

= The Declaration of the 60th Convention of Nikkei & Japanese Abroad =
Contribute to the Multicultural Coexistence with Nikkei Identity!

October 3, 2019, Tokyo

We, Nikkei, assembled in Tokyo from all over the world for the 60th Convention of Nikkei and Japanese Abroad (hereinafter referred to as the Convention) and discussed the comprehensive theme “Japan's New "Reiwa" Era and Nikkei Society Bridging Internationalization.” We hereby declare this resolution consisting of the following five items as the achievement of the Convention.

1. Importance of the Convention

This year marked the milestone 60th Convention. At this first Convention of the new “Reiwa” era, we were deeply honored by the attendance of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress and extremely moved by the warmest words of the Emperor. We express our sincere gratitude to the Imperial family for their most thoughtful and sympathetic consideration toward Nikkeis all around the world. The Convention gives us the best and greatest opportunity to convey our direct voice to Japan and it has played an important role of bridging Japan and countries where we reside. We expect further enhancement of the Convention and hope that Japanese people’s interest in the Convention will further increase.

2. Experience of Nikkei Society in Japan

(1) As the Convention celebrates its 60th anniversary, it also counts about 30 years in the history of the formation of the Nikkei society in Japan starting with the so called dekasegui phenomenon, Nikkei who came to Japan from Latin America in search of employment opportunities. Today, more than 300,000 Nikkeis reside in Japan. In terms of scale, it is the third largest Nikkei society in the world after Brazil and USA. The first generation of Nikkei in Japan supported Japan’s economic activities while also having problems with employment conditions and the education of their children. On the other hand, they brought in their own culture and customs to Japan and contributed to the promotion of Japan’s inner internationalization and multicultural coexistence. As Japan accepts more foreign workers to make up for the labor shortage due to the declining birth rate and aging population today, a lot may be learned from the experience the Nikkeis have gone through. We recommend that for the policy making and public services, Japan makes use of 30 years of valuable experience of Nikkei society and local communities which have accepted Nikkeis.

(2) Many second generation Nikkei in Japan who were educated in Japan, including those who came to Japan as children, retained their multi-cultural backgrounds, and have been able to achieve success as doctors, lawyers, entrepreneurs and researchers. But this success is only enjoyed by part of the second generation. Issues related to education, especially the acquisition of Japanese language ability continues to be the biggest challenge of the second generation. While appreciating the Japanese Language Education Promotion Law enforced in June this year, we ask for the support of the government, local governments and private companies to improve the educational environment for Nikkei

children in Japan. The second generation has a potential ability to contribute to the internationalization of the region as a human resource capable of promoting multicultural coexistence.

(3) There are many young people of 4th and succeeding generations in overseas Nikkei society who want to study or work in Japan. However, the conditions of the visas granted for the fourth generation are very strict and there are very few visitors to Japan using this visa. We request special consideration be given to the fourth generation as was given to the 2nd and 3rd generations as for the status of residency in Japan.

3. Nikkei legacy and International Day of Nikkei

(1) At last year's Convention in Hawaii, we decided, as we are proud of Nikkei heritage and identity, to continue to pass on this legacy to the Nikkei younger generations and people in the countries where we reside. Also, we declared June 20th as the International Day of Nikkei. In response to this, events were held mainly by young people in various countries to celebrate the International Day of Nikkei or to reaffirm Nikkei heritage and Nikkei identity. In September, the Sao Paulo City Council decided to include the International Day of Nikkei in its event calendar. We will appeal the significance of Nikkei legacy and International Day of Nikkei to the world and strive to promote cooperation among Nikkei societies in the world.

4. Establishment of the Nikkei Museums Liaison Council

Nikkei museums around the world are valuable public resources that preserve and disclose Nikkei heritage and identity. Information exchange and cooperation among Nikkei museums is necessary in order to enhance the capacity of each Nikkei museum and make their legacy a common property of the Nikkei societies in the world.

For this reason, we welcome the establishment of the Nikkei Museums Liaison Council. Also, we welcome with appreciation proposals made on holding of symposium on Nikkei Museums in Sao Paulo 2020, as well as on the cooperation in establishing Digital Platform by Kasuga Foundation.

5. Towards an engaging equal partnership

The younger generation, who grow up in Nikkei families affirm their Nikkei identity by learning and understanding Japanese culture, language and values.

We support the efforts of young Nikkei people in various fields such as the creation of IT businesses, the revitalization of traditional culture, and the rebirth of rural areas suffering from population decline.

We are convinced that Nikkei people can play an active, engaged role as an equal partner in promotion of multicultural coexistence as cooperation between the Nikkei network and Japan deepens. It is important to allow multiple citizenship and to support the learning of the Japanese heritage language in order for children learning Japanese to maintain Nikkei Identity.