

Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy

Newsletter No.16

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August 2015

Notice of the 1st meeting held in FY2015

The first Council meeting of FY2015 opened by reflecting on FY2014 and the Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy FY 2014 Report which was turned in to Mayor Kadokawa at the end of FY 2014. Based on these reflections, the council reaffirmed the continuation of last year's theme of "Creating a city deeply rooted in multicultural coexistence" and to intensify the discussions with the cooperation of all residents including those from different areas and nationalities and those with different cultural backgrounds. Thus, with the aim of implementing multicultural policy in each area, the council heard reports of current projects and carried out an exchange of opinions.



<Time and Date> Mon. June 29th 2015 3:30 to 5pm

<Place> Kyoto City Hall

<Agenda> Development of Multicultural Coexistence in each area

Report 1 —Foreign Women's Association Paruyon Activities

Report 2 —The Best Use of Multicultural Background: Brazil and Japan

Report 1: Foreign Women's Association Paruyon Activities

Foreign Women's Association Paruyon Representative Nina Hayasaki Hakkarainen

● In regards to the activities of Paruyon,

The association was founded in September of 2007 in Kyoto to assist women from overseas living in Japan with daily life activities. The association holds meetings for Foreign Women to talk about life in Japan, and also carries out many activities including cooking classes and various training and seminars.



☆What is Paruyon ?

Paruyon means *many* and comes from the Finnish word “Paljion”, depending on the Paruyon activities you participate in, you will find out a lot of new information and have many chances to meet new people, and have chances for exchange and to help each other.

● In regards to current and future activities,

1. Creating a guidebook for daily living for foreigners called Kotona in Kamigyō.*

Paruyon is making the guidebook “Kotona in Kamigyō” as well as its homepage in order to make life of people with foreign background easier. The guidebook includes ways of saying greetings, how to start a basic conversation, how to resolve troubles, how to join “chonaikai” (neighborhood association) and “jichikai” (neighborhood council) circles and activities, how to pass around the “kairanban” (local information passed between neighbors) etc. so that foreign residents can communicate with local people.

They are also planning to make the guidebook in 4 languages – English, Chinese, Korean and Spanish.

*2015 Kamigyō Ward Community Planning Activity Support and Subsidy Programs

2. Creating the brochure “How to Communicate with Foreign Residents in the Neighborhood”

They are planning to make a brochure for Japanese people for deeper understanding for multicultural coexistence.

Council Members Opinions (Extract)

• I wasn't familiar with the noise of “Hi no yojin” (fire safety warning) when I first arrived, so I think the guidebook would be very helpful.

• It's an interesting idea to make a brochure for Japanese people. It would make them rethink and reflect the things they think are obvious versus what standards are for other countries.

• I feel that people from other countries face difficulties depending on the level of understanding by residents in each area. Especially, middle aged people and the elderly need to learn more about international understanding.

• For people who are not familiar with kanji, it can be very difficult to read, so it would be helpful if “kairanban” is written in several languages.

• If “kairanban” is in multi-languages, local people would be able to feel that they are living together with foreign residents in many ways.

• For People who cannot communicate in Japanese, it's hard to join “jichikai” etc., so the city should encourage “jichikai” to try to talk to foreign residents.



Violeta Misaki Takano is a second generation or Nisei Japanese-Brazilian from Belém, Brazil near the mouth of the Amazon River. Ms. Takano reported examples of multicultural coexistence based on her own experience.

●Experiences in Brazil

▪Ms. Takano was feeling heavy pressure as if she had “Japan” on her right shoulder, “Japanese community in Brazil” on her left shoulder and “Brazil” on her back.

▪In Brazilian society, Ms. Takano endeavored to keep her conduct from tarnishing the pride of her Japanese heritage. Within the Japanese community, she was careful that her actions wouldn’t cause any shame for her family.

▪Towards Japanese people, she worked tirelessly to help them appreciate the positive qualities of Brazil.

●Experiences in Japan as an exchange student

▪At first Ms. Takano hid the fact that she was Brazilian, and when searching for a part time job, she never mentioned her Brazilian name until the very last moment.

▪Ms. Takano realized that if she spent her life hiding the fact she was Brazilian then being a foreign exchange student would not have meaning. She felt strongly that she should educate people about the country where she was born and raised. After that, she provided Brazilian food at some events such as university culture festival and as a Kyoto Prefecture Friendship Ambassador she did activities to introduce Brazil.

●Activities as a Foreign Resident

▪When Ms. Takano started raising her child, the number of local residents she spoke with increased, and it made her recognize herself as a part of the local community.

▪Jichikai is very important for coexistence with foreign residents. She had a good relationship with members and became a member of the board herself. It made many things possible.

▪When asked, Ms. Takano participated in activities introducing Brazil, but started to feel that she should create events herself. Then she founded “Asai-no kai” to bring together Japan and Brazil, and organized a Brazil exhibition at the Kyoto International Community House. She also provides Portuguese lessons and lends books and documents related Brazil.

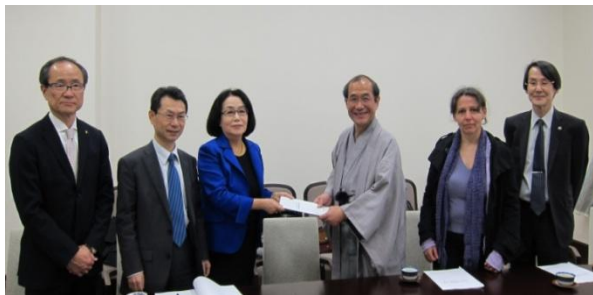
Council Members Opinions (Extract)

▪I think that multicultural society equals a society that accepts people just as who they are. To form a society like this, we need not only to be educated on simply culture and history in general, but also education closely related to the history of people’s lifestyles is necessary.

▪I believe that chonaikai and jichikai activities are important. It is important for people to understand each other’s culture and promote cases of activities based on mutual understanding.

▪ For the chonaikai and jichikai it might be good to have information about foreign residents living in the area, but this might be difficult considering privacy laws.

FY2014 Report was given to the mayor



On March 24, 2015 Ms. Shoko Nishioka, head of Kyoto City Council on Multicultural Policy gave “FY2014 Report” including proposals to Mr. Daisaku Kadokawa, Mayor of Kyoto. Committee members such as Mr. Yamauchi, Ms. Odin, Mr. Sai, Mr. Miho also attended. The summary of the report is the following:

Proposals

1. Understanding for Japanese language educational support and activists
 - To provide suitable support and enhance activities for children who are studying Japanese language, based on their cultural background.
 - To promote the importance and to establish an environment where activists who are supporting Japanese language learners can easily work.
2. Improvement of understanding concerning multiculturalism and personnel training to broaden multicultural coexistence
 - To create various opportunities to promote multicultural understanding.
 - To train personnel with wide range of people with multiple points of view for long term promotion of multicultural coexistence.
3. Establishment and enhancement of locations for activities concerning multicultural coexistence
 - To try to improve facilities through mutual cooperation and the continuation of personnel training at each location.
 - To create new locations for activities and to introduce a wider range of people to a wider range of activities.

Mayor Kadokawa answered the following, “To improve multicultural coexistence is one of the most important policies of Kyoto City. We will seriously consider these proposals and make use of them for the city.”

*If you need FY2014 Report, Please contact the secretariat. Also the report is on the website of International Relations Office of Kyoto City.

Notice from the Secretariat:

If you have any opinion regarding the newsletters or the council, please contact us at the following address. Anyone can attend the meetings as an observer. For back numbers of the newsletter in English, please contact us below.

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