

## CHAPTER 4

# Japanese People Active in the International Community and Roles of Diplomacy

## 1. Japanese People Active in the International Community

### (a) Japanese People Working at International Organizations

It has been becoming more important for the international community to respond to various challenges, regarding not only terrorism and conflicts, which threaten political and security frameworks, but also global issues such as violations of human rights, poverty, infectious diseases, and worsening environmental degradation resulting from rapid globalization. In this context, the roles played by international orga-

nizations are becoming all the more significant and accordingly the duties of international civil servants working at international organizations are increasing.

In order to augment the number of Japanese personnel in the United Nations and other international organizations, Japan has been making efforts to identify qualified candidates while urging international organizations to hire and to promote Japanese staff.

### (b) Activities of Non-governmental Organizations

More than 400 Japanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are estimated to be involved in international cooperation activities. In light of the various issues facing the international community, such as natural disasters and regional conflicts, NGOs that are capable of providing well-tailored, swift, and flexible responses well in tune with local residents are coming to have greater and greater importance. Japanese NGOs have been conducting activities in the fields of not only development assistance and emergency humanitarian relief but also human rights, international organized crime, the environment, trade, disarmament, and the United Nations, among many others. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs attaches an importance to the role of NGOs, and is working to strengthen cooperation with NGOs as an important partner in Japan's diplomacy. NGOs represent

Japan's physical presence in foreign assistance by providing support in the international community.



*Health Education Project, India, by Terra People Act Kanagawa/TPAK supported by JICA Partnership Program (photo: Terra People Act Kanagawa/TPAK)*

### (c) Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers and Senior Volunteers

In June 2007, the total number of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) dispatched to date topped 30,000. The JOCV program was launched in 1965 to take advantage of the great enthusiasm of Japanese youth for foreign countries, with 26 young volunteers dispatched to Cambodia, the Philippines, Lao PDR, and

Malaysia. Since then, the JOCV has sent young Japanese to 82 developing countries over 40 years. The Japanese serving as JOCVs and Senior Volunteers (SVs) contribute to growth in developing countries while playing a significant role in fostering mutual understanding and friendship between Japan and developing countries.

## 2. Assisting Japanese Citizens Overseas

As exchanges with other countries develop, Japanese have played active roles in an increasingly broad range of fields and regions. The number of Japanese nationals traveled overseas, including tourists and residents abroad, has reached approximately 17.5 million (in 2006), with roughly 1.06 million (as of October 2006) of them long-term overseas residents, including permanent residents. At the same time, the dangers that Japanese might encounter abroad have become more diverse, while local legal and social systems are becoming more complex. In this context, there are many cases in which Japanese engaged in activities abroad find themselves in difficult circumstances.

In light of this, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is reinforcing both its assistance measures to facilitate the activities of overseas Japanese nationals and its consular services to enable Japanese to live abroad

with peace of mind. Attuned to the needs of overseas Japanese nationals, the Ministry is enhancing its dissemination of safety information abroad and reinforcing its function of protecting and assisting Japanese nationals according to the circumstances of each area. In addition, to support a life of overseas Japanese, each embassy and consulate providing several services such as issuing passports and certificates, operating overseas voting, supporting Japanese schools and supplementary education and providing medical- and healthcare-related information. The Ministry strives to improve effectiveness of these consular services, which ensure and advance the safety and interests for Japanese Nationals overseas, enhancing effectiveness by utilizing advanced IT technology and public-private cooperation networks and by outsourcing certain function to external service providers.

## 3. Assisting Japanese Companies Overseas

In recent years, as globalization advances, there is a greater need than ever before to strengthen public-private partnerships in order to improve the business environment required for Japanese companies' overseas operations while disseminating and further strengthening the "Japan Brand" abroad, based on the trust and high evaluations that Japanese companies have earned through their activities overseas. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs considers the support for the economic activities of Japanese companies in overseas markets to be an important factor in vitalizing the Japanese economy. For this reason, the Ministry seeks out a broad range of views from Japanese companies and conducts dialogues and consultations on regulatory reform with the United States and the European Union, calling for concrete improvements regarding problems that Japanese companies face. Furthermore, as a country commit-

ted to make an "intellectual property-based nation," in an effort to strengthen the protection of intellectual property rights of Japanese companies in overseas markets, the Ministry consolidates systems of Japanese Embassies, Consulates and Permanent Mission overseas as well as holds bilateral and multi-lateral consultations and negotiations, encourages other countries to cooperate in strengthening the protection of intellectual property rights and in taking measures against counterfeit and pirated goods. Moreover, Japan is working to enhance the investing environment while establishing legal and institutional foundations through the conclusion of conventions for the avoidance of double taxation, investment agreements, and social security agreements. Such improvements lighten the economic burden of Japanese companies and individuals engaged in overseas activities.

## 4. Responding to the Internationalization of Japanese Society

With the current increasingly dynamic people-to-people exchanges among countries, Japanese embassies and consulates overseas are working to issue visas that meet the dual social needs of promoting people-to-people exchanges between Japan and foreign countries, such as for tourism, while ensuring

security and safety within Japanese society. In addition, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs works closely with other countries and relevant Japanese ministries and agencies to carefully address issues involving foreigners in Japan, whose numbers are expected to increase steadily in the years to come.