

# We Are *Tomodachi*

## Autumn / Winter 2017



Feature:  
Toward a Society Where  
All Women Shine

Dr. Surin Pitsuwan:  
A Courteous and Productive  
Relationship between  
ASEAN and Japan

Japanese Emigrants and Their  
Descendants, the “Nikkei,”  
Bridge Japan with the World



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THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN

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JapanGov (<https://www.japan.go.jp>), the official website of the Government of Japan, provides a wealth of information on important issues such as Abenomics (Japan's economic revitalization policy), and efforts to spread fruit of innovation and quality infrastructure worldwide. You'll find plenty of videos, infographics, and more.

The website also features official publications including “We Are *Tomodachi*.”

There are easy links to the sites of various government ministries and agencies as well.



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# Contents

## We Are *Tomodachi*

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### Feature:

## Toward a Society Where All Women Shine

Hand in Hand for a World that Empowers All Women — 8

Bringing Growth through the Integration of Different Experiences — 10



This is Japan  
Fleeting Moments, Lasting Memories — 4



P. 6

Contributed Article:  
Dr. Surin Pitsuwan  
A Courteous and Productive Relationship between ASEAN and Japan — 6

Prime Minister in Action — 12



P. 12

Speech of the Prime Minister — 16

Japan Has Changed, More Changes to Come — 18



P. 20

Japanese Emigrants and Their Descendants, the “Nikkei,” Bridge Japan with the World — 20

ReCAAP Ensures the Safety of Asian Waters — 24



P. 24

This is Japan  
Kumamoto, the “Land of Water” — 26

Living and Learning Globally in Oita — 28



P. 30

Japanese Individuals Contributing Worldwide  
Japanese Architect Harmonizes People and the Environment — 30

Friends of Japan  
Achieving the Impossible: Syrian Refugee Swimmer-Ambassador — 32



P. 32

The JET Programme  
Treasuring Special Ties in Rural Japan — 34

**Cover:** In September 2017, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited New York, United States of America, and gave a speech on the progress of Abenomics (Japan’s economic revitalization policy) at the New York Stock Exchange. See P.16 for more details.

“We Are *Tomodachi*” is a magazine published with the aim of further deepening people’s understanding of the initiatives of the Government of Japan and the charms of Japan. *Tomodachi* means “friend” in Japanese, and the magazine’s title expresses that Japan is a friend of the countries of the world—one that will cooperate and grow together with them.

Note: U.S. dollar equivalents for Japanese yen amounts in this issue are calculated at 111 yen to the dollar, roughly the rate at the time of publication.

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This  
is  
Japan

# Fleeting Moments, Lasting Memories

Japan enjoys four distinct seasons. With the advent of autumn, from north to south along the Japanese archipelago, the leaves on the trees gradually change to deepening reds and yellows, with no day's scenery exactly the same as the last. That's why this time of year leaves a lasting memory in the heart.



## Kakunodate Samurai Houses

Kakunodate is surrounded by rich nature in an inland area of Akita Prefecture. Here a village once inhabited by samurai warriors 400 years ago remains intact today. The sleek black fences, stately manor houses, and samurai swords handed down for generations are all reminiscent of the lifestyle back then. The beautiful autumn colors that envelop the entire village are spectacular.



Best time to see the autumn leaves:  
from mid October through early November

► For more information, please visit: <http://www.akitafan.com/en/>



Best time to see the autumn leaves:  
from early to late November

► For more information, please visit: <https://kyoto.travel/en>



## Oharano Shrine

At the foot of a mountain southwest of Kyoto City quietly sits the grand Oharano Shrine, which was built to enshrine gods when this region became the nation's new capital under the name Nagaoka-kyo in 784. Nagaoka-kyo served as the capital for just ten years, but the shrine has long been revered since then. The bold elegance of the vermilion lacquered *torii* gates and shrine buildings is repeated in the bright crimson leaves.



# A Courteous and Productive Relationship between ASEAN and Japan

Ten years after the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was established, Japan was already poised to refashion its relationship with the newly independent and increasingly assertive states of Southeast Asia. The original five member states—Thailand, the head of the pact, having never been colonized, along with Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Singapore—were also trying to define their own separate and distinct identities on the global stage.

Japan came onto the ASEAN landscape knowing that it had some "burden of history" to manage with and among the ASEAN Member States. By the late 1960s, Japanese investment and factories were moving into the great expanses of this resource-rich region with a growing population, in a strategic location dividing the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. Japanese businesses and industries had a new resolve to turn this unique geographical landscape into a production hub, but they began to face antagonism and a deficit of trust among the people of Southeast Asia. Incidents of opposition to Japanese presence and investment, productive and beneficial as they might be, were occurring in many countries.

The 1977 visit of Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Fukuda to the region transformed the perspectives of the relationship on both sides. Foundation was laid, and momentum was created on a more rational, accommodating and sensitive path forward.

Japan became more engaged, and more investment flowed in, from trade and mercantile exchange to constructive political and strategic involvement.

## The Way Forward

ASEAN has become a Community of Nations, with connectivity and networking between all major countries and economies. ASEAN people have become increasingly prosperous, with more of them joining middle class status. This newly acquired mode of effective co-existence is leading to more prosperity, more consumption, more investment and more trade.

Japan, one of the first Dialogue Partners of ASEAN, has been generous in development assistance and has placed its full confidence in the region with political and strategic support in Cambodia, East Timor, and Myanmar.

But ASEAN is also facing many challenges to which



**Dr. Surin Pitsuwan**

Served as the Secretary General of ASEAN from January 2008 to December 2012, during which he implemented the ASEAN Charter and prepared the region to enter into the ASEAN Community in 2015. Native of Nakorn Sri Thammarat, Thailand. Holds an MA and Ph.D. in political science and Middle Eastern studies from Harvard University. Currently engaged in the promotion of regional integration in East Asia, along with educational and political reform efforts in Thailand. Serves as Board and Council of many international organizations concerned on human rights and democratization, and is a frequent speaker at various international conferences.

Japan is equipped to offer solutions. The ASEAN member states mostly, if not all, lack in capacity in the areas crucial to their own future prosperity, i.e. science, technology and innovation.

## **ASEAN NEEDS ITS OWN HOMEGROWN SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

Japan will have to treat ASEAN as a landscape of opportunity to forge human progress, develop science, promote research and incubate innovation. This technology deficit could possibly stymie ASEAN and relegate it to the Middle Income Trap (MIT). Whatever impressive level of prosperity it has achieved so far, it

needs its own science and innovation. The region cannot remain dependent on external sources of innovation. ASEAN-produced innovation should not diminish Japan's technological advantage; the combined strength of the two sides should raise the advantage of both. A stronger ASEAN will contribute to the prosperity of Japan in the long run.

### **ASEAN NEEDS TO CONSTRUCT ITS OWN REGIONAL DEMANDS AND MARKETS**

The regional and global environment of cooperation has changed dramatically. Globalization and multilateralism have served East Asian and Southeast Asian community-building well. But both have fallen from grace; both have been threatened after delivering market access, a leveled playing field and a new "liberal order" opening up the region for investment and export. With restraint and limitation to globalization and multilateralism, the region has no other alternative except more effective integration among its own nations. Japan offers strong leadership and support for a new regional trade architecture among the ASEAN Plus Six, or Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). We must create our own regional market and enhance our own regional demand. We need to create an alternative to the shrinking and disappearing global markets. Japan, with all its technical knowhow and economic prowess, can help construct this new regional economic platform.

### **THE SOFT-POWER OF JAPAN CAN BE A SAVING GRACE FOR ASEAN**

The soft-power of Japan is very relevant to ASEAN. Discipline, perseverance, preservation of environment, aesthetic values, social cohesion, and overall quality of life are elements that Japan can also share with the people of ASEAN. The new ASEAN Middle Class wants

more than just materialistic accumulation and monetary wealth. More people-to-people exchange, cultural cooperation, youth and educational programs, journalistic exchange, and more investment in civil society cooperation would go a long way in fostering a new dimension of relations between Japan and ASEAN.

In the final analysis, what we should aim for is sustainable and inclusive growth that will raise the quality of life of most of the 630 million people of ASEAN. Japan has contributed a great deal in the past 50 years of ASEAN, and has been the most generous Dialogue Partner of ASEAN. But there is room for improvement in the modality and issues of focus. Growth alone is not producing a region of peace and prosperity; in fact, the widening gap in income disparity, along with inequity in opportunity and political influence, has led to more tensions and instability in many of ASEAN's societies.

Japan too will need to make sure that the fruits and benefits of its cooperation with, support for, and investment in ASEAN will be sustainable and assured well into the future. For that, Japan and ASEAN will need a course adjustment in their journey of friendship that is different from that of the past 50 years.

We are entering a new chapter of our relations. Countries are withdrawing from global engagement, looking more inward, and preoccupying themselves more with domestic challenges. Japan cannot afford to disengage from its relation with ASEAN. Its long-established trade, enormous investment and future prosperity depend on the economic health of ASEAN.

ASEAN is not just an investment field; it is also a region to be transformed with the many soft-powers that Japan possesses. Thus far Japan's relation with ASEAN has been courteous and productive. Softly, Japan can continue to lead and show the way for a better future for all of us, a new generation of Asians in an emerging Asia-Pacific Century.



On September 25th I took up my new post as the Minister, Deputy Chief of Mission of Japan to ASEAN in Jakarta. This year marks the 50th anniversary of ASEAN, and the 40th year since the announcement of the Fukuda Doctrine that serves as the foundation of Japan's diplomacy toward ASEAN. In this important milestone year, I feel delighted and honored to be standing on the front lines of ASEAN diplomacy. I look forward to working closely with ASEAN member states and their partners.

— Hikariko Ono, newly appointed Minister,  
Deputy Chief of Mission of Japan to ASEAN

# Hand in Hand for a World that Empowers All Women

Japan is working to advance gender equality, alongside the governments of developing nations and a wide variety of institutions including UN Women, which offers expertise regarding gender issues. In particular, Japan seeks to empower women in developing nations with its expertise in the areas of education and healthcare management, via projects led by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

One of the problems to be solved is the low availability of education for girls. In Pakistan's education system, for example, in many cases boys and girls go to separate schools from middle school onward. Girls' schools in rural regions are scarce, however, forcing many girls without a school within commuting distance to discontinue their education. And even in schools with both genders, there have been cases of female students dropping out due to the lack of women's restrooms in the schools. In the southern province of Sindh, JICA is providing grants to build schools, classrooms, and restrooms for girls to alleviate these problems. "I hope that by enabling girls to continue their education, we can expand the opportunities available to them," explains Ayumi Yuasa of the Office for Gender Equality and Poverty Reduction of JICA's Infrastructure and Peace Building Department.

JICA is also encouraging widespread use of Maternal and Child Health Handbooks (MCH Handbooks), an idea originating in Japan. JICA is strengthening continuum of care for mothers and infants, through the use of MCH Handbooks tailored to the unique conditions of each country, in 25 countries. In addition to recording pregnancy, childbirth, and infancy, MCH Handbooks serve as a guide for childrearing. In regions where malnourishment of mothers and children is a problem, for example, the books contain extensive information regarding proper nutrition, such as "foods to eat during pregnancy and the breastfeeding period." "Expanding the knowledge of mothers allows them to make their own judgments about the health care of their children and of themselves, which might otherwise be left to doctors and midwives," finds Yuasa. In Indonesia, continuum of care for mothers and infants that is focused on the use of MCH Handbooks has led to a reduction of the maternal mortality rate. In light of such results, JICA is cooperating with the World Health Organization (WHO) to develop international guidelines for MCH Handbooks and further expand their use.

Side by side with the world, Japan will continue moving forward with these and other efforts in order to create "a society in which all women can shine."



In the southern Pakistani province of Sindh, additional school buildings and classrooms for girls are scheduled for construction, which are expected to provide access to education for over 6,600 students. © Matsuda Consultants International Co., Ltd.



Indonesian Maternal and Child Health Handbooks contain plenty of illustrations to make them easy for everyone to understand. © JICA



## A Message from the UN Women Executive Board Secretary

Our ability to create a world in which women and girls can play full and active roles in both public and private life is essential for the peace and sustainability of countries, communities and families.

As one of UN Women's closest partners, Japan has provided political, financial and advocacy support that is helping to drive progress toward this goal. Japan's financial support has enabled us to reach out to thousands of women in areas affected by war, in communities where women are in need of sustainable livelihoods, and where young people need access to the means to further their training and education. And the country's engagement in UN Women's HeForShe IMPACT 10x10x10 initiative—through Champions Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and Nagoya University president Seiichi Matsuo—is helping to engage men and boys as allies for gender equality.

Japan's World Assembly for Women (WAW!) continues to provide important momentum in our efforts toward a world in which women and girls have the chance to shine. Last year's WAW! resulted in several key proposals, including those for the creation of working environments that are enabling and flexible for women and men, boosting women's participation in decision-making in peacebuilding and peacekeeping, and promoting women's sexual and reproductive health and rights.

The conference highlighted the critical importance of increasing the numbers of women and girls in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) education and careers, with proposals for breaking down negative stereotypes and promoting positive role models, strengthening partnership between the public and private sectors to support women in STEM jobs, and promoting gender equality throughout society to propel more women and girls up the pipeline into rewarding employment in science and technology.

Through these initiatives, and all of our ongoing work together as partners, UN Women and Japan must continue to work to transform attitudes, behaviors and practices so that women and girls are empowered to take the lead in shaping our societies.



**Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka**  
Executive Director of UN Women



World leaders gathering at WAW! 2016 to promote women's empowerment. (December 2016)



Prime Minister Abe speaking at the HeForShe IMPACT 10x10x10 Parity Report Launch Event. (September 2017)

# Bringing Growth through the Integration of Different Experiences

Women’s active participation in the workplace is often discussed from perspectives such as gender equality or the provision of equal employment opportunities. But how often do you hear it mentioned as a source of economic growth and innovation?

One person asserting that “women’s active participation in the workplace truly has a direct bearing on expanding a business and generating profits” is Mitsuru Chino, an executive officer at the major trading company Itochu Corporation.

She observes, “In Japan, women who work in product development have generated a large number of hit products in the automobile and convenience store industries and elsewhere. It goes without saying that half of the people in society are women and that they are important consumers. Women are using various products and proposing what they themselves would like to have, based on those experiences.”

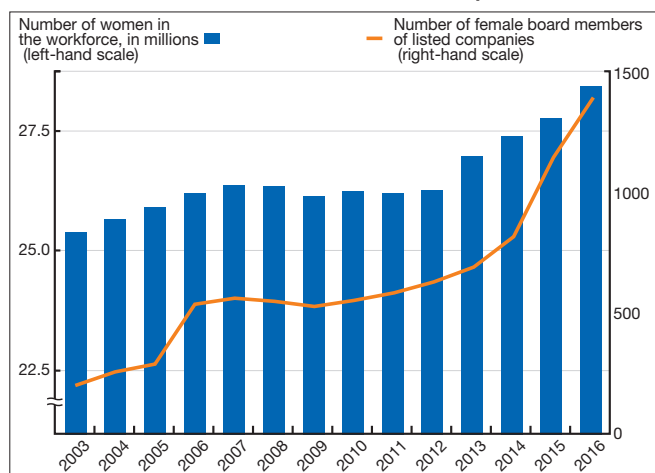
Chino is one of the people driving greater workplace participation by Japanese women, and she points out that during the past twenty years, the number of women in career-track and administrative positions in Japanese corporations has been expanding dramatically. She adds that this increase has heightened women’s consciousness,



**Mitsuru Chino**

Executive Vice President and Chief Administrative Officer of Itochu International Inc.; Chief Executive Officer and President of Itochu Canada  
After working as a partner of an international law firm, Mitsuru Chino joined Itochu Corporation in 2000. There, she was instrumental as in-house counsel and rose to executive officer in 2013. She assumed her current positions in April 2017.

**Changes in the number of women in the workforce and of female board members of listed companies**



In Japan, the number of women in the workforce grew by 1.5 million people between 2012 and 2016. The number of female board members also doubled during that time.

giving rise to a virtuous circle that expands opportunities for workplace participation even further.

“As the number of women in the workforce and in executive positions increases, gender consciousness fades, so the significance of that is quite substantial. At Itochu Corporation, we’ve advanced a wide range of measures, such as creating a system by which female employees are paired with more senior female employees who serve as mentors. And recently, the government has also prepared systems and legislation to promote women’s active participation in the workplace. I feel we are seeing the effects of these efforts as well.”

Economic growth through women’s participation in the workplace—that is, “womenomics”—has been one of the government’s priority issues since Prime Minister Abe took office in 2012. Prime Minister Abe has stated, “Women bring to corporate management certain perspectives that only women can provide. Diversified organizations are able to provide society with new types of added value,” and has introduced the quote “If ‘Lehman



Itochu Corporation introduced a morning-focused working system in 2013. For work performed between 5:00 and 8:00 a.m., extra wages are provided at the same rate paid for late-night work. Breakfast is also provided free of charge to employees who begin work before 8:00 a.m. Since introducing the system, long overtime hours, which had been one of the factors preventing women's active participation in the workplace, have declined considerably, while net income has increased.



In 2010 Itochu Corporation instituted I-Kids, a childcare center for employees, near its Tokyo headquarters. The company responds to changes in the social environment, including increases in the number of female employees and in the number of married couples in which both spouses work.

Brothers' was 'Lehman Brothers and Sisters,' they might still be around" on various occasions. He has also boldly advanced policies that call on private sector employers to establish targets for increasing the number of women in administrative positions as well as policies to eliminate the wait to enter childcare facilities. Moreover, a number of government seminars to foster female executives have been held in various locations around Japan, and there are now plans to expand this seminar program further.

Chino remarked, "The Lehman Brothers story is interesting because it shows in a straightforward way that when people having similar values and perspectives cluster together, once they start to move in the wrong direction, it is difficult for them to set their path right again."

"The reason diversity is important is that new ideas and new values arise when people with different experiences come together, and that improves things," explained Chino. "Being a woman is in fact a kind of social diversity. Through its start-up visa, points-based system for highly skilled foreign professionals, and other endeavors, the Japanese government is now working to prepare an environment in which non-Japanese find it easy to work in Japan. I think the greatest benefit from these efforts lies in the fact that it will infuse a diversity of experiences into Japan. When we pigeonhole people as men or women or foreigners or elderly people, it becomes difficult to draw out the latent abilities and ideas each individual possesses. An environment in which people are all able to put forth their own various ideas in a neutral setting without regard to their attributes is what will spark

innovation in society."

As the result of various efforts taken by both the government and the private sector, between 2012 and 2016 the number of women in the Japanese workforce grew by 1.5 million, and the number of female board members also doubled. For the same period, earnings by Japanese corporations soared from JPY 48.5 trillion (USD 437 billion) to JPY 75.0 trillion (USD 676 billion) (a 55% increase), while Japan's GDP surged from JPY 495 trillion (USD 4.5 trillion) to JPY 537 trillion (USD 4.8 trillion) (a 9% increase). However, "womenomics" in Japan has only just begun. Japan will press on with its efforts to realize a society in which all women shine even more brightly.



Prime Minister Abe attended a reception for the Executive Program for Women Leaders, a seminar organized by the government in cooperation with the private sector to foster strategic management, leadership, and other critical skills among female leaders. There he delivered remarks saying Japan aims to increase the number of female board members as an economic policy, not as a social policy, and that by doing so, Japan will be able to realize further growth. (January 2017)

# Prime Minister in Action



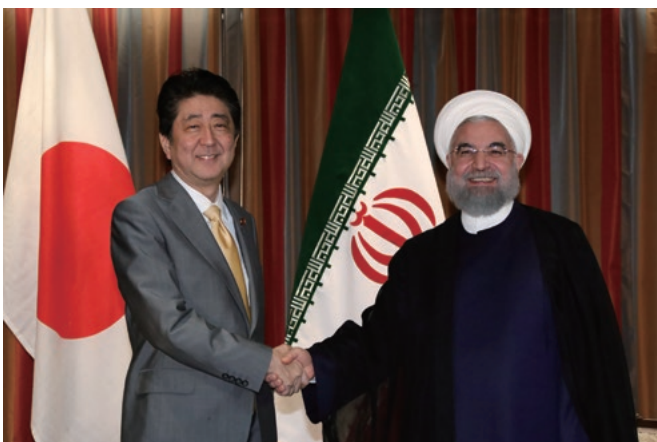
Visiting New York, United States of America, where he gave an address to the United Nations General Assembly. He asserted that North Korea's nuclear weapons and missiles are an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat, and called for solidarity of the international community, saying that what is needed to make North Korea abandon all nuclear and ballistic missile programs is not dialogue, but pressure. (September 2017)



Meeting with António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations, in New York. (September 2017)



Attending a summit meeting in New York with the heads of state of African countries, mainly who are members of the United Nations Security Council. (September 2017)



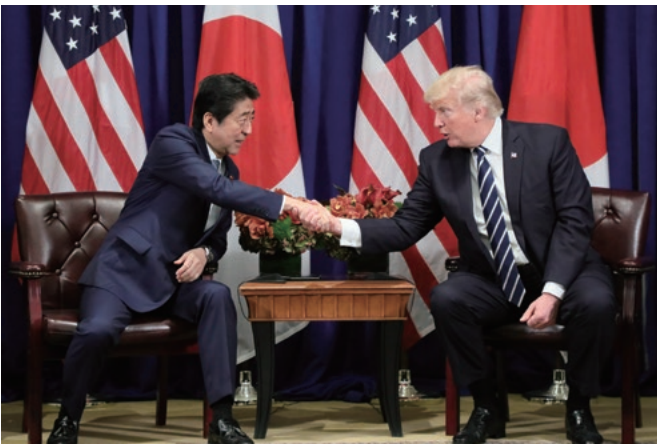
Meeting with H.E. Dr. Hassan Rouhani, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in New York. (September 2017)



Meeting with H.M. King Abdullah II Ibn Al Hussein, King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, in New York. (September 2017)



Meeting with the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United States of America, and H.E. Mr. Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea, in New York. The three countries' leaders shared the view that amid the growing threat of North Korea, they must deepen collaboration under the unity of the three countries, such as by increasing efforts to encourage joint pressure from the international community. (September 2017)



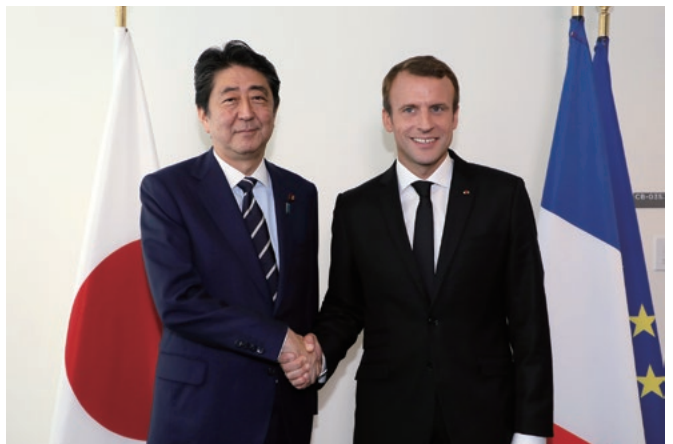
Meeting with President Donald Trump of the United States of America in New York. (September 2017)



Meeting with H.E. Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister of the State of Israel, in New York. (September 2017)



Meeting with H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Turkey, in New York. (September 2017)



Meeting with H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic, in New York. (September 2017)



Attending the fourth Japan-Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting in New York, where he exchanged views with leaders and other officials of Pacific Island countries with the aim of achieving stability and prosperity of their region. (September 2017)



Holding a summit meeting with Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, at the Akasaka State Guest House. (August 2017)



Visiting the city of Kyoto with the Rt. Hon. Theresa May MP, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, where they conversed while participating in a tea ceremony at Fushin'an, the historic tea room of the Omotesenke school which descended directly from Rikyu Sen, the founder of Japanese tea ceremony. (August 2017)



Visiting Ahmedabad, India, where he attended the ground-breaking ceremony for India's high-speed rail project with H.E. Mr. Narendra Modi, Prime Minister of India. A Japanese Shinkansen system is being adopted as India's first high-speed rail, which will be constructed between Ahmedabad and the city of Mumbai. (September 2017)



Visiting Vladivostok, the Russian Federation, where he attended the 3rd Eastern Economic Forum with H.E. Mr. Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, President of the Russian Federation, H.E. Mr. Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea, and H.E. Mr. Khaltmaa Battulga, President of Mongolia. (September 2017)



Attending the ground-breaking ceremony for an international judo center in Vladivostok, the Russian Federation, with President Vladimir Putin of the Russian Federation. Also in attendance was Yasuhiro Yamashita, president of the All Japan Judo Federation (pictured to the left of Prime Minister Abe). (September 2017)



Participating in the Nagasaki Peace Memorial Ceremony held in Peace Park in Nagasaki City. An atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. (August 2017)



Participating in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony held in Peace Memorial Park in Hiroshima City. Seventy-two years have passed since an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945. (August 2017)

# Speech of the Prime Minister

## Delivered at the New York Stock Exchange, Sept. 20, 2017

Full text: [http://japan.kantei.go.jp/97\\_abe/statement/201709/\\_00009.html](http://japan.kantei.go.jp/97_abe/statement/201709/_00009.html)



### Four years of breaking down walls

In Japan, this month a young man in his twenties broke down a massive wall. Yoshihide Kiryū became the first Japanese ever to break through the “10 second barrier” in the 100 meters.

And I too have “walls” to take on. I will break down any and all walls looming ahead of the Japanese economy and map out a new trajectory for growth. This is precisely the mission of Abenomics.

First of all, we have to change Japan’s corporate culture. Two years ago, we drew up a corporate governance code. This resulted in the percentage of listed companies with two or more independent outside directors rising to 88% now, up from 17% five years ago. We also formulated a stewardship code to strengthen governance by institutional investors, and over 200 institutions have already accepted it.

Needless to say, the state sector must also change.

We have been moving forward in reforming our corporate tax to be growth-oriented. Over the past four

years, we have lowered the tax rate by more than seven percentage points. Despite this lower rate, thanks to solid corporate earnings growth, annual corporate tax revenue increased by close to 7 trillion yen (63 billion dollars).

Moreover, we are casting off our inward-focused mindset and actively incorporating growth from around the world.

In July, we reached an agreement in principle on an Economic Partnership Agreement with the EU. And in the Asia-Pacific region, we are accelerating negotiations aimed at the early entry into force of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, or TPP, Agreement, by 11 nations.

We will use every means available to work to extend free, fair, rules-based markets across the world. Japan will continue to demonstrate leadership to this end.

We will assemble outstanding human resources in Japan from around the world. I have set up a “fast track” to conduct visa screenings for these professionals within 10 days and created a system by which they can obtain a green card after as little as a year.

The Japanese economy has now enjoyed positive growth for six consecutive quarters, for the first time in 11 years. Robust economic growth led by domestic demand is being realized through high levels of wage increases occurring four years in a row.

### The productivity revolution

Now is the time for us to take on the greatest structural issues facing the Japanese economy—our biggest “walls.” Those “walls” are the rapidly progressing issues of an aging society with a falling birthrate and also a shrinking population.

We will raise the potential growth rate even in the midst of a decreasing population and simultaneously take steps to properly address the issue of a falling population. To make this a reality, I have been holding high the two banners of a “productivity revolution” and a “human resources development revolution.”

Dramatically improving the labor productivity of each individual will also cause wages to rise. Even with a shrinking population, we should be able to accelerate the speed at which we pull out of deflation.



Manufacturing and services workplaces will transform dramatically due to robots, artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things and other cutting-edge innovations. This is the productivity revolution.

We will support bold private sector investments by mobilizing our entire range of policies, including the tax system, the budget, and regulatory reforms.

### **Regulatory reforms**

The latest technologies in regenerative medicine are about to change the world dramatically. Against that backdrop, many overseas companies from North America, Europe, Asia, and elsewhere are now coming to Japan, saying they want to conduct their clinical trials there.

It was four years ago that we carried out the bold regulatory reforms that the journal *Nature* evaluated as “the world’s fastest approval process.”

Through the emergence of new regenerative medicine technologies and the execution of bold regulatory reforms to address that situation, Japan is now the foremost country in regenerative medicine.

If we implement reforms anticipating those changes in the times, we will also be able to completely transform the global industrial map.

I want to establish a “regulatory sandbox system.” We will make a “sandbox” in which it is possible for certain participants to conduct trial and error freely on new businesses for a certain period of time, without conforming to existing regulations. This is the ultimate in regulatory reform.

I would like people from all around the world imbued with a venture spirit to come to Japan, by all means.

### **Women and the elderly**

As society ages, the composition of the market will also naturally change. That is where new opportunities lie. The ones who can accurately grasp the needs within the expanding senior market are the seniors themselves. Half of the population is female. The particular perspective of women surely holds tremendous power in responding to their needs.

Thanks to our holding high the banners of “womenomics” and staying active throughout one’s life, and creating environments in which it is easy to work, over the last four years the employment rates of women and of people over the age of 65 are both up by three percentage points. As a result, although the population of Japan has decreased by 700,000 people, we have been able to increase the number of people employed by 1.85 million people.

### **The revolution on developing human resources**

I will undertake drastic reforms to what the Japanese economy and society should be like on the assumption of an era of a 100-year life span. For Abenomics, that will be the biggest test of all.

First of all we will press forward with reforms to the employment system.

The long-held value that working long hours is good must be fundamentally changed. As for treatment such as wages, it is necessary to introduce a structure that evaluates workers’ abilities rather than their form of employment.

Next are reforms to the social security system. Social security until now has had as its central focus benefits paid to retired seniors. We will redirect this focus to the working generation to a greater degree. We will reform it to become a system oriented to all generations. We will enhance childcare and nursing care services further to prepare an environment in which the working generation finds it easy to balance employment with these other responsibilities. We will work to provide free preschool education and provide an environment in which it is easy to raise children.

There are also reforms to the education system. We will make higher education effectively free for children from low-income households. We will make it possible for someone to receive practical vocational education and take on the challenge of a new job no matter how old he or she becomes. In order to create that kind of society, we will considerably enhance recurrent education.

We will create opportunities for all, both old and young and women and men alike. I named this kind of reform package the human resources development revolution.

### **Passion and a sense of responsibility**

Some of you might be harboring the question, can I really accomplish the major reforms I spoke about today?

But I will absolutely achieve them. I will reform Japan without averting my eyes from our greatest challenges of a dwindling birthrate, an aging society, and population decline. I will be second to none in terms of that passion and sense of responsibility.

I am reminded of the words of NBA legend Michael Jordan. He said, “I can accept failure. Everyone fails at something. But I can’t accept not trying.”

I too will continue to stay forward looking and take the offensive. No matter how hard the challenge, I will fight on looking to the future and never fail to deliver results. I will take on these issues with a strong sense of resolve.

# Japan Has Changed, More Changes to Come

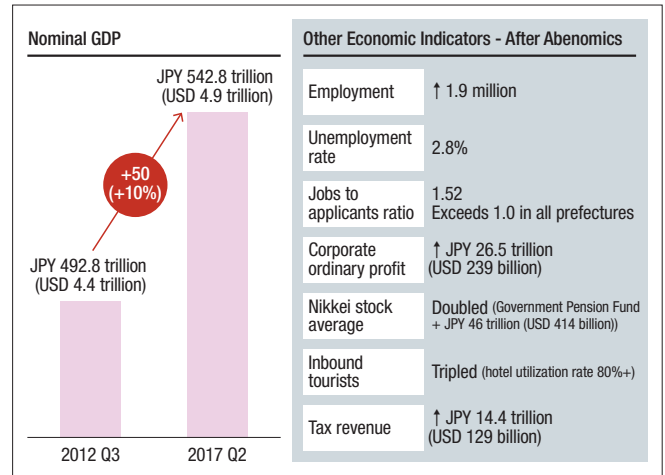
## PM Abe and Top Executives Meet in New York City

Prime Minister Abe invited 15 world-renowned business leaders to breakfast during his visit to the United Nations General Assembly in New York City (Sept. 19, 2017). Abe and his guests—CEOs from leading manufacturers, asset management companies, institutional investors, and consulting and agri-business firms who were interested in and optimistic about the Japanese economy—had an active dialogue about investing in Japan.

The breakfast started off with a few words from Abe. He elucidated the remarkable changes that have happened through Abenomics such as increases in nominal GDP, employment, and corporate ordinary profit. At the same time, he pointed out that Japan also recognizes its need to pursue changes even further—increase productivity, better utilize retained earnings and fulfill the great potential of Japan’s SMEs and startups. Abe also stressed the importance of free trade and

declared his unwavering commitment to making the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement happen.

### Achievements of Abenomics



### Session 1



Participant	Title	Organization
1 Dominic Barton	Global Managing Partner	McKinsey & Company
2 Larry Fink	Chairman and CEO	BlackRock
3 Paul J. Fribourg	Chairman and CEO	Continental Grain Company
4 Gregory J. Hayes	Chairman, President and CEO	United Technologies
5 Michael Sabia	President and CEO	Caisse de dépôt et placement du Québec
6 André Andonian	Managing Partner, Japan	McKinsey & Company
7 Thomas R. Nides	Vice Chairman	Morgan Stanley

Abe received much positive feedback from the top executives, such as for his diligent efforts in creating a business-friendly environment to attract foreign investment, and his leadership in free trade. The participants also provided suggestions regarding future focuses ranging from boosting financial activities to transforming the corporate culture in Japan. While praising Japan’s great strength in R&D, many participants expressed that they expect more innovations in areas such as technology and healthcare. The importance of actively accepting more PE funds into Japan was also pointed out.

Abe respectively addressed each executive’s comments. When a participant lamented by saying, “I want to come for the 2020 Olympics but Japanese hotels are always booked,” Abe joked, “Well, in that case, how about starting your own hotel business in Japan?” In his responses, Abe elaborated on Japan’s ongoing efforts and

made further commitments: for instance, strengthening corporate governance. Japan plans to further refine its corporate governance code to increase transparency through increasing the number of outside directors in listed companies, and revise its stewardship code to improve dialogue between investors and corporates. Abe reiterated, “Changes have happened but these are just the beginning of the reformation—more changes are to come.”

In summary, Abe emphasized his expectations for more investment in Japan. Areas such as infrastructure and agriculture as well as hidden talent and untapped resources in Japan’s various local regions are a just a few of the many promising opportunities in Japan. Foreign investment is the real engine of the Japanese economy and Abe strongly expects to achieve sustainable growth through cooperation with companies around the world.

## Session 2



Participant	Title	Organization
1 André Andonian	Managing Partner, Japan	McKinsey & Company
2 Leon Black	Chairman, CEO and Director	Apollo Global Management
3 Wes Bush	Chairman, CEO and President	Northrop Grumman Corporation
4 William Ford	CEO	General Atlantic
5 Peter Grauer	Chairman	Bloomberg
6 Steven B. Klinsky	CEO	New Mountain Capital
7 Daniel S. Loeb	CEO	Third Point
8 Stephen A. Schwarzman	Chairman and CEO	The Blackstone Group
9 Alain Carrier	Senior Managing Director, Head of International	Canada Pension Plan Investment Board

# Japanese Emigrants and Their Descendants, the “Nikkei,” Bridge Japan with the World



There are five Nikkei employees at Iwata Shinkin Bank, and according to bank staff “it’s natural” to have the Japanese descendants working here. Iwata Shinkin Bank focuses its CSR (corporate social responsibility) activities to assist members of the Japanese-Brazilian community by offering them perks such as free legal consulting and Japanese language classes.

Japan is an island nation. In addition to this geographic limitation, there were various other factors that made overseas travel difficult in past eras. Since modern times, as interchange with overseas countries flourished, the number of Japanese nationals migrating abroad increased dramatically. Today approximately 3.8 million Japanese emigrants and their descendants, known as “Nikkei,” live and work all over the world.

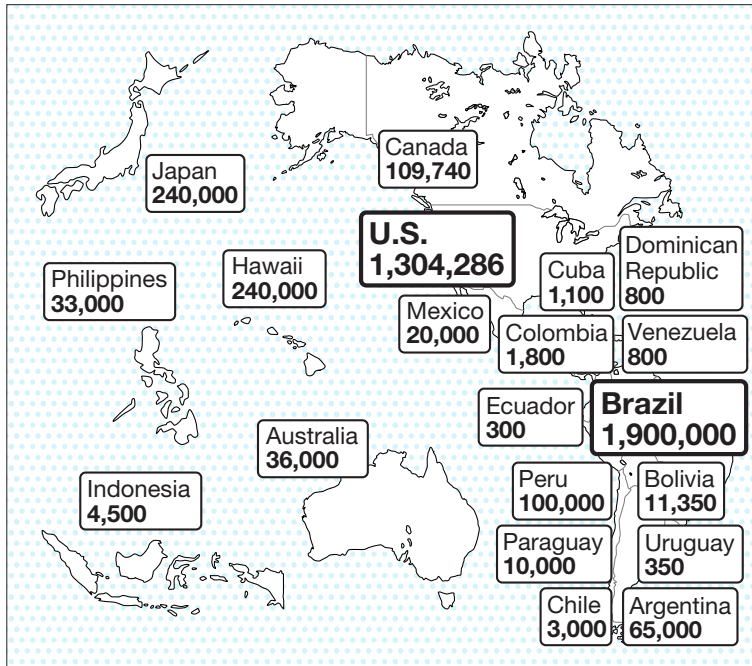
## Nikkei in Japan

After generations have passed since their Japanese ancestors first moved abroad, now many Nikkei come to live in Japan. All over Japan, some 240,000 Nikkei currently live and work alongside Japanese nationals. In Shizuoka Prefecture’s Hamamatsu City, which is home to



Third-generation Japanese-Brazilian Luiza Sasai says the advantages of living in Japan include a comfortable lifestyle, public safety, and punctuality. “I’ve now lived longer in Japan than I did in Brazil, so my emotional attachment is stronger to Japan,” she says with a laugh.

## Nikkei population by country/region



The majority of Japanese emigrants are settled in North and South America, especially Brazil and the United States.

Source: The Association of Nikkei & Japanese Abroad



To ensure the safety of foreign residents in case of emergency, HICE provides multi-language interpreters in disasters, and carries out disaster preparedness training for foreign residents of Japan.

renowned manufacturing companies such as Honda, Suzuki, Yamaha and Kawai, foreign nationals (including Nikkei) account for about 22,000 of the 807,000 total population, the highest ratio of foreign residents in any city of Japan.

One of them is third-generation Japanese-Brazilian Luiza Sasai. After graduating from architecture school in Brazil, she moved to Japan with her parents. Currently she works in overseas trading at the Iwata Shinkin Bank in Iwata City, adjacent to Hamamatsu City.

“Especially in the cities of Hamamatsu and Iwata, in the west part of Shizuoka Prefecture where many foreign nationals reside, there are lots of Japanese language classes and multicultural exchange events to help people better understand Japanese culture. It’s great that in Japan if you work decently hard you can make a living and, as long as you’re not too extravagant, can get pretty much whatever you want. I’m a Japanese-Brazilian, but at my current workplace I get treated the same as any Japanese national. At work and in my daily life, as a Nikkei fluent in both Japanese and Portuguese, I’m happy to be able to assist people who don’t speak Japanese,” she says.

Being familiar with both Japanese culture and the culture of their homelands, the Nikkei are a boon to the workforce in Japanese companies that hire foreign nationals living in Japan. Indeed, in this modern age of globalization, the Nikkei have become a highly sought-



HICE Coordinator Lissa Kikuyama: “We’re working toward establishing a total support system that covers citizens who are foreign nationals in Japan from their birth until they can get jobs and become contributing members of society.”

after human resource.

At the regional level, comprehensive support is available for Nikkei. HICE (The Hamamatsu Foundation for International Communication and Exchange) was established in 1992 to offer information and advice, and provide various classes and events to help the Nikkei and other foreign residents assimilate into the local community.

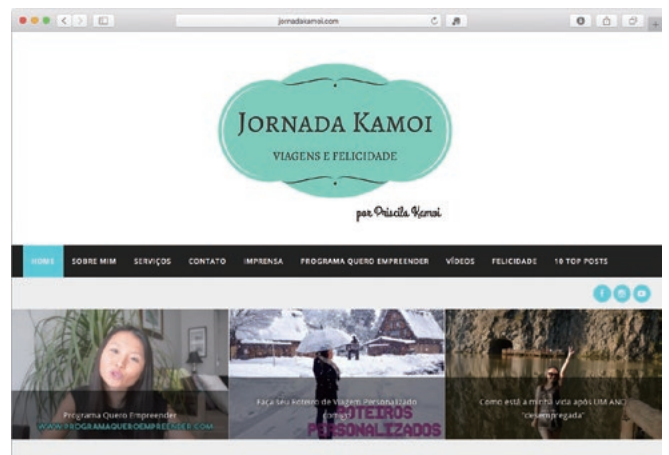
“Japanese-Brazilians account for the majority of the Nikkei in Hamamatsu. As their native language is Portuguese, public institutions such as City Hall and

local schools hire interpreters to facilitate life for Nikkei who have moved to Japan with their families. We work to strengthen connections between the local community and the Nikkei by cooperating with local organizations to conduct disaster preparedness trainings, open language schools, and so on,” explains HICE Coordinator Lissa Kikuyama.

### Nikkei in their home countries

Many Nikkei serve as bridges between Japan and their home countries. The Japanese government is implementing many programs to deepen ties with Nikkei outside Japan, including an annual program inviting Nikkei from Central and South America to visit Japan.

Priscila Megumi Kamoi is a third-generation Japanese-Brazilian living in Brazil. In 2016 she visited Japan, the native land of her grandparents, by participating in the Latin American Nikkei Invitation to Japan Program. Kamoi is a professional blogger who makes her living writing a travel blog called *Jornada Kamoi~Viagens e Felicidade* (“Kamoi’s Journey—Travels and Happiness”). Kamoi says the invitation program provided opportunities to deepen understanding of Japanese culture and life in Japan. “When I actually visited Japan, I noticed that people strictly followed traffic rules. They didn’t throw trash on the side of the road or make a lot of noise on the train. Respect for elders has not been



Kamoi runs a blog called *Jornada Kamoi~Viagens e Felicidade*. After participating in the invitational program, she partnered with the Consulate General of Japan in Curitiba to run series of lectures on Japanese culture and traditions and provide other information about Japan.

forgotten, and manners are notably good. I think there’s a lot that Brazilians could learn from these attitudes. When living in Brazil I kind of forget that I’m Nikkei, but by participating in this program I was able to renew my awareness that my ancestors were Japanese. I felt compelled to convey Japanese culture and traditions to Brazil,” she said.

After returning to Brazil, Kamoi partnered with the Consulate General of Japan in Curitiba to help with the Japanese national government’s public relations



Third-generation Japanese-Brazilian Priscila Megumi Kamoi participated in the “2016 Latin American Nikkei Invitation Program for Strengthening International Communication” after being introduced to the program by a friend.



During the week-long invitational program, discussions among participants as well as lectures by experts, visits to companies, and cultural activities were conducted.

activities by spreading information about Japan. “A large number of Brazilians have an interest in Japan and want to travel there,” she noted. “Through the program I was able to visit Japanese companies and experience Japanese traditional culture, and it made me want to share what I learned and experienced with people like these who are interested.”

Alexandre Shodi Nomura is a third-generation Nikkei Brazilian who runs his own business in Brazil. “The first- and second-generation Japanese immigrants in Brazil have contributed a lot to their communities and are held in high esteem, so much so that ‘the reliable Japanese’ has become an everyday phrase,” he says.

“During the 2016 Rio Olympics, Brazilian Nikkei, despite accounting for less than 1% of the total population, were recognized and honored for their contribution to the development of Brazil. As a third-generation Nikkei, I feel both pride in my forefathers and a responsibility to strengthen friendly ties between Japan and Brazil.”

Nomura works on the board of directors of the Brazilian Society of Japanese Culture and Social Assistance (Bunkyo) and was a chairman of the Junior Chamber International Brazil-Japan in 2016. He helps Japanese people in Brazil adapt to Brazilian culture, conducts various Japanese cultural programs for Brazilians, and acts as a mediator, working to connect everyone involved. In recognition of these efforts he was invited to the 2016 Latin American Next-generation Nikkei Leaders Conference organized by the Japanese government.

“At the conference I exchanged ideas with young Nikkei leaders who are active in various countries, and I reconfirmed the importance of Nikkei forming their own communities in each region. I also renewed my resolve to ensure that the high regard with which Nikkei are currently held in each country is carried on by future generations, through building deeper connections among our own Nikkei communities, home countries, and Japan. I believe these relationships can heighten the recognition and trust toward Nikkei, and bring wider opportunities for each individual to actively and powerfully contribute to their own countries.”

Both in and out of Japan, the Nikkei, who inherit the Japanese values passed down from Japanese emigrants to the second and third generations, are important links for strengthening the ties between Japan and their countries.



Since the invitational program, Nomura says he’s “even more motivated to contribute to the strengthening of the Nikkei community as an essential channel for spreading the values of the Japanese people.”



Nomura is also involved in the Awa-Odori Represa group, which brings the Awa-Odori, a traditional Japanese dance originating from Tokushima Prefecture, to Brazil. With a history of over 39 years, Awa-Odori Represa has performed countless times throughout Brazil. The photo is of a performance in Tokushima during a visit to Japan in 1995.



Alexandre Shodi Nomura, a third-generation Nikkei. Nomura has taken charge of running Bunkyo’s main event taking place in 2018, the “Bunka Matsuri Coordination Campaign” which lets Brazilians experience Japanese culture, and he is working enthusiastically to ensure it will be a success.

# ReCAAP Ensures the Safety of Asian Waters



In cooperation with ReCAAP and as part of its counter-piracy measures, the Japanese government dispatches Coast Guard patrol vessels and aircraft to coastal nations mainly in Southeast Asia, exchanges perspectives and information with relevant agencies, and conducts anti-piracy training and coordinated maritime exercises. The photo shows law enforcement training exercises using a high-speed rubber raft being conducted for Philippine Coast Guard personnel (a patrol vessel provided to the Philippine Coast Guard by Japan is visible in the background).

Just as crime on land will never go away, piracy and armed robbery against ships at sea are still serious problems in the modern era. Asian waters used to have an estimated 100 to 150 incidents per year, but in 1999 that number reached 211 and surged to 353 cases in 2000, turning into a grave threat not only in terms of safety, but also economically. Japanese sailors were being put in mortal danger and ships of other nations were frequently victimized as well. In order to change this situation, Japan worked with other Asian nations to make a new legal framework, the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP). An Information Sharing Centre (ISC) was set up in Singapore and began operating in 2006.

ReCAAP ISC is mainly active in three areas, as explained by Executive Director Masafumi Kuroki: “The first is the timely and accurate sharing of information among countries that are ReCAAP contracting parties whenever an incident occurs. The second is the improvement of contracting parties’ maritime law enforcement capabilities. The third is the engagement with other international organizations and shipping associations to share mutually

beneficial expertise and experiences.”

The activity which Kuroki considers to be of the utmost importance is the sharing of information. In this process, the locations of piracy incidents are quantified per country, port and maritime area, and the incidents are categorized from 1 to 4 according to severity. The information is shared among contracting parties and shipping companies through various measures such as alerts on an ad hoc basis and periodical reports. “There are different levels of piracy and armed robbery against ships, including serious organized crime like abductions of crew as well as offenses like theft from anchored vessels. In order to develop countermeasures, it is crucial to grasp trends such as incidents of what level are common in which



**Masafumi Kuroki**

Executive Director, ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre



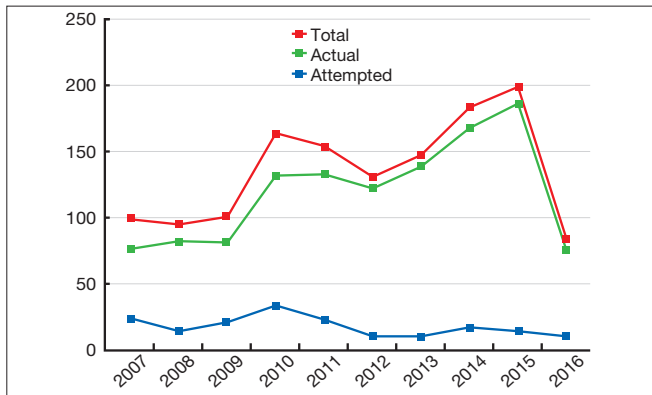
areas,” Kuroki explains.

Piracy and armed robbery against ships were particularly common in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore in the past, but it has been a problem not only for Southeast Asia, but for the entire world. Roughly 90% of the transport of goods in international trade is sea-based. Ensuring the safety of navigation encourages free trade and protects the crews of ships. The ReCAAP framework has been praised and endorsed by the United States, Australia, and European nations in addition to Asian countries including China and South Korea. It is recognized as an effective anti-piracy regional model and inspired the establishment of the Djibouti Code of Conduct (DCoC), which seeks to fight piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. The rest of the world has high expectations for Japan’s further contributions to advancing ReCAAP.

“The Japan Coast Guard was founded in 1948, making its history one of the longest among Asian nations,” says Kuroki. “Sharing its accumulated expertise in ensuring maritime safety with other Asian countries is an important way of supporting ReCAAP’s activities. Japan strives to help other nations improve their capabilities by providing patrol vessels under bilateral agreements and dispatching experts. As those countries’ maritime law enforcement capabilities rise, activities performed by ReCAAP ISC will likewise increase in effectiveness.”

Regarding global efforts to fight piracy and armed robbery against ships, Kuroki warns, “It is necessary to be consistently vigilant in protecting and guarding the safety of the seas. That is why raising awareness of the importance and results of ReCAAP is also imperative. We will continue our efforts to increase the number of contracting and cooperating countries.”

**Changes in the number of incidents of piracy and armed robbery against ships in Asia**



“Attempted” denotes unsuccessful incidents, whereas “Actual” denotes incidents during which a vessel was actually boarded. Although the total number of incidents fluctuates, there has been significant improvement since 2016, thanks to the efforts of stakeholders and ReCAAP.

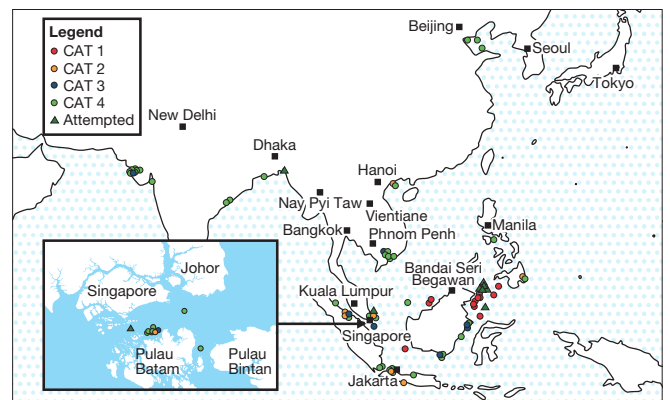


As measures against crimes at sea, protection measures such as shielding the vessel with barbed wire making it harder to board can prove effective. Providing such advice is one of the activities performed by ReCAAP ISC. © Perspectives / Getty Images



As one of the activities designed to improve maritime law enforcement capabilities, officials from ASEAN member states including ReCAAP contracting parties were invited to Singapore and Japan and underwent training there between September and October 2017.

**Locations of incidents in Asian waters**



Locations of incidents reported in 2016. While the maritime areas covered by ReCAAP’s activities are in Asia, the agreement has grown to include 20 contracting parties: Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, China, Denmark, India, Japan, South Korea, Laos, Myanmar, the Netherlands, Norway, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Vietnam.

This  
is  
Japan

# Kumamoto, the “Land of Water”

With spring water flowing from more than 1,000 locations across the prefecture and an abundance of gorges, waterfalls, and groundwater, Kumamoto Prefecture is also called the “land of water.” Kumamoto City, the prefectural capital with a population of 730,000, relies on natural groundwater for 100 percent of its domestic water supply, a rarity among cities the world over. Moreover, Kumamoto Prefecture holds water-related festivals and events all throughout the year, to the delight of visitors to this land of water.



## Festivals

Kumamoto, the “land of water,” holds a large number of events associated with water that take place at the sea, rivers, and hot springs. One of those is the festival of Mizu Akari, held every October, whose name means “the reflection of light on the water.” More than 50,000 lanterns and artistic pieces fashioned from bamboo are floated down the Tsuboi River, which forms the boundary of Kumamoto Castle, one of Kumamoto City’s famous attractions, giving a dream-like atmosphere to Kumamoto nights. © Mizuakari

## Agriculture & Livestock

Blessed with a rich natural environment, Kumamoto offers a wide array of agricultural and livestock products. The Tsujun Bridge, a 75.6 meter-long (248 foot-long) aqueduct constructed in 1854 for regions in deep gorges unable to access irrigation water, is also famed as a tourist attraction. The scene of parabolas of water being discharged with great force from the central section of the stone arch, one of the largest nationwide, is truly spectacular. (Water discharges have been temporarily suspended but are scheduled to resume in 2019.)





### Industry

Kumamoto is an area exceptionally suitable for semiconductor manufacturing, which requires a large volume of clean ultrapure water. More than 100 semiconductor-related companies, both foreign and domestic, have set up manufacturing bases here. Advanced research and development is also being conducted at the prefecture's universities and research and testing institutes as well as in the fields of medical treatment, food, and the environment, which are heavily related to biotechnology. © HORIBA STEC, Co., Ltd.

### Hot Springs

With more than 1,300 hot spring sources, Kumamoto Prefecture is one of the most famous hot spring regions in Japan. One prominent area is Kurokawa Onsen, a hot spring district popular with tourists situated in the northeast of the prefecture. The district evokes a thoroughly Japanese atmosphere, with hot spring ryokan – Japanese-style inns – nestled alongside the gorge. The gorge itself boasts magnificent scenery, and the area received an extraordinary two stars as a hot spring area in the *Michelin Green Guide Japan*. © Fujiya



### Food and Drink

It goes without saying that Kumamoto, blessed by its water, is known for its rice. Kumamoto is also celebrated as an excellent source of Japanese *shochu* liquor and sake, both of which are made using rice. In particular, *kuma shochu*, Kumamoto's best-known locally produced liquor, exhibits a rich flavor thanks to the clear waters of the Kuma River. © maruk / amanaimages



On his own initiative, Jean-Baptiste Gourdin tried his hand at designing official school goods for APU. He submitted a number of designs to the university for consideration, and they were accepted. He observed, "APU has a school tradition of freedom and supports students' individuality."

## Living and Learning Globally in Oita

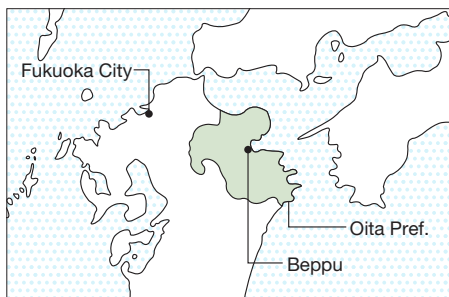
The city of Beppu in Oita Prefecture is where one will find the international university Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU). APU was established by the Ritsumeikan Trust, an educational institution with more than 100 years of history and tradition, through cooperation with Oita Prefecture and the city of Beppu. APU has accepted students from 147 countries and regions throughout the world since it first opened its doors in 2000. APU's two colleges are the College of Asia Pacific Studies, in which students study such subjects as international relations, environment and development, and tourism, and the College of International Management, in which students study business management and other such fields. APU has a student enrollment of about 6,000, with half the student body international and the other half Japanese.

Jean-Baptiste Gourdin, a student from France, said, "Before I came to Japan, the only image I had was of advanced major cities, typified by Tokyo. But by living in Oita I've also had the opportunity to come into contact with the warmth of the culture found in Japan's local areas." He paints APU as a "university at which students become able to transcend the frameworks of nations and

cultures to interact with each other as individuals, while learning together."

During their first year, international students live together in a dormitory with Japanese students who opt to live there. Jana Pelzom, a student from Bhutan and a resident assistant responsible for assisting lowerclassmen and women in the dormitory, talks about the significance of living in a dormitory with people from a multitude of other countries, saying, "We live together with friends from the same age group and build close human relations even with people having completely different cultures, customs, and values."

The Government of Japan is actively promoting the acceptance of international students and is developing various programs, aiming to have 300,000 international students at Japanese institutes of higher education by 2020. The African Business Education Initiative for Youth (the ABE Initiative), which provides African youth with educational opportunities in Japan, is one of these programs. Wanyama Eugene, a native of Kenya who graduated from APU's College of Asia Pacific Studies in 2005 and now works as a staff member at the university, evaluates this initiative saying, "The effects of the ABE



Jana Pelzom (left), who professed, “I love dorm life, because the dormitory at APU is just like a family,” and Jean-Baptiste Gourdin (right), who asserted, “The city of Beppu is very pleasant to live in and a very good place for focusing on your studies.”

Initiative policy have been quite substantial, with twice as many Africans entering the graduate program this year compared to before the policy began.”

When asked about his life in Japan, Eugene recounted with a laugh, “Before I came to Japan, I was worried about whether I could adapt to Japanese society, but I immediately became close to many Japanese people, with one family even treating me as a member of their own. Ultimately, they even gave me a key to their house.” He refers to the people who gave him the key as his “Japanese family.” He recalled that when his Japanese “mother” went on a trip with her friends, during the conversation she talked repeatedly about someone new—a young friend of the family who had become as close to them as a son. It was only at the end of the trip when the woman remarked, “I hope I have the chance to visit his home country someday,” that her friends first learned to their surprise that the person her family regarded as a son was not Japanese, but in fact from Kenya. Eugene continued, “I was touched to hear this story. Of course Japan’s advanced technologies and traditional culture are magnificent, but Japan’s real treasure is the Japanese people themselves. They interact with others without discriminating based on race or religion.”

Eugene asserts that the students attending APU in Oita are blessed with a learning environment that is remarkably unique, even in global terms. He maintains that the reason students come into bloom right before his eyes is the university’s location in Beppu, where human relations are especially close, unlike in a large city. To illustrate the close relations students enjoy with the community, he cites APU students working jointly with an Oita condiments manufacturer to develop a halal soy sauce and later playing a role in its packaging and marketing. He also describes APU students visiting local elementary and junior high schools on their own initiative to hold cooking demonstrations and introduce their home



Wanyama Eugene joined APU as a staff member in 2010. He was in charge of alumni affairs and recruiting international students before taking up his current position of recruiting Japanese students. He notes, “It was unprecedented for a non-Japanese to be in charge of domestic recruiting. But if anyplace were to institute such a pioneering practice, it would certainly be APU.”



The basic ideals of APU are “freedom, peace, and humanity,” “international mutual understanding,” and “creating the future shape of the Asia-Pacific region.” Ninety percent of undergraduate courses are provided in a bilingual framework, offered in either Japanese or English. Roughly half of the faculty is non-Japanese.



A photo of the Masuda family, Eugene’s Japanese family. His “mother” is the woman second from the left, wearing black.

cultures. Upon graduation, students spread their wings in search of a place to be dynamically engaged, at the United Nations and multinational companies, and indeed all throughout the world. “Having young people from all around the globe studying Japan and the world here in Oita, and having them contribute to building a better future—those are the things I live for,” he declared, his eyes gleaming.



**Toshiko Mori**

Graduated from Irwin S. Chanin School of Architecture at Cooper Union in 1976, and worked for Edward Larrabee Barnes and Associates in New York City before setting up her own firm, Toshiko Mori Architect PLLC, in 1981. Received tenure at Harvard University in 1995, was appointed as the Chair of the Department of Architecture at the Graduate School of Design from 2002 to 2008, and continues to teach as Professor in the Practice of Architecture. Among her many awards are the Academy Award in Architecture (2005), an American Architecture Award (2012), Architectural Digest's "AD100" (2014 and 2016), the AIA 2017 Institute Honor Award (2017), and the Certificate of Excellence in Africa Architecture Award (2017).

At the new Center for Maine Contemporary Art in Rockland, Maine, which opened in June 2016.

© Portland Press Herald / Getty Images

Series: Japanese Individuals Contributing Worldwide

## Japanese Architect Harmonizes People and the Environment

Recently, Japanese architects have received significant global recognition. An American online art sector platform called Artsy included three of them among 15 architects showcased in its article "These Architects Are Transforming the Way We Experience Art." Along with Tadao Ando and the firm SANAA, one of the Japanese architects included in the list is Toshiko Mori. Based in New York City, Mori predominantly designs residential, institutional and cultural buildings in the United States. She has received numerous awards, including the Academy Award in Architecture from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and from 2002 to 2008, she chaired the Department of Architecture at Harvard University Graduate School of Design.

Mori's designs connect visual beauty with functionality and convey timeless and universal qualities. For every project, she conducts thorough research on the program and context to gain deeper understanding of clients' needs as well as understanding of nuances of site conditions. "The real lives of buildings begin when people

occupy them. They must be designed for long-term use and the experience of occupants. I make sure to study the site closely to try to understand the specifics of its locale, to see how a new construction can be harmonized with its surroundings to ensure it passes the test of time," Mori explains. Her architectural philosophy is partially based on a practice that can resonate with traditional Japanese ways of thinking. For example, her approach includes rich and imaginative interior spaces that enhance the daily life of inhabitants. She finds that "In Western architecture, emphasis on verticality dominates its spatial order, while Japanese tradition promotes horizontality. It is largely derived from a lifestyle closely associated with floor surfaces that connect spaces in horizontal sequences. Because of this, horizontal orientation helps architecture to operate at an intimate human level."

"The prominence and strength of contemporary Japanese architects in the global scene is due to the collective talent of this group which demonstrates a unique ability to integrate diverse ideas and concepts, and

**Thread: Artists Residency and Cultural Center, Sinthian, Senegal, 2015**



Constructed with a thatched roof, sun dried mud bricks and bamboo, the center was built with local materials and labor. Its defining characteristic of a steep thatched roof harvests rainwater that serves nearly 30% of the village's household needs. © Iwan Baan

distill that complexity into simple, clear and fresh ideas,” Mori points out.

There has been a long tradition of this practice, and she points out Japanese modernist architecture as a notable example: “Western architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright and Alvar Aalto were influenced by traditional Japanese architecture. In turn, Japanese architects adapted the essence of the work of Western modern architecture, yet they combined it with their own culture and tradition, creating a brilliant hybrid. This body of work is distinct because it shows rich dialogue that connects modernism to the tradition and vernacular of Japanese architecture.”

In recent years, the advances made by women not only in Japan but in the rest of the world in the field of architecture have been significant. Mori sees this trend as a welcome and positive one that is creating new role models



Chochikukyo, an early modern house full of inventive ideas for housing that's environmentally suited for the Japanese site and climate, fused with and inspired by traditional Japanese *sukiyazukuri* design and traditional Japanese craftsmanship. The building was once threatened with demolition but it was designated as an Important Cultural Property by the Japanese government in June of 2017. It continues to be maintained and cared for by a group of volunteers. © Takenaka Corporation / Taizo Furukawa

**Syracuse University Center for Excellence for Energy and Environment, Syracuse, USA, 2010**



The building houses a collaborative federation of experts on environmental research such as chemistry, engineering, material science, psychology, and thermodynamics. Topics such as strategies for energy efficiency, indoor environmental quality and site remediation techniques were discussed throughout the project. © Iwan Baan

for the next generation which previously did not exist. Additionally, she points out, “For women to increasingly participate in the field of architecture, surrounding industries need to step up inclusion of women as well, such as in construction industries, engineering disciplines, real estate development, and other important roles. Architecture is a team effort that requires a diverse sector of players. True parity and progress can only be achieved if everyone steps up to the plate.”

Mori continues to devote her time to teaching at Harvard GSD. “My mentor, John Hejduk, often spoke of teaching as a social contract for architects; that it is our social responsibility to cultivate the next generation. Working together with my students is an exciting challenge which continues to inspire me.”



In order to teach the next generation of architects the significance of architecture in global context, Mori takes her students at Harvard GSD to different places in the world. This fall, Mori and her students are speculating about contemporary uses for one of Alvar Aalto's masterpieces, Saynatsalo Town Hall in Finland, which is threatened by obsolescence and possible demolition.



**Yusra Mardini**

Olympic swimmer and Goodwill Ambassador for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency. Born in Damascus, she fled war-torn Syria in 2015 and currently lives in Germany. She swam on the Refugee Olympic Team in the Rio Olympics, and hopes to compete again in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics.

Mardini with students of Taimei Elementary School, Tokyo. © UNHCR

Series: Friends of Japan

## Achieving the Impossible: Syrian Refugee Swimmer-Ambassador

Syrian refugee, Olympic swimmer, and UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Yusra Mardini visited 2020 Olympic Host City Tokyo in August 2017 to promote awareness and understanding of refugees by sharing her own dramatic story.

“Refugees are people who, if only given a chance, are capable of extraordinary things.” Yusra Mardini lives out her claim. In 2015, Mardini fled war-torn Syria for Germany. In 2016, she swam in the Rio Olympics with the first ever Refugee Olympic Athletes Team. Now, as Goodwill Ambassador for UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, she represents the more than 65 million forcibly displaced people around the world, working to inspire other refugees to pursue their dreams.

Mardini is seeking to change the negative image many

people hold of refugees. Speaking at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in January, she declared, “‘Refugee’ is becoming an insult—a name to hurt and humiliate—but there is no shame if we remember who we are.” Mardini describes refugees as “survivors with their own talents and skills that had to flee their country to escape persecution.” The label “refugee” hides the fact that these people are “doctors and lawyers, mothers, and brothers with much to contribute.”

Mardini knew her native Syria as a “vibrant country, full of generous, kind people; a center of art, culture and civilization.” Until 2011, Syria welcomed millions of tourists annually. Mardini grew up in the capital city of Damascus. Her father, a professional swim coach,





Mardini (left) traveled through Hungary with other refugees during her journey to Germany in 2015. © UNHCR/Lam Duc Hien



Members of the Refugee Olympic Team at the Olympic Village, Rio 2016. © UNHCR/Benjamin Loyseau



Mardini leaps from the starting blocks in the 100m freestyle race at Rio 2016. © UNHCR/Benjamin Loyseau



Mardini was appointed Goodwill Ambassador for UNHCR in April 2017. © UNHCR

started Mardini swimming at the age of three. She trained seven days a week, discipline that led to her competing in the 2012 FINA World Championships in Istanbul.

After war broke out, Mardini tried living a normal life, going to school and swimming. But when bombings interrupted her practice, she knew it was time to leave. At the age of 17, she escaped with her sister, hoping that the rest of their family could join them later. They traveled for 25 days through Lebanon and Turkey. They reached the coast and crowded onto a small boat, hoping to make it across the Adriatic Sea to Greece. When the boat's motor failed, Mardini, her sister, and two others jumped out. They swam in the open sea, keeping the boat from capsizing. After three and a half hours, the boat and its twenty passengers, many of whom could not swim, arrived safely on the Greek island of Lesbos.

Mardini found welcome as a refugee in Germany. She started swimming again, working “incredibly hard. I have a good feeling when I’m in the water. Without

swimming, I don’t think I would have survived. Swimming teaches you to be patient and to be passionate at the same time, and in the end, it teaches you to keep fighting.”

Selected for the Refugee Olympic Team for Rio 2016, she joined athletes from different countries, united under the Olympic flag with its message of peace and respect. All counted it a privilege to represent fellow refugees.

On her visit to Japan, Mardini also shared her story with elementary school children. She found it “wonderful to engage with children about swimming, the Olympics, achieving your goals, and being resilient. Children have such a wonderful ability to be open and unbiased and non-judgmental, to just take things and people at face value—I love that.”

Mardini wants to compete in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics and improve her time. “People say gold is out of my reach, but my heart tells me I can continue to break barriers, fight and maybe one day achieve the impossible.”

# Treasuring Special Ties in Rural Japan

I am entering my third year as a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) in Hamada City, Shimane Prefecture. As a child, I watched Japanese television dramas such as “Oshin” and “Stewardess Monogatari” and remember being very impressed by the diligence and perseverance of the Japanese people portrayed in these shows. I decided that I wanted to gain a better understanding of the country, so I took up Japanese studies at university. After graduating, I got a job at a Japanese company in Ho Chi Minh City where I did translation and interpreting work. I was there for 10 years, but began longing to be exposed to real Japanese culture. As soon as I heard about recruitments for CIRs in Japan, I applied for a position.

Hamada City is a coastal city with a population of 55,000 people and a thriving marine products processing industry. My job is to help Vietnamese trainees by interpreting at information sessions on life in Hamada and translating business-related documents. I am the first Hamada City CIR from Vietnam. Since I began running activities to help Vietnamese trainees transition to life in Hamada, assisting with the necessary registration procedures, for example, the city has become popular as a place to go where they can feel comfortable even without being able to understand the language. Trainees from Vietnam have grown in number over the last two years, from around 20 to 130.

Another important aspect of my job is to organize events about Vietnam for the people of Hamada. I introduce my country’s culture and way of life by organizing language and cooking lessons, and writing a column for *Koho Hamada*, the city’s monthly newsletter. My courses are attended by people of all walks of life, including homemakers, office workers and teachers, and many of them have said that they would like to visit Vietnam, despite finding the language difficult. In order to provide Vietnamese people in Hamada the opportunity to truly experience Japanese culture, I have also organized lessons on how to cook Japanese food and wear the *yukata* (the summer version of the kimono), and received good feedback on such events.

I love the word “goen” in Japanese, meaning “special ties,” and I really sense the kindness of the people of Hamada and feel a connection with them. Being invited to spend the New Year holiday with a Japanese friend



**Nguyen Thi Ngoc Nhung**

Graduated from Ho Chi Minh City University of Social Sciences and Humanities. Lives in Japan with her husband and children. In her free time, Nhung participates in local festivals, visits local tourist spots, enjoys picking fresh fruit, and skis.



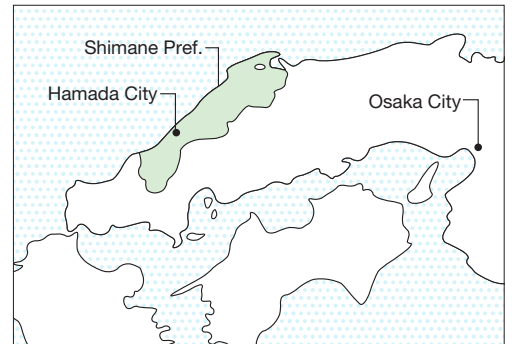
With her family in Japan. Nhung’s sons attend a local elementary school (Grades 1 and 3).

and her family was a particularly memorable experience. I enjoyed being part of their family circle as they fostered in the year with hopes for a good one ahead while sharing a traditional celebratory meal. The New Year is also special in Vietnam, where we display flowers and decorations for good luck, enjoy traditional New Year food, and celebrate with our families. One day, I hope to organize an event for the people of Hamada so they can experience the New Year holiday in Vietnam. I really feel the support of the community because

everyone is so kind: people whom I have met and gotten to know at international exchange events, for example, prepared lunch for my son for his elementary school sports day event, and when I had to move apartments, even offered their help.

There are three CIRs in Hamada City: one from China, one from the United States, and myself. We are currently planning an international exchange festival and hope to make it an entertaining event by introducing popular

foods and presenting songs and dances from each of our countries. I love Hamada's green mountains, blue sea, and the warm hearts of its people. I hope to remain in Japan once I finish my term as a CIR, and help deepen ties between Vietnam and Japan by introducing Japanese culture to Vietnam, and Vietnam's charms to Japan. From here on, I hope to take on new challenges and continue to create and treasure special ties with everyone.



A small gathering to experience Vietnam's coffee culture. Nhung introduces Vietnamese culture to the people of Hamada through language and cooking classes. She also administers a Facebook page in Vietnamese that provides information about tourism in Hamada City.



With colleagues from the Hamada City Tourism and Cultural Exchange Division.



Wearing an ao dai, the traditional dress of Vietnamese women, at a public lecture introducing Vietnamese culture.



CIRs from the United States, China and Vietnam visiting an elementary school.

### About the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme

The Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme began in 1987 with the goal of promoting grass-roots international exchange between Japan and other nations, and is now one of the world's largest international exchange programs. JET participants are placed in every region of Japan and work in one of three positions: assistant language teachers (ALTs), coordinators for international relations (CIRs), or sports exchange advisors (SEAs). In 2016, the JET Programme welcomed 4,952 participants, and currently there are approximately 62,000 alumni from 65 countries living in all parts of the world.



The JET Programme official website  
<http://jetprogramme.org/en/>

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