

IV. 英文要訳

Summary English Translation

Symposium on
How Should Japan Respond to the Issues of Foreigners?
Drawing on the Experiences of Other Countries – Issues and Responses

Summary Report

Opening Remarks

Mr. Itsunori ONODERA, Parliamentary Secretary for Foreign Affairs

Mr. Itsunori Onodera opened the Symposium on “How Should Japan Respond to the Issues of Foreigners?” Approximately 2 million foreign people are residing in Japan. The number of Latin Americans of Japanese descent or so-called “newcomers” in Japan has been increasing since the 1980s, and they face a number of issues related to employment and social security. The government and the private sector should work together to try and tackle these types of issues. He hopes that today’s symposium will be fruitful.

Session I “Issues Faced by Foreigners: Measures Taken by Japan”

• Keynote Speech

Prof. Kazuaki TEZUKA, Chiba University

Prof. Kazuaki Tezuka stated that since the early 1980s the number of foreigners in Japan has continued to increase dramatically, a trend that is still continuing. Approximately 2 million foreign people are residing in Japan and this represents 1.5% of the total population. This is, nevertheless, one of the lowest ratios of foreign residents among industrialized countries.

Japan is now faced with the issue of what basic position it should take in response to foreign residents and what policies need to be implemented. This is a theme that has been repeatedly raised since the 1980s. Initially, at the time of the bursting of the economic bubble opinions were raised that foreigners could be accepted into Japan from countries with excess labor capacity, and sent home after a fixed period. Such a policy proved to be unworkable however.

After the amendment to the Immigration Law in 1990, foreigners of Japanese ancestry, particularly those from Brazil and Peru came in large numbers to Japan, due to hyperinflation and unemployment in their own countries and the promise of better earning potential in Japan. Many of these foreigners have stayed in Japan, given the lack of job opportunities in their own countries, and are now seeking permanent residence. Issues as exemplified by the Brazilian and Peruvian immigrants require a response by government in formulating policy.

Another issue that has been discussed in Japan has been the potential need to supplement the workforce in the future, given the aging society and declining population. Currently however, there is still a surplus of labor in Japan and foreign workers cannot yet be accepted from the perspective of supplementing the workforce. It is inescapable however, that in the future, if Japan does not move to accept human resources, it will lose social and economic dynamism. This therefore requires a policy that is fair and just, irrespective of nationality or country of origin. In the case of Japan it will be necessary to promote the acceptance of skilled personnel in fields such as R&D and technology innovation.

In terms of policy proposals and recent reforms, the following points can be raised: (i) It is necessary for foreigners to have a grasp of the Japanese language to live in Japan; (ii) A more effective response needs to be taken to ensure the work, residence and social security status of foreigners in Japan, and to deal with issues such as education of children; (iii) It is necessary to speedily correct the practices of some businesses of using foreign workers as a source of cheap (and illegal) labor; (iv) Efforts need to be made to ensure that foreigners' children do not drop out of the education system and thus prevent juvenile delinquency; (v) It is important to ensure that each foreign worker fulfils their social security obligations, and that social security payments are a condition of acceptance into Japan; and (vi) Japan should make efforts to deal with crimes committed by foreigners, including cooperation with other countries.

Examples of efforts in countries such as France and Germany should serve as a reference. In English-speaking countries such as the United States, efforts have been made to have foreign workers learn English so that they will not be isolated from the rest of society, which can lead to increased crime among young people. Systems such as the green card system in the United States need to be introduced, and offering education opportunities to one's offspring should be a requirement for people working in a foreign country.

With regards to the issue of terrorism, if certain foreign residents become involved in terrorism, all foreign residents will be stigmatized, and this type of situation should be avoided. International cooperation is essential for addressing this, and international extradition treaties should be formed with a larger number of countries

• Panel Discussion and Q&A

Moderator: Prof. Goro ONO, Saitama University

Prof. Goro Ono called on the presenters to speak.

Mr. Yasuyuki Kitawaki said that as of January 1 this year, the percentage of foreign residents in Hamamatsu is 4%, a relatively a high ratio in Japan. A large number of these foreigners are Brazilian, and the number of foreigners of Japanese descent has been increasing. The reason the number of foreign residents in Hamamatsu has been increasing is that a lot of jobs are available such as at automobile plants and musical instrument plants. Hamamatsu has been making efforts to accept these residents and provide opportunities for them.

Municipalities alone cannot solve all the issues regarding foreigners. The national government decided to open up more to people of Japanese descent, and this was in order to supplement the labor force in Japan. This was originally implemented with the intention of having foreign residents stay temporarily for short periods of time, but the majority of foreigners have become permanent residents.

A number of meetings have been held among municipalities with high concentrations of foreigners, and a Hamamatsu Declaration was formulated to provide guidelines for addressing issues related to foreigners. It is hoped that more measures will be taken by the national government to assist their efforts.

In furthering the integration process, education is being focused on. Many children of foreigners do not have sufficient Japanese skills, and as a result there is a high rate of absenteeism. The national government should do more to address this. An increased number of bilingual teachers need to be provided, and more should be done to help integrate these children. In addition, many foreign residents are in indirect employment structures, and they are mandated to participate in social security schemes. They need to pay into the national pension scheme, but this is not being enforced by employers. Many foreigners are not included in the health insurance system. The government says that foreigners should be included in these systems, but this is not being enforced. These have been the key issues following the amendment of the Immigration Control Law. These problems need to be overcome before they can move forward with integration.

Prof. Yasushi Iguchi said that he was involved in policymaking regarding the acceptance of foreign residents, such as initiatives outlined in the Toyota Declaration. All of the government agencies, not only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, should have an increased sense of urgency about resolving issues related to foreign workers. Increasing numbers of Brazilians and other South Americans of Japanese descent are becoming foreign residents. Measures to address foreign workers should be implemented in conjunction with the recent trend of formulating FTAs.

Migration needs to be supervised, and they should embrace skilled workers who have Japanese language ability. These types of people should be encouraged to settle in Japan with their families.

Dr. Masato Ninomiya stated that there are approximately 275,000 Brazilians living in Japan. This is a large number, and it has given rise to a number of issues. The Nippon Keidanren has requested that the national government take proactive measures. Many major companies are benefiting from the employment of foreign workers, but they are not providing sufficient remuneration. Immigrants have a high sense of hope when coming to Japan, but they are often disappointed. More stringent laws should be implemented to provide more oversight.

Many of the second and third generation Japanese descendants have insufficient Japanese language ability. It is important that these people acquire Japanese language skills, not only for the sake of employment opportunities, but also in order to get in touch with the country of their origin. People coming to Japan should be made to take at least a two to three month course in Japanese, but this alone will not be sufficient.

Every foreign resident should be able to receive the benefits of the insurance scheme. This would be particularly beneficial for Brazilians who were not able to receive proper medical treatment in Brazil, but can receive it in Japan. There is a relatively high level of crime among Brazilians of Japanese descent, and it is necessary to work hard to provide guidance for parents and make sure that foreigners have a plan for exactly what it is that they hope to accomplish in Japan. Specialized teachers should be provided, and other measures should be taken to prevent juvenile delinquency in Japan.

Ms. Masami Matsumoto said that she has opened a school for Peruvian children. In the past many foreign workers came to Japan alone, leaving their families behind. Recently, foreign workers have been bringing their families along with them and settling in Japan. An increasing number of these people are uninsured, and about half of the children studying at her school do not have health insurance.

The type of Japanese that must be taught to foreign children should cover terms that are used in school, so that they can keep up in their classes. If foreign children do not have sufficient language skills, it is often the case that they drop out and become involved in crime. The Peruvian school is funded by tuition from students, and many students cannot attend the school because their families do not have enough money. Hamamatsu City has certified the school, thus allowing it to receive public funding, and it is hoped that the private sector will also help in lowering the tuition. Peru is one of the first countries to accept Japanese immigrants, and this is the opportunity to pay Peru back what it has done. They help foreign children be accepted into society in order to avoid a situation in which they are considered foreign in both Japan as well as the country of their origin.

Prof. Tezuka commented that many people are not familiar with the issues related to foreign residents in Japan. He lived in Germany for several years with his family, and when they were there, German teachers invited his children to their homes and taught them German. This type of openness is not common in Japan, and many children of foreign residents face poor living conditions. A large number of these children do not have medical insurance, and although emergency medical funds are provided by the government, the amount of these funds is insufficient.

Mr. Kitawaki said that the government must work with both the private sector and foreign residents to address issues related to foreigners. Companies must be compliant with laws regarding foreigner workers, and the employment environment should be secure and fully insured. Initiatives by private companies are critical.

Prof. Iguchi noted that many companies are not aware of whether or not they are compliant with the laws. Enforcement is not enough, and concrete measures must be taken for regulation. It is not simply a matter of accepting foreign workers into Japan, but providing stable employment and a sustainable system. If Japan does not do this, it will be seen from the outside as a country which is difficult to work in.

Dr. Ninomiya said that a large number of Brazilians are not taking measures to assert their rights, and many of those who do are fired. No relief measures have been established for employees, and at many companies, management does not lend an ear to the problems of foreign employees.

Ms. Matsumoto said that many foreign residents end up placing their children in Japanese schools, because they face economic difficulties. A lack of parent involvement results in juvenile delinquency, and measures by the government should take into account these factors.

A member of the audience stated that he was involved in formulating the Dispatch Law. Despite demographic changes in Japan, there will not be a labor shortage. How foreign workers can be involved in a constructive way should be considered.

Mr. Kitawaki commented that cultural differences create friction for foreigners, and negative aspects arise such as crime. It is important to decrease these negative aspects as much as possible. There are numerous cultural factors which are unique to these ethnic groups such as sports, food and music, and these are very helpful. People should accept the reality of the situation and make the best of it. Japan should be the type of place where foreigners can be active and be an element of society. He would like the society to be open to people of other nationalities.

Prof. Tezuka noted that Japan does not ensure employment and work conditions for foreign workers in the way that European countries do.

Prof. Iguchi said that it is important that Japan should not only import talent, but also foster talent. Many foreigners have established themselves in Japan, but few people aware of this. Bilingual education should be considered, and networks should be created among people of diverse cultures.

Mr. Ninomiya said that Japanese people have becoming more welcoming toward foreigners over the last 15 years, but many foreigners are still discriminated against in small cities and rural areas. It will be beneficial for Brazilians of Japanese descent to return to Brazil and help add vitality to the economy there. This will help contribute to bilateral ties.

Ms. Matsumoto commented that one of the students at her Peruvian school had difficulty studying at a Japanese school and was learning very little. Lowering the tuition of the Peruvian school will help children such as these. Government support as well as support from the private sector can help contribute to lowering tuitions at private schools for foreigners.

Prof. Ono stated that if a market economy approach is going to be taken in Japan, enterprises should bear the costs of insurance premiums for foreigners. The government should identify the timing of the introduction of foreign workers to Japan in order for Japan to maintain its international competitiveness. It is important not only for the government but also employers to meet their obligations.

Session II “How Should Japan Respond to the Issues of Foreigners?: Drawing on the Experiences of Other Countries”

• Keynote Speech

Mr. Brunson McKINLEY, Director General of the IOM

Mr. Brunson McKinley stated that the migration phenomenon influences international relations and impacts economic and social policies, and countries have approached the issue of how to welcome foreigners into society in a variety of ways. The measures that Japan takes should be decided by Japan, but Japan should refer to the models of other countries.

These models include the “assimilation” model, also known as the “melting pot” approach, which is based on the outcome of full citizenship and the sharing of common civic values with the native population. The opposite of assimilation is “multiculturalism.” This entails the recognition of cultural plurality in model societies, and the regulation of this plurality through principals of equality. Countries incorporate these two approaches in their policies to different degrees. There is an increased tendency for countries to look at short-term migration, and many countries are providing more rights for temporary migrants.

In creating policies, countries should clarify exactly what it is that they want to accomplish. Countries should decide the type of migrants that they can accept and then make the necessary preparations in terms of providing opportunities for language acquisition and developing institutions. Japan did not have a plan regarding the reverse migration of Japanese descendants from Brazil and Peru, so a lot of problems have arisen. Japan should take a thorough, systematic approach to deciding what types of migrants it is willing to accept and then make the necessary preparations. (For the full text, see P. 77.)

• Presentations on “The System of Accepting Foreigners in Other Countries and the Basic Concepts”

Mr. Werner BURKART, Commissioner for issues relating to Visas, Asylum and Migration to Germany, Federal Republic of Germany

Mr. Werner Burkart stated that for decades there has been a general understanding among politicians and the population that Germany is not an immigration country but if one uses the usual counting method—the criterion of being “foreign born”—Germany actually ranks number six in the world with approximately 13% foreigners living in Germany (and these are IOM figures). About 8.9 % of the people living in Germany do hold a non-German citizenship, which means in absolute figures approximately 7.34 million people. The largest groups are the Turks with 1.877 million, followed by former Yugoslavia with roughly a million people.

Without immigration, Germany’s population would be shrinking and it will not be possible to maintain a dynamic economy. But of course, this is hard to defend in public discussions in times of more than 5

million unemployed. However, immigration is no solution to the demographic problem on its own, rather a contribution to the solution.

The groups of immigrants coming to Germany widely differ from immigrants here in Japan. Out of the 769,000, more than 133,000 came from countries within the E.U. They enjoy a particular priority over foreigners from third countries in that there are no restrictions for non-dependent employment. Roughly 2.3 million ethnic Germans have come to the Federal Republic of Germany from countries of the former Soviet Union since 1990. Other groups of immigrants include Jews from the CIS countries, people coming to Germany for family reunification and asylum seekers.

Their new law on immigration, officially called “Act to control and restrict immigration and to regulate the residence and integration of EU citizens and foreigners,” came into force on January 1 this year. The aim was to limit and to better manage the immigration that happens anyway and especially to better serve the needs of our economy and our labor market. The better integration of the foreigners living in Germany was also one of the goals.

The main changes in relation to the former law took place based on a number of political intentions. These can be categorized as residence for the purpose of economic activity, residence under international law or under humanitarian or political grounds, new measures offered to promote integration, an appropriate response to security concerns, and structural changes.

There is a shift in their policy concerning the access to the labor market which is now much more oriented towards the needs of the economy, whilst improving provisions for the sake of the protection of refugees. At the same time, after long and sometimes difficult discussions, there is now a general consensus that the promotion of integration and the support given by the state in this respect correspond to the foreigners’ duty to make their best effort to settle and integrate into society. In order not to be misunderstood: This does not mean assimilation, but it means the obligation to learn their language and to respect the constitution and the law. (For the full text, see P. 85.)

Mr. Paul BURNS, Head of Immigration Policy Unit in Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform, Ireland

Mr. Paul Burns stated that Ireland is a small country which has recently become a significant destination for international migrants. In developing immigration policy, Ireland has had to react quickly to a situation which has arisen in a relatively short period of less than a decade. Their experience over this period has been different from that of most of our European neighbors, as has been their approach to the issues arising.

Their experience as an emigrant people is also an important factor. Emigration from Ireland has been a reality right up to recent times and continues, to a certain extent, to the present day. During the 1980s in particular there were significant levels of emigration of young Irish people, in particular to the United Kingdom and to the United States. The underlying factor which has given rise to the growth of immigration into Ireland is economic development and the availability of employment. Immigration in

significant numbers into Ireland is a relatively recent phenomenon, and the majority of new immigrants are now non-Irish nationals.

Irish work permit system has been the major channel through which significant numbers of the new migrants have come to Ireland. The majority of work permits have been issued in low skilled areas such as agriculture and the hotel and catering industries. In order to attract highly skilled workers, in 2000 a working visa scheme was introduced to attract professionals in the areas of information and communications technology, nursing and construction. Since May 2004, Irish policy requires employers seeking unskilled labor, in most cases, to recruit from within the European Union. The work permit system now focuses mainly on skilled labor needs.

As well as increasing legal migration, the attractiveness of the Irish economy has also, inevitably, resulted in an increased level of illegal migration, including unfounded asylum applications. The majority of asylum applicants are illegal economic migrants. Despite the fact that asylum seekers represent a relatively small proportion of total migrants in Ireland, substantial resources have been put into dealing with the asylum issue, in particular since 2000.

Much Irish legislation through the years has been framed without any reference to the nationality of the persons concerned. This included employment legislation, social welfare and health legislation and even local government electoral legislation. The social welfare system was relatively easily accessible by non-nationals until recent years when it became clear that it was an attraction for illegal immigration and asylum seeking. Most housing in Ireland—almost 90%—is privately owned or rented in the private sector. Access to education is provided free at primary and secondary level to all children resident in Ireland, regardless of the nationality or immigration status of their parents. Access to third level education is free to all European Union citizens, but other nationalities must pay the economic cost of providing the service. This is major source of funds to Irish universities who are actively marketing their services abroad.

Non-nationals who are in employment in Ireland are covered by the same employment protection legislation as their Irish counterparts. This includes equality and anti-discrimination legislation. Just over a week ago, the Prime Minister launched a National Plan of Action against Racism for the period 2005-2008.

By international comparisons, Irish citizenship provisions relatively generous. A child born in Ireland to non-national parents who have been legally resident in Ireland for three out of the previous four years is entitled to Irish citizenship. Their citizenship provisions have the effect of encouraging integration as a person may apply for naturalization after 5 years residence.

The Irish Government recognizes the benefits of immigration and accepts that immigration will be a feature in our society for the foreseeable future. In developing immigration policy, they aim to achieve the necessary balance between favorable treatment for legal migrants while ensuring they do not set up attractions for illegal migration. It is necessary for immigration systems to constantly evolve to meet the challenges which are constantly changing. They in Ireland have learned much from Japan in many fields

in recent decades. They will be watching developments in Japanese immigration policy with great interest. (For the full text, see P. 93.)

Mr. KWON Gi Seob, The Assistant Secretary to the President on Labor at the Office of the President, Republic of Korea

Mr. Kwon Gi Seob stated that South Korea has an imbedded structural demand for labor. This reliance on illegal workers has led to an encroachment on foreign workers rights, and work permit systems have been introduced to address this problem. As of December last year, 189,000 of the 422,000 foreign residents in South Korea were illegal workers. There has been an effort to crack down on illegal residents since the introduction of the Employment Permit System in August 2004, and their growth has declined.

An Industrial Trainee System was introduced in 1993 for training employees of overseas Korean companies. This however failed to address the labor shortage problems of SMEs. A Service Sector Employment Management System was introduced in 2002 to promote employment of ethnic Koreans of foreign nationalities. The Employment Permit System (EPS) was legislated in 2003 and fully launched in 2004. The EPS permits companies that failed to find Korean workers to legally employ certain numbers of foreign workers.

Various factors contribute to the generation of illegal residents, such as tours, studying abroad, seeking refuge, reunion of separated families, work and business. Economic factors such as GNP differences and wage differences between the host country and home country and the availability of jobs, are considered to be the biggest factors contributing to the rise of illegal residents. In particular, South Korea's manufacturing and construction business is the most popular for foreign workers.

The response to illegal residents has been insufficient. A temporary crack down on illegal residents and frequent extensions of visa expiry have led the law abiding spirit of illegal workers to weaken. According to the immigration laws, violators of the law are subject to certain punishments, but in reality, the actual punishment is far less harsh.

Employer-centric policies and passive measures against illegal workers have led to violations of human rights, and many NGOs helping out illegal workers have generated a compassionate sentiment toward illegal workers. This has made it difficult to carry out policies to root out illegal residents. As the Employment System for Professional Skilled Foreign Workers, Trainee Program for Employees of Overseas Korean Company, Industrial Trainee System, Employment Permit System and other systems are managed by different ministries and divisions at the same time, the sense of responsibility of the government has been greatly weakened.

The Employment Permit System (EPS) was adopted to establish foreign worker employment order, strengthen immigration control, and thereby eliminate illegal employment and hiring and prevent the settlement of foreign workers. The EPS allows employers who have failed to hire native workers to legally hire an adequate number of foreign workers. It is a system that the government uses to introduce and

manage foreign workers in Korea in an organized manner. The EPS sets up more progressive steps to protect foreign workers and expands access to the Korean labor market by foreign workers.

In order to stabilize the EPS, further efforts will be carried out to support employers, including mitigating employer's obligation to make efforts to find native workers, allowing workplaces hiring ten or less workers to employ more foreign workers, and extending employment periods of foreign workers.

With the implementation of the EPS, South Korea's foreign worker policy is in a transitional period. The success or failure of the system will determine the successful establishment of a practical foreign worker management system.

• Panel Discussion and Q&A

Moderator: Prof. Kazuaki TEZUKA, Chiba University

Prof. Tezuka opened the panel discussion and invited Mr. Hiroshi Tachibana to speak.

Mr. Tachibana stated that Nippon Keidanren has been looking into reforms that will be necessary in the future. Japan needs to add value in its activities and increase its dynamics through the introduction of foreign workers. A recommendation regarding foreign workers by Nippon Keidanren was the first to be put together by private companies. Following the introduction of the Immigration Law in 1990, the screening of foreign immigrants was done based on whether or not employment was secured, but this is not the case with Japanese descendants.

They are not proposing that foreigners be accepted simply to solve the problems of a labor shortage in Japan. They have proposed several basic principals. Acceptance of foreign workers must be controlled in both quantitative and qualitative terms. For the protection of these workers, a system must be in place when they come to Japan. We must respect the human rights of foreign people in Japan with regard to working and living conditions. There should be no discrimination against foreign workers. Japan must create a win-win situation with other countries if it wants to secure highly-skilled workers. There should be coordination between central and local governments with regard to resident status, work permits and other factors. Unless these problems can be resolved, they cannot take a productive step forward.

In the future, an agency for foreigners living in Japan should be created, similar to those found in other countries. Nippon Keidanren has put together its proposal with the guidance of scholars specializing in this area. The issue of foreign workers will be taken up in the context of FTAs in the future, and Nippon Keidanren is encouraging the government to take measures to address this issue.

Prof. Tezuka stated that foreign workers in Germany in many cases decided to become permanent residents, and Germany's policy has been looking more toward integration. Ireland and South Korea used to be countries that sent out emigrants, but now this situation has changed. Policies have begun to change in South Korea, and the IOM plays an important role in overseeing how the overall situation is changing.

Mr. Burkart stated that situation differs from country to country, and what has been done in Germany and other countries should serve only as an example for Japan. They are now moving toward integration of foreign residents. A universal problem regarding migrants is education. The Turkish children in Germany, for example, do not sufficiently understand the German language and have had trouble understanding their classes. Some areas have introduced preparatory language classes for young children before they enter school. If one allows children to have education in their native language, the problem will continue.

Mr. Burns said that it is desirable for a country to be the destination of immigrants rather than one that is constantly losing its young people, which results in stagnation. Ireland originally took a purely economic approach to immigration in that people were brought into Ireland as workers. Bringing in people from foreign countries is excellent for an economy, because it brings in new ideas. Public acceptance of immigration is very important, and there is a high level of respect in Ireland for Filipino nurses, for example. Their system brings in people on a one-year basis, and one should be aware that a country has the ability to choose from among the resources which are available.

Mr. Kwon stated that in changing its policy regarding the acceptance of foreign workers, it took South Korea ten years to develop its EPS system. The EPS system addresses the fact that labor shortage is a reality, foreign workers are human beings, and the system for foreign workers should be in order. There has been a lot of conflict in South Korea regarding its policy on foreign workers.

Mr. McKinley stated that Japan can learn many lessons from Germany, Ireland and South Korea. Japan and Germany have many similarities, but Ireland and Japan are quite different. Ireland has recently changed to a destination country, however, and this is an area in which Japan and Ireland are similar because they are both newly dealing with the issue of immigration. South Korea is a neighboring country which has many similarities to Japan, but it is about ten years ahead of Japan in terms of its policies toward foreign residents. South Korea's example can thus serve as a guide.

No country in the world is completely satisfied with its migration policy. No single country can be taken as a model, but starting dialogues among different regions in the world can be good for developing best practices. Perhaps the ten countries of ASEAN and Japan, China and South Korea could work together to develop a regional approach to labor migration.

Prof. Iguchi commented that if Japan can adopt best practices, it can become more competitive. Japan would like to secure sustainable growth in Japan and encourage highly skilled Asian workers to come back to Asia. Efforts should be made by both Japanese society and the society of foreigners. Self-help organizations should be created in communities of foreigners. The government has made a number of efforts over the past ten years including facilitating the deportation of illegal immigrants.

Mr. Burkart stated that immigration is not just an economic issue, but there is also a humanitarian aspect. Germany developed a quota and point system in accordance with the needs of the labor market. The proposal, however, was not included in the law. This discussion will likely come up again in ten years, and the law may be changed in the future.

Mr. Tezuka opened the floor to the audience.

A member of the audience commented that Japan should learn from European governments. Many people of Myanmar were affected by the recent tsunami. They are prisoners in their own country.

A member of the audience commented that foreign workers often are not provided good work opportunities when they return to their home countries. Does Japan have any measures to address this?

Mr. Tachibana stated that even after training, people are not given proper opportunities to utilize the skills that they have acquired. It has been recommended that they be given more opportunities for higher-level training.

A member of the audience asked how language education is provided in respective countries.

Mr. Burkart stated that students in Germany are educated in two foreign languages by the time that they graduate secondary school.

Mr. Kwon said that in South Korea the focus is on educating foreign workers in the Korean language, and there are a number of institutions for providing language education and giving advice.

Mr. Burns said that in Ireland there are a number of organizations and community groups that provide foreign children with English language skills.

Mr. McKinley commented that many countries use immigration to improve their competitiveness and support economic activity. This is done in the United States and in Europe, and a regional system could be introduced in Asia. In Thailand, the people of Myanmar who were victims of the tsunami should to be given help. A lot of countries are suffering from “brain drain” in which they lose their top human resources, and efforts should be made to change this into a “brain gain” by encouraging people who have acquired knowledge and skills overseas to return to their home country. The IOM is working to help people apply their skills when they return to their home country.

Mr. Tezuka stated that Japan will continue to search for additional areas for improvement and growth in its policy toward foreign residents.

Closing Remarks

Mr. Yoshinori KATORI, Director General of the Consular Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Yoshinori Katori reviewed the topics covered during the symposium and thanked the participants. The positive side of accepting foreign residents has been mentioned by many speakers today. It is hoped that these issues can be addressed further in the future. Mr. Katori closed the symposium.