



MINATO

みなとユネスコ 会報

Bulletin

MINATO UNESCO ASSOCIATION NEWS & CALENDAR

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Prayer for Peace

IMAMURA Takako, Vice President, the Minato UNESCO Association



Japan has pursued peace for 80 years since the end of WWII. Immediately after the end of the war, Japanese citizens, facing the devastation by the war, made a pledge to throw away all weapons and lead a peaceful life under the enlightenment of the United Nations. A-bomb attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki caused enormous death tolls. Japanese people, caught by the entailing feeling of great loss, kept working very hard from the lowest level of life, in terms of culture, economy and politics.

The cultural tradition of Japan was not totally destroyed by the war. Step by step, Japan started to regain its R&D capabilities and attained a growing momentum in economy. During the 1960's, it became a dream in daily life for ordinary Japanese citizens to have the three items - transistor radio, TV and refrigerator. Their life with these gadgets symbolized the blessing of regained peace. Scholarship was provided by the U. K. and the U. S. governments to those who wanted to study new areas of economics or promote new technologies and systems.

In the following years, most regrettably, the world has seen the outbreaks of the Korean War and the Vietnam War, in which the U. S. had a major stake. Meantime, cultural activities in Japan, including dress fashion, kept expanding and grew up to an internationally competitive level. While Japan experienced the trade war, it also saw the growing popularity of overseas trips by air planes among its citizens. More and more Japanese people wanted to see foreign countries and learn different culture.

Then came the age of hippies when people around the world started to enjoy singing and expanding cultural and human networks. In some cases, 5,000 to 10,000 people get together at an outdoor concert site and sang along in mass chorus. Years later, an endless war broke out in Ukraine. It's heartbreaking to see scenes of devastation where innocent people, by the order of hundreds, perish under repeated ruthless attacks.

Meantime, I was pleased to know last year that the "Three Daizokyo" scriptures, housed for over 400 years in the Daihonzan Zojoji Temple located in Minato City, were registered among the UNESCO Memory of the World. This recognition in my viewpoint seems to demonstrate Japanese people's respect for traditional culture as well as their aspiration for peace.

I sincerely hope that Japan will demonstrate leadership in restoring world peace, based on its peace-loving mindset and endorsement of the UNESCO credo.

(Translated by TANAHASHI S., the PR & Internet Committee)

The First Cross-cultural Lecture for FY2025 Can the UNESCO spirit overcome international conflicts?

Date: July 12, 2025

Venue: Minato City Gender Equality enter Libra

Lecturer: Professor KOBAYASHI Akira, the faculty of education, Tamagawa University

Workshop Facilitators: EHARA Tomoka and SAITO Kaede, Members of the UENSCO Club “Le Lien” of Aoyama Gakuin University

Professor Kobayashi has been a long-time mentor of Tamagawa University’s UNESCO Club. He has organized and conducted study tours for the club member students to visit the UNESCO headquarters in Paris. He generously agreed to give a comprehensive presentation on UNESCO for MUA.

In Part I, Professor Kobayashi gave an illuminating audio-visual presentation about UNESCO. In Part II, the audience joined workshops, facilitated by Ms. Ehara and Ms. Saito.

Summary of Part I.

1. UNESCO promotes transformative education toward peace.

■ UNESCO’s emphasis in education has changed from value education to transformative education. This means more emphasis is placed now on peaceful and sustainable values, in terms of the way of perception, livelihood and thinking.



■ The world is currently challenged by conflicts and division

We are today challenged by a possibility of World War III. Education and UNESCO activities should address the scary future, by nurturing the awareness of global citizenship and by strengthening the skill to solve various conflicts.

■ The world today is characterized by contradiction

The world is facing accelerating international conflicts and the emergence of exclusive nationalism. On the other hand, globalization and international solidarity are concurrently under way.

- The progress in ICT and AI technology has enabled the instantaneous sharing of information throughout the world, thereby enhancing the connectivity among people.
- An increasing number of issues have emerged, which should be addressed by the whole world as one solid community. They include climate change, maritime pollution, energy problems, food shortage and water supply, among others.

■ Phrase from the UNESCO Constitution (1)

On the face of a stone epitaph, erected in the inner yard of the UNESCO headquarters in Paris, we can see the famous phrase taken from the preamble of the UNESCO Constitution – “Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defense of peace must be constructed.” It is expressed in six official languages, including English, French, Russian, Spanish, Chinese and Arabic.

■ Phrases from the UNESCO Constitution (2)

The UNESCO activities are based on the following credo:

“The ignorance of each other’s ways and lives has been a common cause, throughout the history of mankind, of that suspicion and mistrust between the peoples of the world through which their differences have all too often broken into war.”

Therefore, the importance should be placed on the cross-cultural study and education to foster global citizenship awareness, in order to build peace..

■ Mainstay UNESCO activities

- Education, science (natural science & liberal arts), culture and communication
- Formulation of a vision which addresses the solution of contemporary issues facing the mankind.

■ Transformative education proposed by UNESCO

Throughout the 80 post-war years, UNESCO has proposed a variety of transformative education models, ranging from value education to transformative pedagogy, as guidelines which would help to improve or solve critical issues during the different periods of contemporary mankind.

■ The 2023 New UNESCO Education Advisory (Revised version of the 1979 UNESCO Education Advisory)

- This advisory was adopted at the 42nd UNESCO General Assembly on November 20, 2023.
- This new advisory organizes and connects various issue areas, such as ESD (Education for Sustainable Development), GCED (Education for Global Citizenship), digital technology and AI, climate change, gender issues, and fundamental human rights.
- The Japan Association for International Education developed a card-type learning tool and has utilized various networks.

■ The 2023 UNESCO Education Advisory

It is characterized by the importance placed on the role of UNESCO networks.

- The member countries which ratified the Article 71 are making efforts in expanding domestic activities, related to the advisory, promote the interconnection between the ESD and GCED, under the support from the UNESCO-related programs and networks, such as the UNESCO chair, the UNITWIN network (an organization which pursues collaborative issue solution joined by universities in both developed and developing countries) and the UNESCO Schools (ASPnet).

2. ESD and SDGs

■ ESD (Education for Sustainable Development)

- The main initiative is “transformation of values and behavior in order to realize a sustainable society.” Based on the awareness that the status quo is not sustainable, the ESD addresses the said initiative so that mankind can survive in the coming 100 to 1,000 years. The Ministry of Education, Sports, Science and Technology is designating UNESCO Schools as the platform to promote ESD.

- The “ESD for 2030” vision was adopted at the 2015 UN General Assembly. It addresses the support for young generations as well as the enhancement of educators’ skill and the transformation of learning environment.

■SDGs

This initiative, adopted at the 2015 U.N. General Assembly, addresses a total of 17 important goals which are expected to be attained by 2030. However, the track record suggests infeasibility to attain the goals by 2023. It seems likely that, in 2030, the U.N. will adopt a follow-on initiative for these goals, which will become a guideline for UNESCO activities.

■ESD and SDGs are the key to foster global human resources

To be a global person, the awareness about international issues is more important than English proficiency. Such person would be required to have committed intention to improve and solve various world issues by proposing creative ideas.

■Co-existing society rather than competitive society

- During the advancement of globalization, new programs and concepts have been developed such as the 21st century-type skills, International Baccalaureate, and global competency, to foster global human resources,
- However, it is desirable that the fostering of “co-existing”-minded global human resources be promoted, to offset the negative aspect of the competition. This effort is what UNESCO proposes as transformative education. The U.N. and UNESCO pursue a co-existing society, not a competitive one, where no one will be left behind.

3. Collision of different values

■Complication of values

- In the modern society, diversity is a respected value. However, different values or moral judgements arise depending on nationality, ethnicity, religion, political opinions, profession, generation or gender. We have seen an increasing number of cases where difference in values ends up in collisions or complication. Coexistence is not an easy issue to realize.
- In modern society, it is increasingly difficult to judge what is right and what is wrong.
- We moderners are required to acquire the skill to consider and solve the complication in values we face.

■Clash of civilization

Huntington predicted in his book “Clash of Civilization” that, in the 21st century, it would be not ideology but difference in various civilization, consisting of different ethnicity, religion, etc., that would cause escalating clashes and disrupt the human society. Today, we are facing the following conflicts and awakened about the validity of his insightfulness:

- The U. S. vs China rivalry
- Confrontations between the U. S. and Islamic states
- Confrontation between Russia and the NATO countries

■Women’s status in the Islamic religion

- The status of women in the Islamic society is based on the teaching in the Koran and its annotated edition “Hadith.” The perception of women in the Islamic religion reflects substantially the traditional paternalism in the Islamic tribal society. Simply put, women are beings to be protected. In Chapter 4 “women” in the Koran, there is a teaching that seems to suggest that Allah did not place male and female on an equal status.
- Those, who believe in Taliban or Islamic fundamentalism, think that they have no obligation to listen to opinions from outside because they are faithfully observing the teaching of the Koran, which are identical with the words of God. From their viewpoint, criticism expressed by Europe and the U. S. is totally inappropriate. This is a typical example of the clash of civilization.

- It seems debatable how much teachings of the Koran should be applied to the modern society.

■ Question to the audience

• Don't you think that there is no fundamental solution to the clash of civilization? I personally feel that, in order to build the concept of a genuine "universal citizenship," we should choose a UNESCO-based, forward-looking approach and endow a citizenship status to the non-Western civilizations, such as the Islamic, Chinese, Hindu and others. Such civilizations have been nurtured in the cultural traditions that had been handed down over thousands of years. Instead of defining these civilizations as pre-modern, we should integrate whatever universal elements present in the civilizations, and create a new citizenship model. What do you think?

4. What is GCED (Global Citizenship Education)?

■ What is a global citizen?

• It is one of the education programs on which UNESCO has placed top priority. It has a conceptual image, similar to the phrase "Alle Menschen werden Brüder" in Beethoven's No.9 symphony

■ ESD and GCED

These are UNESCO's top-priority education programs.

■ Global Education First Initiative

It was proposed in 2012 by the U. N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

- Three major objectives were included; (1) School education for all, (2) Improvement in the quality of learning, and (3) Nurturing of global citizen awareness. Based on this initiative, UNESCO launched GCED in 2013.

■ Objective of GCED

• To provide such education as will foster human resources who, facing global issues challenging the whole mankind, are able to (1) consider ways to solve the issues from both local and global viewpoints, and (2) make active contributions to solving the global issues.

5. Viewpoints which can overcome the clash of judgements

■ Today, we are seeing the "Clash of Civilizations" in the world. Each party insists that what they are doing meets morality but that the other party is responding in an ethically wrong attitude. This antagonistic relation applies to the Russia vs Ukraine war, as well as the Israel vs. Palestine conflict, the U. S. vs China rivalry, and the U. S. vs Iran conflict. We must work out viable viewpoints and means which will enable both parties to overcome the clash of justices.

■ Questions to the audience

• The World Human Rights Declaration was adopted at the third U. N. General Assembly on December 10, 1948 (with 48 favor votes, 8 abstentions, and no opposition). Hence, the world observes the World Human Rights Day on December 10th. The eight countries which abstained included the U.S.S.R., Ukraine, Belarus, Yugoslavia, Poland, South Africa, Czech, Slovakia, and Saudi Arabia. This means that these eight countries did not regard the concept in the World Human Rights declaration, proposed by the U. N., as universal values. Now, I'd like to ask the audience the following question:

• We are expected to respect cultural diversity but not sure about how much diversity we should accept. Can there be an acceptable level of diversity in our perception of democracy, human rights, peace or war? For example, the official state name of North Korea is the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The country's website states that it is governed as a people-centric state, based on democracy as the national principle. Is their perception of democracy wrong?

■ Factors which obstruct co-existence

- Hatred and distrust
- Example of negated co-existence: UNESCO Crisis Heritage
- Implication of the destruction of the Bamiyan Valley Buddhist remains

6. UNESCO Schools and Civic UNESCO Movements

■ UNESCO school initiative was started in 1953 as a worldwide network of schools (ASPnet).

No. of UNESCO schools in Japan: 1,083 (as of September 2025)

No. of UNESCO schools worldwide: 12,000 in 182 countries (as of March 2025)

- UNESCO schools in Minato City

Sacred Heart School Tokyo: Primary, Middle and High Schools

Tokyo Metropolitan Mita High School

- Study themes which UNESCO encourages UNESCO Schools to pursue:

- ① ESD (Education for Sustainable Development)
- ② GCED (Global Citizenship Education & Culture of Peace and Non-violence)
- ③ International Learning

- UNESCO member states which are waging wars or autocratic:

Russia, Ukraine, Palestinian National Authority, North Korea, Afghanistan, Myanmar, Sudan, etc.

- UNESCO schools in Russia: 280

- UNESCO schools in Ukraine: 79

Is it not possible to work out a path to peace in the aforementioned countries, by networking their local UNESCO associations and UNESCO schools? Possibility for peace may arise from where politics does not prevail.

- Worldwide network of civic UNESCO movements:

Japan: 268 UNESCO Associations (as of June 2025)

Worldwide: 4,921 UNESCO Associations (89 countries)

Part II Workshop

The workshop was organized by the afore-mentioned UNESCO Club member students of Aoyama Gakuin University – Tomoka Ehara and Kaede Saito. The objective was to discuss the multi-cultural understanding from the viewpoint of UNESCO spirit.



The attendees were divided into four groups and requested to discuss one of the four topics – cooking, sports, clothes or music. They were expected to represent different countries and express opinions which would highlight superiority over other countries. Such discussions made the attendees feel the
(To be continued on P. 15)

Minato Citizen's Festival

Dates: Oct. 10 (Sat) & 11 (Sun), 2025
Venue: Minato City Shiba-Park

The Minato Citizen's Festival was held as scheduled over two days. On October 11, intermittent light rain fell throughout the day. Despite the weather, attendance remained high, with many visitors – including those who return each year – making their way to the Minato UNESCO Association booth. As a result, staff were engaged in assisting visitors even before setup was fully completed. Although space was limited within the tent, visitors were able to try on clothing, and thanks to the staff's effective engagement, sales exceeded expectations. At the same time, staff remained attentive to challenges posed by the rain, including water entering the tent, requiring careful coordination between customer service and the protection of merchandise.

On October 12, the weather improved significantly, bringing clear skies. A marching band parade took place along the main street, while performances continued at two stage venues, showcasing the results of ongoing practice by participating groups. The food area was also vibrant and well attended. Ms. SEIKE, Mayor of Minato City, and members of the organizing committee visited each booth, offering words of encouragement and support.

This year, particular emphasis was placed on promoting the Association's activities. Informational panels prepared by each committee were displayed, and visitors were provided with flyers outlining upcoming events as well as membership information.



FestiBalloon

Date & Time: Fri., October 18, 2025. 11:00-20:00
Venue: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

FestiBalloon was held with a wide range of activities organized by groups that regularly use Minato City Life-long Learning Center facilities ("Balloon"). These included indoor exhibitions, stage performances on the grounds, product sales, hands-on workshops, and booths hosted by local businesses. Approximately 50 groups participated, and total attendance reached 21,912 visitors. Following the stage address, Minato City Mayor Ms. SEIKE took time to tour the venue and observe the event in detail.



The Minato UNESCO Association contributed by displaying panels prepared by each committee indoors and by hosting a bazaar on the grounds. Each year, a local Yakitori vendor visits our booth to purchase a Tenugui (traditional hand towel) to wear on his head. This year, however, he shared that he would not be able to return next year as he plans to close his Yakitori shop, and he purchased five towels. It was a memorable "farewell Tenugui," reminiscent of a parting keepsake.

Items generously donated by supporters were passed on to those in need through the bazaar, and the proceeds were donated to the Japan Association for UNHCR. In this way, the activity contributed, in part, to the spirit of UNESCO's SDGs initiatives.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who donated goods, as well as to the members and administrative staff who assisted with preparation, transportation, and sales. We also extend our appreciation to the Administrative Office staffs for their thoughtful support throughout the event.

(Both articles written by ISOBE Toyoko, Vice President, and translated by SUDA Y., the PR & Internet Committee Associate)

Hands-on Workshop of “IKEBANA,” Japanese Flower Arrangement

Date : November 29, 2025, 13:30~16:00

Venue : Minato City life-long-learning Centre

Ikebana originated from the custom of offering flowers to Buddha, and the Ikenobo school, the first school of ikebana, is said to have a history of over 500 years. This year, the Minato UNESCO Association held its third annual ikebana experience class, with Mr. Masakazu Nakamura of the Ikenobo Central Training Institute as the instructor. Eighteen participants, including six foreigners, experienced ikebana.

Activities include:

- Explanation of the history and philosophy of ikebana
- Demonstration by the instructor
- Hands-on experience of ikebana (free style arrangement)

The origins of ikebana can be traced back to the invention of movable type printing and the fall of the Byzantine Empire. Instructor Nakamura explained that in the Ikenobo school of ikebana, it is important to appreciate the natural beauty of plants and trees and to respect nature, not just the form, but also the appearance of the plants. The Ikenobo school's philosophy of finding beauty not only in blooming flowers, but also in insect-eaten leaves and withered leaves, as they evoke the cycle of life, was refreshing.

We were given explanations of the floral materials and tools, and points such as imagining the natural appearance of plants and trees when composing an arrangement, and then we watched an ikebana demonstration by Ms. Nakamura. Finally, the participants also worked on creating ikebana using the same floral materials, and each of them created their own works while considering the characteristics of the plants and flowers and the overall balance.

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all the enthusiastic participants, and to Professor Nakamura for his careful guidance and advice on each and every piece of work by all the participants.



(Written by YOKOI Aya, and translated by MIYASHITA Y., the PR & Internet Committee)

Japanese Language Lessons for Indonesian High School Students

On October 29 and 30, I had the opportunity to introduce Japanese culture, customs and language to nine high school students who had come to Japan from Indonesia. The opportunity arose from an unexpected email I received in early October. The sender wrote: "I will be visiting Tokyo with several students and would like to know whether you could teach them some Japanese culture and language in one or two lessons."

As a Japanese-language teacher, I wanted to do my best to accommodate such a request. I consulted with the committee chair, the committee members, and our president. All of them responded very positively. So we were able to make these lessons a reality.

The students came to Japan to visit universities as part of their plans for future study. Although the lessons lasted only one and a half hours per day over two days, I introduced various aspects of Japanese life, including daily customs, the school system, and common manners, using photo slides. For the language component, I focused on basic Japanese phrases that would be useful during their stay in Japan.

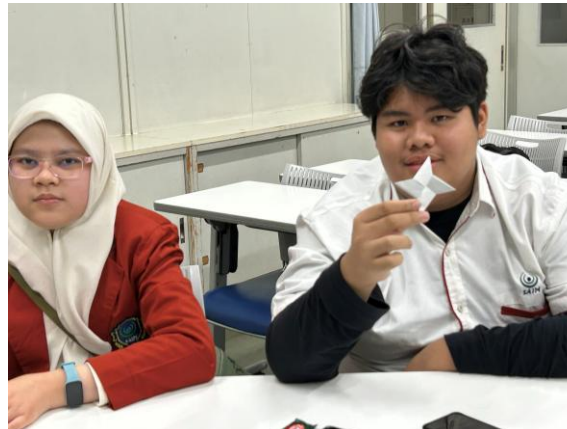
What impressed me most was how widely Japanese culture has spread in Indonesia. For example, I prepared some dorayaki—the favorite snack of Doraemon—for the students to try. To my surprise, they told me, "We have dorayaki in Indonesia, too!" I also learned that all of them had already studied a little Japanese at school.

Although girls wore hijabs, they were typical teenagers. They were very outgoing and asked many questions whenever something caught their interest. During the final lesson, I introduced how to make origami shuriken (paper ninja stars). Everyone enjoyed folding them together.

Because the preparation time was short, I spent many hours intensively, creating teaching materials specifically focused on them and covering as many topics as possible. However, once the lessons began, the two days passed in the blink of an eye. I hope this experience will lead to regular classes in the future for young people who visit Japan on a short-term basis.

Regrettably, wars continue to occur in various parts of the world, I am afraid these conflicts arose from the minds of a handful of greedy leaders. Therefore, it is all the more important for all of us to construct the defences of peace within our own minds,

I sincerely hope that the students I met during the two days will return to Japan in the future and become bridges connecting Japan and Indonesia.



(To be continued on P. 10)

Theme: "Everyday Life" – Toward the Creative Reconstruction of the Noto Peninsula

Venue: Hougaku Hall, Ishikawa Ongakudo, Kanazawa



The theme of the panel discussion was **"Everyday Life: Toward the Creative Reconstruction of the Noto Peninsula."** Representatives from six municipalities in the Oku-Noto region actively exchanged views on how to

At the networking reception, the opening entertainment featured performances by a high school brass band and a university dance club. While some participants commented that the conference seemed to contain fewer traditional UNESCO-related elements than usual, the organizers explained that the performances was planned with the intention of bringing hope and courage to the local community through the power of music. The organizers also expressed their wish that participants would share this message with their respective UNESCO associations members.

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

(Continued from P. 9: Japanese lessons for Indonesian high school students)



(Written by TAGAWA Junko, Standing Director, and translated by TANAHASHI S., the PR & Internet Committee)

3rd International Understanding Lecture in 2025

"Every Japanese Person Should Know: The Culture of Delicious Fish"

Speaker: Issei Nagasaki, Fish Coordinator/Lecturer,

Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology

Date: Saturday, November 29, 2025

Venue: Minato Ward Gender Equality Center,

Libra Learning Room C

1. Self-Introduction

Born and raised in a fisherman's family in Tsutsuishi, Itoigawa City, Niigata Prefecture → Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology → Worked at Tsukiji Market → Completed doctoral course at Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology → Worked at a major telecommunications company & established a fish association → Became an independent expert on delicious fish

Currently, seminar lecturer, writer, event organizer, PR, ICT support, and fish advisor

Recent publication: "Fish Business"



2. Japan, Tokyo, Minato Ward, and Fish

- Fish are an important source of protein for Japan

It is believed that people in Japan have been eating fish for over 7,000 years. Various fish bones have been excavated from Jomon period shell mounds and other sites. According to FAO (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations) data, as of 2018, the annual per capita consumption of fish and shellfish in Japan was 45 kg, more than double the world average of 20.5 kg.

Fish have also been incorporated into other cultural aspects, such as dances and festivals in local areas.

- Trends differ by fish species. Looking at blue fish, horse mackerel is purchased more in western Japan (ranked 1st is Nagasaki City), while saury is purchased more in eastern Japan (ranked 1st is Sapporo City). The regions where fish are consumed the most vary depending on the species.
- Tokyo is the 5th largest prefecture in Japan in terms of expenditure on fish. Tokyo is also characterized by the fact that various seafood from all over Japan and the world gathers there. Toyosu handles as many as 500 items, making it the world's largest fish market in terms of transaction value. In addition, Tokyo has a large production volume of many fish species in its fisheries, including Oshima Island, Tokyo Bay, and inland rivers.
- For tuna consumption, Shizuoka City ranks 1st (having Yaizu Port), and Kofu City ranks 2nd (although it has no coastline, there has been a long-standing route for transporting tuna from Shizuoka's port).
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- Tokyo is also characterized by the gathering of various seafood from all over Japan and the world. Toyosu handles 500 different items, making it the world's largest fish market by transaction value. Furthermore, Tokyo has a large production volume of many fish species in its fishing industry, including Oshima Island, Tokyo Bay, and inland rivers.
- When serving sushi on a wooden platter to foreigners visiting Tokyo, they appreciate the amazing variety of fish from all over Japan that they can eat at once.
- Minato Ward has a long history with fish. During the Edo period, the coastline was a sandy beach called "Shibahama," and the neighborhood towns were obligated to supply fish to Edo Castle, and thus supported Edo's food culture.
- After the Great Kanto Earthquake, a temporary market was established in Shibaura, but it later moved to Tsukiji, and it can be said that one of the roots of the current Toyosu Market was in Minato Ward.

3. Changes in the types of fish delivered to our tables and their causes

- The types of fish being caught are changing.

Yellowtail are being caught in Hokkaido → Changes in ocean currents, perhaps the meandering of the Kuroshio Current has ended.

The Noto Peninsula earthquake has caused crustal movements in the ocean, leading to changes in fish species.

The Seto Inland Sea's nutrient levels have decreased, making it difficult to catch sand eels and octopus → It was previously said that this was due to reduced nitrogen and phosphorus levels in water treatment plants. More recently, it has been discovered that for sand eels, the main reason is that global warming has reduced the amount of plankton they feed on, causing them to seek food even in the summer, leading to predation by natural enemies (such as Spanish mackerel).

The seawater temperature in Tokyo has risen by 3 degrees in winter and is not falling → Cutlassfish and black sea bream are being caught in abundance.

- Causes include changes in sea surface temperature and currents, ocean acidification (due to CO₂), cyclical fluctuations, and crustal movements of the ocean. Human-induced impacts from changes in the coastal environment and fishing also play a role. Global warming is not the only cause.

<Recent News Topics>

- Tuna populations have increased, leading to abundant catches and making them more affordable than before. They are entering fixed nets even though they are not targeted in fishing grounds. However, if there are no catch quotas, they must be released despite the high probability of death, which is not entirely positive from a resource conservation perspective.
- The catch of Japanese flying squid (a cephalopod) has decreased to one-seventh of what it was 10 years ago. This year is a bountiful catch, but due to catch quotas, fishing was temporarily impossible, suggesting a review of resource management methods may be necessary. Incidentally, Japanese flying squid have a lifespan of one year and die after spawning.
- The possibility of including eels in the trade regulations under the Washington Convention was discussed at a conference but was rejected. Incidentally, eels are not commonly eaten in Europe or America.

4. <Changing Norms about Fish in the Future>

- In the past, fish were bought at local fish shops. Currently, they are bought at supermarket fish counters.
- Supermarkets, which rely on mass distribution, demand large quantities of fish of the same specifications, but fishermen cannot standardize their catches, and they don't know what they'll get until the nets are pulled up. Fish that cannot be standardized are incompatible with modern distribution. Therefore, modern distribution requires freezing and aquaculture.
- Technological advancements include improvements in preservation and freezing technology, which allow for consistently delicious fish, but diminish the concept of enjoying seasonal fish. Advances in aquaculture technology allow for tailoring taste to market needs, but this may lead to a decline in flavor diversity. New production technologies, such as cell culture for fish meat production, enable more efficient production, but this raises concerns about a decline in the diversity of fish-eating culture.
- Changing common sense
When you think of yellowtail, you used to think of the Hokuriku region → Today, yellowtail is also found in Hokkaido. The "common sense" about fish from a while ago has changed.



4. <Changing Norms about Fish in the Future>

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5. <How to keep eating delicious fish>

Eating a variety of fish helps to diversify resources.

Supporting the fish you want to eat will make sure you keep eating fish.

Instead of trying to learn everything yourself, befriending people who are knowledgeable about fish will help you update your information.

~ Let's energize Japan with fish!



(Written by UMENE, and translated by MIYASHITA)

The 9th MUA Japanese-language Speech Contest

Date: Sunday, January 11, 2026

Venue: Minato City Libra Hall

On January 11, 2026, the Japanese-language speech contest was held at the Libra Hall. The event was honored by the attendance of Ms. SEIKE Ai, the new Mayor of Minato City, and Mr. Shingu Hiroaki, Superintendent of the Minato City Board of Education, making it a valuable opportunity to engage the entire community. This year, by making participation open to all nationalities, we received more applications than usual, including from those who have become naturalized Japanese citizens. As a result of the selection process, nine participants from nine different countries shared their passionate stories.

In the second part, we held a networking event between participants and attendees. Students from Tokyo Metropolitan Mita High School and the Aoyama Gakuin University UNESCO Club, as well as previous participants, served as facilitators, creating a natural and engaging environment for participants to deepen their friendships. The event was attended by many people, and the venue was filled with great enthusiasm.

Furthermore, with the cooperation of Mr. Hiroyuki Usui, Chairman of the Minato Ward Shopping District Federation, who served as a judge, and the Minato Ward Board of Education, we were able to present participants with "Minato Ward PAY Premium Gift Certificates (equivalent to transportation costs)."

This contest was a great success, thanks to the support of all our members and the speech contest committee members. I would like to express my sincere gratitude. Next year marks our momentous 10th anniversary. We look forward to reflecting on our journey so far and finding our direction for the next step.

Judging Results

Awards	Recipients
Grand Prize	Ngan Thien Trinh
Minato UNESCO Association President's Award	Wahitta Kurnia
Minato Ward Mayor's Award	Gurung Anish
Minato Ward Superintendent of Education Award:	Zhao Shuo
Minato Ward Shopping District Association President's Award	Sophie Syzdykova
Judges' Award	Lkhagvadorj Oyungegee
Excellence Award	Amami Roman
Excellence Award	Haluk Oguz
Excellence Award	Kaung Myat Htet
Special Audience Award	Kaung Myat Htet



Student volunteers



Speakers' interaction with the audience



Grand prize winner Ngan-san from Vietnam



Commemorative photo of all together

(Written by TAGAWA Junko, Standing Director, and translated by MIYASHITA Y., the PR & Internet Committee)

(Continued from P. 6: **The First Cross-cultural Lecture for FY2025**

nature of the multi-cultural co-existence. The UNESCO committee member students of the Mita metropolitan High School played the role of facilitator in each of the groups.

We'd like to extend hearty thanks to Professor Kobayashi, workshop organizers, facilitators and all attendees.

We felt that the lecture and workshop were very meaningful, especially because the world is seeing the continuation of multiple wars today.

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

Exploring Tokyo's Forests, Rivers, and Sea – Series No. 8
“Viewing the Waterfront from the Sea & Observing Marine Life”
– The Connection Between Canal Ecosystems and Our Lives –

Date & Time: Saturday, January 31, 2026, 9:30–14:00

Venue: Hinode Pier, canals of Minato City, and the mouth of the Furukawa River

Lecturer: Professor SASAKI Tsuyoshi (Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology, Department of Marine Policy and Culture; Ph.D. in Fisheries Science)

Despite the coldest season of the year, we were blessed with fine weather and welcomed 27 participants, including students from Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMST).

1) Departure from Hinode Pier: Plankton Sampling and Water Observation

After departing from Hinode Pier, participants conducted plankton collection and water sampling to study the natural environment of the canals—artificial waterways originally developed for transportation, drainage, and water supply along Tokyo Bay.

Water samples were taken in brackish areas where river water and seawater mix, measuring water quality at both surface and bottom layers, including temperature, salinity, and COD (an indicator of water turbidity).

As the boat proceeded, participants also learned about the historical background of the Shibaura area. Around Shibaura 1-chome (Jubako-bori), once home to facilities of Toshiba, the area historically served as a place for recuperation and seaside recreation. It is also where the Fisheries Training Institute (now Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology) was established in 1888. The area represents the final point of water flow originating from the Musashino Plateau, including sources from Ome and Hamura, as well as natural springs from Shinjuku and Azabu, all eventually flowing into Tokyo Bay.

Minato City Mayor Ms. SEIKE has expressed a vision of making Minato City “the Venice of the East,” known as the city of water. Professor SASAKI strongly supported this idea and recited a verse from the Chinese poem *“Mooring by Maple Bridge at Night”* (by Zhang Ji), evoking the image of another water city, Suzhou, and expressing his aspiration to help create such a landscape in Shibaura.



2) Environmental Measures and Remaining Challenges

Participants observed the “crab-friendly revetment,” where approximately 10,000 crabs now inhabit and spot-billed ducks have also settled. Over the past decade, iron pellets have been introduced into the water to promote the growth of phytoplankton (diatoms) by supplying iron ions, while also helping

absorb harmful substances such as hydrogen sulfide, thereby contributing to water purification.

During the cruise, an orange oil fence came into view. While wastewater from 10 of Tokyo's 23 wards is treated at the Shibaura Water Reclamation Center, excess water during heavy rainfall is discharged from such points. The volume of overflow remains a significant issue. It was also explained that there are approximately 600 locations in Tokyo where untreated sewage may be discharged, highlighting ongoing challenges in improving the marine environment.

3) Observation of Marine Life and Water Quality

Collected plankton samples were visible even to the naked eye. Measurements showed both surface and bottom water temperatures at 10.0°C (normally, bottom water is slightly warmer). Surface salinity was 1.5, while bottom salinity is typically around 3.5.

This condition, where freshwater overlies denser seawater, is known as a "salt wedge," in which seawater intrudes beneath river water and moves upstream. Organisms skillfully utilize this flow for vertical, horizontal, and rotational movement, allowing them to remain in estuarine areas. As plankton gather, food chains develop, ultimately supporting human habitation and urban formation.

4) "What Kind of Place is Shibaura?"

During the cruise, participants shared their impressions of Shibaura, mentioning images such as reclaimed canals, refreshing breezes, traditional houseboats, a center of Tokyo's fishing industry, the birthplace of sushi culture, and local fishermen.



5) Group Work After Disembarkation

After returning to Hinode Pier, participants engaged in group discussions on the future of Shibaura and presented their ideas. Comments included:

- Renewed awareness of pollution caused by wastewater
- The importance of interaction with waterfront environments
- The need for careful handling of detergents and oils
- Understanding biodiversity and the role of individual efforts
- Hopes to increase fish populations in the future
- Recognition of ecological connections
- Proposals to expand water transport routes and fishing opportunities
- The importance of maintaining water quality
- A deeper sense of personal responsibility toward water environments

6) Afternoon Talk by Ms. SUZUKI Harumi

In the afternoon, Ms. SUZUKI Harumi, who operates fisheries at the mouth of the Furukawa River near Kanasugibashi Bridge, gave a talk. She explained that Tokyo Bay yields conger eel, clams, Tiger Prawn, and sea bass, and that nori (Asakusa nori: seaweed) was once cultivated there. She expressed her wish to continue providing delicious seafood in the future.

She also noted that small set nets off the coast of Haneda catch species such as sea bass, cutlassfish, yellowtail, and flounder. Through her work with elementary school students, she has observed growing awareness of environmental issues, including invasive species, marine debris, plastic bags, and PET bottles.

Challenges such as the loss of shallow coastal areas due to concrete revetments—critical for spawning—and oxygen-deficient waters affecting plankton survival were also discussed. Efforts such as creating artificial shallows using transported sand are underway. She emphasized the importance of maintaining a shared commitment to keeping the sea clean.

7) Conclusion

Every September, the Shibaura “Suijin-sama” (water god/deity) festival is held to pray for abundant catches and safe navigation. At the same time, the day’s activities reminded participants that maintaining a healthy marine environment is the responsibility of those who live there.

Professor SASAKI concluded:

“This program has helped deepen interest in Tokyo’s marine environment. I hope participants felt that their daily lives are connected to the sea, and that this connection will continue into the future.”

This marked the successful completion of the 8th session of the “Exploring Tokyo’s Forests, Rivers, and Sea” series, which has explored Minato City’s marine environment from the perspectives of forests, rivers, and coastal areas.



(Written by KOBAYASHI Takayuki, Vice President, and translated by SUDA Y., the PR & Internet Committee Associate)

“X’mas Magical Workshop” with the cooperation of Okamotoya

On December 6, with the generous cooperation of Okamotoya—a long-established stationery store in Toranomon with over 100 years of history, and the creator of the live office “Palett Plaza”—we held the “X’mas Magical Workshop.”

A total of 12 participants attended on the day, including one preschooler and two elementary school children. In addition to families, many adults also joined on their own, making it a workshop enjoyed by people of a wide range of ages.

This workshop featured two types of crafts: creating three-dimensional Christmas cards and making ornaments to decorate a tree. It was heartwarming to see children working together with their parents, discussing ideas as they completed their creations. The entire venue was filled with a warm and friendly atmosphere throughout the event.

We also received many positive comments from adult participants, such as:

- “It was more challenging than I expected, and I got completely absorbed in it.”
- “I felt relaxed being able to create something while enjoying the seasonal spirit.”
- “I hope you continue to offer workshops like this in the future.”

All participants looked very satisfied as they held up their completed cards and ornaments, each piece reflecting their individual creativity and care.

We hope to continue organizing seasonal workshops like this, providing a space where both children and adults can enjoy creative activities and feel refreshed.



(Written by TAGAWA J., Standing Director, and translated by SUDA Y., the PR & Internet Committee Associate)

- MUA's 2026 New Year Gathering

Date: Thursday, January 28, 2026
Venue: NEC Shiba Club in Mita

A total of 21 MUA members, including President Tanabe, former President Nagano, President-elect Ms. Tsuboya and Secretary-general Nakajima joined the annual New Year networking event. Two new members in their twenties also participated, creating a lively atmosphere.

President Tanabe gave the opening address, reporting on this year's activities of the Minato UNESCO Association. Seating was determined by a lottery, and the room was filled with cheerful conversation and lively discussion over delicious Western and Chinese cuisine. After the meal, a bingo game was held, with Ms. Furuichi as the host and Ms. Tagawa, as always, entertaining everyone with her excellent hosting skills.

Each time a number was announced, there was a murmur of excitement, followed by "reach" and "bingo," and the fun time passed by. The very first bingo was won by a gentleman who has been supporting our association as a supporting member for the past two years. We felt grateful for such a long-standing support. When the prize was awarded, the game host asked a question of each winner: "What would you do if you won 100 million yen?" The winner of the first prize answered: "I would share it with everyone!" Truly impressive. One after another, lucky bingo winners came forward, and the venue became even more lively with laughter.

The meeting concluded with Vice President Tsuboya's cheerful exclamation, "That was fun!" While the Minato UNESCO Association is experiencing a decline in membership year after year, we hope to continue organizing enjoyable events to deepen camaraderie among everyone.



(Written by OKUMURA Kazuko, and translated by MIYASHITA Yukari)

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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