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Surveillance Systems exported by Chinese Companies

MIWA Kimitada, Honorary President, the Minato UNESCO Association



When we give a glance at China's white paper on its military spending, we cannot help noticing their intention to build military bases all over the world. We should not be upset, though. It is not something we should get angry about if we face squarely the reality of antagonism between the U. S. and China. After all, it is the reality of the international politics today without any doubt.

If you give a retrospective thought on the history of the U. S. military base buildup overseas and its military interventions, you would understand China's intention and activities. In the past, we had experienced the Cold War confrontation between the U. S. and the Soviet Union, the two world's powers, for decades. That is what we call the Cold War era. Time has passed. Today it would not be any exaggeration to say that we are seeing a new Cold War emerging between the U. S. and China which exert influences all over the world.

This is an age where national defense or security cannot be perfect without the aid of Artificial Intelligence. Under the dictatorship of Chairman Xi Jinping, Chinese companies are aggressively selling surveillance systems, with built-in advanced functions, to different markets in the world. If China continues to expand the customer base of such systems, the country is expected to succeed in penetrating and changing the existing rule-based world order to their advantage. A new world order, convenient for China, may emerge from such developments.

As the citizens of a country committed to the U. S. – Japan alliance, we must be aware that China is our imagined enemy. We should be also mindful of the fact that China today boasts a large economy in GDP comparable to the U. S. In contrast, Japan today is placed No. 5 in GDP, a far cry from the powerful status it once possessed where it was stepping up to the world's top GDP position.

In no more than twelve months, Japan will host the 2020 Tokyo Olympic & Paralympic Games. The new national athletic stadium, which will function as the main theater, will be completed soon. I sincerely hope that the visitors from all over the world will have a favorable impression about Japan and its people as a matured nation and decent citizens.

(Written on July 28, 2019)

(Professor emeritus, Sophia University; Ph.D. Princeton University)

(Translated by TANAHASHI Seiichi, the PR & Internet Committee)

The 75th All-Japan UNESCO Movement Convention in Tokyo

Date: September 7 (Sat) & 8 (Sun), 2019

Venue: Mejiro Elementary School in Toshima City, Tokyo

The annual two-day convention, this year addressing “Let’s look back on our own regions through learning,” was held under the joint auspices of the National Federation of UNESCO Associations in Japan (NFUAJ), the Tokyo Council of UNESCO Associations (TCUA), and the Toshima UNESCO Association. This year being the milestone year marking the 30th anniversary of the “UNESCO Terakoya Movement,” it was a good opportunity to review how much the literacy program has accomplished, and discuss future programs. Because Tokyo is the host city of this year’s convention, the Minato UNESCO Association cooperated by offering several key members as volunteers.

The Day-1 was kicked off by the opening addresses by President Sato of NFUAJ, President Ikeda of TCUA, and Mayor Takano of Toshima City. Director-General Audrey Azoulay of Paris-based UNESCO also gave a congratulatory greeting in a video message. This was followed by the screening of a video, commemorating the 30th anniversary of the World Terakoya Movement. Terakoya is better known overseas as a “Community Learning Center.” During the symposium titled “What has the Terakoya Movement brought to people in the developing countries? Voices from typical learners,” the following three representatives gave impressive presentations: An Afghan male who became a teacher; a Nepalese woman who became a city council staff after completing a literacy class learning; and a Cambodian girl who advanced to a high school after learning at CLC. After their presentations, Japanese high school students, who have visited Asian countries on UNESCO study tours, gave their response comments.



During the keynote speech, Dr. Ulrike Hanemann gave a talk on “Contributions made by adult literacy education and non-formal education in achieving SDGs.” She enlightened us with her research and analysis on the interrelation between lifetime learning and SDGs achievement. It was followed by a panel discussion and a wrap-up session which addressed “World Terakoya Movement and SDGs” and “Future Role and Prospect of the World Terakoya Movement.” Thus, the Day-1 programs were all conducted successfully.

Day-2 started with a panel discussion titled “Let’s create a coexistent society through learning” where discussions centered on the impending issues for Japan, namely how to provide adequate education to children of the non-Japanese resident families. During the following keynote speech, Film Director YAMADA Yoji, well known for the “Tora-san” and “Gakko” series movies, gave a talk on “2019 School Education as perceived from Tora-san’s viewpoint.”

At the very end of the two-day convention, participants from Yamaguchi Prefecture who will host the 2020 convention, came on stage and gave invitational speeches to the audience.

(Written by MIYASHITA Yukari, Vice President, and translated by TANAHASHI Seiichi, the PR & Internet Committee)

The 2019 UNESCO School Kanto Block Convention

Date: Saturday, October 5, 2019

Venue: Tamagawa University campus

This year the convention comprised the following two programs:

1. Attendees were divided into several groups and discussed the pending issues and possible solutions concerning UNESCO Schools.
2. Plenary lecture sessions at the auditorium:
Representatives from four different regions gave presentations on how their associations have respectively promoted “UNESCO’s involvements with local communities and schools.” I was one of the representatives and introduced the case of the Minato UNESCO Association (MUA)’s community-based efforts as follows:



- Tokyo metropolitan Mita Senior High School
This high school was certified as a UNESCO School in 1957. The school is known as a pioneer in cross-cultural education as exemplified by the fact that it was the first school to accept the so-called returnee students. It is an annual event for the school to send its students to MUA’s secretariat office and let them listen to UNESCO philosophy-related talks. For example, when the students visited MUA on June 20, 2019, Mr. SHIMIZU Gunji, a Director of MUA, gave a talk on “My experiences during the WWII.” On the website of Mita School, there is a column, titled “Now and then with the Minato UNESCO Association,” which introduces MUA. That’s where various activities, jointly undertaken with MUA, are presented.
- Tokyo metropolitan Roppongi Senior High School
This high school received the UNESCO School certification on 2017. On July 21 of the same year, President Nagano and Vice President Kikuchi of MUA visited the school and presented a commemorative plaque.
- Tamagawa University and Keio University
MUA is grateful for the cooperation offered from those universities, in holding its annual Japanese-language speech contest. The contest consists of two parts. In Part 1, selected candidates speak at the speech contest. In Part 2, the speakers enjoy discussions with the audience. The UNESCO Club members from the said two universities work as facilitators during Part 2 discussions, under the guidance of Professor Kobayashi of Tamagawa University.
- Tokyo University of Maritime Science and Technology (TUMSAT)
MUA conducts a central-Tokyo canal cruise program where it collaborates with TUMSAT to promote higher awareness of our environment as a way to fulfill the SDGs 14 objective. The official name of the environment study program is “MUA SDGs Canal Cruise,” in which participants enjoy a cruise aboard a small boat, along the Shibaura area and old rivers in Minato City. Participants include Professor Sasaki of TUMSAT (for undergraduate course of Maritime Policy and Culture) and his students, Keio University’s UNESCO Club member students, and Minato City public elementary and junior high school students. The program is also affiliated with JR East’s societal experiment digest initiative, addressing the waterfront vitalization.

The canal cruise program addresses (1) How to heighten citizens’ awareness about the risk of sea contamination the sea due to the water drainage of everyday life, from the viewpoint of waterfront environment, and (2) Revival of fish life in the Tokyo Bay through activities to protect the waterfront environment. We hope that the participants and their friends will become more aware of the linkage between the protection of the waterfront environment and the higher probability thereby to enjoy a better environment in the future.

(Written by HIRAKATA Kazuyo, Vice President, the Youth Program Committee, and translated by TANAHASHI Seiichi, the PR & Internet Committee)

The Second 2019 Cross-cultural Awareness Workshop Classical Music Nurtured by Romanian Culture

Speaker: Ms. SHIMADA Kazuko, President of Romanian Music Society in Japan

Date & Time: September 12 (18:30 - 20:30)

Venue: Minato City Life-long Learning Center

We had the pleasure of having Ms. Shimada as the speaker for this workshop. She talked about Romania, especially about music situation in the country.

1. A wonderful encounter with Romania

Things brought up in your mind by hearing the name of a country Romania would be Nadia Elena Comaneci, Count Dracula, and so forth. You should know, however, that Romania is the only Latino country in Eastern Europe and the language is quite similar to Italian language. I happened to encounter with Romanian music back in 1999 when I was a music instructor. I visited the country in 2001 for the first time. I established a connection with the country by fate, and held a concert there as a part of the 100th anniversary events celebrating the Japan-Romania friendship. My request to visit a school was instantaneously accepted and I was able to observe a Japanese language class. I was quite surprised and moved to learn that schoolchildren were quite familiar with Japanese Anime and they all loved Japan. I have maintained the relationship with Romania for over 10 years since then.



2. Basic information on Romania (showing slides)

Romania is one of the Eastern European countries, and faces Black Sea. You should visit such cultural sites as George Enescu Museum, Romanian Athenaeum, Romanian National Opera House, etc. Your mind shall be eased by the Wooden Church of Maramures, a world heritage. Cimitirul Vesal is the pleasant cemetery where dead persons' appearances when alive are painted on tombstones. Vlad III, known as Court Dracula in Japan, is respected by the local people as a hero who defended the country against the attack by Ottoman Empire. A plenty of foods, such as wine, cheese, salami, green/red pepper, cauliflower, lemonade, are sold in market. Rice soup tastes good as well. You can see many storks flying here and there while you seldom see them in Japan.

3. Music situation

I shall first mention George Enescu for Romanian musician. He is a composer, violinist, conductor and a teacher. A music hall is furnished in George Enescu Museum where we perform occasionally. I would like to mention another musician, Dinu Lipatti, worshiped as a god of piano by people who learn piano. George Enescu International Competition is held every other year. Over 4,000 contenders gather in Bucharest for the competition. Mr. ISHII Takuma won the 2nd prize of the piano session for the first time as a Japanese contender in 2016. Radu Lupu, Inna and Angela Ghoerghiu are the most known musicians representing Romanian music circle. Ghoerghe Zamfir is also well known for his folk music. I am very disappointed that their fame has not quite reached Japan yet.

4. Music competition sponsored by Romanian Music Society in Japan

[Romania International Music Competition]

Participants contend in 6 sessions: piano, vocal, string instrument, wind instrument, percussion instrument and ensemble. The competition has been held 15 times to date. Performance of a contender is judged by two factors. The one is whether a contender is promising. The other is whether a contender is able to perform involving the audience. No one can win a prize only by superior playing technique. Some of the winners succeed in the world and others dedicate themselves in training younger artists.

[Romania International Music Competition for Junior Musicians]

A first prize winner is provided an opportunity to perform in Embassy of Romania in Tokyo. Her Excellency Mrs. Svetlana Tatiana IOSIPER kindly extends a strong support to the competition based on her belief that making Romania known to Japanese people shall eventually reinforce the relationship between Romania and Japan in 50 to 100 years to come.

[Performance trip to Romania]

Performance trip to Romania is held in October every year. An elementary school student who is a grand prix winner in Junior Competition join the trip for the first time this year. He/She will perform music in Peles Castle, most beautiful castle, and three other sites.

5. Exchange with Romania in the future

In addition to the current activities, we will join the summer seminar sponsored by Icon Arts. As we donated a grand piano to Embassy of Romania in Tokyo, we plan to hold a concert at the embassy. We sincerely hope that Japanese people get acquainted with Romania more and more. If you are interested in Romanian dishes, we recommend you visit La Mihai, a Romanian restaurant, located in Kinshicho.

Presentation given by Ms. SHIMADA was full of love for Romania. During the questions and answers session set at the end of the workshop, there were several participants who voiced their wish to visit Romania in the very near future. I would like to take the liberty of expressing a heartfelt appreciation for Ms. SHIMADA not only for today's presentation but her great support to such MUA's activities as "World Cooking Workshop on Romanian Dishes" and "Visit to the Romanian Embassy in Tokyo".

(Written by MIYASHITA Yukari, Vice President, and translated by SUDA Yasushi, the PR & Internet Committee Associate)

(Continued from P. 6) Learning about Woods, Rivers and Ocean of Tokyo

We observed the fishery around the coast of Hamarikyū Garden operated by a fisherman whose ancestor obtained permission for fishery there by Tokugawa Shogunate. Children were very much interested in fishes, crabs, gobies, shrimps and so on which were caught. A person in charge of Takeshiba Waterfront Development explained that the followings were discovered as the result of environmental survey:

- Tidal flat situation of sandy mud area
- Biodiversity is maintained where various water creatures live

Afterword by MUA staff:

A junior high school girl expressed that she had a good experience in observing a river which runs very near to where she lives. An elementary school boy took home some fishes caught in order to raise them. We all had a nice trip thanks to great cooperation extended by a fisherman from a historical background as well as JR East.

Our domestic wastewater runs into the ocean. There exist seven important factors in the environment of hydrosphere. I practice three of them as follows:

- I wash dishes only after I wiped off food smudges
- I never drain oil into a sink in the kitchen
- I always use a drain bag in a triangular sink tidy

At the end of this event, I strongly determined that I continue these simple habits.

(Written by HIRAKATA Kazuyo, Vice President, and translated by SUDA Yasushi, the PR & Internet Committee Associate)

Learning about Woods, Rivers and Ocean of Tokyo through a tour of Tokyo on a small boat and a bus

-Planned and Implemented by MUA Youth Committee -

Date & Time: Sunday, Oct. 20, 2019 (9 am ~ 4 pm)

Venue: Minato City waterfront area

Forty-one people from universities, junior high schools, elementary schools, and residents of Minato City participated in this event. They enjoyed the below listed activities as well as lunch on the boat.

Activities:

- ① Explanation on the scheduled activities in Hakuyo Hall of Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology (TUMSAT) chaired by Mr. MATSUMOTO Kenshin, a member of TUMSAT UNESCO Club)
- ② Greetings by Mr. NAGANO Hiroshi, President of MUA
- ③ Lecture by Mr. SASAKI Tsuyoshi, Professor of TUMSAT, Department of Marine Policy and Culture
- ④ Canal tour on a boat along Furukawa River and the coast of Hamarikyu Gardens
- ⑤ Presentation by a TUMSAT student on the research results
- ⑥ Observation of the fishery around the coast of Hamarikyu Gardens
- ⑦ Lunch on a boat
- ⑧ Observation of Takeshiba Waterfront Development (a presentation on the development was given by a person in charge at JR East)
- ⑨ Transferred from boat to bus at Tennouzu
- ⑩ A bus tour along Furukawa River, from Azabu to Shibuya, Meiji Shrine, Shinjuku Gyoen National Garden, and Takeshiba Pier
- ⑪ A presentation by Professor SASAKI of diplomas to all the participants
- ⑫ A group photo was taken in front of the bus and, then, dismissed



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(To be continued on P.5)



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The Kanto Block UNESCO Activities Study Convention

Date: Oct. 5 (Sat) and 6 (Sun), 2019

Venue: Hasuda City, Saitama Prefecture

The annual two-day convention was held at the Hastopia in Hasuda City. I attended the opening event, the panel discussions and session meetings on Day-1. The opening was kicked off by the brass band of the Hasuda Junior High School students. It was very impressive (photo below). I heard that the team has always been ranked high in the brass band competition, and that the band routinely visits different local institutions to give its performance. I was highly encouraged by the typical sustainable community-based activities.



During the panel discussions, two scholars gave presentations on the plenary subject “Global Environmental Changes.” One was an expert in maritime ecology from the Australian Antarctic research bureau, and the other was a specialist in terrestrial ecology from the National Institute of Polar Research in Japan. The Australian scientist, engaged in the survey and research of krill and other creatures in the Antarctic region for long years, has given continuously a warning about the global environmental change for the past 40 years. During the Q & A session with the floor, a grave concern was expressed concerning the observation that climate change has been imposing negative impact on our everyday life, as well as a possibility that creatures on the earth, including krill and humans, might not be able to adapt successfully to such negative changes. Among the different presentations given during the session meetings, I took a great interest in the one given by the Ibaraki Christian Junior & Senior High School students.



The 2020 Kanto Block convention will be held in Takasaki City, Gunma Prefecture in October. Many members from the UNESCO Associations in Gunma were present in the 2019 convention and they expressed a concerted commitment to host the next year’s gathering successfully.

(Written by Miyashita Yukari, Vice President, and translated by TANAHASHI Seiichi, the PR & Internet Committee)

From the UNESCO Press Release

UNESCO project enables ten African female filmmakers to work with director Naomi Kawase in Japan



(13 February 2020)

The Director-General of UNESCO, Audrey Azoulay, and Japanese filmmaker Naomi Kawase on Thursday announced the names of the ten winners of the UNESCO-Nara Residency for Young African Female Filmmakers, in a side event of the 13th session of the Intergovernmental Committee of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions in Paris.

“It is important for the cinema industry to make the voice of Africa heard,” said the Director-General, “to support the emergence of diverse cultural expressions, put forth new ideas and emotions, and make sure that women as creators contribute to a necessary global dialogue for peace, culture and development.”

The ten winners, female filmmakers aged 21 to 35 from Burkina Faso, Kenya, Nigeria, Senegal and South Africa, will be in residence in Tawara, in Nara Prefecture, from 29 March to 12 April this year. They will be coached by Ms Kawase and Senegalese female filmmaker Fatou Kandé Senghor. The residency project is supported by the Government of Japan and the Japan Foundation.

“In a way,” says Ms Kawase, “being a woman made it easier for me to look closely at my own environment. Not being in the mainstream or the centre, women can make new discoveries. In my case, I will create things from sources within myself. I believe there is something universal in deep personal experience.”

The ten filmmakers are: **Mayowa Bakare**, Nigerian scriptwriter and assistant director/**Okule Dyosopu**, South African documentary film director, founder of an independent production company/**Awa Gueye**, Senegalese director of five documentary, docudrama and fiction films/**Joan Kiragu**, award winning Kenyan documentary filmmaker/**Uren Makut**, Nigerian director and producer, creator of a training centre for young filmmakers/**Lydia Matata**, Kenyan filmmaker, writer and journalist/**Fama Reyanne Sow**, Senegalese director and screenwriter/**Delphine Yerbanga**, director and producer at Burkina Faso’s public national television/**Thishiwe Ziqubu**, director and founder of a production company in South Africa/**Floriane Zoundi**, director and scriptwriter for television in Burkina Faso. (Excerpted)

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:

Tel: 03-3434-2300, Tel & Fax: 03-3434-2233, E-mail: info@minatounesco.jp
URL: <http://minato-unesco.jp/>