



Towards Global Local Governments

YOKO KIMURA, CHAIRPERSON, COUNCIL OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

I first got to know CLAIR about 20 years ago when I was staying in Paris to conduct research on social welfare in France and a professor from a Japanese university recommended that I should definitely visit the CLAIR Paris office.

When I met the staff there for the first time, they gave me an explanation of local government and welfare in France as well as some CLAIR Reports and other materials. The CLAIR Reports, analyzing issues from a local government perspective, were fresh and interesting.

For me, as someone who conducts policy research on topics like local and national government finance and social security, information from overseas and support for my own overseas research activities are indispensable, and CLAIR has become a reliable partner for me ever since those days in Paris. In truth, the CLAIR Reports from the overseas offices have a very good reputation and have been invaluable references in crafting the Trinity Reforms and other

initiatives. Over the last 20 years I have always had the impression that CLAIR has been doing ambitious and meaningful work. And now, through some strange twist of fate, I have become involved in the management of CLAIR as its new chairperson.

CLAIR was established in 1988 by the local governments, working together, with the goals to promote “internationalizing local government” and to contribute to “local autonomy”. It has been funded by proceeds from the sale of lottery tickets. I believe it is a valuable treasure for Japan, particularly ordinary Japanese citizens, as a window for them to the outside world. CLAIR has built up this valuable resource through the labors of all my predecessors who have worked to create relationships of trust with various organizations in the many countries where we have overseas offices. It has accomplished this in many areas of activity, including coordinating the JET Programme, which is highly acclaimed both in Japan and abroad, conducting overseas research, supporting sister city and state exchange activities, and contributing to multicultural coexistence initiatives.

There are many people these days who say that Japan has no choice but to deal urgently with the issue of “internationalizing local government”; because of economic globalization, along with falling birthrates and an aging population. In other words, it is the arrival of a society marked by population decline. CLAIR is at the forefront of research and policy formulation in these areas, drawing on its knowledge of other leading countries around the world who are also grappling

with these issues.

CLAIR's work to support “internationalizing local government”, or, really, to bring ‘an international flavor to people's lives’, is varied, complex and wide-ranging. Through a network of connections to local government chief executives' offices, international relations divisions, international exchange organizations, boards of education and other groups, as well as through gaining the cooperation of central ministries like Internal Affairs and Communications, Foreign Affairs, and Education, CLAIR headquarters in Tokyo works, together with each overseas office, to make real the variety of the international experience for the ordinary citizen. We must also never forget how the many local governments, experts on the ground, and other people around the country work in the background to support these aims.

CLAIR constitutes a collaborative infrastructure to promote “internationalizing local government” and to contribute to “local autonomy”. While we feel it has fulfilled this role well, we recognize that a mixture of continuity and innovation are necessary for continued success, so we will continue to carry out organizational reform.

In closing, I must say how deeply grateful I am to be able to work toward achieving CLAIR's lofty ideals.



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Words of Welcome from the New Executive Director

MASAAKI AKAGI, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, JLGC

My name is Masaaki Akagi and I have the distinction of being the first executive director of the Japan Local Government Center (CLAIR, New York) not affiliated with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. I have served as a public official of Hyogo Prefecture government for thirty years. My career work in international economic development and industrial policy has consumed the majority of my time serving the citizens of Japan. During my first stay in America, I received a Master of Public Administration degree from Evergreen State College in the state of Washington in 1988.

Assigned as the new executive director at the Japan Local Government Center (CLAIR, New York) beginning July 20, 2010, I am challenged to carry forward the core missions of CLAIR, New York, in order to empower the existing relationships between Japan, the United States and Canada. During my stewardship at JLGC I hope to be able to make gainful strides in the following areas:

1. Commission valuable research projects that identify best practices in the field of public management in the United States and Canada and

to disseminate those models and case studies to local governments in Japan.

2. Effectively and efficiently manage aspects of the Japan Exchange Teaching (JET) programing while supporting the JET Alumni Associations in their efforts to promote understanding of Japan and Japanese culture throughout the United States and Canada.
3. Promote bilateral cooperation among Japanese, American and Canadian local governments and governmental associations.
4. Accept and initiate proposals that would create new and strengthen existing collaborative partnerships among Japanese, American and Canadian local governments.

The United States of America is the largest market economy in the world. Canada is a major trade partner and a strategic ally for Japan. Japan has the second largest market economy and is the oldest constitutional monarchy in Asia and shares various democratic values with the United States and Canada. Productive and stable bilateral relations and the active cooperation between the US-Japan and Canada-Japan are imperative to help

recover from a worldwide recession and to safeguard democracy in the world. For the Japanese national and sub-national governments the promotion and diversification of strong bilateral relations will continue to be an important mission in securing a prosperous and secure future for Japan.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the executive directors, directors and Japanese and local staff who preceded me. Their hard work and stellar leadership have positioned JLGC as a prominent organization within the international community. I would also like to thank the JET alumni associations in North America, for volunteering their time, energy and spirit in promoting Japan and Japanese culture. Finally, I would like to express my appreciation to the readers of the JLGC Newsletter for their cooperation and support of CLAIR.

With warm regards,



A Greeting from the New Counselor

HOTAKA KAWASAKI, COUNSELOR, JLGC

Hello, Everyone. I'm Hotaka Kawasaki, a new staff member at JLGC.

I was born in Shizuoka Prefecture, which is famous for Mt. Fuji. My father liked climbing mountains so much that he moved to Shizuoka, and he also named me after Mt. Hotaka, a beautiful mountain between Nagano and Gifu Prefectures. (Please search for it on Wikipedia.)

I am interested in visiting, living and working in various areas around Japan. That's why I took a job at the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, which is responsible

for the basic administrative systems and fiscal policies of Japanese local governments. I have worked in the prefecture governments in Kagoshima and Yamaguchi, in addition to the national government in Tokyo. These two prefectures are well known by their old, feudal-period names of "Satsuma" and "Choshu", two of the main forces behind introducing Western technology leading to the modernization of Japan about 150 years ago. I experienced a lot of wonderful things in both places.

At the same time, I am also interested in living and working

abroad, and I had been looking for such an unusual chance for a long time while working at "domestic" offices. And now I've gotten the chance to come here, to New York!

At JLGC, I am in charge of cooperative activities with public organizations in the U.S. and Canada, as well as JLGC's budgeting and disbursements. I'm very happy and excited about this precious opportunity, and I'm looking forward to meeting you sometime!



Mr. Sasaki Returns to Japan

SETH B BENJAMIN, PH.D., SENIOR RESEARCHER, JLGC

Hiroshi Sasaki, executive director of the Japan Local Government Center, New York, for the last three years, has returned to Japan. There he has taken up a position in Tokyo at the *Fund for Local Government Employees' Accident Compensation*. Mr. Sasaki brought to New York an energetic commitment to improve the standing of the CLAIR (New York) office in the United States and Canada. In his three years plus, he did just that.

From the beginning, he was very engaged with the JET Alumni Association. Indeed, Mr. Sasaki's children themselves had the benefit of learning English here in the United States from a JET alumna. This sense of "one good turn deserves another", clearly brings hope that the vast number of JET alumni, particularly in the United States, one day will bring a benefit to what has been Japan's enormous investment in cultural exchange. Who knows, as Mr. Sasaki says, maybe a former JET will someday become President. Also, Mr. Sasaki hopes that the JET experience will remain with the youth of today always. What better way of continuing this rich

relationship with Japan than to become lifelong supporters of Japanese-American friendship through supporting JET alumni activities. JET alumni, Mr. Sasaki says, are the true ambassadors of cross-cultural diplomacy.

Another aspect of Mr. Sasaki's tenure in New York was the effort he made to strengthen the government relationship between Japan and North America. He was indefatigable in bringing the Center closer to the various government organizations and their constituents. One way he did that was to emphasise getting the Japanese officials to witness first hand, as a group, the machinery of government in action. So, there were visits to the New York State legislature watching debates on bills being proposed for the State; to Andover, Massachusetts, to witness the unique form of government known only in New England as the Town Meeting - and lively that was too, or to East Orange, New Jersey, to see how a local government focuses its energy on reviving the community spirit by using remarkable technology to ensure public safety. In addition to the staff of the Center, Japanese officials from all over



Visit state capitol of Pennsylvania

the United States participated. These events are truly a means of engaging *all* the governments of Japan (central, prefecture and local) so that they may enrich their experience of what is new and innovative in government administration.

The theme of learning from each other is fundamental to the mission of CLAIR's overseas branches and, in this area, Mr. Sasaki was always looking for new ways for the Center 'to learn' from American governments. One such initiative launched by Mr. Sasaki is a collaboration with the State University of New York. American and Japanese professors and government officials will discuss both countries' desire to provide services more efficiently, after which they will prepare a report that all can use to see how better organising government may help in responding to the needs of their citizens more closely.

All in all, though times have been difficult fiscally, the Center has thrived under the leadership of Mr. Sasaki. We wish him well for the future.



Farewell with JETAA New York and JLGC

Delegates from Miyagi Prefecture visit the State of Delaware

TAICHI HANZAWA, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, JLGC

Miyagi Prefecture and the State of Delaware established their Sister-Prefecture/State relationship in 1997 and have conducted exchange up until now primarily through exchange of students and government workers. Under the slogan of “Realization of a Prosperous Miyagi” the Miyagi government has developed various industrial promotion policies, such as attraction of enterprises and cultivation of local industry. As a part of these policies, the Miyagi government is aiming to promote economic exchange with its Sister State based on the friendship exchange the two have shared up until now. Receiving agreement towards this endeavor from the Delaware government, Miyagi set its sights on reforming the contents of the two organizations’ “Agreement of Exchange.”

Under these pretexts, a delegation of four members from the Miyagi Prefectural Government Department of Commerce, Industry and Tourism visited the State of Delaware’s Cities of Wilmington, Dover and Rehoboth Beach. The main contents of the visit are outlined below.

• Signing of a Revised “Agreement of Exchange”

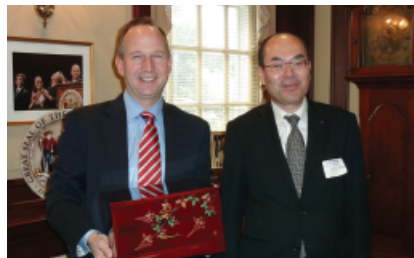


Director-General Wakoh and Secretary of State Bullock

The main purpose of the delegation’s visit, the revised agreement pertaining to the details of exchange between Miyagi Prefecture and the State of Delaware was signed by the Director-General of the Miyagi Department of Commerce, Industry and Tourism and

Delaware’s Secretary of State. The contents of the revised agreement stipulate a continuation of the friendship exchange that has been carried out up until now as well as a focus on economic exchange.

• Courtesy Visit to Delaware State Governor Jack Markell



Governor Markell receive a gift

The Delegation paid a courtesy visit to Governor Jack Markell, who was appointed as governor of Delaware in January of 2009. By a letter written by Miyagi’s governor, the delegation expressed Miyagi’s desire to strengthen the basis of economic exchange between Miyagi and Delaware and to promote exchange in environmental fields, such as clean energy. The letter also invited Governor Markell to visit Miyagi Prefecture this year and expressed a hope to reform Miyagi and Delaware’s “Sister-State Agreement,” to which Governor Markell kindly agreed. Furthermore, the delegation informally discussed with the Governor topics such as “Resolution of the contents of exchange between Miyagi and Delaware towards economic focus,” “Introduction

of Miyagi’s Economic Revitalization Policy” and “Next steps to boosting economic exchange with Delaware.”

• Meeting with the Mayor of Dover



A welcome reception held in their honor

The Delegation also met with Carleton E. Carey, Sr., Mayor of Dover, Delaware’s capital city. Dover is Sister Cities with Miyagi Prefecture’s Iwanuma City. Recently there have been plans to sign collaboration agreements between Iwanuma/Dover middle schools and colleges, and Mayor Carey expressed his desire to see further strengthening of relations.

• Participation in the Rehoboth Beach Film Festival

The Delegation also promoted Miyagi tourism at the “Rehoboth Beach Film Festival” held in Delaware’s Rehoboth Beach, as well as conducting a Miyagi-sake taste-testing and a presentation of “Suzume-odori,” the traditional dance of Sendai associated with Masamune Date. The dance was performed by “Iroha Mazura,” a dance group well known in Sendai, and was very well received by the audience.



Iroha Mazura put on a festive performance

Great Lakes JETAA - JET Alumni Association for Ohio and Michigan

AMBER ARASHIRO, PRESIDENT, GREAT LAKES JETAA

U.S.-17 "Great Lakes JETAA" has had a very busy year! New officers were elected and subchapters were formed in Western Michigan, Southeast Michigan and Ohio. Subchapter representatives coordinated many events for their alumni including movie nights, apple picking, BBQs, *momijigari*, *nengajo* making, karaoke, cooking lessons and returnee receptions. A pre-departure Q & A and reception for new JETs were also well attended by alumni. Members enjoyed a *bonnenkai* with special guests from CLAIR New York.



A committee met to write amendments and updates to outdated by-laws, and several general meetings were held. The Great Lakes JETAA also published a newsletter with contributions from several alumni. Topics in the newsletter included subchapter activities, elections, new JET departures, returning JET alumni gatherings, recipes, a movie review, and an introduction to our new Consul General of Japan.

The highlight event for the chapter was "A Feast for the Eyes: a Japanese Confectionery Demonstration" that was held May 13-16, 2010 in collaboration with the Michigan-Shiga Sister State Board and Shiga prefecture. The purpose of the event was to provide Michigan residents with an increased interest in and understanding of Japan and Michigan's Sister State, Shiga.

The first demonstration was

held at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing, Michigan. Mr. Shoji Nishizawa gave a demonstration of confectionary making that was attended by approximately 200 people. Following Mr. Nishizawa's demonstration, participants drank authentic Japanese tea while they tasted his unique and gorgeous Japanese confections. The Great Lakes JETAA president, Amber Arashiro, gave a speech just after the confectionery demonstration in which she described her memories of receiving wagashi as omiyage from co-workers during the JET Program.

The same program was repeated at the Consul General's residence in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and again at the Novi Civic Center. Five volunteers with the JETAA volunteered to set up and sell the wagashi and the Great Lakes JETAA Michigan vice-president, Faye Valtadores, and secretary, April Mears, gave speeches to the audience about their *wagashi* and tea ceremony memories while teaching on the JET Program.

The Great Lakes JETAA has its own website (www.greatlakes.jetalumni.org) and a Facebook group page with 100 members. Photos of past events and

invitations to future ones can be found on this Facebook page as well as the website.

The Ohio vice-president, Valerie Rambin, and treasurer, Claire Brender, will attend the national conference in New York in August and are expected to return with great ideas to make the chapter even stronger in the future. The Great Lakes JETAA looks forward to many more opportunities for networking and sharing memories among others who remember their JET experience fondly.



Wagashi



Great Lakes JETAA with Mr. Ouchi, one of the demonstrator of confectionery making from Shiga

JAPAN NIGHT in Toronto

YUKO NISHIDA, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, JLGC

For many years, the Japan Local Government Center (JLGC) attends the annual conference of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). Since 2009 JLGC has hosted a "JAPAN Night" event. The festivity serves as a networking reception. This year, in cooperation with the Canadian Urban Institute, Japan Night 2010 was held on the evening of May 28th in Toronto.

Guests were welcomed by JLGC's executive director, Hiroshi Sasaki and were treated to delicious Japanese cuisine, a variety of cheeses quenched with Canadian beer and wine. Over seventy people joined the party; including many who attended last year's event. Everyone shared their experiences and many reminisced about the nurturing relationships between their city/town and their sister cities in Japan.



JAPAN NIGHT in TORONTO

JLGC Toronto Office: Reporting on Canada for Fifteen Years

Located in the international city of Toronto, JLGC Toronto office has maintained a strong relationship with the Canadian Urban Institute (CUI). Please follow the link below to learn more about JLGC Toronto and CUI.

Web: <http://www.canurb.org/content/japan-local-government-centre>

Settlement programs for immigrants in Canada

KAZUAKI NAKAJIMA, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, JLGC

This past July, Director Uemura of the JLGC Toronto office and I visited Canada to conduct research on language learning systems for immigrants. During the early 1990's, Canada became aware of two issues that would affect their labor force and compromise their national strength; an increasing aged population and lower birth rates. Therefore, the Canadian Government embarked on a national strategy to attract the best and brightest immigrants to live and work in Canada. In order to entice and support newcomers, the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program was launched in 1992. LINC allows for the development of linguistic communication skills ensuring that immigrants are better able to function in and contribute to society. In the last five years, the Canadian

Government has spent \$3 billion to support newcomers!

Currently, Japan must confront these same issues and can no longer avoid or restrict accepting immigrants, especially to support the workforce. There are a few Japanese mayors from cities that have large immigrant population who are supportive of altering immigration policy. Recently a conference was held to support immigrants where experiences and issues on education, medical care and social security for newcomers were shared among government officials.

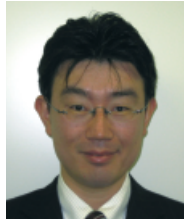
What's good about the Canadian policy? It respects immigrants' native language and culture while helping to ameliorate

assimilation into Canadian society. The extent of these efforts by Canadian government is reflected partly from the high number of immigrants who become naturalized citizens; currently around eighty-four percent. Japan could learn from the success of Canada's willingness to increase and support new immigrants.



Newcomer Information Centre in Toronto

Hello, my name is Tomoya Suzuki and I am from Tokyo Metropolitan Government.



This year, Tokyo and New York celebrate the 50th anniversary of their sister city relationship which started in 1960. It is my great pleasure and honor to work here as a representative of Tokyo in this celebratory year. At JLGC, I am in charge of supporting JETAA USA and research projects from Japanese local governments.

As part of my every-day life in New York, I would like to learn more about this exciting country and enter into relationships with many American local governments.



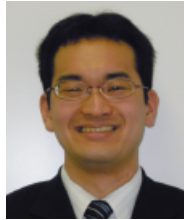
[Tokyo Metropolitan Government]

- Population: 12,993,920 (as of Nov. 1, 2009)
- Area Size: 2,187.58 km²
- Transportation from Major City: From Tokyo Station, by train, 30minutes

Tokyo, capital of Japan, is the political, economical and cultural center of the country. As well as all the state-of-the-art technology, you can also enjoy the history and the culture from Edo period in 400 years ago. In the Tama area, western part of Tokyo, and in the small islands, a lot of beautiful nature welcomes tourists.

The city is nominated 3rd place as the "Top 25 livable cities" by 'Monocle' magazine. And 197 restaurants in Tokyo were introduced by Michelin Tokyo 2010. Come and visit Tokyo. You can discover what you want!
<http://www.metro.tokyo.jp/ENGLISH/index.htm>

Hello, my name is Takeshi Furukawa from Niigata Prefecture. It's nice to meet you.



My main duties at JLGC include accounting, budget and project review. I'm also in charge of planning a seminar in Washington D.C. that will highlight the local government in the United States. This seminar will provide an opportunity for local Japanese government officials living and working in America to better understand American local government

I look forward to meeting and talking with many people and would like to learn a lot of things through my work at JLGC.



[Niigata Prefecture]

- Population: 2,380,000
- Area Size: 12,582km²
- Transportation from Major City: From Tokyo, by Shinkansen (Bullet Train): 100minutes

Niigata Prefecture is located at the center of the Japan Sea coast and blessed with an abundance of natural beauty including beautiful coastlines, sprawling mountain ranges designated national parks, and bountiful rivers feeding into fertile plains. Japan's longest river, the Shinano, flows through the city.

Niigata is the leading producer of rice in Japan. Niigata's sake is famous for its smooth and dry taste because of the quality of rice and abundance of fresh water. Niigata is a winter wonder land and visitors flock to Niigata's many ski resorts and hot spring spas.
<http://www.pref.niigata.lg.jp/en/>

I'm Keizo Ishibashi from Sakai City. Located in the heart of Honshu Island it is said that the soul of Samurai



is still alive in the city because the area has been the capital of samurai sword manufacturing since the 1300s.

I'm in charge of Fellowship Exchange Program which affords senior state and local government officials an opportunity to experience Japanese government administration first hand. While coordinating this program, I would like to learn why Americans and Canadians are interested in Japan.



[Sakai City]

- Population: 838,455
- Area Size: 149.99km²
- Transportation from both of Kansai Airport and Osaka Station: 30 minute by train
- Sister City: Berkeley (California, USA)

Sakai City has Nintoku-ryo Tumulus, one of the three largest ancient tombs in the world along with King Khufu's Pyramid of Egypt and the First Emperor's tomb of Shin Dynasty of China.

There is a magical harmony between traditional and industrial culture. Many Japanese traditional cultures, including: Japanese Tea Ceremony, Japanese incense and the Shamisen a three-stringed musical instrument, were born in the Sakai area. Also, components of the popular Shimano Bicycle come from Sakai. There is a famous Japanese expression: "Mono no Hajimari Nandemo Sakai", which means "Everything is from Sakai!"

http://www.city.sakai.lg.jp/index_en.html

JET Programme, JET Alumni Association Vital to the Future of U.S.-Japan Relations

MATTHEW GILLAM, SENIOR RESEARCHER, JLGC CHIZUKO KAWAMURA, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, JLGC

JETAA New York hosted the JETAA USA National Conference from August 12 to 15, with 42 representatives from 18 of the 19 US chapters (except Alaska) and the three US Country Representatives participating.

Since a review of CLAIR's activities for the JET Programme was conducted by the Government Revitalization Unit in May, and support for JETAA was among the activities under administrative review by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in June and July, this year's conference was focused much more than usual on explaining the role of the JET Programme and JETAA in efforts to improve the English language ability of the Japanese and to promote international exchange in Japan.

The first main session on this topic took place on the morning of Friday, August 13. Mr. Yasuhisa Kawamura, the director of the Japan Information Center at the Consulate General of Japan in New York, explained the position of the Ministry after their recent review. During his talk he emphasized that the Ministry understands the importance of JETAA's vital role in the US-Japan relationship and will continue supporting the alumni. However, this support will be strictly limited to activities and events which enable former JETs to be diplomatic assets for Japan, or which improve the quality of future JETs. He concluded his remarks with his "Three Cs" for future relations, "Confidence, Caution and Cooperation", and asked for pragmatism rather than excessive optimism or pessimism in dealing with the current situation. As to CLAIR's position, Mr. Matthew Gillam explained CLAIR's current situation and future support for JETAA, saying that the continuing fiscal difficulties

facing local governments make it difficult for CLAIR to promise to maintain current funding levels in the coming years. He concluded by saying it is very important that we gain the support of local governments for JETAA activities. These presentations were followed by a lengthy discussion by attendees on ways to address the issues raised in various criticisms of JET and JETAA in Japan.

The other main session was on Sunday morning, when we had a special guest from the Embassy of Japan in Washington, DC. Ambassador Ichiro Fujisaki had a discussion with the conference participants for approximately 90 minutes in which they exchanged opinions and ideas on how to improve the quality of the JET Programme.

In addition to these, sessions were also held for chapter issues such as membership management, event planning, leadership transition and succession planning, basic fundraising, and career development.

Furthermore, on Saturday morning, after a brief, general talk on funding, a technical session was held specifically for treasurers where participants learned detailed information on funding policy and administrative procedures for both MoFA and CLAIR. Everyone seemed grateful for the clear explanations of these increasingly complicated processes.

One more major topic that came up in several sessions was technology, and a lot of effort was made to build on the achievements of the Technology Regional Conference held in Portland earlier this year in order to provide chapters with better, more effective and easier to use technology solutions to their data management and communications needs.

A press release was put together after the conference, entitled "JET Programme, JET Alumni Association Vital to the Future of U.S.-Japan Relations". Among other things, the release says that "JETAA USA came to the conclusion that the JET Programme and JETAA are crucial to Japan's international outreach and to increasing mutual understanding between Japan and the United States. JETAA USA hopes that upon review the Japanese government will rediscover the necessity and value of the JET Programme and JETAA. Japan needs both JET and JETAA to continue building bridges between Japan and the United States." This press release has drawn quite a bit of attention from the Japanese media.

We believe this conference was a good opportunity for JETAA members to share information on recent events and gain a better grasp of the situation regarding the JET Programme and JETAA. It was also a valuable chance for all of us from JETAA, MoFA and CLAIR to reconfirm our commitment to working together to maintain and improve JET and JETAA. We are very grateful for the participants' voluntary initiatives to support the JET Programme and improve JETAA activities.

Lastly, we extend our sincere gratitude to JETAA New York, the three Country Representatives, and the Consulate General of Japan in New York. This conference would not have been possible without everyone's commitment and generous support.

