

CHAPTER 4

WIDENING DIPLOMACY

A

DIVERSIFICATION OF DIPLOMATIC BODIES

Overview

With the advancement of globalization and science and technology including information and communications technology (ICT), the international community is beginning to have a stronger impact on the lives of the people day by day and each person is taking a greater interest in the international situation as well as the relationship between Japan and the international community. In developing foreign policy, it is indispensable for the government to promote wide-ranging dialogue with all segments of society in order to plan policy using the knowledge possessed by all sectors of society and to meet

its responsibilities for feeding information back to society. Furthermore, with the advancement of so-called “internationalization,” various non-government bodies are beginning to play a more significant role in the international community and are broadening their scope of activities. Such bodies include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private companies, international civil servants and a number of human exchange organizations. Under these circumstances, it is necessary for the government to support activities initiated by non-government bodies and develop diplomatic activities by deepening coordination.

1	The Success of Japanese NGOs
----------	-------------------------------------

In Western societies, NGOs have historically been active in various areas as a result of the full-fledged civil society. In recent years, Japanese NGOs have come to play an active role in the international community, in not only development assistance but also fields such as the environment, nature conservation, disarmament and non-proliferation, and the economy. NGOs by nature are well suited for carrying out meticulous activities that are close to the local community and citizens and responding swiftly and flexibly. Recently, Japanese NGOs have been involved in assistance programs through proactive coordination with international organizations including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and World Food Programme (WFP).

In recognizing the advantages of NGO activities as well as the increasing presence and role of NGOs, the government identified strengthened coordination with NGOs as one of the policies in the “Ten Reform Principles

to Ensure an Open Foreign Ministry.” Strengthened coordination with NGOs has consistently been a point of discussion in the series of reforms. The need for strengthened coordination with NGOs was also pointed out in the proposals of the Reform Advisory Board and the 2nd Consultative Committee on ODA Reform.

In response to such developments, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) created the post of Ambassador for Civil Society in November 2002 with a view to promoting coordination with NGOs. The Ambassador for Civil Society participates as a representative of the Foreign Ministry in the exchange of opinions and information between the Foreign Ministry and NGOs. The Ambassador for Civil Society also offers indirect support to NGOs in international conferences at which many opportunities for dialogue and cooperation with NGOs are scheduled.¹

¹ The NGO Liaison Center, headed by the Ambassador for Civil Society, was established as a contact point for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for accepting all inquiries and requests on NGOs and passing them to the relevant divisions without delay. (NGO Liaison Center (within the Domestic Public Relations Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), 2-2-1 Kasumigaseki, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8919 Tel: +81-3-3580-3311 (extension 4873), +81-3-5501-8046 (direct)) In addition, the “Fifteen Specific Measures for ODA Reform” and the Action Plan for the Reform of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs included the following concrete measures for strengthening coordination with NGOs: (1) reinforcing the functions of the existing NGO-MOFA Regular Meetings; (2) holding regular meetings between Japan’s overseas establishment and NGOs (ODA-Embassies); and (3) introducing Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects and the JICA Partnership Program to support further capacity building in NGOs in addition to their activities.

Area of Development Assistance

International cooperation activities by NGOs are extremely important since they are capable of providing meticulous assistance which meets the diverse needs of developing countries and regions as well as the implementation of swift, flexible emergency humanitarian assistance activities. These activities are also extremely important since they represent a tangible form of Japanese assistance. Since 1996, NGO-MOFA Regular Meetings have basically been held four times a year. The structure of the Meeting was changed to that of the plenary meeting and two subcommittees, one on ODA policy and the other on NGO-MOFA collaboration in order to further promote the dialogue in FY2002.

Since FY2002, NGO-Embassy Regular Meetings, which are called ODA-Embassies, have been launched in developing countries where Japanese NGOs are relatively active to enhance mutual understanding and cooperation among NGOs and Japanese embassies as well as overseas offices of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC). To date, ODA-Embassies have been implemented in 12 countries including Cambodia, Bangladesh and Kenya.

Conventional forms of financial cooperation to support NGO activities include the NGO Project Subsidy and Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects. NGOs support has been enhanced by the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects (2.2 billion yen budget for FY2003) and the JICA Partnership Program (1.09 billion yen budget for FY2003), both of which were newly established in FY2002. At the same time, the scope of support covered by the funds was expanded in the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects. For example, this grant assistance gave partial coverage to expenses by NGO headquarters (personnel expenses and other expenditures indispensable for implementing the project), which had not previously been permitted. All the same, external audits are required for all projects covered by the

Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects to ensure that funds are appropriately used.

As for emergency humanitarian assistance activities conducted by NGOs, the government has contributed funds since FY2001 (the government contributed a total of 2.7 billion yen in FY2003) to enhance government-NGO coordination and allow Japanese NGOs to swiftly and effectively carry out their activities within the framework of the Japan Platform (JPF).² After US and UK forces launched the military operation against Iraq, a joint team composed of several NGOs participating in the JPF was among the first to set up an emergency medical system for refugees in the border region between Iraq and Jordan. In addition, within Iraq since the war, three NGOs under the umbrella of the JPF have provided assistance to Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) (i.e., distribution of essential daily commodities), helped restore hospitals and schools, and engaged in other activities.

In August, the NGO International Symposium was held ahead of the Third Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD III) at the United Nations University (UNU), sponsored by the Foreign Ministry and other organizations. The main theme of this symposium was to understand the current situation of Africa and see how NGOs could contribute to African development. Nine NGO representatives from Africa were invited, and vigorous discussions were held with approximately 300 participants in attendance, including NGO-related parties, students and general citizens. More specifically, these discussions covered issues faced by Africa, such as conflict prevention, HIV/AIDS and infectious diseases, rural development and debt. The results of such discussions were compiled into the report, *Proposal from NGOs* and this was also announced at TICAD III.

Other Areas

On the economic front, the Foreign Ministry has obtained the understanding and cooperation of private

² The Japan Platform (JPF) was established in August 2000 under a framework developed through collaboration between economic circles and the government with the aim of enabling Japanese NGOs to swiftly and effectively implement emergency humanitarian assistance activities. The following NGOs participate in JPF: Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) Japan, Shanti Volunteer Association, JEN, Save the Children Japan, Medical Relief Unit, Japan (MeRU), Nippon International Cooperation for Community Development (NICCO), Japan Red Cross Society, The Japan Center for Conflict Prevention, Japan Rescue Association, Association for Aid and Relief (AAR) Japan, Telecom for Basic Human Needs (BHN), Peace Winds Japan, World Vision Japan, Humanitarian Medical Assistance (HuMA), Japan Mine Action Service (JMAS) and Japan Alliance for Humanitarian Demining Support (JAHDS).

Emergency Assistance Giving Consideration to the Various Aspects of Damaged Areas

The first news that an earthquake had struck Iran reached us on the afternoon of December 26, 2003. Immediately, we, the Association of Medical Doctors of Asia (AMDA), began gathering information and buckled down to share the news with local activity coordinators and private groups.

The next morning, December 27, the decision was made to dispatch an emergency medical assistance team. At almost the same time, the head of the Emergency Medical Assistance Operations Division, who was on a business trip to the Quetta office in Pakistan, departed for Iran and arrived at the damaged area of Bam on December 28. The team immediately started a survey and the provision of medical support. With a geographical advantage, our team was the first foreign group to render assistance.

On December 31, a doctor, nurse and mediator from the Okayama headquarters joined an advance party in the capital of Kerman province. From that day, at the request of the local government, they started lifesaving emergency procedures at the intensive care unit (ICU) of Kerman General Hospital. A large number of heavily wounded and critically ill patients being brought in from Bam received operations at the hospital. Our team continued supplying medical equipment and supporting the hospital staff until the chaos of the ICU abated on January 3.

In tandem with these efforts, we started a mobile clinic in Baravat, a town neighboring Bam. In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, the critically injured patients were evacuated by aircraft, but an AMDA survey at the damaged area showed that a lot of people with chronic diseases remained in the city without any treatment because regular medical services had been disrupted, and others had received inadequate treatment in the chaotic hospitals. Hence, on January 1, we started to drive with staff and medical supplies from Kerman to Bam. The AMDA team, made up of Japanese and Iranian medical professionals, set up in one to two locations and treated some 300 patients over the ten days to January 11.

The city of Bam was a miserable sight, with its only remaining landmarks being the power poles and Bam date palms, the local specialty. Most of the buildings looked as though they had been trodden on and crushed, and dust and debris filled the air. Like Japan, Iran is in a highly earthquake-prone region, but quakeproof building policies are not widely followed. The residents had been almost entirely unprepared for the disaster when it struck. In the aftermath, they pitched tents next to the places where they used to live and barely maintained their sustenance from aid supplies and things they managed to salvage from the rubble of their homes. There seemed to be a lot of people crouching and languishing in their tents, lacking the will to take themselves to the hospital and leaving their injuries untreated, sapped by the enormity of the event.

As the crisis waned and the atmosphere of the town began to change, the medical team dispatched from the headquarters was relieved by local cooperation personnel and the team returned to Japan temporarily. In its place, doctors from the Indonesian branch of the AMDA provided medical support in Bam and Jiruft principally, and aid supplies donated by the residents of Okayama Prefecture were airlifted through a joint effort of Okayama Prefecture, the Iranian government and the AMDA.

The AMDA is committed to respecting local initiative. It is essential to give full consideration to the cultural, political and social environment of an area and to respect the choices of local residents when we carry out our projects. Therefore, the AMDA strives to dispatch Japanese staff with relevant backgrounds and knowledge who will be welcomed by local people. Since the workers who came to Bam were deeply versed in Iranian and Islamic societies, we were able to negotiate with the Iranian government, procure materials and do our medical work smoothly without misunderstandings. It will be incumbent upon us in future, too, to bear in mind many messages of sympathy from groups and individuals in Japan and to listen carefully to the feelings of local residents with respect to reconstruction assistance.

(Photo)

AMDA (Specified nonprofit organization)

organizations and gathered a range of opinions. For example, before the 5th World Trade Organization (WTO) Ministerial Conference held in Cancun (Mexico) in September, the Foreign Ministry held a briefing on the WTO new round negotiations in February and August and explained the status of discussions on the issues that were expected to be addressed in Cancun. After the Ministerial Conference, an NGO-sponsored report and exchange of opinions were convened in November on the overall process of negotiations in Cancun and the future direction. Persons in charge from the Foreign Ministry, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry attended this meeting. Furthermore, the Foreign Ministry has worked for better coordination with NGOs in the WTO Doha Round, as demonstrated by the briefing that the Foreign Ministry held on the Cancun Ministerial Conference for private organizations in November.

Regarding the environment, in particular, the Foreign Ministry gave priority to dialogue and coordination with NGOs beginning with the preparatory stage of the 3rd World Water Forum in March. On March 23, the last day of the forum, it was announced in the

Initiative for Japan's ODA on Water that coordination would be strengthened among a wide range of international, local and Japanese NGOs in areas including the provision of safe drinking water and sanitation, improving agricultural productivity and countermeasures against disasters.

With respect to disarmament and non-proliferation, the Foreign Ministry holds exchanges of opinions with NGOs that are working for the elimination of nuclear weapons on how to advance nuclear disarmament. The Foreign Ministry also coordinates closely with NGOs in demining and the recovery of small arms and light weapons.

Meanwhile, because many Japanese NGOs have a weaker financial and organizational basis compared to those of NGOs in other major developed countries, NGOs need to develop their expertise and strengthen organization management capacity in order to play a more active role in international cooperation. From this perspective, the Foreign Ministry, JICA and the Foundation for Advanced Studies on International Development (FASID) are implementing a variety of programs aimed at strengthening the organization of NGOs and human resource development.

2

Japanese Staff Active in International Organizations

International organizations along with national governments and NGOs fulfill a crucial role in the international community in areas such as maintaining peace and security, development, trade, environment, human rights and humanitarian issues. International organizations refer to inter-governmental organizations such as the United Nations (UN) that are separate from individual states and work for the common benefit of the entire international community. Japanese staff play a vigorous role in international organizations such as the UN in diverse areas. They include various people such as heads of international organizations who have been elected to their posts and staff who are employed in international organizations and who are active in their careers. From junior staff to top officials, they are working in a range of fields in countries around the world, including conflict areas

such as in and around Iraq and Afghanistan.

At present, numerous Japanese staff are working on the front lines. They include heads of international organizations who have been chosen through elections of member states of international organizations, such as Director-General of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Koichiro Matsuura and Secretary-General of the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) Yoshio Utsumi. Japanese staff also include top officials like Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Toshiyuki Niwa and Executive Secretary of the Secretariat of the Basel Convention Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto, in addition to young employees such as WFP employee Mio Takada, who is introduced in the column.

Japanese Senior-level Officials at Major International Organizations

(As of the end of 2003, in alphabetical order)

Nobuyasu Abe	Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, United Nations (UN)
Kiyotaka Akasaka	Deputy Secretary-General, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Shuhaku Aoki	Director, Office of Business Planning, World Food Programme (WFP)
Tadao Chino	President, Asian Development Bank (ADB)
Hiroyoshi Endo	Director of the Control, Prevention and Eradication of Communicable Diseases, World Health Organization (WHO)
Sakiko Fukuda-Parr	Director, Human Development Report Office, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Sukehiro Hasegawa	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and Resident Representative for East Timor, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Haruko Hirose	Deputy Director-General, United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
Takatoshi Kato	Deputy Managing Director, International Monetary Fund (IMF)
Shigeo Katsu	Regional Vice President, Europe and Central Asia Region, World Bank
Yuji Kawaguchi	Director, World Health Organization (WHO) Centre for Health Development
Arata Kochi	Special Advisor to Assistant Director General, World Health Organization (WHO)
Sachiko Kuwabara-Yamamoto	Executive Secretary, Secretariat of the Basel Convention
Takayuki Matsuo	Director, Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Koichiro Matsuura	Director-General, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
Masaaki Mishiro	Director, Office of Oil Markets and Emergency Preparedness, International Energy Agency (IEA)
Shoji Nishimoto	Director, Bureau for Development Policy, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Toshiyuki Niwa	Assistant Secretary-General for Central Support Services, Department of Management, United Nations (UN)
Yasuyuki Nodera	Regional Director, Asia-Pacific Region, International Labour Organization (ILO)
Ichiro Nomura	Assistant Director-General, Fisheries Department, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Keiko Okaido	Deputy Executive Secretary, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
Shigeru Omi	Regional Director, Western Pacific Regional Office, World Health Organization (WHO)
Koji Sekimizu	Director, Marine Environment Division, International Maritime Organization (IMO)
Hironobu Shibuya	Special Advisor to the Executive Director, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
Yoshiyuki Takagi	Executive Director, Office of Strategic Planning and Policy Development, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
Teiji Takahashi	Director, Liaison Office in Japan, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Saburo Takizawa	Controller and Director, Division of Financial and Supply Management, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)
Tomihiko Taniguchi	Deputy Director-General, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
Masaru Todoroki	Deputy Director, Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
Yoshio Utsumi	Secretary-General, International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
Kunio Waki	Deputy Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
Itaru Yasui	Vice-Rector, United Nations University (UNU)
Yukio Yoshimura	Vice President and Special Representative, Japan, World Bank
Kenji Yoshinaga	Director, Land and Water Development Division, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
Akiko Yuge	Director, Tokyo Office, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Japanese Staff Active in International Organizations Staff at the Iraq office of World Food Programme (WFP)

It was because of the 1991 Gulf War that I became interested in United Nations' (UN) activities in the first place. At that time, I was a high school student, and I was really surprised to learn that wars could start so easily. As a result, I developed an interest in work through which I could strive toward a single transnational objective, and as such, I was naturally interested in working for the UN.

After having worked at the World Food Programme's (WFP) Tanzania office through the JPO system¹ for three years, I started serving at the WFP's Iraq office in October 2002. There, I was involved in various rural development projects in the Kurdish region in northern Iraq until right before the US and UK-led military operation against Iraq began in March 2003.

I hoped for a peaceful resolution until the last moment. But eventually, a deportation order was issued to UN staff and five days later the US and UK military forces began bombing. Then, I moved around Syria, Jordan and Kuwait to engage in cross-border support.

UN staff were allowed to reenter southern Iraq in early May when the US and UK military forces had secured their occupation. As a member of the first UN staff team to enter Iraq, I set about activities in Basra, located in the center of southern Iraq. The top priority for the WFP was to restore a public distribution system that had functioned in Iraq for 12 years. Since the free trade of goods was completely prohibited after the 1991 Gulf War, no food could be distributed to the people under a regular market economy. The government thus introduced a distribution system for all the Iraqi people. More than 60% of Iraqis had depended on this distribution system for their daily bread. The collapse of the system would have had a crisis-like effect on the nutritional status of the Iraqi people.

Having overcome a variety of difficulties such as the collapse of government functions, deteriorating public order, the harsh natural environment and the destruction of infrastructure and offices from looting after the war, the WFP managed to safely restart the distribution system on June 1. Thereafter, the WFP has continued to support this distribution system. At the same time, it has also set about preparations for the establishment of a food service program to provide meals especially for hospitals as well as those who are socially and economically vulnerable such as fatherless families, children, malnourished children and elderly people.

Despite all the UN's utmost efforts toward rebuilding Iraq as aforementioned, the Iraqi people became more discontent due to the confusion after the war, deteriorated public order and the lack of improvement in the standard of living. Finally, on August 19, the UN office in Baghdad was bombed, and the UN staff were evacuated from Iraq. Currently, as I write this article, I am involved in reconstruction assistance for Iraq out of a temporary WFP office in Cairo. It is unfortunate to be far away from Iraq, not at the scene, but I am now engaged in the training of Iraqi staff in countries surrounding Iraq, and also preparing for reconstruction assistance, keeping in close contact with Iraqi staff, so that I can immediately launch various projects whenever public order in Iraq improves.

Right before and during the war, I realized how limited the role of the United Nations is in the context of international peace. Moreover, the bombing of the UN office showed that the UN can be the target of various types of attacks in spite of its humanitarian support. On the one hand, I fully realized that the UN is faced with a variety of realities, limitations and intricate difficulties. But on the other hand, through my experience of being with the Iraqi people as they suffered from difficulties under a dictatorship as well as economic sanctions before the war and now spend everyday life bewildered by the new system after the war, I strongly believe that it is important for the UN to continue long-term reconstruction assistance and to avoid the reoccurrence of similar tragedies in the future.

(Photo)

Author: Mio Takada, Iraq office staff, World Food Programme

¹ Junior Professional Officer system. Under the system, those who wish to become international organization staff are dispatched to international organizations generally for two years, funded by the Japanese Government. The aim of the system is to create opportunities for people to pave the way for becoming regular staff by gaining work experience.

3 Coordination with Opinion Leaders of Various Sectors

The Foreign Ministry makes efforts to create opportunities to have discussions with experts and opinion leaders from various sectors including academia, economic circles, the press and NGOs. The aim of such discussions is to draw upon the knowledge and experiences of these experts, especially their expertise, in policymaking as well as to deepen the public's understanding of individual policies. The Foreign Ministry, thus, organizes symposia, Track II meetings³ and other events that are attended by experts from Japan and abroad. In 2003, over 50 such events were held.

As one of the efforts focused on strengthening policy vision, the Policy Evaluation Panel (Chair: Professor Shinichi Kitaoka, University of Tokyo), composed of experts from various sectors, compiled the results of discussions over the course of a year on the basis of the Reform Advisory Board's findings and submitted the report to Minister for Foreign Affairs Yoriko Kawaguchi (September). Furthermore, the Eminent Persons' Group on UN Reform (Chair: Professor Yozo Yokota, special advisor to the rector of the United Nations University), which was established as an advisory panel to Foreign Minister Kawaguchi, has been discussing measures that Japan should take toward UN reform. The group is scheduled to submit a policy recommendation report to the foreign minister by May 2004.

In promoting "human security," one of the major pillars of Japanese diplomatic policy, the Third International Symposium on Human Security (February) and the Symposium on Today's Security Challenges (December) were held with the aim of making the public aware of the final report compiled by the Commission on Human Security and discussing measures that should be implemented by Japan and the international community. With respect to the revision of the ODA Charter, discussions at the Board on Comprehensive ODA Strategy were taken into consider-

ation. In addition, the "Trend of International Assistance and Japan's ODA Charter" seminar was held to discuss with experts from Japan and abroad the approach Japan should take toward ODA policy (June).

Moreover, the Foreign Ministry co-organized symposia addressing the transformation of the international order and challenges facing Japan and the international community with the UN and other organizations. They included the symposia "What is Expected of United Nations Diplomacy Now? - Seeking Peace and Prosperity in the 21st Century" (March), "New Threats and Non-Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction" (March) and "Civil-Military Cooperation in Peace Operations" (April).

Frameworks for dialogue on security in Asia included the Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD/September), Council on Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP/December) and the Shangri-La Dialogue that was hosted by the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) of the UK (May). Japan continues to be proactively engaged in these meetings.

As for regional issues, the Japan-Arab Dialogue Forum (September) and the second seminar of Dialogue among Civilizations between Japan and the Islamic World (October) were among those which were held in accordance with Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's announcement during his visit to the Middle East in May that Japan would strengthen its dialogue with Arab and Islamic countries.

Above-mentioned symposia, Track II meetings and other fora specifically provide opportunities to have candid exchanges of views with experts from Japan and abroad and thus complement inter-governmental dialogue and international conferences. These fora, by taking into consideration a wide range of opinions, make invaluable contributions in promoting creative diplomatic policy.

³ In general, inter-governmental dialogue is called Track I and dialogue at the non-governmental or private-sector level as well as dialogue including both government and the private sector is called Track II.

Major Symposia and Track II Meetings, etc. with Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Involvement

Meetings aimed at strengthening policy conception

- Foreign Policy Evaluation Panel
- Meeting of the "Eminent Persons Group on UN Reform"
- Board on Comprehensive ODA Strategy

Symposia, seminars, etc.

Major conferences, etc. hosted by the Government of Japan and related activities

- Japan-ASEAN Security Symposium (October)
- Chatham House (UK) seminar "TICAD III – Japan and African Development in the 21st Century" (July)

Those looking into the transformation of the international order and challenges facing Japan and the international community

- Symposium "What is expected of United Nations Diplomacy Now? – Seeking Peace and Prosperity in the 21st Century" (March)
- Symposium "New Threats and Nonproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction" (March)
- Seminar "Civil-Military Cooperation in Peace Operations" (April)
- International Conference "Globalization with a Human Face – Benefiting All" (July)

Relating to priority areas of Japan's foreign policy

- International Symposium on Human Security "Human Security – Its role in an era of various threats to the international community" (February)
- Symposium "Human Security Now" (December)
- "Trend in the International Assistance and Japan's ODA Charter" Seminar (June)
- "Study on Human Resources Development in International Cooperation for Peace"

Other bilateral relations and regional issues

- Japan-US 150 Years Commemorative Symposium (July)
- "A Study Group on Strategic Formulation of Japan-US Relations" (July)
- International Symposium "Japan-China Relations toward the Future" (Japan-China Intellectual Exchange Program) (December)
- Symposium "WTO and China – Dynamism of East Asian Economy" (December)
- International Symposium "Strengthening and Development of Chinese Environmental Technology and Challenges for the Future" (Japan-China Intellectual Exchange Program) (November)
- International Symposium "Current Situation and Challenges of Vegetable Production and Distribution" (Japan-China Intellectual Exchange Program) (January)
- International Symposium "Situation of Intellectual Property Rights in Practice" (Japan-China Intellectual Exchange Program) (January)
- Seminar on Dialogue with Next Generation of Leaders (Indonesia) (September)
- International Symposium "In Search of Consolidation of Peace in Africa" (March)
- International Symposium on Refugees in Africa "Renewed Partnership between Japan and UNHCR" (June)
- Japan ASEAN Workshop and Open Symposium (January)
- Symposium "India: An emerging global power – Strategy for Japan-India cooperation in the coming age" (December)
- Second EU-Japan Symposium on People-to-People Exchanges/EU-Japan Rectors' Meeting (June)
- Seminars on Japan-EU investment promotion (November, December)
- Second Seminar on the Dialogue among Civilizations: The Islamic World and Japan (October)
- "Symposium on Issues Relative to Brazilian Residents in Japan" (March)
- Seminar on Sweden-Japan Business and Investment Opportunities (November)
- Seminar on New Opportunities for Japan-Finland Business Cooperation (November)

- Symposium "Relations between Japan and Southwest Asian Countries in the 21st Century – Through the Eyes of Former Students in Japan" (Third Reunion of Former Exchange Students in Japan from Southwest Asian Countries) (July)
- Symposium on the role of foreign students in Japanese corporations (2003 Reunion of Former Students in Japan from China and ROK) (October)
- Symposium "World Peace in the 21st Century – Building Our Society through Synergy of Diversity" (2003 Global Youth Exchange Program) (October)

Issues in other areas

- Workshop on safety measures for Japanese nationals overseas (lecture)
- Crisis management relay seminars
- Symposium "Towards the Elimination of the Chemical Weapons - Roles of the OPCW and Japan" (October)
- Tokyo Follow-up Meeting of the UN Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects (January)
- International Symposium on Trafficking of Children (February)
- Symposium on Abolition of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) (August)
- International Symposium "Emergency Relief Activities and Lessons Learnt from the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in 1995" (November)
- ASEM Symposium on Multilateral and Regional Economic Relations (March)
- ASEM Symposium on Educational Exchange (November)
- International Symposium "Potential of Sustainable Development: Review of the Decade Following Rio Summit and Perspective of New Century" (February)
- Symposium on "Movement of Natural Persons" (March)
- Symposium on APEC jointly organized by the Government of Japan and ABAC Japan (May)
- Symposium "Working for the UN" (October)

Track II meetings

Those looking into the transformation of the international order and challenges facing Japan and the international community

- Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD) (September)
- Seventh Japan-US-China Track II Meeting (November)
- Second Asia Security Conference (May)
- Japan-US Track II Meeting on Arms Control, Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Verification (March, November)
- Fourth General Conference of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) (December)
- Roundtable discussion on Northeast Asian security (September)
- Other bilateral relations and regional issues
- 21st US-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON XXI). (November)
- Japan Arab Dialogue Forum (September)
- Conference for Confidence-building between the Israelis and the Palestinians "Toward Stable Coexistence of Mutually Interdependent States of Israel and Palestine" (May)
- Japan-Middle East Cultural Exchanges and Dialogue Mission (September-October)
- 11th and 12th Japan-Germany Forum (March, October)
- Japanese-Austrian Committee for the 21st Century 7th Meeting (July)
- UK-Japan 21st Century Group 19th Meeting (February)
- New 21st Century Committee for Japan-China Friendship (December)
- First Japan-Canada Forum (November)
- Third Japanese-Russian Forum (September)
- 6th Sakhalin Forum (August)
- 21st Japan-Russia Symposium (January)
- Tokyo International Conference on Investment to Africa (February)
- Ninth Asia-Pacific Journalists Meeting (November)
- Third Meeting for the Promotion of Asia Forest Partnership (November)

4

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) and Senior Overseas Volunteers

Japan is encouraging programs to dispatch Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) as well as Senior Overseas Volunteers with a view to promoting international cooperation activities with public participation. These are the programs that dispatch abroad Japanese people who wish to dedicate their skills and knowledge to nation-building in developing countries while working together with the local people.

To date, the JOCV program for youths from ages 20 to 39 has dispatched 25,129 persons to 78 countries since its establishment in 1965. Meanwhile, the Senior Overseas Volunteer program, which covers persons from ages 40 to 69, has dispatched 1,709 persons to 51

countries since the program was launched in 1990 (in FY2002, 1,234 JOCV were dispatched to 66 countries and 434 Senior Overseas Volunteers were dispatched to 43 countries).

JOCV and Senior Overseas Volunteers make substantial contributions to the nation-building of developing countries. These volunteers also foster mutual understanding between Japan and developing countries and make use of their experiences in Japanese society after fulfilling missions abroad. As a result, their unique activities have been highly evaluated both in Japan and the countries to which they were dispatched.

B

DOMESTIC PUBLIC OPINION AND DOMESTIC PUBLIC RELATIONS

(a) Overview

In order to conduct diplomacy with the full understanding and support of its citizens, the government must provide them with information concerning the country's diplomatic activities in an easily understandable way and also engage in a wide-ranging exchange of opinions with the people to develop foreign policies in step with the public.

In light of increasingly close international relations, diplomatic issues are having a direct effect on the lives of Japanese citizens, and their interest in Japan's foreign policies is greatly growing. Therefore, it is crucial for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to properly respond to this heightened interest and thus fulfill its accountability to the public.

Japan's foreign policies are being advanced while giving comprehensive consideration to rapidly changing domestic and overseas situation 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 way at the proper time in order to facilitate their accurate grasp of the background and content of specific policy measures. It is also important to present to the public new far-sighted diplomatic approaches that aim to maximize Japan's national interests and construct a better international order in the rapidly changing international community. Thus, the Government of Japan needs to make every effort to inform people effectively on its diplomatic policies.

(b) Domestic Public Relations Activities

The Foreign Ministry is undertaking the following activities to disseminate information to the public: "visible public relations;" public relations through information and communications technology (ICT); and public relations through the media.

(1) "Visible public relations"

At the Foreign Ministry, the foreign minister and Foreign Ministry staff who are actually engaged in diplomacy are striving to promote "visible public relations," or in other words, direct dialogue with the people. In April 2002, as an initiative of Minister for Foreign Affairs Yoriko Kawaguchi, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Town

Meetings began, in which direct dialogue was conducted between the people and the foreign minister. In 2003, a total of four town meetings were held in the following cities on themes of great public interest: Fukuoka (theme: "Japan and East Asia"), Sendai (theme: "Japan's Diplomacy in the Future"), Hiroshima (theme: "Japan's Diplomacy toward Peace") and Tokyo (theme: "Economic Diplomacy in the Future – Steps Toward Free Trade Agreements (FTAs)") (a total of eight meetings by the end of 2003). During these meetings, the foreign minister endeavored to deepen the public's understanding of diplomacy by giving easily understandable explanations and candidly responding to the questions and opinions regarding Japan's foreign policy as well as the international situation.

In regard to Official Development Assistance (ODA), ODA Town Meetings, whose purposes include introducing developments in ODA reform to the people, have been regularly held in many parts of Japan. A total of nine ODA Town Meetings were held in 2003.

The Foreign Ministry has also been offering 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 Foreign Ministry has also been organizing lectures at universities (Diplomatic Talks) and high schools (Talks for High Schools) and these have been highly evaluated by the participants. In addition, the Town Meeting: Dialogue with Students (held four times a year in Tokyo, Kyoto and other places), where university students and junior staff of the Foreign Ministry exchange opinions, has gained great popularity among the participating students as an opportunity to raise openly their questions and comments. These events not only contribute to disseminating information to the public, but also serve as an invaluable experience to come directly into contact with the public for Foreign Ministry staff who put diplomacy into practice. Through "visible public relations," the Foreign Ministry intends to continue its efforts to promote people's understanding of Japan's foreign policy and obtain a wide range of views



Minister for Foreign Affairs Yoriko Kawaguchi attends a town meeting held in Tokyo (December)

from the public and draw on them in policymaking.

(2) *Public relations through information and communications technology (ICT)*

The Internet is a very important means by which information on foreign policy can spread to the public accurately, promptly and directly. The Foreign Ministry website provides the latest information on Japan's foreign policy as well as the actual international situation. The Foreign Ministry 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 2003, webpages focused on issues of particular interest to the people (the situation in Iraq, etc.) were launched. The "Letters from Iraq," serially published 71 times by the late Ambassador Katsuhiko Oku, who was killed in Iraq in November 2003, evoked an especially powerful response from the public. In addition, the organization, design and other features of the website were enhanced to improve the accessibility of necessary information. The Foreign Ministry intends to make further improvements, including the application of video, with a view to spreading broadband communication. Furthermore, the website not only offers information, but also receives questions and opinions from the people

through the "Foreign Policy Q&A" webpage, and the Foreign Ministry's views are uploaded as responses to frequently expressed questions and opinions.

(3) *Public relations through the media*

Conveying accurate information about Japan's foreign policy through the media, including newspapers and television, which people encounter on a daily basis, is vital to nurturing people's trust and further understanding. Therefore, the Foreign Ministry vigorously communicates to the public through its press-related officials. These include the foreign minister, senior vice-ministers, the vice-minister and the press secretary/director-general for press and public relations, whose major routes of communication are to impart information by holding regular press conferences and issuing statements, announcements and press material at official occasions.

The Foreign Ministry has been striving to provide easily understandable, highly detailed information regarding foreign policy issues and their background, which draw particularly high interest from Japanese citizens, by cooperating in the coverage of television and radio broadcast programs, providing material for periodic publications and issuing pamphlets. In particular, pamphlets,¹ which people can pick up and look through, have been widely distributed in town meetings and other

¹ Pamphlets issued in 2003 include: *Japan's Assistance for the Reconstruction of IRAQ; 150 Years of Japan-US Relations: Friendship & Partnership in the 21st Century; Japan and Africa: Let's walk together hand in hand, Japan and Africa; and Japan's Northern Territories*. (Japanese only)

opportunities and have been highly evaluated as easily understandable material.

(c) Steps to Gather Public Comments

The Foreign Ministry established the Office for Comment and Opinion in January 2003 (officially launched in April 2003) to gather a broad range of opinions from the people, sincerely respond to them and draw on them in foreign policymaking and the accomplishment of its tasks. This

office collects comments and opinions through a variety of means, including conducting public opinion surveys, getting feedback from the websites of the Foreign Ministry and Prime Minister's Office, facsimiles, letters and telephone calls. The office provides the information it has collected to top officials and divisions responsible for policymaking in the Foreign Ministry. Among the opinions that it has gathered, the Foreign Ministry website uploads those of great public interest, as described above.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website

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

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