

We Are *Tomodachi*

Japan and Russia Edition 2018

SPIEF'18 **ПМЭФ'18**
ST. PETERSBURG ПЕТЕРБУРГСКИЙ
INTERNATIONAL МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЙ
ECONOMIC ЭКОНОМИЧЕСКИЙ
FORUM ФОРУМ



Feature: Improving Lives in Russia through the Eight-Point Cooperation Plan
Making 2018 an Opportunity for Deeper Japan-Russia Friendship



JAPANGOV
THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN

Russia and Japan: The Latest Updates



Anatoly Artamonov, the Governor of Kaluga Region, visited Tochigi Prefecture, meeting with Governor Tomikazu Fukuda and visiting a local enterprise. Governor Fukuda plans to visit Kaluga Region soon. (June 2018) Photo (left): ©Shimotsuke Shimbun



Alina Zagitova received an Akita dog in Moscow, while Prime Minister Abe visited the city to see President Putin. (May 2018)



A number of Japanese football fans showed up to the 2018 FIFA World Cup Russia. They cleaned up stadiums after each of their matches. (June – July 2018)

Contents

We Are *Tomodachi* Japan and Russia Edition 2018

"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.

Feature:

Improving Lives in Russia through the Eight-Point — 6 Cooperation Plan



Making 2018 an Opportunity for Deeper Japan-Russia Friendship — 4



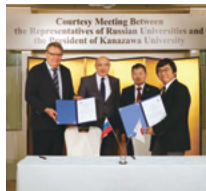
P. 4

Friends of Japan Russian "Seiyu" Puts Heart into Spreading Love of Anime — 14



P. 14

University Collaboration Shaping the Future — 10



P. 10

The JET Programme Building Bridges, Sharing Cultures: Working for Japanese Local Government — 16



P. 16

Japanese Individuals Contributing Worldwide — 12 Dancing Onward with Love for Russian Ballet



P. 12

Friendship across the Four Northern Islands — 19



P. 19

Cover

In May 2018, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Saint Petersburg, Russia, attending together with H.E. Mr. Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin, President of the Russian Federation, St. Petersburg International Economic Forum 2018 and Japan-Russia Business Dialogue.

Making 2018 an Opportunity for Deeper Japan-Russia Friendship



In August 2018, Yabusame, traditional Japanese horseback archery, was performed for the first time in Russia at the Central Moscow Hippodrome. The event was a great success, attended by many families.

“For developing close partnership between Russia and Japan, cooperation in the personal sphere, people-to-people interactions, and cultural, scientific, and educational exchange are especially valuable. Improving our relationship in these fields will be achieved through the activities of both nations in this Russia-Japan cross cultural year of 2018—of that I am certain.”—Russian President Vladimir Putin emphatically expressed this sentiment at the Japan-Russia joint press conference on December 16, 2016.

As part of point eight of the Eight-Point Cooperation Plan, “Fundamental expansion of people-to-people interaction,” the two nations are holding “Japan Year in Russia” and “Russia Year in Japan,” respectively. These events are being held nationwide in each country, with the aim of expanding relations between Japan and Russia

in the fields of politics, trade, economics, culture, and interregional exchange, and are expected to increase the bonds of friendship and mutual understanding between the people of both countries.

As far as specific exchange events are concerned, the Russian cities of Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Vladivostok, Khabarovsk, and Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk have already hosted Japanese *taiko* drum concerts and other performances, while Moscow has also had events conveying the charms of Japan’s various local regions, all to positive reviews. Prime Minister Abe participated in an opening ceremony for the year of exchange held at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow at the end of May and directly introduced the attractiveness of Japan to the Russian people. For the summer onward, there is a diverse range of events planned, including performances of Shochiku Grand Kabuki, an exhibition of



In July 2017, a Japanese culture festival based on the concept of Japanese summer festivals was held in Gorky Park in central Moscow. Following the lead of Japanese dancers on the stage, Russians joined in the traditional *bon odori* dance. In 2018, which is “Japan Year in Russia,” the festival is scheduled to be held again along with a variety of other Japan-related events. © J-FEST



As part of the Russian Cultural Festival, a special exhibition featuring pieces belonging to the Pushkin State Museum of Fine Arts was held first at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum and later at the National Museum of Art, Osaka. The ribbon cutting ceremony at the Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum was attended by Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Japan Mikhail Y. Galuzin and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Manabu Hori.

masterpiece paintings from the Edo period that includes pieces designated as National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties, and a demonstration of *yabusame* horseback archery. Furthermore, a “Russian Cultural Festival in Japan” and a variety of other events are planned in Japan as well.

Toyohisa Kozuki, Ambassador of Japan to the Russian Federation, is full of hope regarding these efforts. “Russia is an important partner country in the Asia-Pacific region. But in spite of our countries being neighbors, many Russians don’t know all that much about Japan, and public surveys have shown that Japanese people also lack understanding of Russia. Few Japanese people know about the beauty of Russia’s natural landscapes, for example, which I’ve grown to love through my hobby of photography. As expressed by the slogan of Japan Year in Russia, ‘This Is the Japan You Don’t Know About,’ a major goal for this project is to get as many Russians as possible more familiar with our country. We hope that the efforts of this year of mutual partnership

will create a better environment for taking on the issues that both countries share.”

Similarly, Ambassador of the Russian Federation to Japan Mikhail Y. Galuzin emphasizes, “This Japan-Russia exchange project isn’t limited to just one area like politics or economics, but covers many different ones. We’re also comprehensively promoting this effort on the private-sector level. I hope that these efforts will deepen the mutual understanding between the people of both countries and that we will keep building a positive bilateral relationship on an even firmer foundation. In order to ultimately conclude a Japanese-Russian peace treaty, it is necessary for the people of Russia and Japan to build a true relationship of trust and come to an agreement. This project will contribute towards that goal.”

2018 is an important turning point in the relationship between Japan and Russia, and will allow the two neighbors to nurture bonds of friendship.



Toyohisa Kozuki

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Russian Federation. Born in Tokyo in 1956. Assumed his current position in 2015, after having previously served as Director of the Russian Division of the European Affairs Bureau, as Deputy Chief of Mission, Minister, Embassy of Japan in Russia, as Director-General of the European Affairs Bureau, and as Deputy Minister at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.



Mikhail Y. Galuzin

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to Japan. Born in Moscow in 1960. Assumed his current position in January 2018, after having previously served as Minister-Counsellor at the Embassy of Russia in Japan, Director of the Third Asia Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, and Ambassador to Indonesia.

Improving Lives in Russia through the Eight-Point Cooperation Plan



The "Sayuri" greenhouse farming facility, constructed in the cold-climate city of Yakutsk through Japan-Russia technical collaboration. The greenhouse is making it possible for fresh vegetables to be grown all year round.

The Eight-Point Cooperation Plan proposed by Prime Minister Abe at the May 2016 Japan-Russia Summit Meeting is a concrete plan to unleash the potential of the highly promising Japan-Russia relationship. The plan will

bring direct benefits to people's daily lives in Russia in such fields as medication and healthcare and their living environments, and also promote exchange between regions, in sports, and among young people. One of the Eight-Point Cooperation Plan's objectives is to generate as many opportunities for direct interactions between the people of Japan and Russia as possible. The intent is for such interactions to enable the citizens of both countries to personally experience the benefits of the expansion of the relationship between Japan and Russia as a result of the cooperation plan. Roughly two years have passed since the cooperation plan was proposed, and the active efforts of Japanese and Russian entrepreneurs are bearing fruit: More than 100 written agreements at the private-sector level have been signed at present, of which about 40% are moving towards realization. One after another, concrete results are materializing that will make the lives of the Russian people more comfortable and enjoyable.

The Eight-Point Cooperation Plan

- (1) Extending healthy life expectancies
- (2) Developing comfortable and clean cities easy to reside and live in
- (3) Fundamental expansion of medium-sized and small companies' exchange and cooperation
- (4) Energy
- (5) Promoting industrial diversification and enhancing productivity in Russia
- (6) Developing industries and export bases in the Far East
- (7) Cooperation on cutting-edge technologies
- (8) Fundamental expansion of people-to-people interaction

The Eight-Point Cooperation Plan first discussed during the 2016 Japan-Russia Summit Meeting will provide mutual economic and cultural benefits to both countries. The plan has become a regular topic of discussion during Japanese-Russian leadership and cabinet official summits.

This article showcases four major projects among these efforts.

Contribution to curing multidrug-resistant tuberculosis through an innovative medication

(1) Extending healthy life expectancies

In Russia, more than 14,000 citizens died of tuberculosis in 2016 according to the World Health Organization (WHO), making treatment for it an urgent need.

In recent years, multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, which is non-responsive to existing anti-tubercular drugs, has become a serious issue. In July 2017, Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. (Otsuka) signed a cooperative agreement with leading Russian pharmaceutical company R-Pharm JSC and began working on a plan to fight multidrug-resistant tuberculosis in Russia.

Delamanid, which was discovered and developed by Otsuka, has proved effective in the treatment of multidrug-resistant tuberculosis. In 2015, it was added to the WHO Model Lists of Essential Medicines and is being put to use not only in Japan but other countries as well.

Most conventional tuberculosis medications have significant side effects, which makes it difficult for patients to take them over the sustained period required for a complete cure. In addition to being more tolerable in this respect, delamanid does not interact with HIV or diabetes medication, rendering it effective for patients undergoing those treatments as well.

“Delamanid’s safety is one of its distinctive characteristics, which is why the WHO also recommends its use for children. Also, the medication is taken orally rather than by injection or intravenous drip. Therefore, it has the



Keiso Yamasaki, Global Project Leader of TB Projects of the Pharmaceutical Business Division of Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd., says, “I am happy to see this research we have been conducting for a long time bear fruit, fulfilling the company’s philosophy, ‘Otsuka—people creating new products for better health worldwide.’ I hope that delamanid will bring Japan and Russia closer together.”

advantage of being easy to take long-term. I think that’s what R-Pharm JSC appreciates in our product,” explains Keiso Yamasaki of Otsuka’s Pharmaceutical Business Division.

A new drug application for delamanid was submitted in Russia in March 2018. If it is exempted from clinical trials, the medication will become available in Russia in early 2019.

“We wish to make delamanid available in Russia as quickly as we can, and reduce the number of tuberculosis victims. We hope to eventually make it so that delamanid can be produced within Russia,” says Yamasaki.

For the many Russians suffering from multidrug-resistant tuberculosis, delamanid may bring new hope.

Reducing traffic jams with a high-tech traffic signal system

(2) Developing comfortable and clean cities easy to reside and live in

In many Russian cities, serious traffic jams are occurring that pose a significant obstacle to economic activity and civic life. Kyosan Electric Manufacturing Co., Ltd. (Kyosan) is working on alleviating Russia’s traffic jams with a unique traffic signal system.



Tomooki Chiba (left), General Manager of the Management Department of the Traffic Control Systems Division of Kyosan Electric Manufacturing Co., Ltd., and Ryota Notaki (right), Engineering Manager of the Engineering Department of the Traffic Control Systems Division of Kyosan Electric Manufacturing Co., Ltd. They say, “ARTEMIS’s introduction in Voronezh was reported on by local news, and we received positive feedback.”



Although this was Kyosan’s first project for Russia, the company was able to overcome issues in adapting the system through trial and error together with its Russian counterparts.

Ryota Notaki of the Traffic Control Systems Division of Kyosan explains, “Our traffic signal system ARTEMIS (Autonomous and Real-Time signal control based on Estimation of traffic demand for MINimization of Signal waiting time) exchanges information between signal control equipment and enables the reduction of traffic jams by controlling the timing of traffic light changes automatically. It’s a rather advanced system, even from a global perspective.”

In the hope that this system will decrease traffic jams in Russia’s cities, ARTEMIS was tested in Moscow between July and August 2017. After the system was installed at five intersections in the Moscow suburbs, transit time in the test area of about 2 km (1.2 mi.) was found to have been significantly reduced, from around 8 minutes to about 5 minutes.

The city of Voronezh has officially decided to make use of ARTEMIS as well. The city’s traffic authority and Kyosan have installed ARTEMIS at 10 intersections with extremely heavy traffic along the Moskovsky Prospekt, a major avenue running through the city center.

Since the system became operational in late December 2017, ARTEMIS has shown immediate results. The average wait time at traffic signals has decreased by 28% since its implementation and it is obvious that the flow of vehicles has become significantly smoother. Residents are happy about the results, with one of them saying, “I’m really grateful for how much shorter my commute has become thanks to the reduction in traffic jams.”

“Other cities in Russia witnessing the results achieved in Voronezh are sending us inquiries. I’m honored that we are able to contribute to solving traffic jams in Russia,” says Tomoaki Chiba of Kyosan’s Traffic Control

Systems Division.

This high-tech traffic signal system, which has reduced traffic jams in Japan, continues to spread in Russia.

Bringing fresh vegetables to regions of extreme cold

(6) Developing industries and export bases in the Far East

The city of Yakutsk in the north of Russia’s Republic of Sakha is located in an extremely cold region where temperatures reach as low as -60°C (-76°F). Who could have imagined that fresh vegetables could be grown in such a place? Japanese trading firm Hokkaido Corporation, which supports Japanese businesses’ activities in Russia, has coordinated a project to fulfill the wish of Yakutsk to be able to harvest fresh vegetables all year round.

“Temperatures in Yakutsk are extremely cold and the soil is permafrost, which are immensely challenging circumstances for farming. I knew that it would be a difficult project, but if we are successful, we’ll be able to provide something very valuable,” explains Yukio Temma, Director General of Hokkaido Corporation.

For the project, Hokko Corporation is designing the greenhouse, using its experience and know-how from Hokkaido, the coldest region in Japan. The covers are made with three layers of fluoride film with excellent translucence and durability, which improves their heat retention. With sunlight hours in Yakutsk being short, Hokko’s expertise is also used to provide the greenhouse with appropriate environmental control technology such as artificial lighting.

In addition, Add-One Farm Co. Ltd. provides training in agricultural techniques. Russian growers have visited Hokkaido and learned growing methods for cold regions



In the Sayuri greenhouse, tomatoes were harvested the first winter, and now cucumbers are being grown. These fresh vegetables are enjoyed by children at local kindergartens.



Yukio Temma, Director General of Hokkaido Corporation, explains, “It was mutual trust and the desire to provide tasty vegetables that enabled this project to succeed.”

through this training.

The greenhouse farming installation “Sayuri,” based on Japanese technology, was established in September 2016 in Yakutsk. In October, tomato seedlings were planted for the first time, and harvesting began in December.

“People in Yakutsk couldn’t believe that we actually harvested tomatoes in the winter. From now on people will be able to have fresh vegetables even in the winter season. Yakutsk’s food culture might change significantly,” says Temma.

Sayuri began as an experimental area of 0.1 hectares (about 0.25 acres), but is scheduled to be expanded to 1 hectare (about 2.5 acres) in the fall of 2018 and to 3.2 hectares (about 7.9 acres) in 2020. More varieties of vegetables are also planned to be added accordingly. With these efforts, the food environment in this cold part of Russia is changing through Japanese technology and the enthusiasm of growers in Yakutsk.

Delivering mail, packets and parcels swiftly and reliably via automated processing systems

(7) Cooperation on cutting-edge technologies

Since about 2012, due to a boom in online shopping in Russia the number of imported packets and parcels has risen drastically. In the Christmas season when the volume is especially high because of gifts being sent, in recent years some gifts were unable to be delivered on schedule. At Russian Post’s Vnukovo Logistics Center located in western Moscow, where customs inspection and sorting processes are performed, it therefore became necessary to improve the speed and efficiency of packet and parcel processing.

Russian Post implemented postal automation systems from Toshiba Infrastructure Systems & Solutions Corporation (Toshiba) as a solution.

These systems swiftly read addresses and barcodes of mail, packets and parcels, enabling improvements in sorting capabilities which increase the processing capacity to about 1.32 million pieces of mail and about 700,000 packets and parcels per day.

The introduction of this system has allowed the Vnukovo Logistics Center’s amount of mail, packets and parcels processed per hour to increase tenfold. “This system consists of a customs system and various sorter systems, installed in adjacent buildings, which are connected with conveyors and allow major processes to be automated. I think that this has also been effective in reducing the workload for operators at the Logistics Center, who used to transport mail, packets and parcels manually between

buildings,” says Yuichiro Ishibashi of Toshiba’s Security & Automation Systems Division.

Russia is continuing the automation of its international logistics center and Toshiba will work even harder toward automation of the processing of postal items.

In December 2016, a micro packet sorter was installed at the Novosibirsk Logistics Center by Toshiba. Also, in November 2017, a Toshiba customs system started operation at the Kazan Logistics Center.

“When we implemented these systems, we listened to opinions from staff on-site and made every effort to fulfill the Russian side’s needs,” explains Ishibashi.

The amount of postal items handled by Russian Post is expected to increase even more, and Japanese technology will continue providing support through acceleration and automation to ensure that they will be delivered swiftly and reliably to the people of Russia.

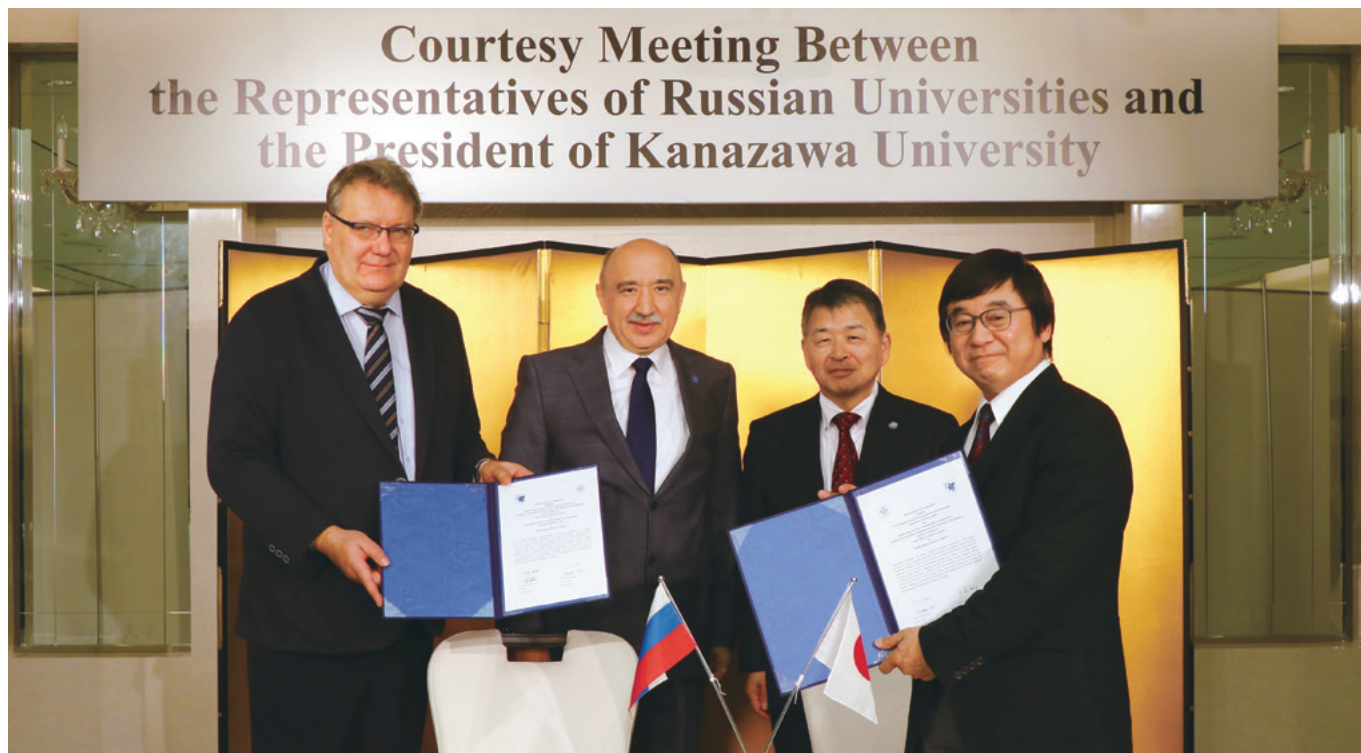


Russian Post’s Vnukovo Logistics Center is an enormous facility equivalent to about six gymnasiums in scale. Using conveyor belts to reduce the burden on the facility’s staff was one of the approaches used by Toshiba.



Yuichiro Ishibashi, Head of the Logistics & Postal Systems Business Unit of the Security & Automation Systems Division of Toshiba Infrastructure Systems & Solutions Corporation, says, “We will continue to provide increasingly better options and deliver postal items to Russian citizens as fast as possible.”

University Collaboration Shaping the Future



In January 2018, at the "Kanazawa University Kick-off Symposium for MEXT 'Inter-University Exchange Project'—'Training Program for Russia-Japan Innovative Leaders of Tomorrow,'" a memorandum for cooperation on the Double Diploma Program was exchanged between Kazan Federal University and Kanazawa University. (From the left are KFU Vice-Rector Dmitry Tayursky and Rector Ilshat Gafurov, and Kanazawa University President Koetsu Yamazaki and Vice President Yoshio Otani).

Over the last 30 years, Kanazawa University in Ishikawa Prefecture has developed a relationship with the prestigious Kazan Federal University (KFU) in the Republic of Tatarstan, Russia. Exchange began in 1988 when Dr. Haruhiko Suzuki, Professor of Kanazawa University, began sharing his research in low temperature physics with counterparts at KFU. Low temperature physics is the field of science dealing with the property of materials in environments where temperatures approach absolute zero. Ten years later in 1998, the universities signed an agreement to engage in joint research projects and to facilitate exchanges of students, a commitment to collaboration that continues today.

Japan and Russia lead the world in low temperature physics research, and Kanazawa University and KFU have combined their respective strengths in cooperative research activities. Kanazawa University carries out experiments, while KFU grows crystal samples and works

on the theoretical underpinnings and implications of these experiments, making for an active exchange of researchers and ideas. Scholars from the two universities jointly publish academic articles and make presentations together at international conferences.

Students also benefit from the support of the Japanese Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology (MEXT). According to Dr. Aida Mammadova, Associate Professor of Kanazawa University Organization of Global Affairs, "The Republic of Tatarstan has evolved uniquely, with diverse cultures and ethnic groups blending together. Japanese students thus find their time at KFU an invaluable and eye-opening cross-cultural experience. Students from Russia, on the other hand, are very eager to visit Japan, and they find living in the country and encountering Japanese culture firsthand quite stimulating. The programs create a beneficial situation for all involved."



Kazan Federal University (left) in Kazan, capital of the Republic of Tatarstan, established in 1804, is known as the birthplace of organic chemistry in Russia. Kanazawa University (right) in Ishikawa Prefecture is a national university created in 1949 by the merger of five schools including the former national Kanazawa Medical University, which had its roots in a vaccination center established in 1862.

Kanazawa University's "Training Program for Russia-Japan Innovative Leaders of Tomorrow" was selected by MEXT as an "Inter-University Exchange Project" in August 2017. This program will expand collaboration with Russian universities such as KFU and with a research organization in the Republic of Tatarstan, and will include the launching of a basic science program in physics and computing science, a

preventative medicine program centered in the areas of neuroscience, oncology, and circulatory and preventative medicine, and advanced science and technology programs in machine engineering and in information science.

Yoshio Otani, Vice President of Kanazawa University, explains, "We are planning a double diploma program so that graduates can receive degrees from both universities. Dmitry Tayursky, Vice-Rector for Education of KFU who has experience as a lecturer at Kanazawa University, has deep appreciation for Japan and enthusiasm for the program. Under Tayursky's strong leadership, planning for the exchange program is proceeding smoothly." Tayursky also speaks his enthusiasm, "Any collaboration between universities in different countries is a kind of 'people diplomacy.' We are looking for a new generation of young leaders who can transform the world for the prosperity and benefit of both societies."

Otani believes that "enhanced collaboration between Kanazawa University and KFU will make for good relationships between Ishikawa Prefecture and the Republic of Tatarstan, and between Japan and Russia."



KFU Vice-Rector Tayursky (right middle) with Kanazawa University faculty and staff, discussing the future direction of the two universities' relationship.



Russian students visited Japan through the cultural exchange program of Kanazawa University.



Dr. Yoshio Otani, Vice President of Kanazawa University, also directs the Organization of Global Affairs.



Morihiko Iwata

Iwata was born in 1970 in Yokohama, Kanagawa Prefecture. Having entered the Bolshoi Ballet as a trainee in 1995, he became a regular member in 1996, and was promoted to the ranks of the First Soloists in 2003. In November of 2009, he received the Order of Friendship from then Russian Federation President Medvedev. Since 2012, he has served as the artistic director of the Buryat National Academic House of Ballet. In 2016, he received the coveted "Ballet Cavalier" award in Russia's "Soul of the Dance" awards. © Hiroshi Abe

Series: Japanese Individuals Contributing Worldwide

Dancing Onward with Love for Russian Ballet

Morihiko Iwata's path to becoming the first foreign regular member of the storied Bolshoi Ballet and going on to join the ranks of its "First Soloists" began when he encountered Russian ballet at the age of nine, his first glimpse coming in the form of a video. "I've seen ballet from many different countries, but the dancers who truly captivate me have always been Russian. Looking back, I suppose that even as a child I may have sensed the deep emotional expression that is a distinctive feature of Russian ballet."

Given the opportunity to study abroad after graduating from high school, Iwata traveled to Russia, where he met the person who would become his lifelong mentor, the late Aleksandr Ivanovich Bondarenko, at the Moscow State Academy of Choreography. To this day, Iwata still holds

dear to his heart the words of his mentor: "Ballet is a virtue. It is the act of conveying something important about life, in a way that anyone in the world can understand, using only one's body."

Iwata's study abroad experience would prove to be a major turning point in his life. Having decided that he would live in Russia as a professional dancer at the epicenter of Russian ballet, Iwata spent three years beginning in 1991 as a regular member at Moscow's Russian National Ballet Theatre before setting his sights on the world-renowned Bolshoi Ballet.

At the time, the Bolshoi Ballet did not have any precedent of hiring foreigners, but Iwata finally won admission after practicing with the ballet as a trainee. Iwata recalls, "It was quite mentally draining for me at



Iwata also teaches children at the ballet school of the Buryat National Academic House of Ballet.

first. As somebody who had transferred in from a different ballet company, I was treated as an outsider. I was never given roles. Nevertheless, I loved practicing, so I would practice over and over again, even when it wasn't necessary for me to do so."

After having been accepted as a regular member in 1996, Iwata was promoted to the elite ranks of the First Soloists in 2003. In spite of his slight stature at 166 cm (just over 5 ft. 5 in.), Iwata had earned acclaim for his amazing physical ability, unparalleled precision, and deep love for Russian ballet, and his utter dedication to his roles quickly earned him the respect of those around him. Even after becoming a First Soloist, Iwata continued to refine his technique while earnestly listening to the advice of his colleagues. "When I was given the role of the Jester in *Swan Lake*, I had the incredible good fortune of receiving direct guidance from none other than Yuri Nikolayevich Grigorovich, who is like a god among ballet dancers." Thanks in part to this experience, Iwata would go on to become known as a specialist when it comes to playing unique roles.

Even when Iwata retired from the Bolshoi Ballet after 17 years, his next career move came as no surprise—he chose to stay in Russia. Having inherited the art of ballet from so many Russian masters, Iwata decided that it was now his turn to pass Russian ballet on to the next generation of young dancers, and so he accepted the position of artistic director at the Buryat National Academic House of Ballet.

Even while serving as an artistic director, Iwata is also still active as a ballet dancer. Hoping to help popularize Russian ballet in Japan, Iwata often performs in Japan, as well. Since 2015, he has performed in *NOBUNAGA*, an original ballet that fuses Russian ballet with traditional Japanese classical dancing.

Iwata says, "I think that Russian culture and Japanese



In *NOBUNAGA*, an original ballet fused with Japanese dance and featuring feudal lords of Japan's Warring States period as a motif, Iwata performed alongside Farukh Ruzimatov (the former principal dancer of the Mariinsky (Kirov) Theatre and current artistic advisor of the Mikhailovsky Theatre) and Japanese classical dancer Rankoh Fujima.

culture are highly compatible with each other." There are many Japan enthusiasts among Iwata's Russian friends, and they have sometimes turned the tables on him by teaching him about the wonders of Japanese culture. "Just as I love the ballet and culture of Russia, there are also many Russians who are very much interested in Japanese art and culture. Russian culture is all about drawing out and outwardly expressing the inner aspects of a person, while Japanese culture is all about probing deeper within. They may seem like polar opposites, but that is all the more reason for the many points of resonance between them. As 2018 is "Japan Year in Russia" and "Russia Year in Japan," I plan to hold commemorative performances in Russia, through which I hope to make Russians feel closer to Japan through the medium of Russian ballet."

Iwata always strives to create ballet that brings together the cultures of Russia and Japan and that will stand the test of time to become an ageless classic for future generations to enjoy.



Iwata spends busy but fulfilling days interacting with local residents of Ulan-Ude, the capital of Russia's Republic of Buryatia, which lies on the edge of Lake Baikal. The man and woman sitting to his right are principal dancers of the Buryat National Academic Opera and Ballet House.



Jenya Davidyuk

Jenya is from Novosibirsk, Russia. She moved to Tokyo to work as Japan's only Russian voice actress for anime. She also works as a TV personality and singer, and accompanies orchestra tours of Russia as a singer of anime and video game theme songs. She lives in Tokyo with her Japanese husband and one-year-old daughter.

Series: Friends of Japan

Russian “*Seiyu*” Puts Heart into Spreading Love of Anime

Being an anime voice actor is a dream job beyond the reach of all but the most dedicated Japanese people. These performers are known in Japanese as *seiyu*. Given the incredible popularity of anime in Japan, the vast majority will unfortunately never achieve success. So how did a young Russian woman from New Siberia beat the odds to become Japan's first ever Russian *seiyu*?

Jenya Davidyuk became fascinated with anime at an early age, at first unaware that it was made in Japan. One of her favorites was the internationally popular anime *Sailor Moon*. Underneath the dubbed Russian dialog, she heard some very foreign-sounding words. Eventually, she learned it was Japanese. She soon fell in love with the language, so much so that she started taking Japanese lessons. Back then, anime was not yet popular in Russia, making it tough for Jenya to buy anime goods. “I had to ask my friends in Moscow and the United States to get them for me,” she laments.

In 2000, Jenya set up an anime fan site. As the page grew, she took the bold step of translating it into Japanese and English, posting audio files of anime songs that she performed in Japanese. Eventually, her site was noticed by a Japanese anime enthusiast, who posted a link to the site on a popular anime bulletin board.

Her newfound Japanese audience was so impressed by her passion for anime that she was invited to take part in a TV show. Accompanied by her father, the then 21-year-old Jenya visited Akihabara, the world capital of anime culture. She was also thrilled to see *seiyu* using their voice talents in the studio.

Returning to Russia after her trip, she became even more enamored with her dream of becoming a *seiyu*, although her Japanese friends warned her that it would be impossible. In 2005 she moved to Japan, at first making ends meet by working as a Russian teacher, freelance translator and Russian language advisor. In 2009, Jenya was overjoyed to

win a small part in a popular anime, *Evangelion: 2.0 You Can (Not) Advance*. The character was a Russian who worked as an operator at a facility called NERV's Bethany Base. Jenya took the original Japanese lines from the script and translated them into Russian for the role.

While continuing to pursue her dream of becoming a *seiyu*, Jenya found herself becoming a regular performer on an NHK TV show for Japanese people wanting to study Russian. "I enjoyed this work immensely. Japanese was hard for me at first, which helps me appreciate that learning Russian can be hard too."

Her next adventure saw her briefly return to Russia. In 2014, famed conductor Kenichi Shimura was planning the first performance in Russia of the popular Game Symphony Japan concert, in which a full orchestra performs music from computer games and anime shows. He asked Jenya to accompany him as a singer and emcee. "It was a great honor to introduce Japanese culture to my fellow Russians," she says. The event was a huge success, and Jenya was thrilled to join the orchestra on stage to sing popular anime songs in Japanese and English, bringing her further Russian media attention. She returned most recently to Russia in April 2018 to perform at the Game

Symphony Japan concert, her sixth tour with Shimura.

In 2015 Jenya worked as a Russian translator and dialog coach on a feature-length anime titled *GIRLS und PANZER der FILM*. Thanks to Jenya's dedication and her excellent Japanese, the rest of the crew warmed to her very much; so much so that director Tsutomu Mizushima created a role especially for her. She was asked to play the part of a Russian schoolgirl. "I felt like my 10 years of work in the anime industry had finally paid off. I felt indescribable happiness! Mr. Mizushima made my dreams come true," she says. Jenya was especially thrilled that the character she played spoke fluent Japanese. The franchise became a big hit and was granted an overseas release, including screenings in Russia, bringing great joy both to Jenya and to the fans and colleagues that had supported her.

Much encouraged by this success, Jenya continues to build her career as a *seiyu*. "The progress I've made so far would have been impossible without my fans and colleagues. They are everything to me. With their continued support, I'll keep developing my *seiyu* skills and perfecting my Japanese, while building cultural bridges by popularizing anime in Russia and beyond."



Jenya singing *Melodies of Life* from the soundtrack of *Final Fantasy IX*, accompanied by a full orchestra at a Game Symphony Japan concert in Russia.



Jenya in matching cosplay next to a life-size cardboard cutout of her character Clara from *GIRLS und PANZER der FILM*. ©GPPF



Meeting fans and signing autographs for the screening of *GIRLS und PANZER das FINALE 1* in Moscow, in April 2018.



In the recording studio with fellow *seiyu* Sumire Uesaka. Jenya's interview on NHK WORLD-JAPAN is available at: <https://www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/news/editors/3/2016041501/index.html> ©NHK WORLD-JAPAN

Building Bridges, Sharing Cultures: Working for Japanese Local Government

Languages fascinate me, and I find Japanese to be the most enchanting of them all. When my English club's teacher first introduced me to the Chinese characters that are used in written Japanese, the ancient pictographs seemed somehow very romantic to me. That's probably because we Russians rarely encounter these symbols in daily life, especially in my hometown of Krasnoyarsk.

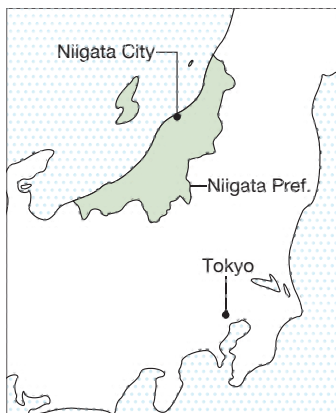
So perhaps it was only natural that I went on to study Japanese at Siberian Federal University. We had an excellent Japanese center on campus where we interacted with native Japanese speakers, attended lectures given by teachers from Japan, and also took part in cultural events. I enjoyed being a part of this activity so much that I worked there for four years after graduation. Part of my job, both then and now, is exploring, explaining, and then bridging the differences between Russia and Japan. I sometimes have to encourage one or both sides to go out of their way to amicably compromise. A perfect example of this is the clash between academic calendars. In Japan, classes start in April, but in Russia classes start in September, which causes problems with teacher availability and the arrangement of student exchange programs.

In spite of challenges like this, my colleagues and I racked

up some major achievements. These included many activities that helped bring our countries closer, such as founding Japanese literature and movie clubs, starting student exchange programs and holding kendo tournaments. On the business side, we saw the creation of a Toyota engineering center and the launch of the Krasnoyarsk Smart City project, which involves architectural firm Nikken Sekkei working with my alma mater to create a more eco-friendly urban environment.

These success stories helped Krasnoyarsk and Siberian Federal University foster huge breakthroughs in Japan-Russia relations. This was immensely satisfying, but it left me dreaming of a life living and working in Japan. So I applied to become a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR), which involves working in Japan as part of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. Soon after applying, I was accepted and dispatched to Niigata, a port city on Honshu, Japan's main island.

I quickly became accustomed to my new life here, moving together with my husband, who works here as a translator. We love the nature and the beautiful sunsets, as well as how close we are to the Sea of Japan. As we grew up far from sea and sand in our land-locked hometown,



Ekaterina Efimova

Born in Krasnoyarsk, Russia. Graduated from Siberian Federal University. Has been working as a CIR in Niigata since August 2016. Loves to travel around Niigata Prefecture, read manga and practice ikebana.



Ekaterina enjoying ikebana lessons at a local community center.

we love visiting Niigata's many beautiful beaches.

I work for the Niigata Prefectural Government Office. This often involves smoothing out cultural differences and closing the communication gap. In that sense, my work here often resembles my previous job, but with a twist. For example, part of my job now involves encouraging somewhat delicate conversations. Russian visitors often misunderstand instructional posters and promotional photos for hot springs and public baths. In these images, bathers are often shown enjoying the baths while wearing towels. Tourists often don't realize that those towels are only shown to protect the sensibilities of the viewers! In reality, towels should never touch the water in the baths. Bathers mustn't wear towels except while showering or drying off.

On a more serious note, my team and I have been contributing to events in Khabarovsk and Vladivostok, which are happening as part of the Russia-Japan Cross Cultural Year in 2018. As part of this, Niigata is ramping up the cultural exchange still further.

Although I'm very happy here, life in Japan hasn't been

without challenges. In Krasnoyarsk we rarely have to put up with humid weather, so summers here are tough. It's also hard for straight-talking Russians like me to adapt to Japanese-style communication, where much is left unsaid. Thankfully I'm getting better at reading between the lines!

Something that has helped me become more in touch with Japanese culture is studying traditional flower arrangement, known in Japanese as ikebana. There's something very meditative about ikebana, which is all about communicating feelings without the need for words.

So in spite of the challenges I face, or perhaps because of them, I cannot recommend the JET Programme strongly enough. Anyone interested in Japan and cross-cultural exchange should consider applying.

I'm undecided on what I'll do when I finish my term as a CIR. I might choose a career in tourism, or find a job that helps Russian and Japanese companies work together. Either way, I hope to continue building on the skills I've been developing since I graduated, and I sincerely hope to continue living and working in Japan.



At work in the Niigata Prefectural Government Office.



Explaining Japanese influence on Russian culture at a maritime high school in Itoigawa City, Niigata.

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 2017, the JET Programme welcomed 5,163 participants, and currently there are approximately 66,000 alumni from 67 countries living in all parts of the world.



The JET Programme official website

<http://jetprogramme.org/en/>

We Are Tomodachi

Japan and Russia Edition 2018

Published by



Edited by

Public Relations Office, Cabinet Office
and
Office of Global Communications, Cabinet Secretariat
1-6-1 Nagatacho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo
100-8914, Japan

Available in electronic format.
<https://www.japan.go.jp/tomodachi>

eBooks 

We would be delighted to have your feedback.
Please send us your comments.
https://www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/forms/comment_ssl.html

Links to the websites of ministries

Cabinet Office <http://www.cao.go.jp/index-e.html>
Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries <http://www.maff.go.jp/e/>
Ministry of Defense <http://www.mod.go.jp/e/>
Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry <http://www.meti.go.jp/english/>
Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology <http://www.mext.go.jp/en/>
Ministry of the Environment <https://www.env.go.jp/en/>
Ministry of Finance <https://www.mof.go.jp/english/index.htm>
Ministry of Foreign Affairs <http://www.mofa.go.jp>
Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare <http://www.mhlw.go.jp/english/>
Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications <http://www.soumu.go.jp/english/index.html>
Ministry of Justice <http://www.moj.go.jp/ENGLISH/index.html>
Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism <https://www.mlit.go.jp/en/>
Reconstruction Agency <https://www.reconstruction.go.jp/english/>
Nuclear Regulation Authority <https://www.nsr.go.jp/english/>

Friendship across the Four Northern Islands

Japan and Russia are making efforts to foster mutual understanding and trust through people-to-people exchange on the Four Northern Islands, despite the difference of views with regard to those islands. Moreover, Japan and Russia are promoting realization of joint economic activities on those islands in a manner that does not harm the legal positions of either side.



Special grave visits were conducted by airplane for the first time to the islands of Kunashiri and Etorofu. (September 2017)



Former island residents and others visited the islands of Kunashiri and Etorofu by airplane, paying their respects at cemeteries. (photo: Shana on Etorofu Island, July 2018)



An exchange meeting of pop culture was held during a visit by young people to Kunashiri Island. (September 2017)



A group of Japanese including former residents visited Shikotan island, having an exchange meeting on education and culture. (July 2018)



Regarding joint economic activities on the Four Northern Islands, a second joint public-private local research team (with a total of 54 members) was dispatched from October 26–31 to more concretely pursue the five candidate projects that were specified to be undertaken promptly at the Japan-Russia Summit Meeting in September 2017.





Japan. Sharing tomorrow.

We Are Tomodachi

Japan and Russia Edition 2018

<https://www.japan.go.jp/tomodachi>



JAPANGOV
THE GOVERNMENT OF JAPAN