

Kawasaki CityKAWASAKI CITY
川崎市

Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents Newsletter

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Having Your Voice Heard by the City: FY2008 Annual Report Submitted to the Mayor

On April 17, 2009, Chairperson Yong-Jae CHO and Vice-Chairperson Elok HALIMAH of the Seventh Representative Assembly submitted the *FY2008 Annual Report* to the mayor of Kawasaki and reported on the assembly's activities over the past year.

The mayor expressed deep gratitude for efforts made by the Seventh Representative Assembly, which comprises the Committee on Education and Culture and the Committee on Society/Community Life, to seriously deliberate such issues as academic support for children and health care support for foreign residents.

On June 2, the chairperson and vice-chairperson attended a meeting of the Citizens' Affairs Standing Committee of the City Assembly, where they described the activities of the Representative Assembly based on the annual report. The Citizens' Affairs Standing Committee extends an invitation to this meeting every year so that its members have an opportunity to hear the opinions of the Representative Assembly and incorporate what they learn into their deliberations. The chairperson of the Citizens' Affairs Standing Committee responded to the assembly's report by saying, "It reminded me that with the increase in the population of foreign residents, it is extremely important that we strive to create a community where those residents, as members of our society, can demonstrate their talents as individuals."

The representatives will strive to investigate and deliberate issues to create additional specific proposals during the remaining half year of the Seventh Representative Assembly's term.



Announcements: Multicultural Festa, Citizen's Festival, and Open Forum



In the second half of 2009, the Representative Assembly will participate in several events and hold its Open Forum to promote interaction with Japanese residents and facilitate mutual understanding.

The Multicultural Festa is an event not only for foreign residents but also for people of all different backgrounds. The Representative Assembly will have a food booth featuring *sui-gyoza* (boiled Chinese dumplings), shrimp chips, Romanian soup, and a Filipino dessert and will offer visitors a taste of the different cultures represented.

The Citizen's Festival is an opportunity to inform the public of the Representative Assembly's activities and will feature panel displays on wedding and New Year's customs around the world as well as demonstrations of games and pastimes from different countries. The festival will include a parade and a multicultural stage featuring song and dance performances.

The Open Forum provides an opportunity for representatives to outline deliberations that have been conducted by the Seventh Representative Assembly thus far and to listen to the ideas and feedback of both Japanese and foreign residents. A community party (free of charge) will be held after the meeting, and all local residents are encouraged to attend.

☆ Multicultural Festa Mizonokuchi

October 24 (Sat.)
 Takatsu Civic Hall, Nocty 2, rooftop patio
 (Mizonokuchi, Musashi Mizonokuchi Station)
 10:30 a.m.–3:30 p.m.

☆ Kawasaki Citizen's Festival

October 31 (Sat.) and November 1 (Sun.)
 Kawasaki Fujimi Park
 (A 15-minute walk from Kawasaki Station)
 10:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m.

☆ Open Forum

November 29 (Sun.), Takatsu Civic Hall
 Nocty 2, 12F
 (Mizonokuchi, Musashi Mizonokuchi Station)
 2:00–5:00 p.m.

● **Useful Information:** The *FY2008 Annual Report* of the Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents is distributed at venues for Representative Assembly meetings and at various events. Also, copies of the report are kept at libraries and civic halls throughout the city for you to read.

Summary of Assembly Meetings



Year 1, Fourth Meeting, Day 2 (February 22)

- Committee on Education and Culture**
 - Investigating community-based Japanese language and other academic support for children with foreign backgrounds
 - Improving orientation for children and their parents/guardians
- Committee on Society/Community Life**
 - Medical interpretation system
 - Report on the MIC medical interpreting seminar
 - Studying the division of responsibilities between specialized interpreters and conversational aid interpreters

Year 2, First Meeting, Day 1 (April 19)

- Committee on Education and Culture**
 - Issues related to the high school advancement of students with foreign backgrounds
 - Special recruitment and test taking systems for foreign students in Kanagawa
- Committee on Society/Community Life**
 - Multicultural society (multiculturalism and conditions in Japan)

Year 2, First Meeting, Day 2 (May 10)

- Committee on Education and Culture**
 - Report of findings regarding paths for the academic advancement of foreign junior and senior high school students living in Kawasaki
- Committee on Society/Community Life**
 - Multicultural social workers
 - Immigration control administration

Year 2, Second Meeting, Day 1 (June 14)

- Committee on Education and Culture**
 - Summary of discussions related to the academic support of children with foreign backgrounds
 - Multicultural understanding (education for multicultural understanding in schools and communities)
- Committee on Society/Community Life**
 - Training and utilization of various personnel involved in multicultural affairs

Year 2, Second Meeting, Day 2 (July 12)

- Committee on Education and Culture**
 - Discussing proposals already made in the area of multicultural understanding and opinions submitted during the term of the Seventh Representative Assembly
- Committee on Society/Community Life**
 - Current status of consultation services provided to foreign residents
 - Venues and personnel involved in social work

Looking Back on Previous Forums

Shinsha UEDA (Committee on Education and Culture)

The Committee on Education and Culture has had many discussions about the desire to extend the period in which Japanese language and academic support are provided to children of foreign residents. The longer the period of learning, the more progress the student can be expected to make in improving their Japanese skills. However, the parents' cooperation is extremely important in this regard. In the process of providing support, I have strongly sensed the need for parental support in helping children lead more rewarding academic lives.



Sudeep ADHIKARI (Committee on Society/Community Life)

Thus far, the committee's discussions have focused on two main themes: (1) health care support for foreign residents and (2) human resource cultivation in multiculturalism.

Health care is an important issue that affects people's

very lives and is an even more important issue for foreign residents who might also have to face communication challenges. Committee members have discussed the importance of easy access to medical information, the need for medical interpreting and support services to ensure that foreign residents receive the same treatment at hospitals that Japanese residents do, and the preparation of volunteers as well as the development of systems and structures for utilizing them. Their conclusions are being compiled into proposals for the mayor.

Japanese society, which is still engaged in the process of internationalization, needs to cultivate human resources that can solve problems faced by foreign residents and learn to use them effectively. While discussing ideas with various government personnel, the Representative Assembly is developing proposals for the mayor aimed at training personnel more effectively, developing better systems, and making Kawasaki a city that is accommodating to its foreign residents.



● **Useful Information:** The 2009 version of the list of Kawasaki City Multilingual Public Relations Materials, which lists pamphlets and other materials written in multiple languages, is now available. The list can be read at information counters for foreigners at ward offices, civic halls, and libraries. Alternatively, it can be downloaded from the Representative Assembly's Web site.

★ FY2009 Meeting Schedule ★

☆ Kawasaki City Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents

Location: Kawasaki International Center (A 10-minute walk from Motsumiyoshi Station on the Tokyu Toyoko Line) **Time:** 2:00–5:00 p.m.

Third Meeting: Day 1—Sept. 27 (Sun.) Day 2—Dec. 20 (Sun.)

Fourth Meeting: Day 1—Jan. 24 (Sun.) Day 2—Feb. 21 (Sun.)

Note: Assembly meetings are open to the public. Please feel free to attend.



☆ Open Forum: Nov. 29 (Sun.)

Location: Takatsu Civic Hall (Nocty 2, 12F, JR Musashi Mizonokuchi Station or Tokyu Line Mizonokuchi Station) **Time:** 2:00–5:00 p.m.

Note: Anyone may participate. This is an open opportunity for members of the general public to share their ideas with their Representatives.



H1N1 Influenza Prevention

The H1N1 influenza virus has been sweeping across the world since spring of 2009. There have already been more than 100 confirmed cases in Kawasaki. It is important that everyone continue to wash his/her hands and gargle to prevent the further spread of the flu.

Those who have symptoms, including fever, sore throat, cough, and runny nose, should contact the influenza consultation center by phone before visiting a hospital. Information on the flu can be found in multiple languages on the Kawasaki International Association's Web site (www.kian.or.jp/topics/swine-flu-virus.html).

<Weekdays>

8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

- Kawasaki Ward Office, Health and Social Welfare Center
- Saiwai Ward Office, Health and Social Welfare Center
- Nakahara Ward Office, Health and Social Welfare Center
- Takatsu Ward Office, Health and Social Welfare Center
- Miyamae Ward Office, Health and Social Welfare Center
- Tama Ward Office, Health and Social Welfare Center
- Asao Ward Office, Health and Social Welfare Center

8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

- Health and Welfare Bureau, Health and Safety Division

Tel: 044-201-3189

Tel: 044-556-6715

Tel: 044-744-3104

Tel: 044-861-3341

Tel: 044-856-3217

Tel: 044-935-3217

Tel: 044-965-5218

Tel: 044-200-2692



Educational Consultation upon School Enrollment



When a child with a foreign background transfers to an elementary or junior high school, the Comprehensive Education Center provides specialized educational consultation services and Japanese language support. Since August 2009, educational administrators in each ward have been working in partnership with the Comprehensive Education Center to offer educational consultation services.

The administrators have been focusing on providing counseling to children who have transferred to the lower grades of elementary school and who need Japanese language support.

For details, contact the Kawasaki City Comprehensive Education Center.

Kawasaki City Comprehensive Education Center

School Affairs Division for Foreign Students

Tel: 044-844-3733

● **Useful Information:** The e-zine *Intercom Kawasaki* contains important information on everyday living for foreign residents of Kawasaki and is now being sent on a weekly basis. Send a message to kawasakikutagenngo@live.jp, indicating which language you would like to receive this e-zine: simplified Japanese, Chinese, English, Portuguese, or Spanish.

Now Seeking Members for the Eighth Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents!

The Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents was established in 1996 in accordance with an ordinance to promote mutual understanding and create better local communities. Assembly members choose several themes from among the problems that foreign residents face every day, conduct research on those topics, discuss their findings, and make proposals to the mayor. This is your chance to ensure that your voice is heard by the city administration.



Term: April 1, 2010, to March 31, 2012 (two years)

Description of activities: Participate in meetings held approximately eight times a year (generally held on Sundays and conducted in Japanese)

Eligibility: Individuals who have been registered as foreign residents in Kawasaki for at least one year and are 18 years of age or older

How to apply: Send in your application by January 15, 2010 (must be postmarked by this date).

Note: Application forms will be available starting in October at ward offices, civic halls, libraries, and the Kawasaki International Center. Alternatively, they can be downloaded from the Representative Assembly's Web site (www.city.kawasaki.jp/25/25zinken/home/gaikoku/kaigi)

If you have any questions, please contact the office provided under *Inquiries* below.



Representatives and Their Multicultural Experiences

Volume 3

■ The Hope of the Korean People



My father, Kaijutsu GON, was born in Kyongsang-Bukto, South Korea, in 1914. He immigrated to Japan during the Pacific War and moved from place to place after starting off working as a coal miner in Hokkaido. After the war, he settled down in Kawasaki Ward in Kawasaki City and started a family with my mother, Meijun

LEE. My father raised four children while making a living as a swine herder and day laborer.

My wandering father had one older sister still living in South Korea, but he lost track of her for a time after he immigrated to Japan. There were rumors that she had gone to North Korea, but these were unconfirmed. Finding my aunt has been an important part of my life's work.

The unification of my homeland (South Korea and North Korea) is like a far-off dream. No matter how complicated the political and economic situations are, I believe that the people's desire for unification is like an enormous pool of magma buried deep within a volcano.

(Suminori GON)

■ Ten Years from Romania to Japan



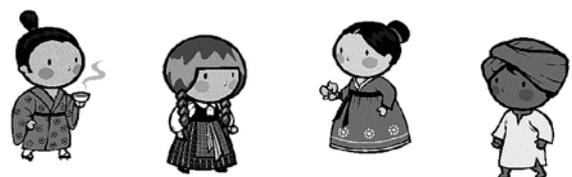
My name is Mariana Oana SENDA. Ten years ago, I moved from Romania to Japan. I knew nothing about Japan when I first arrived and was thus shocked to find so many differences from what I was used to—differences in language, culture, food, etc. Still, thanks to the support of

my family, the kindness of my friends, and the help of the people around me, I was gradually able to break through these barriers of unfamiliarity.

As I began to eat the same kinds of food and live the same lifestyle as the Japanese around me, I felt as if I became better able to understand the spirit of the Japanese people. For example, my first favorite Japanese dish was *nikujaga* (simmered meat and potatoes). This dish helped me learn to appreciate the flavor of soy sauce and other Japanese dishes. Today, I can even eat *natto* (fermented soy beans) with mayonnaise. Recently, I have come to realize that many of the unique qualities of Japan are rooted in Japanese history, and I am learning to better understand those qualities from this perspective.

I think Japan is a wonderful country. Japanese people protect their history and culture while adopting new ideas and have created a society that emphasizes compassion for the more vulnerable members of their communities. For example, Kawasaki City ensured that its foreign residents would be taken care of by establishing the Representative Assembly for Foreign Residents. I look forward to working with my fellow Representative Assembly members on behalf of my beloved Kawasaki City and, by extension, my beloved Japan.

(Mariana Oana SENDA)



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