【Observation】 TSURUGA POLT SQUARE “otta”
 Travel from Fukui to Kyoto
 Dec. 12 (Tue) **【Workshop】** Preparations for the Reporting Session (summarizing program findings, preparation of action plans)
【Observation】 Nishiki Market
【School exchange】 Faculty of Theology, Doshisha University
 Travel from Kyoto to Tokyo
 Dec. 13 (Wed) **【Courtesy Call】** Mr. Rahm EMANUEL, U.S. Ambassador to Japan, American Embassy in Japan
【Reporting Session】 Presentation of program findings and action plans
【Courtesy Call】 Mr. ARIMA Yutaka, Director-General, North American Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
 Dec. 14 (Thu) End at the hotel

2. Program Photos

Inbound Program

	
December 8 【Courtesy Call】 Mr. Gilad COHEN, Ambassador of Israel to Japan	December 8 【Exchange】 Jewish Community of Japan
	
December 8 【Observation】 Meiji Jingu Shrine	December 9 【Observation】 Meiji Memorial Picture Gallery



December 10 【Observation】 Kinkakuji Temple



December 10 【Observation】 Byodoin Temple



December 11 【 Observation, Experience 】
Tsuruga Konbu shaving



December 11 【Courtesy Call】 Mr. YONEZAWA
Koji, Mayor of Tsuruga City, Tsuruga City Hall



December 12 【Observation】 Nishiki Market



December 12 【School exchange】 Doshisha
University



December 13 【Courtesy Call】 Mr. Rahm
EMANUEL, U.S. Ambassador to Japan,
American Embassy in Japan



December 13 【Reporting Session】

	
December 13 【Reporting Session】 Commemorative photo	December 13 【Courtesy Call】 Mr. ARIMA Yutaka, Director-General, North American Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

3. Voices from the Participants (excerpt)

◆ Working Youth

During my exchange program, I had some remarkable experiences. Visiting the Foreign Ministry offices in Japan, the Israeli Embassy, and the U.S. Embassy provided unique insights into international relations and diplomacy. Additionally, participating in a traditional Japanese tea ceremony was a culturally enriching experience, highlighting the elegance of Japanese traditions. Lastly, the Humanity Museum in Tsuruga stood out for its engaging exhibits, offering a deep dive into human history and culture. These experiences collectively made my participation in the KAKEHASHI Program extremely memorable and valuable.

◆ Working Youth

Formal meetings with ambassadors and high-level Japanese officials (at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a local government) were the most relevant and informative parts of the program from a professional standpoint.

4. Voices from the Receiving Parties (excerpt)

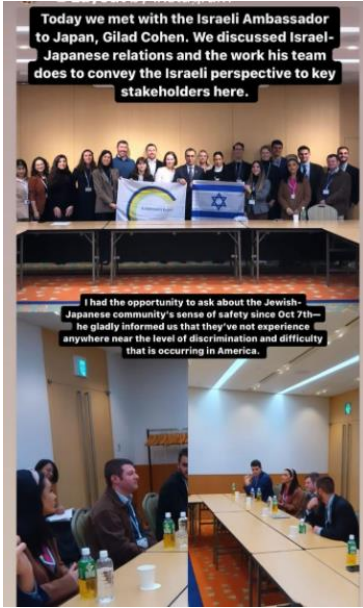
◆ Courtesy Call Destination

We gained extremely good responses from the participants of the program, who solemnly viewed the exhibits of Polish orphans and the landing of Jewish refugees, observed the exhibition planned by local high school students, and actively exchanged opinions on their courtesy visit to the mayor. They also displayed strong interest in Japanese culture through the Konbu shaving observation experience.

◆ Faculty at the Exchange School

We talked about our visit to a Jewish community in the United States that was a part of a previous KAKEHASHI Program and shared what we experienced during that visit. I think this sharing of experiences brought us closer to the participants from the U.S.

5. Disseminations by the Participants (excerpt)

	
December 9, 2023 (Instagram) Today we met with the Israeli Ambassador to Japan, Gilad Cohen. We discussed Israel-Japanese relations and the work his team does to convey the Israeli perspective to key stakeholders here. I had the opportunity to ask about the Jewish-Japanese community's sense of safety since Oct. 7th. He gladly informed us that they've not experienced anywhere near the level of discrimination and difficulty that is occurring in America.	December 20, 2023 (Instagram) For the second time, I had the privilege of leading a group of young Jewish leaders to Japan with AJC ACCESS and Japan's Kakehashi program. Together, we met with representatives from the Israeli, American, and Japanese governments to deepen our understanding of global affairs and strengthen the relationships between our countries and the Jewish people. This year's trip came at an incredibly challenging time for the global Jewish community, with rising tension between democracy and authoritarianism around the world. It was also Hanukkah ^(Note 1). Throughout the trip, we continually discussed what it means to be the light in the darkness, and to have hope in dark times. I feel deeply grateful to have worked with

	such a thoughtful and committed (and fun) group of young leaders, who will continue to fight for democracy, freedom, and the wellbeing of the Jewish people. Japan has come so far since the end of World War II. It's a reminder that no matter how bad things are, we have the choice to transition from war and devastation to joy and prosperity. (Note 1) Hanukkah: A Jewish winter festival
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6. Presentations of Program Findings and Action Plans at the Reporting Session (excerpt)

Locations: Tokyo, Kyoto, Fukui (excerpts from presentations given by all four groups)

	Sparking Hope - As a member of the young Jewish professional community at Adas Israel synagogue in DC, there is an opportunity to discuss the Jewish community of Japan. The synagogue hosts a monthly happy hour during which we can discuss the Tokyo Jewish community, the Japanese perception of it, and the differences in anti-semitism. Alternatively, we can leverage the monthly Saturday luncheon to have a lengthier discussion with the DC community. - Op-ed about keeping kosher in Japan and cultural observations related to existing as a Jew in other spaces. Jews in the United States are subjected to many stereotypes. But when abroad, we are often free from those stereotypes, as people are not as aware of the particular nuances of our ethnic and religious background.
[Action Plan] - Share differing values - Emphasis on hospitality - Focus on learning and education - Rich cultural traditions - Technical innovations - Strategies - Social media & blogs We will utilize social media campaigns and blog posts to promote participation in the KAKEHASHI Program, Japan-Jewish ties, and cultural exchanges. - Introductory event We will introduce Japan's basic cultural customs we experienced in the KAKEHASHI Program, such as the tea ceremony and hotpots, to the local Jewish community.	[Action Plan] - Teachings from Tsuruga and sushi-making in Baltimore As a resident of Moishe House Baltimore, we will hold an event for young generation Jews at the house. It will be an event in which participants will learn about the history of Jewish refugees in Tsuruga while experiencing sushi-making. We will announce the event in the <i>Baltimore Jewish Times</i> and have local journalism provide coverage of it. - KAKEHASHI sabbath We will invite people from the local community to the Sabbath service ^(Note 1) held at Sixth & I Synagogue ^(Note 2). There, we will introduce our learnings and experiences in the KAKEHASHI Program and about AJC. By acting as goodwill

(3) Community dialogues We will create ties between local Jewish and Japanese-American communities in our city to promote deeper understanding and empathy. 3. Social media campaign (1) Blog posts We will share our unique experiences, cultural insights, and the significance of the places we visited, with a focus on the relationship between significant cultural historical places in Japan and Jewish history. (2) Education on Japanese culture We will create contents with the aim of promoting tourism. (3) Cultural exchanges and long-term relationships We will introduce the special moments in our cultural exchanges and learnings we experienced during and after our stay in Japan. 4. Community dialogues (1) Purpose Foster dialogue between the Jewish and Japanese communities in the U.S. to promote mutual respect and solidarity in navigating shared historical experiences and addressing contemporary challenges. (2) Implementation details For example, via AJC, we will host a dialogue between Jewish young professionals and young professionals from the Japan America Society, facilitated by the Consuls General of Japan and Israel to our regions. We will discuss key issues facing our communities and share perspectives on allyship. (3) Objective We will foster solidarity by mutually sharing	ambassadors of Japan, we hope to connect the Jewish people with the Japanese community in Washington DC and promote an interest in becoming AJC KAKEHASHI members in the future. (Note 1) Sabbath service: A religious service held on the Sabbath, or the day of rest for Jewish people (from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday) (Note 2) Sixth & I: A synagogue (place of worship for Jewish people) in Washington DC 3. As a member of the young Jewish professional community at Adas Israel synagogue in DC, there is an opportunity to discuss the Jewish community of Japan. The synagogue hosts a monthly happy hour during which we can discuss the Tokyo Jewish community, the Japanese perception of it, and the differences in anti-semitism. Alternatively, we can leverage the monthly Saturday luncheon to have a lengthier discussion with the DC community. 4. Other activities (1) Activities alongside AJC • We will present a report to the board in the Philadelphia and South New Jersey area. • We will discuss project possibilities with members of the board and the executive team. • We will press ahead with the idea of issuing press releases and emails about the highlights of our trip to people on the area mailing list. (2) Independent activities • We will give a presentation at the Information Professionals Association (IPA). • We will work to incorporate and emphasize the sharing of Jewish and Japanese values in
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stories of having overcome difficulties and seeking common grounds for understanding historical struggles regarding unfairness and injustice.	the Japanese Ministry of Defense's future initiatives against disinformation.
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Implementation Agency: Japan International Cooperation Center (JICE)