



MINATO

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Bulletin

MINATO UNESCO ASSOCIATION NEWS & CALENDAR

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Hello from a new MUA Vice President

Ikuko Newell Tsuboya



It's quite embarrassing to admit that I learned about UNESCO, including how it came into being and what its Charter sets out, only when I was asked to write this Inaugural Address. I was almost ashamed to find that UNESCO is not only about preserving the World Heritage Sites. What I have learned is: after the end of the World War II that had devastated the world, the world leaders got together and decided to establish UNESCO with an aim to "deepen mutual understanding and promote international peace and common welfare for human kind." UNESCO is one of the special agencies of the United Nations (UN) and has 194 member countries. Its philosophy, if put in one word, is the creation of "peace". This is one of its most important missions.

Along the way, I belatedly looked into the activities of Minato UNESCO Association (MUA), a volunteer organization, and updated my knowledge. The world's first UNESCO cooperating private-sector organization was founded by people who resonated with UNESCO's philosophy. The number of such grass-roots groups reaches nearly 300 across Japan. It is noteworthy that Minato City is located in the center of Metropolitan Tokyo, and 10% of Minato residents are foreign citizens. We can proudly say that MUA is playing an essential part in this area. It's been a while since I joined MUA, and I am honored to assume the role of its Vice President.

MUA was founded 44 years ago, in 1981. Its members belong to one or more committees such as "membership development", "PR and bulletin", "language training", "international study and culture" and "youth group", thereby engaging in a variety of activities. With enthusiasm, they draw up plans and carry out "World cooking class", "Japanese language class", and "hands-on cultural experience" to name a few. Truly I appreciate their effort and dedication.

In recent years, the world has changed drastically. The first surprising incident was the onslaught of Covid. Our social life was tattered: People were not allowed to see their parents and friends, and students couldn't go to school. Worse still, armed conflicts are erupting in many places. A high school student, who was aspiring to study in the US university, came to see me, with tears welling up her eyes, complained that the student visas are not granted by the US this year. The slogan: "Our country comes first" sounds as if turning back the clock, and far-right political parties are gaining power here and there... Surely I am not alone to have this sense of crisis... the world is rapidly getting further away from the "creation of peace" that is the purpose of UNESCO.

And of course we are facing global warming. In Tokyo this summer, the temperature reached near 40 degrees Celsius, a category classified as "fiercely hot". In the Tokyo Bay, subtropical fish are swimming. Where are we heading to?

My father was pulled into the war for four years and served on the destroyer "Harukaze". He was such a sweet man that, when finding someone in trouble, he would give his watch, his suit and even his shoes to help him. After the war, however, when his children, including me, were watching a war scene on TV, my father would turn it off without uttering a word.

(Continued to P. 2)

The 2024 Kanto Block UNESCO Activity Research Conference in Ibaraki

Date: Saturday, October 12, 2024

Venue: Tsukuba International University
(Tsukuba City, Ibaraki Prefecture)



The Kanto Block UNESCO Activity Study Meeting was held in Tsuchiura City, Ibaraki Prefecture. The event welcomed approximately 200 participants, including 36 members from the Tokyo Metropolitan Liaison Council of UNESCO Associations. The conference began with a moving choral performance by students from Tsuchiura Municipal Daini Elementary School, who had previously won the gold prize in the national elementary school division of the All-Japan Chorus Competition.

Keynote Lecture:

TOMITA Keiko, President of Tokiwa University, delivered “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) — The Challenge of the Remaining Six Years”

Breakout Sessions:

- 1.SDG Activities and the Role of Private UNESCO Organizations
- 2.Peace Activities, the World Terakoya Movement, and International Exchange – Included a report from the Mingalaba UNESCO Club (Suginami Ward)
- 3.World Heritage and Future Heritage



In the second breakout session, a report was presented by the Mingalaba UNESCO Club from Suginami Ward. The presentation focused on the current state of activities both within and outside Myanmar, as well as on future directions for support. Since the military coup in 2021, Myanmar has remained under military rule, and the report emphasized the growing importance of educational support through initiatives such as the Terakoya movement. It also highlighted the need to further promote mutual understanding and exchange between Myanmar and Japan.

The 2025 Kanto Block Conference is scheduled to take place on Saturday, September 27, at the Fukaya City Cultural Hall in Saitama Prefecture.

(Written by SATO Ritsuko, Standing Director, International Science and Culture Committee, and translated by KODAMA, K.)

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(Continued from P. 1) Hello from a new MUA Vice President

In my memory, it was the only time he looked menacing to us. In his death bed, he murmured: “I hate wars.” I guess he must have witnessed horrifying scenes. Today, after 80 years, we still watch, on TV and other screens, victims and refugees crying for help among the shattered and abandoned buildings. I ask to myself: Have we learned no lesson from our experience? I’m telling to myself: “peace is more precious than anything else.”

This is why our UNESCO activities are essential more than ever. Although each member has only small power, if we all worked together, I believe our faith could move mountains.

(Translated by Miyashita Y., Standing Director, the PR & Internet Committee)

The 80th National Convention of Japan's UNESCO Activities held in Niihama

Date: Saturday, November 23, 2024

Venue: Rihga Royal Hotel Niihama



This year the national convention was held in Niihama, Ehime Prefecture, attracting 320 participants, including 18 from Metropolitan Liaison Council of UNESCO Associations (of which 2 members were from Minato UNESCO Association). Niihama is the industrial city developed together with Besshi Copper Mine, one of Japan's three major copper mines. Copper thus produced was transported to Osaka and formed the foundation of Sumitomo Zaibatsu. The opening of mine was in 1690, while the closing was in 1973.

Memorial lecture “Learning from advanced examples of SDGs” by SUEOKA Teruaki. (Advisor, Sumitomo Historical Archives):

“Both Sumitomo, the operating company, and its workers strived together to preserve environment and engaged in activities aimed at enriching the local community. This is the advanced example of SDGs. Surely they were ahead of the time.”

Performance report

All the 27 elementary and middle schools in Niihama city are designated as “UNESCO School”, of which 4 schools reported their activities as follows.

- Niihama Minami High School:

We are learning the history of Besshi copper mines. They are world famous mines, represent Japan's industrial revolution, and tackled environmental issues ahead of time. Even after the mines were closed, a deliberate urban planning was put in place, thereby allowing Niihama city to become a sustainable industrial city. We are aiming at registration of Besshi Copper Mines as UNESCO World Cultural Heritage.

- Funaki Middle School:

We've been working on the question: “How should a student live while pursuing sustainable development?” This year, we took on a study from the viewpoint of environment. For example, we learned Besshi Copper Mines as Heritage of Industrial Modernization, experienced volunteer activities within the school district, and undertook a protection campaign for Japanese Pont Turtles (endangered species).



- Takiyama Elementary School

Pass the Takiyama Salt Farm down to the next generation. Efforts to connect Takiyama's past and future were reported.

- Sohiraki Elementary School

Through the ESD activities made possible by the partnership of school and local residents, we are aiming at realization of the sustainable co-creative society. There are four pillars: hometown study, environmental education, disaster prevention education, and human rights education. Emphasizing “Connection” and “Involvement”, we put out exchange programs with the local residents and hands-on experiences at cultural facilities.

The National Convention was closed after President Suzuki of Japan Federation of UNESCO Associations made a general comment.

(Written by SATO Ritsuko, and translated by Miyashita Y., the PR & Internet Committee)

MUA's Fiscal 2024 Symposium: 6th round of "Think about Peace" series What the UNESCO 2024 Recommendation on Education poses to Japan

Date: Tuesday, January 21, 2025
Venue: International House of Japan
Sponsored by MUA and Co-sponsored
by Minato City Education Board

Moderator: Professor SHIBUYA Megumi, Meiji Gakuin University
Keynote Speaker: Professor NAGATA Yoshiyuki, University of the Sacred Heart, Tokyo
Panelists: Tokyo Metropolitan Mita High School students
MINAMIYAMA Nanako, 1st grader
MIZUOKA Tsubasa, 2nd grader
KOBAYASHI Youta, 2nd grader

We had the privilege of having Professor Shibuya as moderator for this symposium which focused on the UNESCO 2024 recommendation on education. Also, it was a great pleasure to have three Mita High School students as panelists. The following is a summary of the symposium:

Professor Shibuya:

The 1974 UNESCO recommendation on education did not attract much attention in Japan. Later, member states proposed its revision and it caused international discussions. In 2023, the recommendation was revised. It's been my long-cherished desire to talk about it with like-minded people and come up with specific actions on our respective positions. This is the background of why I proposed this symposium.



Keynote speech by Professor Nagata:

■ "What the UNESCO Recommendation on Education poses to Japan: Let's discuss the future image of education with young people"

① What is the UNESCO Recommendation on Education all about ?

I'm very excited today to see young people express their opinions proactively. I think that this will be most likely the first case where those, who undertake the future, discuss the future course of education with their own words. This must be an epoch-making important first step. Let me ask an initial question. What would you learn other than reading, writing and calculation? In other words, what should be learned beside the basics? Would it be an inclusive mindset toward difference such as accepting opinions different from your own, or accepting people with different background?

There was a time in medieval Europe when music and poetry were prioritized. There could be a variety of answers, depending on the geographical location where you lived or the era when you existed. For example, in the pre-war Japan, the government forced people to memorize the Imperial Rescript on Education so that they would become loyal subjects who would contribute to the state. In other words, education was used as a tool of the state. In our contemporary society, education may be perceived in the context of information or digital transformation.

Now, back to the UNESCO recommendation, we could interpret that a total of 194 countries in the world agreed that education addresses “peace and human rights.” (adopted at the 2023 UNESCO general assembly) I think it is very significant that a clear future course was presented during the period when wars were still waged,. The following comparison shows what the former 1974 UNESCO recommendation on education addressed vis-à-vis what the 2024 UNESCO recommendation on education addresses:

- The former 1974 UNESCO recommendation on education addressed the following:
International understanding, cooperation and peace as well as human rights and fundamental freedom.
- The 2023 UNESCO recommendation on education (revised edition) addresses the following:
Peace and human rights, international understanding, cooperation, fundamental freedom, global citizenship, and sustainable development

Why was the revision made? One reason stems from the fact that the nature of global issues has changed. Fifty years ago, we did not face climate change or pandemic. Today, we are additionally challenged by AI with its potential and threat. In short, education has not caught up with what have emerged since fifty years ago. Although the recommendation is not legally binding, member states are expected to reflect it in their legal governance and policy making while all related people are expected to work in solidarity. Regrettably, the 1974 UNESCO recommendation could not exert its influence. Therefore, viable influence is expected under renewed awareness of the 2023 recommendation. In Japan, there is a basic plan for promoting the objectives in the recommendation. Today, I'd like to explain about the 14 principles which constitute the core of the 2023 UNESCO recommendation for education.

The 14 guideline principles:

1. Human rights (most basic principle)
2. Common good (access to high quality education)
3. Rights holder (eradication of segregation and bias)
4. Convivial (ethical care and compassion)
5. Gender (equality in gender)
6. Inclusive (focus on diversity)
7. Well-being (safety, health and well-being)
8. Transformation (holistic transformation throughout one's life)
9. Knowledge co-creation (both teachers and students are co-creators)
10. Freedom of expression (freedom of expression, accompanied by banning of violence and hatred)
11. Ethics of technology (ethical use of technology)
12. Interconnection (Promotion of dialog between local and global)
13. Dialog (Promotion of dialog among different cultures and generations)
14. Global citizenship (Awareness of global citizenship)

② Challenges for Japan and future potential

As issues such as bullying and truancy are prevalent in Japan, we cannot say that the rights to education is sufficiently secured. Truancy is increasing in other developed countries as well. Education should address not just knowledge but also emotional, mental and physical growth. I recommend that schools be changed into a place where students feel happy and excited to learn.

Presentations by three Mita High School students:

Ms. MINAMIYAMA Nanako:

■ "Mita High School UNESCO Committee and Japan's education"

Our school is designated as an enthusiastic "UNESCO school". Core activities are undertaken by the UNESCO Committee. Major activities include "Visits to foreign embassies," "Cultural festival activities," "Participation in UNESCO's Terakoya movements" and "Fundraising for Ukraine, Turkey and Syria."

- ① During our cultural festival, we held a bazaar and a fundraising campaign. We collected unnecessary items from teachers and students. A combined total of bazaar proceeds and donations, amounting to ¥41,955, was donated to the Gaza area through an NPO. Also, we held UNESCO-related quiz rallies at different places in school and presented commercial item coupons to winner students.
- ② Each year our school participates in the UNESCO Terakoya movements. For example, we collect misprinted or spoiled postcards, exchange them for cash and donate it to campaigns to eradicate poverty or increase literate population. Prior to the said postcard collection, we did a written-message passing game to heighten the awareness of importance of literacy.
- ③ We also collect used clothes for fundraising. In this connection, we invited representatives from the NPO's where we donated the proceeds, and asked them to give a speech at our school. Today's symposium, in collaboration with the Minato UNESCO Association, is held as a part of our UNESCO Committee activities.

Ms. MIZUOKA Tsubasa:

■ Intra-School Questionnaire (Do, Collect and See)

Out of the afore-mentioned 14 guideline principles, we chose "Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development" as the question issues to be considered and answered from both local and global viewpoints.

Question issue, results and consideration

■ Convivial (related to Peace)

Local viewpoints :

Q : Have you ever been exposed to difference in opinions or conflicts in daily life?:

A : About 80% of 103 respondents answered Yes.

There were cases where differences in opinions developed into quarrels. More patience to hear out opponents' opinions would have been desirable.

Global viewpoints :

Q : Concerning worldwide issues, what are typical local incidents emerging from them?

A : Worldwide issues often involve war and segregation. More voice from ordinary citizens should be reflected. On the other hand, big issues seem to be beyond our capability. Many express opinions, saying the solutions are basically impossible in nature.

■ Inclusive (Human rights-related)

Questions were raised from both local and global viewpoints. Respective answers were given to each question. (Details are omitted here)

■ Ethics of technology (related to Sustainable Development)

Questions were raised from both local and global viewpoints. Respective answers were given to each question. (Details are omitted here)

【Discussions among the UNESCO Committee】

- We can say that the students of Mita High School understand well the core of issues and have come up with well-thought out opinions. Still, these opinions seem to be insufficient in recognizing the specific means to solve. Education plays a critical role in disseminating favorable trends in society. However, there has not been any answer as to what kind of education is required. Thus, discussions lack specific nature.
- To improve our awareness, is it not necessary for us to feel the issues close to our everyday life? Can there be viable solutions to wars or segregation? Of course, efforts should be made by individuals and governments. The challenges seem to include the lack in our awareness & internalization of the issues. Maybe the immature perception of the issues disturbs our deep thinking. We thought that it is necessary for us to start from a local viewpoint, improve our thought step by step, and finally step it up to a global viewpoint. Because the general awareness among students is still insufficient, it seems necessary to steer the current education model toward more self-driven learning. One way is to realize classes where both students and teachers engage in stimulating interaction in a vibrant atmosphere.

Mr. KOBAYASHI Youta:

■ ”Future image of education” — a high school student’s viewpoint

- My awareness of the issues

Students have a sense of urgency about the said issues but it’s often on an ambiguous image level. It’s a common challenge facing high school students today. The major cause for this situation stems from the traditional education model, namely a one-way street lecture from teachers to students. For example, we see only a single way of thinking presented to approach an issue. This ends up in providing students with only fragmented views of social issues. I think this is why we cannot understand the core nature of the issues, and why we only have an ambiguous image. I regret the current education model provides only a horizontal viewpoint.

- Critical need to learn from multiple-axis viewpoints

How can we change the traditional horizontal viewpoint to 3D viewpoints? I think it’s necessary to establish a learning model which combines viewpoints from multiple axes. This should include a distance axis (local and global), a time axis (past, present & future), and a human axis (me and others). For example, speaking of peace, it prevails in Japan from a local viewpoint, However, from a global viewpoint, we are aware of warfare underway in Ukraine. When we look at Japan from a time axis, we experienced two major wars in history and there is no telling what may happen in the future. Thus, multiple viewpoints enable us to have a 3D image of the issue.

What I mean by human axis is dialog, Through the exchange of different opinions among students, a new viewpoint will be added. I trust that you can develop a new opinion by incorporating various viewpoints, thereby stepping further into the core of issues.

- 3D way of learning

We should mind is the following three steps – “Know,” “Think,” and “Act.” Each of the steps requires dialog, I think.

- Dialog

Dialog empowers each participant. Through dialog, you can put into words the ambiguous perception of issues which are in your mind. In dialog, you will exchange various opinions and notice different viewpoints. I think this process empowers you and enable looking at issues from multiple viewpoints.

- To know

I think it’s very important to add new extra-curricular & proactive elements to the traditional way

of school education (desk learning). This means field work and dialog. Such initiatives will empower students and motivate them to pursue different activities.

- To think

In the process of knowing and dialog, you may face unacceptable opinions. If you ask yourself repeatedly how and why such opinions came about while engaged in dialog, you will find answers.

- To act

In your repeated efforts to think, know and dialog, you will find an opportunity to put your thought into action. For example, you may be able to select merchandize according to your awareness of its possible negative impact on environment.

- Question and concern :

We collected major concerns which high school students have, through questionnaire. Such concerns included, “Is the current school education system good enough to continue?” “How can an individual influence society?” “We tend to be self-contained,” “I feel an ambiguous concern over the possible large burden which we may have to bear in the future.”

- Wrap-up by the Mita High School UNESCO Committee

We agreed that “Co-creation through dialog” is the crucial key to education in the next-generation. We also think that the conventional unilateral approach in education is outdated, in view of the prevalence of AI in our society or the increasingly complicated nature of world affairs. Dialog and co-creation seem to be necessary approaches to erase the outdated system. To this end, it is crucial for us to know, think and act. In addition, we should mind the afore-mentioned 14 guideline principles in our dialog.



Many teachers from Mita High School participated in this event. The UNESCO committee-related teachers expressed gratitude for this opportunity where their students could express their opinions as panelists. We hope we can make this event as a foothold for future activities.

(Written by SATO Ritsuko, Standing Director, the International Science & Culture Committee, and translated by TANAHASHI S., the PR & Internet Committee)

The 2024 Tokyo Metropolitan Liaison Council of UNESCO Associations Workshop Report

Theme: Marking the 80th Anniversary of the End of World War II

— Reflecting on "Peace" and the Future of UNESCO Activities—
Organized by TMLCUA and Suginami UNESCO Association

Date: Sunday, February 23, 2025, 13:00–17:00

Venue: Suginami Asagaya Community Center

In the midst of a rapidly changing international society, the year 2025 marks both the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II and the 80th anniversary of UNESCO's founding. However, we continue to witness unresolved issues such as discrimination, division, conflict, and environmental degradation. This training session featured practical reports and proposals from three UNESCO associations in Tokyo, each focused on efforts toward realizing peace. During the group discussions that followed, participants were divided by them to explore what actions we can take to build peace and achieve a sustainable future. Together, we considered concrete steps forward.

Theme 1: Reflecting on Peace from the Perspective of Education and Culture

Presented by: Shinjuku UNESCO Association

Theme 2: Building Peace through International Understanding

Presented by: Minato UNESCO Association

Theme 3: War, Atomic Bombing, and Peace

Chuo UNESCO Association

From the Minato UNESCO Association, we presented our core activities focused on promoting international understanding. Volunteer speaker OKAMOTO Marin from Tamagawa University shared detailed insights into the following practical initiatives:

1. Symposium Series: "Thinking About Peace"

A recurring event that invites participants to reflect on peace from various cultural and global perspectives.

2. Language Classes

Designed to foster communication and cultural exchange, these classes help bridge linguistic and cultural gaps.

3. World Cuisine Workshops

Hands-on cooking sessions featuring dishes from around the world, encouraging appreciation of diverse cultures.

4. International Understanding Lectures

- Opera Lecture Concert
 - Enjoying Haniwa (ancient Japanese clay figures)
 - Stories of Ocean Currents
- These lectures blend art, history, and science to deepen global awareness.

5. Japanese Speech Contest

To conclude our presentation, we shared our goals for future activities: to further expand and sustain our current initiatives, and to enhance the depth and impact of the "Thinking About Peace" symposium series.

(To be continued on P. 12)



The Third 2024 Cross-cultural Awareness Workshop
“The Coming of the Erlking – A Lecture Concert by a Charismatic Baritone
with a Voice of Darkness”

Date: February 24, 2025

Venue: Minato City LIBRA Hall



Lecturer: Mr. TOMOKIYO Takashi,
Baritone Singer, Member of Nikikai
Pianist: Mr. SAEKI Ryoma
Violinist: Ms. UCHIDA Yu

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's timeless masterpiece “Der Erlkönig (The Erlking)” is widely recognized, particularly through the famous musical setting by Franz Schubert, which is even included in school textbooks. However, Schubert was not the only composer captivated by this haunting tale—many others have also been inspired to set the poem to music.

In this lecture, participants first explored the origin of Goethe's “Der Erlkönig”, and joined in a group reading of the poem in German. In the second half, the lecturer introduced works by eight different composers who were fascinated by the tale, performing each version himself so that the audience could experience the differences through the power of the baritone voice.

In German, “Erlkönig” translates literally to “Alder King,” from “Erle” (alder tree) and “König” (king). The alder tree, a member of the birch family, grows as tall as 25 to 30 meters. In German folklore, there are legends associated with the alder tree:

“Those who wandered the wilds feared the woman who lived in the alder groves and lured passersby into the swamps. It was believed she was an embodiment of the alder tree itself, endowed with magical powers.”

While the exact moment Goethe's “Der Erlkönig” was introduced to Japan is unknown, it appeared in “Goethe no Shi (Goethe's Poems)”, translated by Mr. HASAHIMOTO Tadao and published by SHINCHOSHA back in 1905 (Meiji 38). Since then, the title “Maou” (The Demon King) has been used consistently in Japanese translations of the poem.

Goethe's “Der Erlkönig” is thought to have been inspired by a Danish folk ballad titled “Elveskud” (“The Elf Shot”). German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) adapted this into “The Daughter of the Alder King.” Composer Carl Loewe (1796–1869) turned this version into the song “Herr Oluf” in 1821:

“Herr Oluf, on the night before his wedding, rides far to invite guests. On the riverbank, he encounters dancing fairies, one of whom—daughter of the Erlking—extends her hand and invites him to dance. He declines, explaining he is to be married the next day. She persists repeatedly, and when he refuses again, she threatens him with illness and strikes him. She lifts him onto his horse and sends him home to his beloved. Upon his return, his mother stood there trembling as she saw his ghostly form. He asks her to tell his bride he went out riding into the forest with his horse and dogs for a hunt. The next morning, the bride arrives and finds Herr Oluf lying still under a crimson cloth—dead.”

Goethe (1749–1832) was a poet, playwright, novelist, natural scientist, statesman, and jurist. In 1782, at age 33, he published “Der Fischer's Tochter” (The Fisherman's Daughter).

One evening, Goethe was visiting a friend's estate when he reportedly saw a shadowy figure on horseback pass through the gate carrying something. The next day, he and his friend learned it was a farmer rushing his sick son to the doctor. This incident, combined with German legends stated above, is believed to have inspired the poem "Der Erlkönig."

The Fisherman's Daughter begins:

"Under a large alder tree near the shore, a few small fishermen's huts stand. One quiet night, a pot hangs over a small fire, surrounded by fishing nets and tools. As the daughter of a fisherman, Dortchen, works, she hums a tune: "Der Erlkönig."

In the lecture, Mr. TOMOKIYO first recited the poem "Der Erlkönig" by Goethe, followed by a group reading with the audience in German. Then, he sang eight musical interpretations of the poem composed by different musicians, explaining their unique styles and approaches.

The Eight Composers Featured:

Corona Schröter (1751–1802)

A German actress and singer, who was the first to compose music for Goethe's "Der Erlkönig" in 1782.

Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752–1814)

Composed his version at age 40. With over 1,500 songs to his name, Reichardt is seen as a forerunner of Schubert in the history of German Lieder.

Bernhard Klein (1793–1832)

Studied at the Paris Conservatoire and later became music director of Cologne Cathedral. He joined the Berlin Opera Academy at age 26 and remained there until his death at 39.

Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758–1832)

A composer, conductor, and music educator. He met Goethe in Weimar at age 44, and they shared a deep friendship lasting over 30 years. Zelter, one of Goethe's few friends, frequently received Goethe's poems, to which he composed music and sent them back.

Ludwig van Beethoven (1770–1827)

Beethoven struggled with setting "Der Erlkönig" to music and left it unfinished. Later, Reinhold Becker (1842–1924) completed the piece and published in 1897, which was unfinished and buried in the Gesellschaft der Musikfreunde in Vienna.

Louis Spohr (1784–1859)

A composer, singer, violinist, conductor, and inventor of the violin chinrest. He included "Der Erlkönig" in a collection of six baritone songs with violin and piano accompaniment (Op.154, 1856).

Carl Loewe (1796–1869)

A prolific composer, vocalist, and pianist who wrote about 400 songs. He composed his version of "Der Erlkönig" in 1824 at the age of 28, becoming known as a master of the ballad form.

Franz Schubert (1797–1828)

The renowned Austrian composer wrote his famous "Der Erlkönig" in just four hours at age 18 in 1815. According to his friend Joseph von Spaun, Schubert was so moved while reading the poem aloud that he began composing immediately and completed it in one sitting—despite not owning a piano. That evening, the piece was performed at the seminary, to great excitement.

During the lecture, Mr. TOMOKIYO Takashi performed "Herr Oluf" and all eight versions of "Der Erlkönig" composed by the featured composers.





(Written by UMENE K., the International Science & Culture Committee, and translated by SUDA Y., the PR & Internet Committee Associate)

(Continued from P. 9)

During the group discussion session, participants were divided into a total of nine groups – three groups each per theme. Each group explored what UNESCO activities can contribute to the realization of peace and discussed concrete action plans.

The proposed actions included initiatives that could be implemented by individual UNESCO Association or Club, as well as by those connected with the “2,000 People Project.” Each group freely exchanged ideas from various perspectives, and a representative from each of the nine groups presented their solidarity themes and action proposals.

After the Tokyo UNESCO Liaison Council training session, the executive committee held a follow-up meeting called the “Connecting Forward Group.” In this meeting, we discussed how to carry forward the proposed action plans into future activities, and agreed to begin implementing them.



(Written by UMENE Keiichiro and translated by KODAMA.K., the PR & Internet Committee)

Symposium & dialog organized by high school students addressing education for peace
Organizer: UNESCO Committee of Tokyo Metropolitan Mita High School

Date: Saturday, March 29, 2025

Venue: Mita High School auditorium (Minato City)



We had the pleasure of receiving from Mita High School an invitation to the captioned symposium. Seven MUA members attended the event and President Nagano gave a presentation on MUA's activities. The school is designated as a "UNESCO School" and places importance on ESD (Education for Sustainable Development) as well as learning about peace and cross-cultural understanding. As an extension of their efforts, the UNESCO Committee of the school had a central role in implementing the symposium.

Programs:

- ① Explanation of the symposium's objective
- ② Explanation of the UNESCO 2024 recommendation:
Education for peace and human rights, international understanding, cooperation, fundamental freedom, global citizenship, and sustainable development.
- ③ Discussions on peace
- ④ Successful models of what we can do for seeking peace:
 1. Activities undertaken by the UNESCO Committee of Mita High School
 2. "MICHISHIRUBE initiative" undertaken by Meiji Gakuin University students.
 3. Regional activities undertaken by the Minato UNESCO Association
 4. Government activities (Children and Families Agency)
- ⑤ Dialog session workshop:
Groups of attendees engaged in dialogs, utilizing the card materials based on UNESCO recommendations.

During discussions of the afore-mentioned Explanation of the UNESCO 2024 recommendation, a question was raised about what would be the most appropriate image of education to meet what our future calls for. We came up with one answer, namely co-creation through vibrant dialogs. A representative from the Children and Families Agency interpreted the co-creation as multi-generational linkage, involving children.

During the final dialog session, Mita High School students undertook the role of facilitators in each group. Vibrant exchange of opinions took place. Major opinions expressed from different groups included, "We appreciated this gathering where like-minded people could freely exchange opinions," "I entered Mita High School because I've been interested in international exchanges and because the school is located in Minato City which accommodates many foreigner residents," and "Interaction with people like foreign students who have different viewpoints gives me an important foresight into the future."



This past January, MUA held a symposium where three Mita High School students joined the panel. I heard that the students were motivated by the experience to start up their own symposium. I was impressed with the enthusiasm shared by Mita High School's related teachers and students for UNESCO activities.

(Written by SATO R., Standing Director, the International Science & Culture Committee, and translated by TANAHASHI S., the PR & Internet Committee)

MUA's 2025 Annual General Meeting

Date & Time: 17:00 – 18:00, Friday, April 18, 2025

Venue: Minato City Life-long Learning Center (Room 305)



At its April 2025 general meeting, MUA had a great pleasure to have the company of Mayor SEIKI Ai, who is Advisor of MUA, along with several staff from the secretariat of Minato City Education Board, including Mr. Nakabayashi, Manager; Ms. Kojima, Supervisor; Ms. Abe and Ms. Kumagai. A total of 24 MUA members also attended.

Mayor Seike gave a most positive comment about MUA's activities which she regards as viable means to foster international mutual understanding and build a resourceful and inclusive society. As good examples, she cited "Japanese speech contest," "World cooking workshops, including Mexican and Taiwanese dishes," "International cross-cultural lecturers," and "Hands-on Japanese culture workshops, including *Ikebana*" which are MUA's mainstay programs.

Mayor Seike also mentioned the recent news that the important three Buddhist sacred scriptures, stored in the Zojoji Temple in Minato City, were registered into the UNESCO World Heritage of Memory. She perceived it as a good symbol of what Minato City has to offer to the world. Minato City has 80 foreign embassies and accommodates non-Japanese population from over 130 foreign countries. Mayor Seiki intends to take advantage of this international nature of the community and make it into a full-fledged international city. She requested MUA to work closely with the city to attain this objective.

The general meeting proceeded under the chairmanship of President Tanabe. The reporting agenda for Fiscal 2024 included "Report on completed activities," "Report on internal conferences," "Report on financial statements," "Auditors' report," "Report on MUA's cooperation with the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan and the Tokyo Metropolitan Liaison Council of UNESCO Associations, along with Plan for Fiscal 2025." The agenda also included Fiscal 2025 plans for "Activities," "Budget," "Officers," along with a plan to stipulate that Standing Directors should join conferences convened among President and Vice Presidents." These agenda were subjected to discussion, one by one, and approved unanimously.

Ms. TSUBOYA Ikuko, formerly Director and newly elected Vice President, gave an encouraging message, "Minato City is a multi-cultural community with foreigners accounting for 10% of its population. Let us create a trailblazing successful model of a peaceful international city through the collaboration of Minato City and MUA." It was followed by a self-introduction of Mr. NAKAJIMA Susumu, who too office as MUA's secretary general in May 2025. Meantime, Mr. KAWAMURA Takahiko, former secretary general, gave a farewell remark, to which President Tanabe responded with words of appreciation for his dedication during the past one year. The general meeting was wrapped up with a closing remark by Vice President ISHII Yoshiaki.



(Written by KOBAYASHI Takayuki, VP, and translated by TANAHASHI S., the PR & Internet Committee)

MUA Officers, Directors, Auditors, Advisors and Counselors for Fiscal 2025

President	TANABE Kiichiro
Vice President	ISHII Yoshiaki, ISOBE Toyoko, IMAMURA Takako, KOBAYASHI Takayuki, NEWELL-Tsuboya Ikuko*
Standing Director	OKUMURA Kazuko, KASAHARA Masako, SATO Ritsuko, TAGAWA Junko, FURUICHI Yoko, MATSUZAKI Kazuko, MIYASHITA Yukari, YOKOI Aya
Director	UTSUNOMIYA Kazumi, SASAKI Tsuyoshi, SHIBUYA Megumi, SHIMIZU Gunji, SUZUKI Akemi, NAKAMAE Yuki, HIRAKATA Kazuyo, MIWA Emiko, MORIMURA Shunsuke, YAMADA Setsuko, FUKUMOTO Yoshiaki
Auditor	TANAHASHI Seiichi, NAKAGAWA Norio
Honorary President	MIWA Kimitada
Advisor	AKASHI Yasushi, ITO Kohei, TAKAI Mitsuko, SEIKE Ai, NAGANO Hiroshi, MIKAMI Yoichiro,
Counselor	KIKUCHI Kensuke, KISO Isao

Note: The asterisk mark denotes a new appointee. The tenure of all lasts until the 2026 General Meeting.

(Continued from P, 16) UNESCO Press Release

Audrey Azoulay UNESCO Director-General: “UNESCO advocates for the ethical and responsible integration of AI in education”

Since 2018, UNESCO has made the ethics of artificial intelligence a priority, leading to the adoption by its Member States of the first international normative framework in this field.

To support the integration of these technologies, which are already abundant in education, UNESCO published the first Guidance for Generative Artificial Intelligence in education and research in September 2023, as well as two AI competency frameworks for students and teachers in 2024, addressing both the opportunities and risks of AI and proposing, among other things, an age limit of 13 for the use of generative AI by students.

Since 2024, UNESCO has organized training courses on its AI competency frameworks in more than 100 countries, reaching thousands of educators and decision-makers. The Organization has also directly supported 58 countries—in developing frameworks, school curricula and certified training programs on digital and AI skills—with a clear goal: to develop young talent that is aware of the potential of AI, but also of its biases and limitations.

The UNESCO-King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Education

Established in 2005 with the support of the Kingdom of Bahrain, the UNESCO-King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies in Education rewards individuals and organizations that promote the creative and responsible use of technology to enhance teaching and learning. Since 2005, the Prize has been awarded to 34 projects from 21 countries, selected by an international jury of five recognized experts. Each project has received US\$25,000.

(Excerpted)

UNESCO recognizes four initiatives promoting the responsible use of AI in education

Four initiatives from Belgium, Brazil, Egypt, and the United Kingdom received the UNESCO King Hamad Bin Isa Al-Khalifa Prize for the Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Education, supported by the Kingdom of Bahrain. Alongside the Prime Minister of Bahrain, Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, praised the impact of such initiatives in training hundreds of thousands of teachers and young people for a more informed use of artificial intelligence.



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The initiatives rewarded this year illustrate how technology must remain at the service of education, and not the other way round. At a time when AI is revolutionizing teaching methods, UNESCO will continue to ensure that its use remains guided by ethical principles and serves the common good. (To be continued on P. 15)

Minato UNESCO Association is a citizens' voluntary membership organization that promotes Japanese traditional culture, holds cross-cultural workshops and presents multicultural events and international symposia for world peace. For any questions or comments about our articles, please contact our secretariat office at:

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