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INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE AND PUBLIC RELATIONS ACTIVITIES

1	Promoting International Cultural Exchange
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(a) Overview

Cultural exchange is an important pillar of Japan's foreign policy as it contributes to the stable development of relations with other countries by enhancing the international understanding and appreciation of Japan. In particular, with the advance of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in recent years, organizations and individuals outside the government, such as the media, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individual citizens, have been increasingly active in sending messages in the international community. In this situation, for the Japanese Government, seeking deeper understanding from people toward Japan or its diplomacy becomes more important than ever. At the same time, since the terrorist attacks in the United States (US), there has been a growing awareness of the importance of dialogue among civilizations for mutual understanding. With this basic recognition, in pursuit of better understanding from abroad Japan makes efforts to convey to other countries Japan's attractiveness as well as its real posture by introducing Japan's culture and traditions, and to facilitate the education of Japanese language abroad, Japan also promotes better mutual understanding with other countries by conducting personnel exchange programs at various levels, ranging from eminent persons and cultural specialists to youths and other citizens. In addition, Japan also places emphasis on multilateral cultural cooperation in the international community, such as the preservation of cultural heritage.

(b) FIFA World Cup, Year of Japan-Korea National Exchange, Projects Commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Normalization of Japan-China Relations and Other Projects

In order to deepen mutual understanding with other countries, Japan carries out cultural exchange programs

with various countries through organizations such as the Japan Foundation, and also gives support to cultural exchange projects held by private organizations. In particular, Japan is vigorously carrying out cultural exchange programs called "commemorative projects" with a number of countries to celebrate special occasions.

In 2002, the Year of Japan-Korea (ROK) National Exchange, and the year when the FIFA World Cup was co-hosted by Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK), the two countries actively implemented programs to deepen the exchanges between the peoples of the two countries. Specifically, Japan held various cultural exchange programs, extending from co-productions of music and theater to citizens' exchange programs such as the reproduction of diplomatic goodwill missions (Korean Mission to Japan) of the Edo Period, and it also supported grassroots activities of private organizations. With China, Japan held various cultural exchange programs to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the normalization of relations, such as the Japan-China joint opera performance and a pop concert.

As the year 2003 has been designated as the "Japan-ASEAN Exchange Year 2003," Japan intends to strengthen the sense of community through exchange programs with countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in various areas including culture. Furthermore, Japan plans to hold the "Japanese Culture Festival in Russia 2003" throughout the year 2003 and carry out programs introducing Japanese culture in various areas of Russia including Moscow and St. Petersburg, which will celebrate its 300th anniversary. Moreover, with the US, the years 2003 and 2004 have been designated as the 150th Anniversary of the Japan-US relationship, and exchange programs will be promoted in both countries.

(c) Youth Exchange and Education

Exchanges between youth, who bear the responsibility for the future of the international community, are extremely

Japan's Efforts for the FIFA World Cup

With the co-hosting of the FIFA World Cup by Japan and the ROK, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) made efforts to introduce Japan in various countries.

Public relations activities at overseas establishments

- Established a FIFA World Cup information desk at overseas establishments in countries participating in the World Cup (77 establishments in 31 countries), at which Federation of International Football Associations (FIFA) goods and other items were displayed, and materials introducing Japan were distributed in coordination with relevant ministries, local governments and other organizations.
- In cooperation with local governments that hosted matches and training camps, overseas establishments in the various countries distributed public relations material, tourist information and other items made by the local governments.
- Lectures introducing Japan given by foreign football players who used to play in J. League.

Utilizing video materials

- Distributed and requested the broadcast of a video made by MOFA, which included a special introduction of the cities that were venues for FIFA World Cup matches, to TV stations in countries abroad and to airlines, among others. Also encouraged the introduction of Japan and the ROK by utilizing a Japan-ROK jointly produced video.

Public relations via a website

- Established a special site on the Japan Information Network website of MOFA. Also established links to relevant sites on the Japanese and English-language versions of the MOFA website as well as the websites of its overseas establishments.

Cooperation for foreign press reporting

- Invited foreign TV crews, primarily from participating countries, to Japan. Assisted them in producing and broadcasting programs introducing Japan. Also carried out invitations to Japan for ROK sports journalists (about five every year) for a period of six years from FY1997.
- Provided various kinds of information necessary for foreign press scheduled to come to Japan.

Visa exemption for ROK citizens for a limited time period

- Exempted visas for ROK citizens who requested entry to Japan for the purpose of a short stay of under 30 days, which included the period of the FIFA World Cup (May 15 to June 30)
- Both Japan and the ROK dispatched immigration control staff to each other's country to give or deny permission in advance for entry into the country (pre-clearance). This was done as an effort to simplify and expedite immigration procedures at arrival points so that people's visits could take place smoothly and appropriately.

important for developing friendly and cooperative future relations based on mutual understanding between Japan and various countries. In this regard, Japan has actively promoted efforts in areas such as youth exchange and education.

JET Programme⁵⁹

The JET Programme 15th Year Special Evaluation

Commission, which was established in 2000 and is composed of private-sector experts concerning the JET Programme, compiled a report on the programme in 2001 in the 15th year of the programme. At present, in light of the report's recommendations, efforts are being made to strengthen further actions in the fields of youth exchange and education through enhancing and developing the programme.

⁵⁹ Foreign youth invitation program for teaching languages and other subjects (Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme): Over 6,000 people from 38 countries are invited to Japan each year for the purpose of enhancing foreign language education in the country and advancing international exchanges at the local level through youth exchanges. Since 1987, local governments and other organizations have carried out this programme with the cooperation of Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications, and the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations.

International Exchanges and the FIFA World Cup

I can see, just looking around me, that the internationalization of local governments is slowly but clearly progressing as the number of international exchanges increases.

Internationalization takes a number of forms such as international marriages and visits by students from overseas. The FIFA World Cup has deepened Japan's interaction with the rest of the world.

My town, Nakatsue-mura, promoted itself as a good location for a training camp for teams participating in the FIFA World Cup, jointly hosted by Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK).

Town representatives visited 15 embassies in Japan to offer our town's services as a training camp. In particular, through our shared interest in the natural environment, we developed a good relationship with the Jamaican ambassador, and it brought me a chance to visit Jamaica.

I have quite some pride in Japan, but upon arriving in Jamaica I realized that we have not reached the world-class level. The yen could not be used at the airport, at hotels or even at banks. I even wondered if the stories I had heard about the days of high growth in Japan when the yen was even more trusted than the US dollar were really true or just delusions of grandeur. I felt it even more when I saw that the majority of the cars on the roads, and even the taxis, were Japanese brands.

Unfortunately, the Jamaican team was eliminated from the FIFA World Cup in the qualifying stages, but Nakatsue-mura was fortunate to become the training ground for the team from the Republic of Cameroon. This produced better results for our small town than we could have imagined. We managed very friendly exchanges that bridged our language and cultural gaps, and became close to the athletes. At the send-off party that we gave the team the night before they left, the members of the Cameroon team, known as the indomitable lions, stood in the middle of the dance circle formed by the children dancing the Hanagasa-ondo dance. Then, one by one, they enthusiastically and uninhibitedly joined in. I was very moved by this. On behalf of Nakatsue-mura, we presented the members of the team with special honorary village citizenship awards.

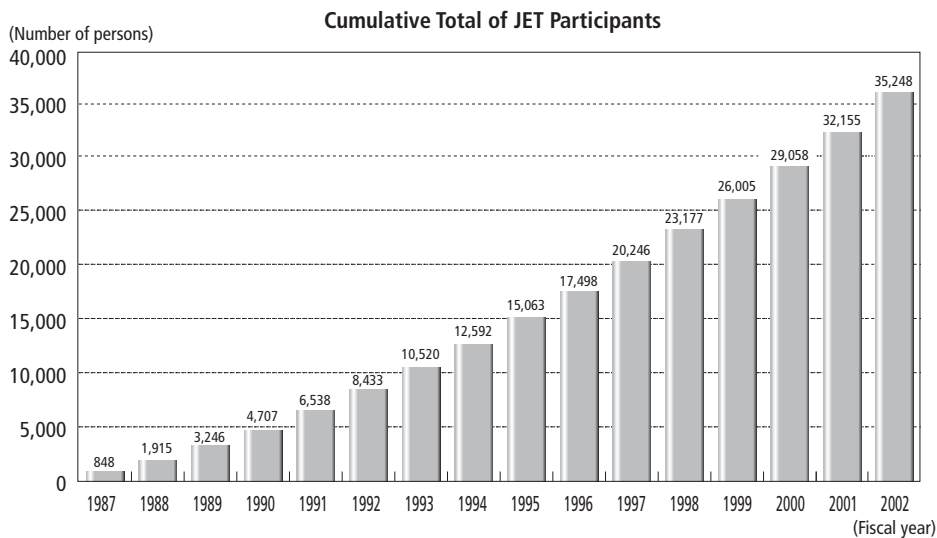
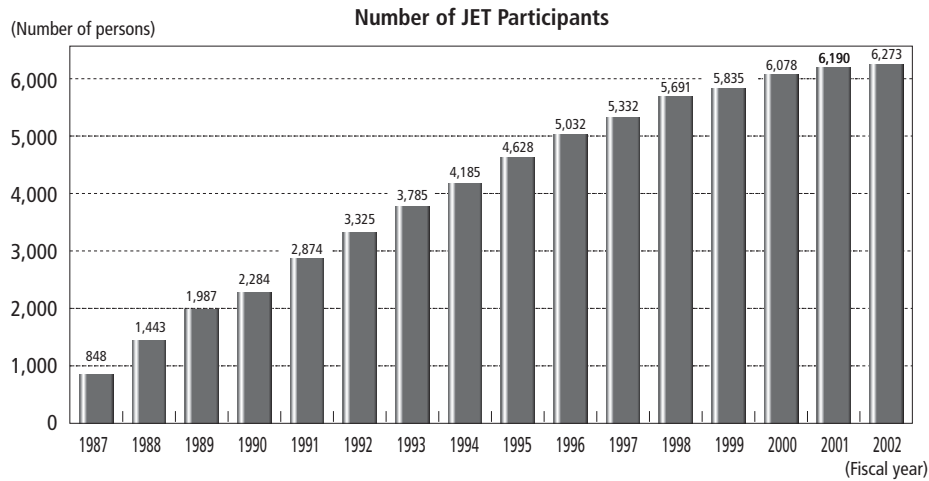
The present day progress of internationalization has imparted a lot of vitality to the development of our village, through the FIFA World Cup. Even though the Cameroon team did not go on to the final stages of the tournament and went home early, and the FIFA World Cup itself came to an end, thanks to people in the media Nakatsue-mura became a talking point.

The tricolor Cameroon flag which was raised at the end of 2001 is still fluttering in the breeze on the village office roof today, making the villagers feel good and giving joy to the much increased number of tourists now visiting our town. The FIFA World Cup and internationalization are just wonderful.

Yasumu Sakamoto, Mayor, Nakatsue-mura

(Photo)

Number of JET Participants and Their Cumulative Total



Interactions among Exchange Students in Japan

Japan has strengthened its support to exchanges among students who are studying or who have studied in Japan by providing assistance to more than 160 Japan Alumni Associations around the world. Japan also provides information concerning studying in Japan through the media, including “the Study in Japan Comprehensive Guide” website (<http://www.studyjapan.go.jp>). These and other efforts have been undertaken with a view to fostering an even greater number of people who understand Japan through their experience of having studied in Japan.

Research on Japan and Japanese Language Education Abroad

Promoting research on Japan and spreading the use of Japanese language abroad is essential for fostering a deeper understanding of Japan’s politics, economy, culture and society in foreign countries. For this purpose, Japan has subsidized institutions which conduct research on Japan, has dispatched Japanese language education experts, has held training sessions for foreign Japanese language teachers from abroad, has donated educational materials and has administered the Japanese-Language Proficiency Test.

Participating in the JET Programme: The Joy of Being Needed

Starting in 1997, I worked for three years as the first Brazilian Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) at the Mie International Exchange Foundation. As a Japanese Brazilian and someone who considers Japan as a second home, I tried to broaden the Japanese people's understanding of my home country by explaining that it is more than just samba, carnivals, the Amazon, soccer and coffee. Participating in the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme was a new challenge I made for myself.

The work that a CIR needs to do depends on the needs of the region. In addition to the sister-city relationship between Mie Prefecture and San Paolo State, the number of Brazilians of Japanese descent working in Mie is rapidly increasing. Even before I became accustomed to my new life, I was expected to act as an advisor to Brazilians living in Japan; yet, I was totally useless at first. I stuck by a saying of my parents: "Asking a question may bring momentary embarrassment; not asking will cause embarrassment for your entire life" and boldly asked my superiors and friends lots of questions. I learned much from them. I also visited community centers and schools throughout the prefecture and had the opportunity to interact with many people. I taught people about Brazil through relevant topics pertaining to everyday life as well as the food culture, and in this way, while talking about our points in common and our differences, I was able to devote myself to cultural exchange.

In my second year of living in Japan I learned that my father had become ill. Instinctively, I immediately wanted to return to Brazil, but my father said, "Do you remember the time you called me full of excitement after climbing Mt. Fuji? The view from the top was all the more rewarding because you had to struggle to get there, was it not? Everything is like that. You can only feel really fulfilled if you do not give up until you have completed the task you set for yourself."

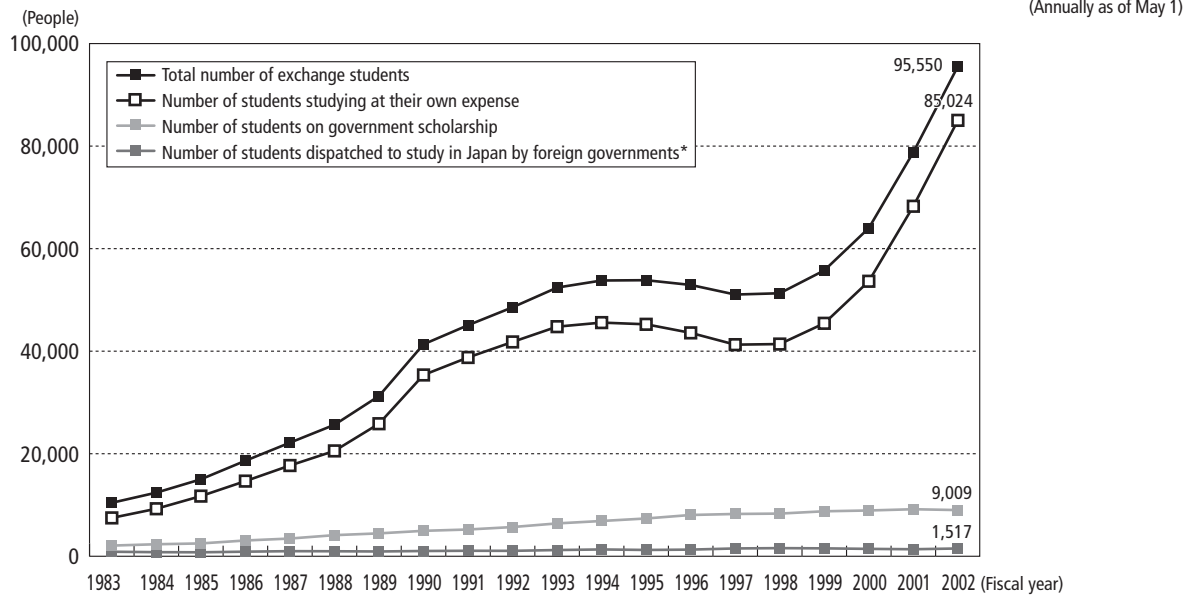
In my three years on the JET Programme I made precious friends and had invaluable experiences which have left an indelible impression on my heart. More than ever, I realized that differences of nationality or language are no barrier when one approaches people with a sincere heart.

Currently, I am working as the Brazilian Chapter Representative of the JET Alumni Association (JETAA). In the future, I will continue to devote my efforts to enabling many young Brazilians to have a chance to participate in the JET Programme—a tremendous opportunity to spread one's wings.

(Photo)

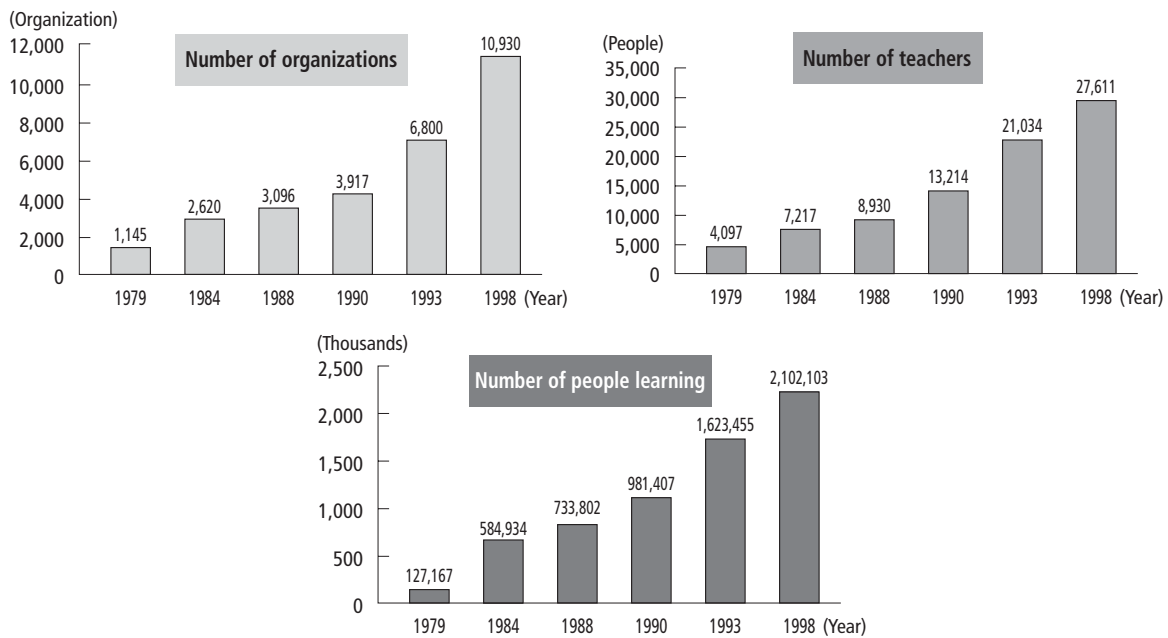
Christina Izumi Sagara,
JETAA Brazilian Chapter Representative

Change in the Number of Exchange Students in Japan



Note: * The students who are dispatched to study in Japan by foreign governments come from Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Uzbekistan, Laos, Viet Nam, Cambodia and the ROK.
 Source: Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, *Acceptance of Foreign Students in Japan*.

Changes in Japanese Language Education Abroad



(d) Cultural Cooperation

Japan offers support in various ways to the cultural activities carried out by developing countries and by international organizations.

Japan has been actively providing developing countries with assistance to support their nation-building efforts from the perspective of cultural development as well as economic and social development. Through the Cultural Grant Aid programs, Japan offers *gratis* equipment to

(Photo)

cultural and educational activities of developing countries. In FY2002, Japan enhanced the aid program by introducing the Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects, which provides small-scale but elastic support for NGOs, and the Grant Aid for Cultural Heritage, which provides grants to ameliorate the peripheral environment of the cultural heritage deemed as the common heritage of mankind.

Furthermore, Japan has been providing active support for the preservation of the world's tangible (cultural

heritage sites, etc.) and intangible (traditional arts such as dance and music; traditional crafts such as ceramics, lacquer arts and dyeing) cultural heritage through the funds-in-trust in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). A representative example of cooperation for tangible cultural heritage is the preservation and reconstruction of the Angkor monuments in Cambodia, which began during the process of peace and reconstruction in Cambodia. Furthermore, as a part of its reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan, Japan dispatched a Japan-UNESCO joint survey mission to Afghanistan in October 2002 to begin assisting UNESCO in the preservation of the Bamiyan site.

In regard to the preservation of intangible cultural heritage, given the understanding that cultural diversity is the source of social and economic vitality, UNESCO announced the Proclamation of Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity in May 2001. This was a part of efforts for the inheritance and development of intangible heritage possessing exceptional value. The proclamation designated 19 intangible heritage assets around the world, including Japan's Nôgaku. Japan intends to continue actively supporting efforts to promote and preserve intangible heritage in cooperation with UNESCO, while fully utilizing its knowledge and experience as a country advanced in protecting intangible cultural heritage.

Meanwhile, as part of its international cooperation efforts to regulate the illegal international trade of cultural property, Japan concluded the Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property in 2002 (The Convention entered into force on December 9 for Japan).

2	Domestic Public Opinion and Public Relations Activities, and Promoting the Understanding of Japan in Other Countries
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(a) Overview

For Japan to conduct diplomacy with the full understanding and support of its citizens, the Government must provide the country with easily understandable information concerning the country's diplomatic activities, and also engage in a wide-ranging exchange of opinions with the

Japanese people that will help the Government develop foreign policies in step with the public.

With the trend toward increasingly close international relations in recent years, the range of items handled as diplomatic issues that directly affect the lives of Japanese citizens has been increasing, and Japanese citizens have shown a growing level of interest in Japan's

foreign policies. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) must properly respond to this heightened interest and thus fulfill its accountability to the Japanese public.

Japan's foreign policies are being advanced while giving comprehensive consideration to rapidly changing domestic and overseas conditions and to the interests of diverse parties. Accordingly, it is extremely important that the diplomatic authorities provide citizens with the necessary information in an easily understandable format at the proper time in order to facilitate an accurate grasp of the background and content of specific policy measures. It is also important to provide citizens with information on new far-sighted diplomatic approaches that aim to maximize Japan's national interests and construct a better international order amid the current changes in the international community, which are occurring with bewildering rapidity. Thus, the Government of Japan needs to make positive efforts to disseminate information to the Japanese people regarding its diplomatic policies.

Moreover, in public relations abroad, an accurate understanding, trust and favorable impression of the

general situation in Japan and Japanese Government policy by people of other countries is an indispensable factor in facilitating Japanese foreign policy. For this reason, Japan publicly announces and explains its policy through public relations activities in its overseas establishments as well as through other means, providing information to the press, inviting opinion leaders and journalists to Japan and utilizing multimedia such as the Internet. MOFA is introducing various aspects of today's Japanese society to overseas with the purpose of deepening understanding of the background of Japan's actions.

(b) Domestic Public Opinion and Public Relations Activities

MOFA is undertaking the following reforms and activities to disseminate information to the public. First, in 2002, as an initiative of Minister for Foreign Affairs Yoriko Kawaguchi, MOFA Town Meetings began, in which direct dialogues were conducted between the people and the foreign minister. Five meetings were held during

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website



Japanese-language version
<http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/>



English-language version
<http://www.mofa.go.jp/>

FY2002 in Osaka, Sapporo, Nagoya and Fukuoka, following the first meeting in Tokyo in April. In the future, MOFA intends to promote dialogues with the people through MOFA Town Meetings. Moreover, the ministry established the Office for Comment and Opinion to strengthen further activities related to the voices of the people, thus to take them appropriately into consideration in the foreign policy making process.

The MOFA website provides the latest information on Japan's foreign policies as well as the actual international situations. MOFA intends to further enhance the contents of its website in the future. The website also contains immediate and useful information such as situations in various countries and regions, which has been found practical by many people since its start. In April 2002, the "Overseas Safety website," which provides overseas travel information, was established as an independent site. It has been improved to be a more detailed, easy-to-use website. The "Foreign Policy Q&A" web page receives opinions and questions from the people, and MOFA's views are uploaded as responses to frequently expressed opinions and questions. Furthermore, the new "Let Me Know about the Ministry of Foreign Affairs!" web page was set up, through which young people may interview MOFA staff. In addition, efforts are being made to enrich web pages including the "Perspectives of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Staff," that carries essays by MOFA staff.

Meanwhile, MOFA has been striving to provide easily understandable, highly detailed information regarding foreign policy issues deemed to be of particularly high interest to Japanese citizens, including the background to these issues, by cooperating with the editing of periodic publications, issuing pamphlets, producing public relations television programs and other efforts.

Moreover, MOFA has been establishing opportunities which bring its staff and the people together through the "Gateway to Foreign Affairs," "Seminar on Foreign Affairs," "International Forum" and other lecture and discussion programs, and by holding symposia nationwide. To foster greater understanding of international affairs among the younger generation, the ministry has also been organizing lectures at universities and high schools.

(c) Understanding of Japan in Other Countries

MOFA is undertaking detailed public relations activities abroad while grasping the circumstances of each region including the degree of interest in Japan and main areas of interest, as well as considering the content to publicize and the effective media through which to disseminate it. The ministry also conducts public opinion surveys regarding the country and analyzes the results in order to understand more accurately other countries' awareness of Japan.

Japan's overseas establishments hold public relations activities such as lectures and symposia. In addition to introducing Japan's politics, economy and diplomacy, the overseas establishments also use public relations activities to introduce Japanese culture, arts and other aspects. In particular, from the viewpoint that intellectual exchanges are important to promote an understanding of Japan, the ministry dispatches experts and eminent persons abroad to give presentations. Public relations targeting young generations and public relations to attract foreign tourists to Japan are also the areas of priority.

As for efforts to provide information to the foreign press, the ministry provides information to correspondents in Tokyo whenever necessary. This is also widely done on occasions such as visits abroad by Government VIPs and visits to Japan by foreign VIPs. Furthermore, foreign press reports based on misperceptions or bias against Japan are swiftly responded to. Moreover, the invitation scheme for staff members of foreign TV stations provides support for reporting and broadcasting of Japan-related programs abroad. In addition, the ministry invites foreign opinion leaders and prominent journalists with the aim of introducing the current situation of Japan.

Introducing Japan via the Internet, the use of which has rapidly spread in recent years, is another priority in overseas public relations. Regarding the MOFA website, which disseminates information concerning Japan's foreign policy, some information has been provided in languages such as Korean and Chinese in addition to the English-language version of the site. Furthermore, the ministry is striving to promote an understanding of Japan through the Japan Information Network website,⁶⁰ which provides general information on Japan. In addition, many overseas establishments of Japan have their own websites,

⁶⁰ Japan Information Network: <http://jin.jcic.or.jp/>

which provide information closely related to the local community in English or a local language.

Distinctive public relations activities using printed materials and videos are also essential. In 2002, with the co-hosting of the FIFA World Cup by Japan and the ROK as an opportunity, public relations activities included the creation of a video introducing places in Japan where FIFA World Cup matches were held. This video was offered for showcasing on international flights arriving in and departing from Japan as well as on television in various countries. Furthermore, MOFA has created printed materials introducing Japan's efforts and its position on issues such as reconstruction assistance to Afghanistan and the name of the Sea of Japan. These materials have been distributed at international conferences and given to the press as well. Additionally, it is planned that public relations programs will be created to promote tourism in Japan, and they will be broadcasted in the Asia-Pacific region via satellite.

(d) The Tone of Foreign Press Reports regarding Japan

In August 2002, a newspaper article in the US reported that one world media organization after another was closing their bureaus in Japan. There were a number of factual errors in this article, which MOFA pointed out to the newspaper. The warning in the article, however, that the foreign media's interest in Japan was declining, also

drew attention in Japan, and some major newspapers and magazines introduced the content of the article.

However, the first ever visit to North Korea by Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi in September, which was highly commended by the international community, increased interest in Japan's diplomacy. Subsequently, in light of heightened tensions in the Northeast Asian region due to developments on the abduction issue as well as the fact that North Korea's nuclear weapons development program became evident, Japan's responses to those issues attracted a great deal of attention around the world. Furthermore, as for the Japanese economy, Prime Minister Koizumi's structural reform plan also drew interest, and there was lively reporting on the problems facing the Japanese economy as well as current efforts and obstacles to the reform.

It is expected that in 2003, the attention of foreign press will continue to be focused on Japan's diplomatic efforts. They include, in particular, efforts aiming to alleviate tensions in the Northeast Asian region, efforts in the fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and their delivery vehicles, and efforts toward the "consolidation of peace" in places including Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Aceh, Indonesia and Mindanao, Philippines. In addition, issues such as how Japan will rebuild its economy and how it will advance its economic and trade relations with neighboring countries in light of the uncertain future of the world economy are also expected to attract the interest of overseas news agencies.