

The 45th Convention of Japanese and Nikkei Abroad – Convention Declaration

We, the representatives and supporters of Nikkei abroad all over the world, held the 45th Convention of Japanese and Nikkei Abroad on October 27-28, 2004, in Tokyo. During the Convention, under the general theme of “To strengthen the collaboration between Nikkei communities and Japan, our mother land,” we discussed the five sub-themes of (1) Japanese language education, human resources development, and collaboration on economic and technical cooperation projects of the Government of Japan; (2) Nikkei working and residing in Japan; (3) construction of an International Nikkei Net; (4) overseas voting; and (5) other issues (that of atomic bomb survivors, etc.), and approved the four resolutions below. We declare in the name of the Convention that we have summarized these four resolutions into a request to the Government of Japan and related organizations.

The Convention also expresses its deepest sympathies to the people who lost their lives in the Chuetsu Earthquake whose aftershocks have been continuing since October 23, and sincerely hopes that the people in the afflicted region will be able to reconstruct their lives as soon as possible.

[Resolutions]

(1) Promotion of Japanese language education and full cooperation with the economic and technical cooperation projects of the Government of Japan

From the Meiji Era to the present day, we immigrants have maintained an environment conducive to Japanese language education for the second, third and fourth succeeding generations and have endeavored to carry out human resources development of Nikkei communities. Japanese language education is extremely important for the maintenance and development of Nikkei communities and for exchanges with Japan. We will continue to strongly promote Japanese language education for our successors in collaboration with Japan, our mother land. In relation to this, the Nikkei communities abroad will provide full cooperation to the economic and technical cooperation projects of the Government of Japan that place priority on human resources development for the children of immigrants, including Japanese language education, and measures for the elderly, etc.

(2) Efforts to resolve issues relating to Nikkei workers

We will endeavor to resolve the various issues of Nikkei workers relating to employment, welfare, education, etc. For example, we will expand and strengthen both qualitatively and quantitatively the current programs for information gathering and prior education for Nikkei before they come to Japan, and will clamp down on organizations that illegally dispatch workers to Japan. However, the cooperation and support of the Government of Japan and Japanese society are essential to achieve this. The October 5 report of the “Overseas Exchange Council,” a consultative body to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, also indicated the importance of resolving issues such as Nikkei (newcomer) employment, schooling of Nikkei children, etc.

(3) Promotion of the construction of “International Nikkei Net”

We assent to the establishment of the “International Nikkei Net Council” tasked with

the construction of the “International Nikkei Net,” a global information network linking Nikkei communities all over the world through the Internet and centered on the Association of Nikkei & Japanese Abroad, and we will promote the construction of this net. We will build a system to enable the voices of we Nikkei to be linked to Japan, our mother land, enable communication between Nikkei communities abroad and Japan and communication among the Nikkei communities all over the world, and further strengthen the relationships between all these groups.

(4) Strengthening campaigns for the promotion of participation in overseas voting

The House of Councillors election in July this year was the third instance of overseas voting. It included candidates residing outside Japan and received a lot of coverage in the mass media. However, the electoral roll registration rate and voter turnout for voters residing overseas remained low, and we consider this to be extremely regrettable. For this reason, we intend to redouble our efforts to promote voter registration and participation in voting, and we will continue to strengthen our campaigns to simplify the voter registration and election procedures, recognize the right to vote in the constituency election system, and realize an overseas constituency for people abroad.

[Requests]

(1) Centenary Anniversary of Emigration to Brazil

We request cooperation and support for the Centenary Anniversary of Emigration to Brazil to be held in 2008.

(2) Project to Invite to Japan Nikkei Residing Abroad

We would like the Project to Invite to Japan Nikkei Residing Abroad, which has been terminated since this fiscal year, to continue to exist in some form.

(3) Japanese language education

We strongly urge the cooperation and support of the companies and universities of Japan for the promotion of Japanese language education.

(4) Support for atomic bomb survivors residing outside Japan

We request the immediate implementation of the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare’s “Project to Provide Health Care Subsidies to Atomic Bomb Survivors Residing Outside Japan” which mandates the payment of benefits such as health care allowances, etc. to atomic bomb survivors residing outside Japan based on the landmark decision of the Osaka District Court of June 1, 2001 ruling that it was illegal to exclude atomic bomb survivors residing outside Japan from the scope of the Atomic Bomb Victims Relief Law and on the Osaka High Court decision of December 5, 2002. We also request the prompt implementation of the decision of the Nagasaki District Court of September 28, 2004 making it possible for atomic bomb survivors residing overseas to petition for application of the Atomic Bomb Victims Relief Law without coming to Japan.

October 28, 2004

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