

*Kawasaki City*KAWASAKI CITY  
川崎市

# *Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents Newsletter*

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## Foreign Residents Issue Four Proposals

### Final Meeting of the Seventh Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents



The Seventh Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents, whose term began in April 2008, has had its final meeting. Representing the more than 32,000 foreign residents living in Kawasaki City, the Representative Assembly conducted surveys, held deliberations, and developed proposals through its two committees: the Committee on Education and Culture and the Committee on Society/Community Life. The Representative Assembly developed proposals based on four themes, namely, (1) support for advancement to high school, (2) the expansion of education for multicultural understanding, (3) foreign residents and health care, and (4) the cultivation of human resources that can provide consultation services on diverse issues. (For details about these proposals, see page 2.)

We would like to thank everyone who supported the efforts of the assembly. We are now looking forward to being active members of our communities and working to make Kawasaki a better place to live for foreign and Japanese residents alike.

## Open Forum Attracts Many Participants and Promotes Discussions



The Open Forum was held at Takatsu Civic Hall on November 29, 2009. It was a nice day for the event, which attracted some 180 passionate participants. Among these participants were residents of Kawasaki and other cities, city assembly members, NPO representatives, local government officials, researchers, students, and past Representatives.

The purpose of the Open Forum is to promote exchange and dialogue between Representatives and local citizens and to listen to people's thoughts and opinions regarding the City's policies and issues that affect the local community. This event is an opportunity for both foreign and Japanese resi-

dents to discuss ideas for making Kawasaki a better place to live and for promoting multiculturalism in Kawasaki.

The Open Forum consisted of the General Assembly and three subcommittee meetings. Participants engaged in energetic and passionate discussions on the topics of academic support, multicultural understanding, and social life.

A reception was held after the Open Forum. This gave attendees a chance to make new friends and deepen their relationships with others in the community. It also offered a chance for attendees to share their opinions in a casual and more relaxed atmosphere than at the Open Forum. (Asri MOCHAMAD)

**Note:** For information on the opinions expressed by participants, see page 3.



# Proposals by the Seventh Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents

## (1) Bolster support to help children with foreign backgrounds advance to high school.

1. Develop a structure in which children with foreign backgrounds can receive academic support so that they can take school classes and pass high school entrance exams.
2. Look into the possibility of a special system for high school entrance exams that takes into consideration the needs of children with foreign backgrounds and the feasibility of introducing it to municipal high schools. Also, work to implement special procedures at prefectural high schools in Kawasaki City that would accept applications from foreign residents living in Kanagawa Prefecture and increase the number of students who can be accepted at these schools.



## (2) Expand education for multicultural understanding in elementary and junior high schools.

1. Promote education for multicultural understanding by compiling examples of practices that can serve as future reference in the instructor-led cross-cultural exchange program, which is the main program for multicultural education in elementary and junior high schools.
2. Incorporate the cultures and languages of children with foreign backgrounds into education for multicultural understanding. Education for multicultural understanding is an important opportunity for children to form their own identities and gain self-affirmation.



## (3) Create systems that provide foreign residents secure access to health care in their communities.

1. Form ties with relevant institutions, e.g., the Kawasaki International Association and civic organizations, to facilitate health care support through such services as consultations and the dispatch of people to help foreign residents in hospitals.
2. Create links on the City's Web site to health-related information, such as on hospitals that can accommodate foreign-language speakers and multilingual health interview sheets.
3. Strive to create an environment that makes it easy for foreign residents to be examined at medical facilities, for example, by promoting the use of multilingual health interview sheets and the use of multilingual signage at medical facilities in the City and promoting the use of medical interpreters and other people to help foreign residents.



## (4) Cultivate people with the specialized knowledge needed to respond to the various consultation needs of foreign residents and facilitate support for problem solving.

1. Hold specialized training for workers at the Kawasaki International Association and civic organizations and for City Office employees so that they can work together to address the complex and diverse problems faced by foreign residents.
2. Ensure that people with specialized knowledge are utilized at the City Office and the foreign resident consultation desk.



**Note:** For more information on the rationale behind and background of these proposals, see the FY2009 Annual Report of the Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents. The annual report is available at the City Office, civic halls, local libraries, and venues for Representative Assembly meetings.

# Opinions of Open Forum Participants

Many opinions and ideas were expressed during each of the topic-based subcommittee meetings. Some of these are presented here. (Additional information is provided in the annual report.)

## First Subcommittee: Academic Support

1. Junior high schools that are focused on school advancement have an atmosphere that is difficult for newcomers to adjust to.
2. Collaborative efforts in the area of academic support between Asao Ward and the Asao Multicultural Support Network Himawari should be replicated in other wards.
3. Support for students before they enroll in high school is important, but support after enrollment is essential.

## Second Subcommittee: Multicultural Understanding

1. There are both active and passive schools.
2. Education for multicultural understanding, which teaches respect for differences, must help eliminate bullying.
3. Even though classes for multicultural understanding are limited, students seem to learn it naturally by spending time together with children with foreign backgrounds at school.

## Third Subcommittee: Social Life

1. Although multilingual health interview sheets are available on the Internet, many hospital personnel do not know about them. Information that is currently available is not being reported to the people who need it.
2. There are problems with foreign residents who cannot subscribe to health insurance.
3. Multicultural social workers have a broad scope of activity. They should be assigned to specific fields, such as education or health care.



# Summary of Assembly Meetings

## Third Meeting Day 1 (September 27, 2009)

- Summary of deliberations at each committee meeting in preparation for the Open Forum

## Day 2 (December 20, 2009)

- Confirmation of opinions expressed at the Open Forum
- Proposals

## Fourth Meeting Day 1 (January 24, 2010)

- Report on the City's efforts in response to the assembly's proposals
- Annual report
- Proposals

## Day 2 (February 21, 2010)

- Proposals
- Annual report

## Proposals by the Representative Assembly and the City's Efforts

The proposals issued thus far by the Representative Assembly have been reflected in the City's policies in various forms. In response to the proposals submitted, the City investigates measures to be taken, and the relevant city bureaus report to the assembly every year on their progress concerning those measures.

Details of these reports and the grades (status) they are given can be found in the annual report and on the Representative Assembly's Web site. The items on which the relevant bureau authorities have achieved some results are given an A, and items that are in progress or under investigation are given a B.

The table at right shows the status of proposals made in the first part of FY2007 (announced in FY2009).

**Note:** The titles of the relevant authorities are those that were current at the time the proposals were issued. (Sudeep ADHIKARI)

Description	Relevant Authority	Status
Support for basic academic skills needed to advance to high school	Board of Education	B
Dissemination of high school advancement information	Board of Education	B
Support for high school students after enrollment	Board of Education	B
Creation and distribution of disaster prevention education materials for foreign residents	General Affairs Bureau (??)	FY2008 A
Development of a system for communicating information during emergencies	General Affairs Bureau (??)	FY2008 A
Centralization of information provided by the City Office to foreign residents	Citizens Affairs Bureau	B
Display of information at the City Office	Citizens Affairs Bureau	FY2008 A
Preparation and provision of information containing illustrations and pictorial symbols	Citizens Affairs Bureau	FY2008 A



## Multicultural Exchange through Food Multicultural Festa Mizonokuchi



The Multicultural Festa Mizonokuchi was held on October 24 at Takatsu Civic Hall, with brisk cold air telling of the coming winter. There were concerns about how the flu might affect attendance, but many people

came out to the event. Participants were able to experience other cultures by sampling food at various food stalls and enjoying song and dance performances from different countries.

The Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents had set up a food booth and served sui-gyoza (boiled Chinese dumplings), shrimp chips, Romanian soup, and a Filipino dessert to visitors.

In addition, the assembly distributed newsletters, Open Forum fliers, and Citizen's Festival fliers, introducing people to its activities. The event informed many people about the assembly and hopefully helped contribute to multiculturalism in our community. (Ko KYO)



## Experience Various Cultures with City Residents 32nd Kawasaki Citizen's Festival

In an effort to promote interaction between foreign residents and Japanese residents as well as the creation of a multicultural society, the Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents participated in the Kawasaki Citizen's Festival on October 31 and November 1.

At this year's event, we exhibited a display of photos showing New Year's celebrations and weddings from around the world. Also, the world quiz that we hold annually was very popular, and many children stepped up to the challenge.

Furthermore, we demonstrated a Chinese game in which an object resembling a shuttlecock is kicked around and showed footwear from Thailand and the Philippines made of palm husks. Being able to play games with visitors while explaining how to play those games was impressive.



The multicultural stage on which assembly Representatives participated featured performances of songs and dances from around the world, attracting applause from the large audience. The attendance of so many citizens and their enjoyment of various cultures are proof that we live in a multicultural society. (Shinsha UEDA)

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## Looking Back on the Seventh Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents

Yong-Jae CHO, Chairperson

I was elected to the Sixth Representative Assembly and have served as a Representative for the past four years. In my second term, as one of the few foreign residents whose native language is Japanese, I was nominated as the committee chairperson.

Some younger members were elected to the Seventh Representative Assembly, allowing a better age balance to be achieved. The presence of many Representatives with excellent Japanese skills has helped facilitate the deliberation process. However, because foreign residents have a wide variety of lifestyles—with some in international marriages, some with spouses who are also foreign residents, some who are international students, and some who were born in Japan—there were problems regarding the prioritization of issues.

In recent years, the foreign community in Kawasaki City has changed significantly. Before the change, the problems facing foreign residents in Kawasaki consisted primarily of those facing Japanese-resident Koreans, who previously accounted for the largest percentage of foreign residents. However, with the foreign community now exceeding 30,000, Chinese residents make up the largest group of foreign residents. At the same time, the living environments and household composition of foreign residents have become more diversified, and the number of individuals hoping to reside permanently in Japan is growing. The proposals submitted by the Seventh Representative Assembly evolved out of these changes.

To ensure a better future for the community, the proposals focused on improving the quality of life of foreign residents with various kinds of academic support to promote high school advancement, developments to the health care environment, and consultations and solutions to problems affecting people in their everyday lives. Improving the quality of life of the City's foreign residents has benefits for native Japanese residents as well.

I believe that the Representative Assembly is a place of realization, where Japanese and foreign residents can get to know one another better. Therefore, I hope that the number of foreign residents willing to step forward and share their opinions will increase in the future. I also hope that those who serve on the Eighth Representative Assembly will act as a bridge between the diverse community of foreign residents and the native Japanese residents alongside whom they live. Best wishes in all your endeavors.



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Ideas and input regarding the newsletter and/or the assembly are always welcome.