

Minutes of the 2022 OISCA International Board of Directors Meeting

(October 4, 2022)

The OISCA International Board of Directors Meeting 2022 was held at the Conference Room of the First Members' Office Building of the House of Representatives in Nagatacho, Tokyo. This was the first time the Board of Directors had actually met in three years due to the world-wide COVID-19 pandemic.

After the recitation of the Japanese National Anthem and OISCA Theme Song, Mr. Kitsuki Fumio, Secretary General of OISCA International, declared the meeting open. At the outset, all the participants had a silent prayer for the victims of the international conflicts and disasters that took place in various parts of the world.

In the opening remarks, Mr. Kitsuki introduced that the use of the conference room was made possible through the cooperation of the National Diet League to Promote OISCA's International Activities, and the National Diet League also donated drinking water for the meeting participants. He mentioned that a total of 115 delegates, representatives and observers from 13 countries and areas including online participants. Out of this number, 23 international members from 4 countries and area (India, the Philippines, Mongolia and Taiwan) have actually come to Japan for the Board Meeting. He stated that the meeting had to tackle a variety of issues including, environmental conservation, climate change, the deterioration of farms, agricultural development, etc.

Then, Hon. Ishiba Shigeru, Member of the House of Representatives, who is the President of National Diet League to Promote OISCA's International Activities, took the floor to deliver a welcome speech. At first, he said that early in the morning, North Korea launched a missile which passed through Japanese airspace and flew over. He was attending an emergency meeting to address this issue. Today, the world is in the midst of a once-in-a-century period of great transition. From 1914 through 1918, the first world war broke out, from 1918 to 1920, the pandemic of Spanish flu occurred which claimed over 40 million of lives throughout the world; then, the Russian revolution took place, Then in 1930, the Great Depression struck the United States and affected the whole world. From 1939 through 1945, the Second World War occurred. The present situation resembles the past. But we must not allow this situation to happen again. We must do what we can in our own countries. We are in agreement with OISCA philosophy and cooperate with the projects. OISCA should use this meeting to discuss what it can effectively do in the future, Hon. Ishiba emphasized. He had to leave the meeting and rush back to deal with the North Korean missile launching.

Following Hon. Ishiba's welcome speech, the participants of the Board of Directors

Meetings were introduced one after another.

Afterwards, the selection of Chairmen Group was carried out. Dr. Jett C. Rojas, President of OISCA Philippines, and Mr. Mathradikkal Aravindababu, Director and Secretary General of OISCA South India, were selected as the Co-Chairmen of the meeting.

Ms. Nakano Etsuko, OISCA International President, made her keynote speech. She profoundly appreciated the presence of many delegates who took the trouble of coming over to Japan for the meeting despite the constraint of the COVID-19 pandemic. She then referred to the recent tragic death of former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo and was very appreciative of the tribute paid by many countries to Mr. Abe. She particularly noted with deep appreciation of the tribute by Dr. Mohamad Mahathir, Malaysia's former Prime Minister, who rushed to Japan to pay condolences soon after Mr. Abe was shot dead.

She then recalled the lecture Dr. Mahathir delivered several years ago at OISCA Business Matching Forum held in Malaysia. In his speech, Dr. Mahathir explained the background why he adopted Look East Policy when he became the Prime Minister.

She talked about the ancient history of Japan dating back to the Jomon period from 10,000 B.C. to about 400 B.C. At that time, people were known to live in peace. Rice planting and harvesting continued to play a leading role in the life of the Japanese people based on the Imperial system.

She referred to the episode way back in 1973 when the OISCA founder received a set of silver cups from the Emperor for his outstanding service in international cooperation. The founder stated that this great honor was conferred for his work of contributing to agricultural development in Asian countries.

She went on to say that OISCA's spirit remains unchanged: the promotion of agriculture, the determination to devote time, energy, expertise, and resources to the task of helping other people who needed assistance. –

Speaking about environment, she called attention to the reality that the world is today facing environmental deterioration and destruction, and we have to change our lifestyle.

To conclude her speech, she expected that OISCANs in different countries to interact, cooperate and complement each other on mutual trust and understanding.

After the keynote speech of the OISCA President, four Vice Presidents made brief addresses respectively. The first speaker was Ybhg. Datuk Sri Ibrahim Bin Ahmad of Malaysia who addressed on line. He said that SDGs has been promoted by UN and many stakeholders. OISCA's attention should be paid to less developed countries and should commit to attain self-sufficiency.

Vice President Alok Narain Sinha was next to address the meeting. He said that he was happy to visit Japan on the 61st anniversary of OISCA. When he was young, he was experiencing rice planting together with Japanese volunteers. India and Japan share a lot of

common things, especially in industry and agriculture. Indian Prime Minister Modi and Japanese Prime Minister Kishida met and discussed many issues including young people's education. He hoped to spread of OISCA centers to every Indian State. He would like invite to a special event commemorate the Indo-Japanese relations being held in India this December.

Afterwards, Dr. Jett C. Rojas of the Philippines took the floor. He said that in the Philippines, they are facing climate change. In dry season, heavy floods occurred in many areas of the country. Besides, the pandemic has brought many problems, the number of unemployed and business closures have seriously increased. In order to cope with the calamity, the Philippine government is allocating 5% of national budget.

Lastly, Mr. Nagaishi Yasuaki from Japan, delivered short remarks. The world today is facing a variety of problems. While our life has become convenient, problems are increasing. Later he would disclose a new dimension of policy: "Greater Asia and Pacific Rim Strategic Partnership Initiative".

The meeting moved to next agenda item: approval of new chapters. South India's 4 new chapters (Vallikkunnu, Pandikkad, Aliparamb, Parappanangadi) were approved. In addition, the reorganized Chapter in the Republic of Korea was also approved.

The next-term (2023-2024) Board of Directors were introduced and unanimously approved by the meeting.

Meanwhile, Mr. Nagaishi Yasuaki, Secretary General of OISCA Japan, presented a new concept named "Greater Asia and Pacific Rim Strategic Partnership Initiative". He explained in detail the initiative. It is a comprehensive framework that encompasses all of Asia and Pacific Rim, and is aimed to promote the exchange of human resources and facilitation and revitalization of business partnership in the region, utilizing the OISCA international network.

The important point of this initiative is to ensure sustainability. In the case of one-way support and cooperation systems based on ODA, if funding is not available, projects and activities will be discontinued. For continuing projects and activities, it is essential to sustain the activities while generating funds for themselves.

From now on, we should establish a system to compensate each other for what is lacking. By complementing each other with natural resources and labor, which Japan lacks, and financial resources, and technologies and know-how, which many Asian countries lack. This is what is called "people-to-people" cooperation.

In summary, Mr. Nagaishi enumerated the basic policies of the vision are as follows:

1. Fostering and exchanging a wide range of human resources
2. Promote disaster reduction/mitigation and various environmental conservation/education activities utilizing ecosystem

3. Poverty reduction and regional economic revitalization through the promotion of social businesses rooted in each region
4. Promotion of sustainable agriculture and technological exchange to ensure food safety and self-sufficiency.
5. Promotion of various appropriate technologies and technological exchange
6. Promotion of business matching among private companies in the region.

Mr. Nagaishi said he welcomes proposals from local chapters and would study them in the Headquarters.

Before lunch break, a unique project was introduced by Kumamoto Chapter, Kumamoto-Mongolia Project. The project mission is creating community that supports each other across borders. Concretely, the project is implemented by holding periodic online events and carrying out business matching for the purpose of improving women's lives in Mongolia. Mongolian organic wools and handmade embroidery goods have been sold at a Mongolian shop opened in Kumamoto.

The meeting session recessed for lunch. The delegates and observers moved to the room next door and had lunch box (Bento).

In the afternoon, the session 2 started with online presentation of reports from different national chapters. Representatives from Hong Kong, Trust National Council of OISCA in India, South India, North India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and UAE respectively made reports on their recent activities.

Then, Mr. Akasaka Kiyotaka, Former Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations, delivered a special lecture entitled "A World in Peril and the United Nations". According to him, many people criticize that the United Nations is not doing a proper job. But that view is not correct, he stressed. As bright sides of the UN can be cited, for example, the achievements of MDGs for 2000-2015, SDS for 2015-2030, Climate Change: Paris Agreement in 2015, WFP obtained the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017, WHO's activities for COVID-19, Polio, Leprosy, Ebola, etc., and Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

On the other hand, UN is currently faced with pressing issues as emphasized by Secretary-General Antonio Guterres time and again. The UN is incapacitated, however, to effectively deal with the issues, mainly due to the vetoes cast by the Security Council members on the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the situation in Myanmar, the climate crisis, and global food crisis. Mr. Akasaka cited an article appeared in the Economist, June 20, 2020 which pertinently pointed out the United Nations "has taken on more than it was designated for. And the design itself needs a fresh look."

He then summarized what Japan can do for the world as follows:

1. Initiatives for peace

2. Facilitating solutions for regional conflicts
3. Initiatives to solve social problems such as aging, universal health coverage, education and vocational training
4. Environmental initiatives such as climate change, reforestation, 3R initiative, natural disaster and prevention and mitigation, and relief
5. Public transportation.

Following the speech, there were a few comments from some members of the International Board and Mr. Akasaka politely answered them.

Before closing, OISCA President Nakano Etsuko handed out certificates of commendation to those who greatly contributed for the OISCA activities in the past.

The list of awardees is as follows:

- Mr. Yitzhak Abt, OISCA Israel
- Mrs. Bindu Huria, OISCA North India
- Dr. Meenu Kumar, OISCA North India
- Dr. N. Krishnakumar IFS (retired), OISCA South India
- Dr. Parvathi Warriar, OISCA South India
- Dr. Thomas Thevara, OISCA South India
- Mr. Chachawarn Moolsart, OISCA Thailand

Lastly, Mr. Alok Narain Sinha, Vice President of OISCA International, closed the session with short remarks. He thanked for the organizer of the meeting under the difficult situation and appreciated for the different chapters who took part in the meeting in person and online despite of short time.

RECEPTION

In the evening of October 4, a reception was held at the Restaurant Alaska, Press Center, To commemorate the OISCA 60th Anniversary and the International Cooperation Day. Those delegates, observers and OISCA Secretariat participated the Board Meeting all moved from the Diet Members' Office Building in Nagatacho to the Press Center Building in Uchisaiwaicho for attending the reception.

The reception was attended by a total of 113 persons: OISCA International Board members, representatives of OISCA domestic chapters, Foreign Ministry officials, representatives of Japanese corporations supporting OISCA and Tokyo-based diplomatic corps including Ambassador from East-Timor, Uzbekistan and Myanmar.

Ms. Nakano Etsuko, who assumed the Presidency of OISCA Japan in 2020, made

introductory remarks. Then, distinguished guests present were introduced. On behalf of the diplomatic corps, H.E. Mr. Ildio Ximenes Da Costa, Ambassador of East Timor, delivered a speech. He said that the relationship of his country with OISCA in the recent years is limited to dispatching trainees in agriculture. He stressed the trainees are expected to learn not only skills but OISCA spirit as well.

The guests were entertained with the presentation of Japanese dance performed by a lady member of OISCA Metropolitan Chapter, and video presentation of Indian dances, Also, video was shown on the training activities such as rice cultivation of foreign trainees at the Nishi Nippon Training Center. The guests were presented souvenir: rice produced at the Training Center together with green tea produced by OISCA Hamamatsu Kokusai High School. The long chatted while enjoying drinks and food with live performance of piano and violin.

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