



## 1. Japanese Society and Japanese Citizens Deepening Their Ties with the World

Increasing the number of people traveling to and from Japan could generate positive impact such as stimulating the economy and promoting mutual understanding among different cultures. Based on this view, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan places a premium on facilitating the entry and stay of foreign nationals in Japan, stimulating various types of exchange, and having various types of Japanese individuals and groups participate in international exchanges.

The number of foreign nationals entering Japan exceeded 9.4 million in 2010, nearly twice the level in 2000 (about 5.27 million). The number of foreign nationals residing in Japan for a long-term (registered foreign nationals) was about 2.1 million at the end of 2010, which is about 1.3 times as many as in 2000 (about 1.7 million).

While it is important to promote the entry of foreign nationals into Japan, it is necessary to prevent the entry of persons who could be harmful to the interests of Japan. Foreign nationals entering Japan need valid passports and visas<sup>1</sup>. Visas are issued at Japanese diplomatic missions (embassies and consulates-generals) with no probable harms to immigration control. Foreign nationals entering Japan with visas must undergo an immigration inspection at the ports of entry into Japan and show valid passports and visas. In this way, a judgment on permitting foreign nationals to enter Japan is made by issuing visas and immigration inspections. In response to the increase of foreign nationals visiting Japan in recent years, the Ministry is working to expedite visa issuing procedures to individuals entering Japan for the purpose of business or tourism.

The Ministry has begun waiver of visa fees for foreign nationals visiting Iwate, Fukushima, and Miyagi Prefectures, which were damaged particularly severely from the Great East Japan Earthquake in order to support those areas. Furthermore, "Okinawa multiple-entry visas" to Chinese nationals visiting Okinawa has started since July 2011. As a result, the number of visa issuance for Chinese individual tourists visiting Okinawa from July through December 2011 grew by roughly 38 times from the same period in 2010, to approximately 8,900. Furthermore, based on "The New Growth Strategy" approved by the Cabinet in June 2010, the Ministry newly introduced "Visa for Medical Stay in Japan" from January 2011 to make it easier for foreign nationals to visit Japan for medical treatment purposes.

As the number of long-term foreign residents in Japan increases, various problems are emerging domestically in such fields as education, employment, and housing. To tackle these issues, the Ministry held the second international workshop in February 2011, following the first held in 2010, together with local governments, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and other bodies. This workshop featured discussions about "Focus on the future policy of Japan for foreign nationals", which was intended to raise awareness in this area.

As part of efforts to develop "All-Japan" diplomacy that utilizes the strengths of nongovernmental actors, the Japanese government for example is working to enhance cooperation with nongovernmental Organizations (NGOs) as important actors in international cooperation. NGOs' importance is growing in recent years as bodies providing assistance to developing countries in view

<sup>1</sup> Nationals of countries with which the Government of Japan has concluded visa exemption agreements, do not need visas to enter Japan.

of rising public interest in international cooperation. Japanese NGOs are implementing careful attentive assistance attuned to local residents' needs for poverty reduction and humanitarian assistance, primarily in Asia but also in other regions of the world including Africa and the Middle East. Based on their knowledge of subjects such as the present conditions of developing countries, NGOs are engaged in a wide range of activities in addition to on-site assistance, forming NGO networks and making policy recommendations in various fields like human rights, education, health, and the environment.

The Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) and Senior Volunteers (SVs) are also important players in international cooperation, working toward the resolution of problems that developing countries face by striving together with local people. These volunteers are visible representation of Japan's ODA in developing countries and widely appreciated around the world, playing significant roles in promoting economic and social development of these countries, and fostering mutual understanding and friendship between Japan and developing countries. The knowledge and experience that returning volunteers bring back to Japanese society is also bearing fruit. To ensure better JICA's volunteer programs, a new policy was announced in July 2011 under the title "Grassroots Diplomats: For Better Collaboration and the Bonds of Friendship- Japan's Overseas Volunteer Program", and efforts are being made toward this policy's realization including review of its system.

Local governments and communities play a major role in fostering good international relations across a wide range of fields. In recent years, local governments, organizations, and citizens have been actively engaged in diverse activities that are earning a high degree of recognition in the international community. Local governments and communities are playing an extremely important role as diplomatic actors promoting international mutual understandings, building trust-based relationships, and strengthening the Japan brand.

In light of these circumstances, the Ministry regards local governments and communities as important partners in promoting diplomacy, and it aims to work with them to direct all-Japan efforts toward enhancing the country's comprehensive diplomatic capacity. The Ministry implements various cooperative measures with local governments and other concerned parties to achieve those goals, placing particular emphasis on (1) communicating the attractions of local communities to the world, (2) supporting the internationalization of local communities, and (3) providing a broad range of information on international exchanges. Particularly important issues are those of supporting communities in countering damage by harmful rumors resulting from the Great East Japan Earthquake and support for revitalization of local industry and local economies, and the Ministry is implementing diverse efforts in support of an "open reconstruction" within international markets.



*A member of Young Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) instructing rice and edible crop cultivation methods at an experimental center for rice cultivation (Malawi, photo: JICA)*

## Japan-EU English Haiku Contest: Cooperation with Matsuyama City through Haiku

Haiku in English? What words do you use to express the seasons or the meter? These were what I thought, as many Japanese would do, when I first heard about English haiku. Nevertheless, many people abroad enjoy writing HAIKU as a hobby. Obviously, they write haiku not in Japanese but in their own language.

Mr. Herman Van Rompuy, the President of European Council is one of them. He even published a collection of his haiku as a haiku poet. That triggered Japan and the EU to host a Japan-EU English Haiku Contest on the occasion of the annual Japan-EU Summit Meeting. The first contest was held in 2010. Speaking of haiku, Matsuyama City in Ehime Prefecture is well known as the birthplace of Masaoka Shiki, a famous haiku poet in Japan. I then consulted with officials at the tourism promotion section of Matsuyama City. They agreed to support the contest as the city has been promoting the branding of Matsuyama City as “a capital of haiku”.

The theme of the second Japan-EU English Haiku Contest held in May 2011 was “kizuna” or the bonds of friendship as a token of gratitude to the EU for its assistance to Japan in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake. There were a total of 364 entries from Japan and 25 EU member states. These haiku expressed support for Japan or gratitude for assistance from the EU. One entry each from Japan and the EU sections won the grand prize. The grand prize winner from the EU entry was Ms. Federica Bertacchini from Italy who depicted the EU flag embracing the Japanese flag as a token of bilateral friendship and cooperation. The counterpart from Japan was Mr. Shunsuke Oyu, who put his sense of gratitude for assistance from around the world into his entry. As a supplementary prize, Ms. Bertacchini was invited to Dogo hot springs in Matsuyama City while Mr. Oyu was invited to Brussels, the home of President Van Rompuy. They were welcomed by the citizens there.

This is not the only example of collaboration between Matsuyama City and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan through haiku. Matsuyama City hosted a ceremony to set up a haiku post box at the Mission of Japan to the European Union in Brussels on September 19, 2011, in commemoration of the 110th anniversary of the demise of Masaoka Shiki. A total of 90 haiku post boxes are already distributed across Matsuyama in an effort to promote haiku, but the haiku post box in Brussels is the first to be introduced outside Japan. What drives us is the aspiration to appeal to people about the allure of haiku and the profundity of Japanese culture from Brussels.

Haiku is often among the topics of talks between Japanese and EU leaders. Haiku now bonds Japan and the EU at the citizen's level as well as the political leaders, contributing to closer bilateral relations. If Masaoka Shiki were alive now, who had great interest in foreign cultures, and knew this, he would write haiku for Japan-EU relations.

Jiro Takamoto  
Second Secretary  
Mission of Japan to the European Union



Mr. Oyu, at center, with haiku lovers in Brussels  
His prize-winning work:  
Delightful moment/learning how to say thank you/in dozens of languages



Ms. Federica Bertacchini, at center in the back row, with citizens from Matsuyama  
Her prize-winning work:  
Blue sky and twelve stars/Embracing a round red sun/a fraternal hug

## 2. Supporting Japanese Nationals and Companies Overseas

The annual number of Japanese traveling abroad has reached the level of approximately 16.64 million (2010). The number of Japanese living abroad<sup>2</sup> has also reached about 1.14 million (as of October 2010) and it has been increasing year by year. A large number of Japanese nationals are active in many fields in the world. This results in increasing and diversifying risks and dangers to Japanese abroad. Protecting their lives, safety, and interests are one of the most important missions of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. We implement various measures to assure the safety and security of Japanese abroad.

The Ministry swiftly collects and provides wide-ranging information concerning the safety and security of Japanese abroad, including information on accidents and crimes such as terrorist attacks, and kidnapping, wars and conflicts, natural disasters, and the spread of infectious diseases. The Ministry also calls on individual Japanese national to raise their awareness of risk management and to have one's own safety measures. Meanwhile, the Ministry continuously seeks enhanced measures to provide effective and prompt services to utmost extent in cases where Japanese nationals are involved in dangers.

In addition to providing fundamental administrative services such as issuing passports and various types of certificates and handling overseas voting through Japanese diplomatic missions (embassies and consulate-generals) in each country, the Ministry supports the daily lives of Japanese residing overseas by activities such as giving assistance to Japanese schools and supplementary education schools and provides medical and healthcare-related information to Japanese residing overseas. These measures (consular services) are important services for Japanese people and enterprises conducting or expanding their activities overseas.

Furthermore, the Ministry supports Japanese immigrants and their descendants abroad since they have been contributing to the development of their countries of residence help strengthen bilateral ties between Japan and those countries as "bridges" and they play very important roles for Japan to advance diplomacy as an open country.

Amid the changing international economic environment with the advance of globalization and the rise of emerging economies, it is extremely important for Japan to link overseas growth, particularly in Asia, to that of Japan. The government needs to actively support Japanese enterprises in areas, such as deploying integrated infrastructure systems and addressing import restrictions introduced in various countries after the Great East Japan Earthquake. The Ministry is gathering opinions widely from Japanese enterprises on issues they are facing overseas through its diplomatic missions and other channels and is responding to their inquiries and requests. Furthermore, the Ministry also holds dialogues and discussions on regulatory reforms and improvements to the business environment with different countries and calls for improvements in these countries and regions.

To support the activities of Japanese individuals and enterprises overseas, it is also important to develop the legal infrastructures governing economic cooperation relationships with other countries. The Ministry works toward improving the use and operation of Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) taking into consideration of requests from Japanese enterprises overseas, and it conducts periodic reviews of how EPAs are implemented. The Ministry is also making progress in conclusion of investment agreements to protect, promote, and liberalize investment, tax treaties to avoid double taxation, and social security agreements to resolve the problems of duplicate social insurance contributions to two countries and of dual contributions. Furthermore, as part of the initiative to establish Japan as an intellectual property-based country, the Ministry is working to strengthen protection of the intellectual property rights of Japanese enterprises by conducting activities such as reaching out to other countries through both bilateral and multilateral consultations, based on the complaints from Japanese enterprises that are damaged by counterfeit and pirated goods.

<sup>2</sup> In this context, Japanese living abroad refers to persons who have overseas addresses or residences with the duration of three months or longer.

## Projecting the Charm of Japanese KOKUSHU (the National Brew) of the World!

Have you ever heard of the word “KOKUSHU”? The Japanese word literally means the national brew. The KOKUSHU of Japan is Sake. (According to the Japan Sake and Shochu Makers Association, square calligraphy cards on which successive prime ministers signed “KOKUSHU” ( 国酒 ) with a brush are displayed at their headquarters.) Can Japanese sake be a source of pride for Japan as the KOKUSHU, as wine is for France and Italy?

Japanese sake has almost become a “face” that represents Japan abroad. In 2011, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs launched a project to promote award-winning Japanese sake in the sake category of the International Wine Challenge (IWC), the world's largest wine competition held in London every year, at its overseas missions (Embassies and Consulates-General) overseas. The Ministry sends high-quality sake many of which are the prize-winners to the overseas missions to serve the distinguished guests there. Japanese sake is also selected to make a toast at the Emperor's Birthday celebration.

The reason why Japanese sake is used in diplomatic settings is that diplomacy cannot be conducted without close human relationships, and the cuisine would serve as an important tool in building such relationships. Delicious Japanese sake can impress foreign guests and serve as lubricant to build good relations. Japanese sake helps enliven conversations with people from other countries, especially those from wine-culture regions, with its complex brewing process compared to that of wine, and a fruity aroma despite the use of rice as the raw material.

Japanese sake is also a Japan Brand item that should be marketed towards the world. It seems that the degree of recognition of Japanese sake is halfway in comparison to the growing popularity of Japanese cuisine around the world. It is my hope to contribute to win wider recognition of Japanese sake through such occasions as receptions and events for promoting Japanese food culture, including Japanese sake.

The scale of global wine market was over USD100 billion as of 2005. If Japanese sake, the Japanese national brew becomes a global brew and can make inroads into the wine market as another brewed beverage, it will help revitalize local economies in Japan. The Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011 devastated the Tohoku Region, which is a major production center for Japanese sake. Since the disaster, large amounts of Japanese sake produced in the region have been shipped to overseas missions, which presents to all over the world a message for reconstruction from the disaster, with food products from the region, including rice.

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An event introducing Japanese sake at the official residence of the Japanese Ambassador to France in June 2011



The Japanese sake booth at the Hong Kong Wine and Dine Festival in October 2011

### 3. Diplomacy with the Support of the Public

In implementing foreign policies, it is crucial for the government to gain understanding and the support of the policies by the public. The public should be given explanations on foreign policies and the roles of the government specifically, clearly and timely. The Ministry makes every effort for this purpose by using various media, such as newspapers, magazines, TV and the Internet. Information technology has been advancing and influence of social media on civil society has been growing in recent years, which necessitates us to provide more information on Japan to the public more actively. The Ministry has elaborated strategies and frameworks for public diplomacy including on public relations, media relations, cultural and human exchanges and has been implementing them flexibly and effectively.

Press conferences are held almost every day by the Foreign Minister, the Parliamentary Senior Vice-Ministers for Foreign Affairs or the Press Secretary. Statements by the Foreign Minister or the Press Secretary are issued to express Japan's positions on particular issues, and press releases to provide information on the Ministry's activities. The Foreign Minister, the Parliamentary Senior Vice-Ministers, and the Parliamentary Vice-Ministers appear on TV and other media to talk about Japan's foreign policies directly to the public.

The Ministry makes efforts to upload accurate information on its website (<http://www.mofa.go.jp>) and to enhance the contents. All of Japan's embassies, missions to international organizations, and consulate-general offices opened their own websites by the end of the year 2011. The Ministry started Twitter (MofaJapan\_jp) and Facebook (Mofa.Japan) in June 2011, recognizing that the social media recently has great influence on the public. It is important to provide information in various foreign languages. The Ministry runs its website in English, while overseas diplomatic missions provide in local languages.

The Ministry promotes public relations through dialogue with Japanese citizens. In addition to the speeches and lectures by the Foreign Minister, the Ministry officials present lectures and talk sessions at universities and senior high schools nationwide, hoping that younger generation will have more interest and knowledge in foreign policies. In September 2010, the Ministry launched issuing the

journal titled "*Diplomacy*", which is expected to stimulate discussions on foreign policies among the public. The Ministry invites comments and opinions from the public through its website and other media. It is another attempt to have better communications with the public.

In its efforts to promote further understanding and trust in diplomacy by the Japanese people, the Ministry formed the Committee for the Promotion of Declassification of the Diplomatic Historical Records with the participation of experts in May 2010. The Ministry is actively working on an expeditious transfer of the historical diplomatic records to the Diplomatic Archives and the declassification of these records. The declassification process has been accelerated since fall 2011 in particular. Furthermore, the Ministry is disclosing information pursuant to the Act on Access to Information Held by Administrative Organs, while giving due consideration to Japan's security and relationship of mutual trust with other countries.

In the process of obtaining the forementioned public understanding and support while securing Japan's national interests in the international community and striving for the recovery and reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake, what is important properly address various challenges is to further strengthen the foreign policy implementation structures to fully coordinate with a variety of stakeholders related to promote an "all-Japan" effective diplomacy.

To this end, it is necessary to make efficient and effective use of limited human, material, and financial resources while securing a sufficient budget and human resources required for the diplomatic activities. In this regards, based on the results announced following discussions in the Ministry's task force on Japan's overseas establishments in 2010, the Ministry has reviewed existing diplomatic establishments promoted more efficient and effective allocation of human resource as well as cost-cutting measures. At the same time, based on the recognition that it remains essential to strengthen the diplomatic structures, Japan has worked to open new diplomatic establishments with the aim of developing its foreign policy implementation structures on a par with those of other major countries. The Ministry is continuing to improve its system of diplomatic establishments strategically, bearing in mind the proposals made during the public hearing to review the government programs at the end of 2011.