

## Judge Ms. Akane Tomoko, International Criminal Court

By Madoka Nishina



On Friday, August 23rd, 2019, the International School Network visited the International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague, Netherlands. When we arrived at the ICC, Judge (Ms.) Akane Tomoko met us at the entrance and took us inside through strict security. Firstly, we listened to a presentation about the ICC and then went on a tour of the building. We were able to see the hearing room from the visitors' view.

The ICC is working to investigate countries that are: in conflict, recovering, and politically unstable. The ICC tackles crimes that are widespread, against and attacking humanity, and a genocide. It is worth noting the difference between the ICC and the International Court of Justice (ICJ)- The ICC punishes people, while the ICJ settles arguments between countries. Ms. Akane Tomoko explained to us her role at the ICC as one of the 18 judges.

In her Division, Pre-Trial Chamber II, there are three judges: Ms. Tomoko Akane and two judges from Italy and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Ms. Akane notes that her work is very challenging, including the aspect of language; Discussions are in English, but there are many documents written in French, which she has to translate.

They are working on a Central African case now in which two defendants from Central Africa are detained in detention in the Hague. They are dealing with the situation in the pre-trials to decide if the charges are confirmed. She demonstrated that in brief, the process of the pre-trial is made by confirming the situation and then investigating the suspect-targeted case, by teams of three judges from each chamber along with legal officers from various backgrounds. After the confirmation hearing, six judges undergo the trial.

The whole process is very confidential until the decision is made.



Ms. Akane explained to us about her life working as a judge at the ICC. The ICC has no fixed work times, although usually office hours are from 8 to 5:30. Ms. Akane noted that this depends heavily on the workload at the given time. The judges have to be alert 24 hours a day and even on holidays. The ICC has very few Japanese staff, 12~14, of which some are temporary. Ms. Akane noted that she misses Japan and Japanese food. Not only is it hard to find Japanese cuisine like udon in the Hague, but she also stated that it is even hard to find rice. She misses Japanese food, including natto, tofu, miso, soba, and especially udon.

Ms. Tomoko Akane expressed her wish to welcome young Japanese people to visit the ICC. She wishes that more Japanese people can actively join and be curious about international settings. She aspires for Japanese people not to be afraid to ask questions and to step outside of the Japanese environment.



## Kuwait Embassy Interview



On September 25, 2019, the International School Network visited the Embassy of Kuwait to interview the Ambassador. His Excellency Mr. Hasan Mohammad Zaman.

H.E. Mr. Zaman explained that students in Kuwait tend to be very strong in geography, and are therefore familiar with Japan as a big economy.

H.E. Mr. Zaman expressed his hopes for students between Kuwait and Japan to further their connections. He explained that most Kuwaiti students come to Japan to study the Japanese language, which is the literature and the customs of Japan. On the other hand as well, H.E. Mr. Zaman commented that he hopes Japanese students can receive scholarships in Kuwait to study the Arabic language.

Trust between countries is one main challenge noted by H.E. Mr. Zaman. He hopes that he can change mentalities so that people can be more peaceful, and encouraged to fix problems in a peaceful manner. H.E. Mr. Zaman explained that education affects life and the mentality of a whole population. He mentioned that an example in the change of mentalities, fueled by education, is that of post-war Japan. After the war, Japanese people had passed the era by concentrating and learning to live in peace. Both Kuwait and Japan have been contributing to humanity issues in the world without a profit incentive. H.E. Mr. Zaman noted that there is the duty of a rich country to assist in humanity issues in other countries, such as peace and poverty. In such manner, H.E. Mr. Zaman noted Kuwait to be an advocate for world peace. Furthermore in 2016, the leader for the UN humanitarian issue was Kuwaiti.



Japan and Kuwait have had good relations since the independence of Kuwait in 1961. They have especially been partners in the oil sectors. Historically, H.E. Mr. Zaman noted that Kuwait will never forget the role Japan played in the liberation of Kuwait. Japan had supported Kuwait 13 million dollars during this rough time. Similarly, Kuwait has been helping Japan during times of need including the Great Tohoku Earthquake. H.E. Mr. Zaman noted that Kuwait donated 5 million barrels of oil to Japan. H.E. Mr. Zaman then explained that such support indicates great friendships.

H.E. Mr. Zaman's goal is to enhance the relations between Kuwait and Japan, especially in terms of economics. He explained that the oil sector and investment climate has been good between the two countries, and so he has the focus of attracting more Japanese investment to Kuwait.

## Jordan Embassy Interview



The International School Network went to the Embassy of the Ambassador of Jordan to Japan to interview the Ambassador H.E. Ms. Lina Annab.

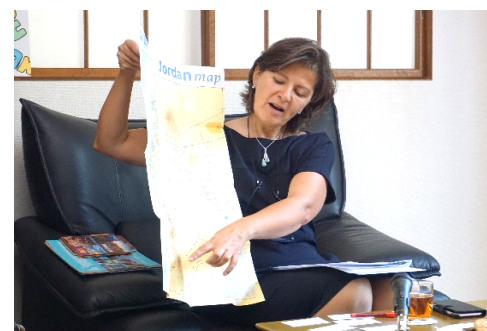
H.E. Ms. Annab considers some of the best qualities of Jordanians to be their warm and welcoming attitude and their authenticity. According to H.E. Ms. Annab, Tourists to Jordan always say that the best part of their trip was not the tourist spots, but the people of Jordan who are down to earth, modest and full of hospitality. She wishes for the people of Japan and Jordan to engage more in interacting with each other. She believes that the two countries share many similar cultures and history, and therefore the people will feel a stronger connection once they get to know

each other.

H.E. Ms. Annab's goals as the Ambassador of Jordan to Japan is to build on the already excellent relations between the two countries. She explained that this mission has a very strong foundation, as the two nations already have genuine love for each other. H.E. Ms. Annab hopes to further diversify the relations between the two nations as the "potential is tremendous," aiming to tackle the various aspects to make sure the relations can develop to the maximum level. In recent years, Prime Minister Abe has been visiting Jordan which has strengthened strategic ties, and H.E. Ms. Annab is very hopeful for the two countries' relations to get even stronger for the future. As a message towards Japanese people, H.E. Ms. Annab mentioned her hopes that Japanese people can be more aware of how admired they are from people all over the world. She hopes to share the good image and strong ties



between Jordan and Japan to more people. Furthermore, H.E. Ms. Annab aspires to break down the "psychological distance" that exists between Jordan and Japan, so that the two countries can come closer together, and exchange more visitors. There are few Japanese people visiting the Middle Eastern area, and vice versa. H.E. Ms. Annab hopes that people can break down stereotypes and so people can enjoy, share, and cherish different cultural values.



## Czech Republic Embassy Interview



On August 14, 2019, the International School Network visited the Embassy of the Czech Republic to interview the Ambassador, His Excellency Mr. Martin Tomčo.

As a nation with over 1000 years of history, H.E. Mr. Tomčo noted that culture is "almost everywhere" in the Czech Republic. Czech art is rich in various forms, including classical music and architecture. H.E. Mr. Tomčo recommends tourists to visit the castles in the Czech Republic, which the nation has about 2000!

H.E. Mr. Tomčo stated that "every Czech is a musician." There is also an internationally well-known Slavik painter, Mucha, whose art exhibitions are popular in Japan. As a nation in the heart of Europe, H.E. Mr. Tomčo explained that the Czech Republic is a globalized nation united in the diversity of languages and cultures. H.E. Mr. Tomčo noted that cuisine in the Czech Republic is also influenced by central Europe, with famous sweets and cakes similar to those in Austria. H.E. Mr. Tomčo described Czech people as being honest, open, and straightforward. This is also well-captured in the nation's motto, "Truth Prevail." H.E. Mr. Tomčo also noted that Czech people are very welcoming and pleasant.

H.E. Mr. Tomčo indicated that relations between the Czech Republic and Japan are longer than people expect. The first Czech was a Jesuit who arrived in Japan in 1802. Since then, the two countries have shared strategic partnerships and shared focuses on technology, innovation, and education.

H.E. Mr. Tomčo introduced that the Czech Republic is one of the first countries in the world to have high gender equality. In 1919, it was the 10th country in the world that implemented women's suffrage. As a sovereign and proud country, H.E. Mr. Tomčo explained that equality is an essential value for Czech people.

As the Ambassador, H.E. Mr. Tomčo hopes to develop stronger relations between the Czech Republic and Japan. H.E. Mr. Tomčo has been interested in Japan since his childhood, especially in the culture, such as Japanese tea and karate. He also had many Japanese friends growing up who had studied in the Czech Republic. Having the profession and hobby to travel, H.E. Mr. Tomčo had been familiar with Japan. He expressed his appreciation for Japanese politeness and positivity. He hopes that more Japanese people can go to the Czech Republic.



## Angola Embassy Interview



On August 19, 2019, the International School Network visited the Embassy of Angola in Tokyo for an interview with the Ambassador, His Excellency Mr. Rui Orlando XAVIER. When H.E. Mr. Xavier was appointed as the Ambassador of Angola to Japan; he was told by his President to create the bridge between Angola and the Japanese people. Angola and Japan have been sharing a friendly and strategic relationship. H.E. Mr. Xavier noted that is his first goal to improve the people-to-people relations, even before political relations. H.E. Mr. Xavier expressed his appreciation for Japan as a very comfortable place to work. H.E. Mr. Xavier has been impressed with how Japan is a very polite, kind, and clean nation. H.E. Mr. Xavier explained that he is

passionate to overcome any differences, and facilitate the communication between the two countries, and sign more contracts for a stronger relationship. H.E. Mr. Xavier feels that the relations between Angola and Japan have a strong potential, and is happy to be working in Japan. H.E. Mr. Xavier noted that Angola is a country that is very close to nature, with warm and kind people. Geographically, Angola has a variety of landscapes, including mountains and the ocean, and is closely connected to its bordering nations including Congo, Zambia, and Namibia. Angola is a very wide and large country with minerals and petroleum. Angola exports oil, gas, and minerals, and imports cars and machinery from Japan. H.E. Mr. Xavier explained that Angola is working to improve and establish stronger relations with every country, and as the Ambassador of Japan, hopes to improve the relations between Angola and Japan. H.E. Mr. Xavier joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1990. He explained that he worked “step-by-step” at different sections and gained experience in various fields. H.E. Mr. Xavier worked first as a secretary and then Counselor before being posted as an Ambassador. His previous postings as an Ambassador have been in France, Italy, and Portugal, where he

worked for 9 years. He then went back to Angola to work in the department for international relations before being appointed as the Ambassador to Japan last July. H.E. Mr. Xavier came to Japan in November, and presented his credentials to the Emperor in December. H.E. Mr. Xavier hopes to increase talks like this interview for improving relations between Japan and Angola. He hopes students in Japan can not only work for Japan but also for the peace of the entire world.



## Iraq Embassy Interview



On August 27th, 2019, the International School Network visited the Embassy of Iraq. Iraq is a nation with one of the oldest histories in the world. Debatably, the nation’s history can be traced back to 8 ~ 10 thousand years ago. H.E. Mr. Almosawi noted that the traditions of Iraq can be seen through its old language, which is not only a means for communication but also a code of conduct for society. H.E. Mr. Almosawi explained that the language represents Iraq’s traditions from about 8 thousand years ago. H.E. Mr. Almosawi described the Iraqi cultural values to be humble, generous, respectful, and hospitable. With 13 races, 9 religions, and multiple languages living in peaceful coexistence for more than 6 thousand years, Iraqi people have been very united in diversity.



H.E. Mr. Almosawi noted that this is the beauty of Iraqi society, that such a diverse group of people have been living in peace for a long time without problems between races or cultures. H.E. Mr. Almosawi explained that the violence of terrorist groups have occurred in Iraq resulted in the destruction of important historical and religious buildings, which is not only a crime to Iraq but also to humanity. The rich cultural heritage of Iraq is reflected by the buildings that were burnt down, including an 1800 year old church and a mosque from over a century ago. He explained that such terrorist destruction had been very moving and shocking to the country in terms of its cultural heritage and history of long peaceful coexistence. His passions about working as an ambassador revolve around teamwork, and how he gets to work with diplomats all over the world.

He mentioned that it is almost every ambassador’s dream to be employed in Japan, and he seemed very optimistic about being able to serve his country in Japan. H.E. Mr. Almosawi had a very strong message towards the Japanese students, which is to take a moment to relax and enjoy life. He expressed that children are truly happy when they are playing and running around outside, not being tied up with excessive studying and homework. The Japanese people’s determination to work very hard is admirable, but the amount of work prevents them from doing things that make them happy. He said he wants to see more people genuinely enjoy their life, and his main message towards students as well as the rest of the population is to go to school, be good, but most of all enjoy things that make them happy.



## Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan



Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Japan to interview the Director, Ms. Kayoko Fukushima on August 28, 2019.

Ms. Fukushima noted that Japan has been opening doors to trade and treaties since the Edo period. Since World War II, Japan has become determined to be a peaceful nation and has aided developing countries with global efforts and close focus on the SDGs. Ms. Fukushima believes that the first step towards world peace is first to build peace within our minds. Societies need to develop mutual respect and trust, founded on the principles of equality. Ms. Fukushima has been working in the MOFA since 1981 and has worked occasionally at the United Nations University and UN Women. The International



School Network has previously interviewed her at UN Women.

Initially, Ms. Fukushima felt a change when she came back to MOFA because of the difference in office environments. UN Women was a small and new office, which started with only two staff members! In comparison, the Diplomatic Archives is older and larger, having been built 50 years ago, operating with over 50 staff. Nevertheless, both of her positions have involved management and outreach activities, so Ms. Fukushima noted that her experiences at both offices had a lot in common. Ms. Fukushima also explained to us her challenges in balancing her work life



and private life as a working woman. She noted that Japan had come a long way in maternal care. When she had her first daughter, there was no childcare leave, but when she had her second daughter, she got a one year leave. Now, the Ministry can take up to three years of childcare leave.

Ms. Fukushima's message to students is to come to the Diplomatic Archives and to learn more about the international world and diplomacy. She hopes that more students can contact the Archives, and is willing to hold seminars and group tours for students. Ms. Fukushima also expressed that she would appreciate further cooperation, inquiries, and visits from Embassies.

As for her future goal, she is working to make the Diplomatic Archives more user-friendly and accessible. She aspires for more people to find the information and services provided by the Diplomatic Archives useful.



## India Embassy Interview



On August 30, 2019, the International School Network visited the Indian Embassy to interview His Excellency Mr. Sanjay Kumar Verma. India is very famous for its rich history of traditions, including its festivities dating two to three years back. H.E. Mr. Verma emphasized that Indian culture has both traditional and modern aspects and that many groups of people are working to preserve their traditions, as they are a "prized collection of Indian society." There is coexistence and hybrid between Indian cultures and distinct modernities, as can be seen in clothing.

India has a heterogeneous culture, supported by the constitution, recognizing 22 languages in the country. H.E. Mr. Verma explained that Indian people share the power of tolerance and trust in the "togetherness of people." He expressed that Indians are united and diverse in a very vibrant

way. H.E. Mr. Verma noted that this is a quality that the world must appreciate and that it is the foundation of peace and harmony. H.E. Mr. Verma explained that Indians practice peace in two different ways: (1) peace within yourself through the practice of meditation and yoga, and (2) peace around yourself by interaction with humans, flora, and fauna. He explained that "harmony is an extension of tolerance," and hopes that people around the world can understand the principles of unity in diversity. H.E. Mr. Verma's passion as the Indian Ambassador is to contribute to the convergence not only between the governments of India and Japan but also between the people. He hopes that the peoples can engage in various fields together, including tourism and research, and that the governments can develop and implement more frameworks for further cooperation. H.E. Mr. Verma expressed his appreciation for the Japanese value for nature, which he noted is also reflected in Japanese fresh and healthy cuisine.



He has a strong admiration for the Japanese sensitivity for the environment, including both their cultural interpretations (such as Mt. Fuji) and the nation's focus on climate change issues. H.E. Mr. Verma's impression on Japan is its "inherently cultured and disciplined" value. He is impressed by the Japanese belief in group activities, and how the people are very calculating and predicting when it comes to decision making. However, such carefulness can be a disadvantage- the process can become slow. H.E. Mr. Verma hopes that Japanese people can also take more risks by implementing and trying new things and concepts.

H.E. Mr. Verma's message to Japanese students is: "internationalization." He aspires to invite more Japanese people to travel, especially to India, to enrich their understandings of their culture and of humanity in general. He hopes students can learn about the international world, primarily through studying a universal language like English.



## World Intellectual Property Organization



On August 15, 2019, the International School Network visited the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) Japan Office to interview the Director, Mr. Yuji Okuma, the Counselor, Mr. Yohei Noda, and Associate Research Officer, Ms. Rebecca Ferderer.

Mr. Noda explained that SDG has always been a focus for WIPO as an organization stressing sustainability. There are two technology-based platforms that WIPO has for global issues in the context of SDGs. The first is WIPO Research. WIPO research is dedicated to research on medicines for neglected tropical diseases in developing countries, by universities and institutions. WIPO, in collaboration with companies from

providing know-how for chemical substances and collaborative resources. Many companies have been neglecting such research because the patients of the diseases do not have money. Therefore, these initiatives are essential for developing countries and advancing medicines. The second is WIPO Green, a public-private partnership. This initiative helps developed countries transfer technology to developing countries through a database of green technology. Developing countries can access this database and contact the relevant companies in developed countries, creating a network that can benefit both sides.

WIPO has a focus on inclusivity, and its balance between helping developed and developing countries. WIPO aims for its IP system to benefit all countries, and respects all opinions. Mr. Noda noted that there are many conferences on topics that can be a conflict of interest, such as patent rights and traditional knowledge. Raising awareness of the importance of IP, in general, is another challenge that WIPO is tackling. This is especially apparent in SMEs, who may not have enough staff of knowledge. WIPO is



working to help protect these businesses' IP. Finally, copyright infringement, especially those online, is an issue that WIPO aspires to raise awareness. These include youtube and e-books, which many young people around the world download without knowledge of its copyright. Mr. Okuma hopes that WIPO can raise awareness to protect and respect the copyright of various products and works. Mr. Okuma expressed his view about the first step to world peace. The world has faced various crises on all levels- worldwide, regional, and subregional. He believes that humankind should be patient, communicative, and considerate of the globe. Mr. Okuma noted that dialogue is critical, especially between national authorities.

## Cambodia Embassy Interview



On September 13, 2019, the International School Network visited the Royal Embassy of Cambodia to interview the Ambassador, His Excellency Mr. Ung Rachana.

H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana expressed that he is very ambitious in strengthening relations between Cambodia and Japan. Firstly, he hopes to advance bilateral ties further. He aspires to promote economic diplomacy in Japan. H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana noted that he had organized Cambodian festivals in Tokyo (Yoyogi Park in May) to encourage cultural exchange. The festival featured Cambodian food, handicrafts, and dance.

H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana also holds seminars in universities to raise awareness and promote the Cambodian economy and tourism in different Japanese prefectures. Finally, H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana aims to connect as many Japanese people with Cambodians as possible. He hopes that the two countries can exchange more visitors and tourists in the next coming years. H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana is delighted that direct flights between the two countries are always quickly booked during holiday seasons. With rising living standards and increasing the middle class in Cambodia, H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana is also excited for more people to be able to travel overseas.

H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana's message for Japanese people is to know more about Cambodia. He hopes that Cambodian tourism, culture, and food can be better understood in Japan. He hopes more people can come to Japan because there are "many things to offer to friends and students." H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana expressed that Cambodia had been a great empire from the 9th to the 13th Empire. He hopes more people can travel, because "seeing once is more meaningful than

hearing about something 100 times". Events H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana is organizing the Khmer Contest for Japanese speakers. This event, on October 5, is an opportunity for people to attend, learn, and meet new people. H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana also would like people to know that Cambodian people see Japanese people as friendly, warmhearted, and punctual. He wishes that Cambodia can learn about Japanese life and way of working. Finally, H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana was born during war times and remembers the reconstruction of the nation. He explained that he has always "dreamt of seeing peace in the country and in his region." H.E. Mr. Ung Rachana also noted that education is the "core of humanity," and it is what helps shape a peaceful future.



# Kanagawa International School

**Kindergarten Class** Age : from 2 years old  
 Regular Class : Monday to Friday 9:00-14:30  
 Saturday Kindergarten Class : Saturday 9:00-14:00  
**Elementary Class** Age :6 to 12 years old

•Totsuka School  
 3940 Totsuka-cho, Totsuka-ku,  
 Yokohama  
 •Fujisawa School  
 17-1 Minami-Fujisawa, Fujisawa



## Kenya Embassy Interview



H.E. Mr. Maina had emphasized the friendly relations of Kenya and Japan since the independence of Kenya from British rule. According to the embassy, "Kenya is the leading recipient of Japanese development Assistance (ODA) in the Sub-Saharan Africa, and the aid is mainly focused on the improvement of technology, infrastructure, economics, agriculture, environment, education, and health." The country strives to leave poverty in the past and enter the international markets by efficiently utilizing the aid from Japan. Conversely, Japan has received generous donations from Kenya as well. After the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster of 2011, Kenya donated 1 million USD to Japan. Additionally, just last year, Kenya donated 1 ton of Kenyan tea to Southwestern Japan

when they were hit with destructive natural disasters. In terms of trade, Kenya exports products such as tea, coffee, Macadamia nuts and roses to Japan. Japan exports cars, machinery, and other technological products to Kenya. H.E. Mr. Maina hopes that Kenya and Japan would cooperate to maintain peaceful relations in favor of both sides.

According to H.E. Mr. Maina, there are four values that are the core of Kenya's culture, and the first and most important is 'family'. Through the marriage institution, individuals have the power to create families and raise children to engage in beliefs that are true to their specific tribes. Morality is another core value of Kenya because it drives society to always continue improving. Then it is followed by leadership and the concept of private ownership of property. Kenya is being the first country to ban the manufacturing, selling, and use of plastics. H.E. Mr. Maina introduced that 83% of energy in Kenya is from renewable resources; the nation mostly relies on geothermal and solar energy, and a bit of hydroelectric energy. Furthermore, the President launched the biggest wind power project in Africa, which generates 381 megawatts of electricity.

Kenya is a technological center in Africa. Kenya has succeeded in two key projects: The first is Kenya's high ICT infrastructure, consisting of a sophisticated and secure system. Kenya has connected the undersea system with high internet levels (of 13.5MB per second). The second is its highly educated and young population, who are the drivers of innovation and startups. Many companies have been outsourcing through Kenya, and the range of industries have only been increasing. H.E. Mr. Maina hopes that Japanese companies can invest more in technology in Africa.

H.E. Mr. Maina also explained cashless payments to be an important gateway for economic development. What is significant about Kenya's technological infrastructure is that everyone in the country, in both rural and urban areas, own a smartphone. This has allowed for communication and economic transactions over any distance, leading to an improvement in economic inclusion.



## Bosnia and Herzegovina Embassy Interview



On August 7, 2019, the International School Network visited the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina to interview the Ambassador, His Excellency Dr. Sinisa Berjan. H.E. Dr. Berjan noted that relations between Japan and Bosnia and Herzegovina are strong and at a high level. He expressed that he is grateful for the Japanese government and people in helping the nation with its reconstruction. Japan has been Bosnia and Herzegovina's biggest financial donor of financial and reconstruction of schools and hospitals. H.E. Dr. Berjan noted his appreciation for Japan and that he hopes he can further strengthen the relations between the two countries in aspects such as trade. He explained that there are many things Bosnia has to offer, including furniture, food, and

honey, and that the nation hopes to learn from Japan and its innovative skills as well. Furthermore, H.E. Dr. Berjan touched upon the subject of cultural exchange, such as in sports, education, and science.

H.E. Dr. Berjan's passion for working as the Ambassador of Bosnia and Herzegovina includes the opportunity to meet different people from different cultures. He is grateful for his encounters with Japanese people as well as his embassy staff. His goal as the Ambassador is to strengthen and deepen the already good relations of the two nations. He explained that there is much space to improve in the bilateral relations and so he hopes to promote Bosnia and Herzegovina in Japan, especially through various activities that can help familiarize Bosnia to the people. Since H.E. When Mr. Berjan was a child, he was inspired by world geography, as a focus of Bosnian education. H.E. Mr. Berjan reminisced about his childhood cartoon that was about a traveler, and how he had always wanted to become a traveler of the world. This dream has come true!

His message to students in Japan is to challenge themselves, and to try to learn foreign languages. He explained this by illustrating the path of keeping step with the changing world by learning about foreign cultures and adapting to new knowledge.

Meanwhile, he also mentioned that it is important for the younger generation of Japan to keep and preserve the traditions and customs that the whole world admires. Nonetheless, H.E. Mr. Berjan highlighted that each individual should organize their lives to maximize fulfillment by maintaining a balance of hard work and following dreams to reach results, and also to value friends, family, and recreational activities.



## International Monetary Fund Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific



On August 8th, 2019, the International School Network visited the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (OAP) in Tokyo, Japan.

Mr. Sumi introduced to us the three functions of the IMF OAP: lending, surveillance, and capacity development. Firstly, the IMF lends to its member countries at times of emergencies, such as when a country, for any reason such as overspending, is unable to pay back their loans.



The IMF comes in to lend and correct policy patterns to bring back the order in the balance of payments. For instance, at the time of the Euro financial crisis, the withdrawal of bonds from Greece fueled by the Greek misrepresentation of management turned into a problem for the Euro. The IMF stepped in with their conditionality, or “belt-tightening” policies, to guide Greece away from the root of the problem. Mr. Sumi noted that these policies, which change previous habits and old ways, may be regarded as harsh and unpopular. Mr. Sumi used the analogy of the IMF being like a doctor- a doctor focuses on the long term health of the patient, so an unpleasant hospitalization may be forced to prevent an unfavorable lifestyle. For example, diabetes can be treated by hospitalization that forces patients to eat healthy foods instead of what the patient is used to and desires.

In addition, the IMF undergoes surveillance to look at the policies and its overall effects. The IMF publishes reports on the economic situations of countries, and most of them are disclosed. The IMF also undergoes capacity development so policy makers can gain knowledge to pay attention to the important indicators. For instance, the IMF OAP invites officials from 19 countries to get together for such training, paid by the Bank of Japan. The significance of the IMF is its role in smooth money trade. Mr. Sumi pointed out that the flow of goods is handled by the WTO and GATS, and that both the money and goods flow make up multilateral trade.



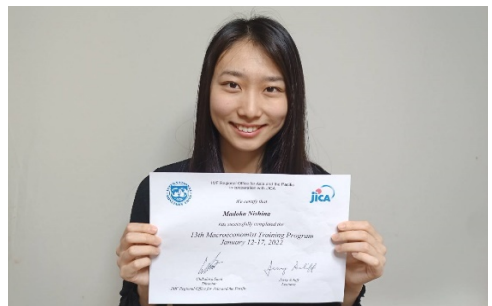
The IMF was established in 1944, after World War II, to prevent the economic reasons of the war: with shrunken trade and the increase of bloc economies, countries imposed tariffs and devalued their currency to save money but this in turn caused destabilization and less interdependence between countries. Henceforth, as WWII was coming to a close, the winning nations assured free trade and interdependence for a friendlier and richer global economy. As Japan is not a small country, Mr. Sumi believes that Japanese people must take the role as one of the leading economies of the world to learn more about other countries and express opinions more. Japan has recently been taking the role as the leader in various global issues such as climate change, breaching problems and connecting countries together as friends. However, because of the modest culture, many Japanese people still tend to be very shy about sharing their voice. Mr. Sumi noted that Japanese people should be prepared to share opinions when asked in a global environment, and these opinions do not necessarily have to stay fixed; people should listen attentively and form opinions which they can change at any time. This way, more Japanese people can participate and think about global issues.

The IMF OAP is stationed in Japan and has a significant role. The missions of the IMF Regional Office of Asia and Pacific include surveillance, as the annual reports and statistics published by the IMF are conveyed to the Asia and Pacific, and used and trusted by various entities such as Japanese companies. There are also seminars held to tell what is done in the headquarters, as a flow of information. One thing that Mr. Sumi explained that he would like to increase the flow of information from Asia to the headquarters. Despite plenty of information flow from the headquarters to Asia and the Pacific, Mr. Sumi noted that there is not enough flow of information in the opposite direction.

Especially because Japan has knowledge of Asia, he wants to input this knowledge back to the headquarters through increasing meetings. Another one of Mr. Sumi’s goals is to increase training opportunities. For instance, Mr. Sumi is now focusing on the Macroeconomist Training Program, which trains graduate (and undergraduate) students how the IMF looks at the economy, as a standard approach. He hopes to promote the profession of an economist as a career choice in international organizations- especially the field of macroeconomics.



Madoka Nishina from the International School Network completed the 13th Macroeconomist Training Program (MTP), an intensive course on IMF economic surveillance in January 2022 hosted by the OAP. The course explained the roles of the IMF and methods on macroeconomic policy analysis, and included team analysis projects and presentations on countries’ current situations. The participants were mostly students from global backgrounds in their masters’ programs in fields related to economics.



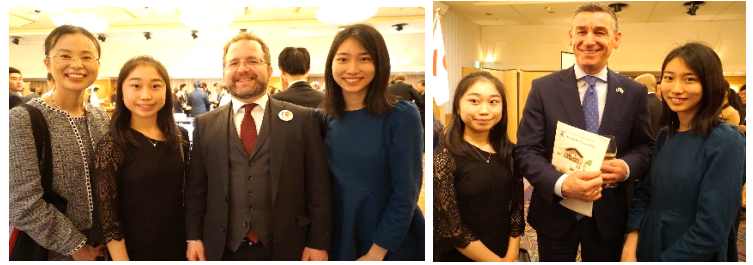
## Myanmar Reception

The Ambassador H.E. Mr. Myint Thu invited us to the reception for the 72nd Anniversary of the Independence Day of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar on January 24th, 2020 at the Embassy of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar.



## Kosovo Reception

H.E. Mr. Leon Malazogu invited us to the piano concert and reception for the 10th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between the Republic of Kosovo and Japan and the 11th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Kosovo on March 14th, 2019 at Hotel Okura Tokyo.



## Tajikistan Embassy Interview



On August 14, 2019, the International School Network visited the Embassy of Tajikistan to interview His Excellency Mr. Mirzosharif Jalolov Asomuddinovich.

With the motto to unite, H.E. Mr. Jalolov explained that Tajikistan had been involved in domestic wars from 1992~1997. He shared with us four of the goals Tajikistan is undertaking.

The first is the industrialization strategic goal. 70-75% of the population live in rural areas and are engaged in agriculture. Yet with a growing population, H.E. Mr. Jalolov noted that there is a need for more jobs.



The second is to break out communication debt. Now, there are bridges to Afghanistan being made to facilitate more movement. Thirdly, H.E. Mr. Jalolov explained that energy self-sufficiency is a massive goal for the country, which has been achieved! The nation operates on hydroelectric power. Finally, H.E. Mr. Jalolov mentioned that there is still a long way to go with the goal of food security.

H.E. Mr. Jalolov hopes that there can be more trade and economic relations, which are still not intact due to the distance between the countries. H.E. Mr. Jalolov expects that Tajik green products, such as wild pistachios, grown without fertilizers or pesticides, or sweet licorice roots used in medicine, can be

exported to Japan. H.E. Mr. Jalolov's goal as the Ambassador of Tajikistan is to develop interactions between his country and Japan in terms of trade, economics, investment, and tourism. He is also keen on the educational collaborations between the two countries, including the sciences.

H.E. Mr. Jalolov's message for students is to "be honest with yourself." He hopes that everyone can learn as much as they can, as he believes that knowledge is the most valuable thing for a student. He explained that what you learn in childhood is what is imprinted in stone in your memory. H.E. Mr. Jalolov introduced to us a Persian saying that goes, "The knowledge itself is the light in your heart" and "shields from any bad in your life." This portrays how education prepares people for their lives.

H.E. Mr. Jalolov also recommends students to learn foreign languages and travel more, especially for Japanese people as they live in an island country. He hopes that through their studies and travels, students can interact and find solutions from outside their societies because no society is perfect.

## International School Network Main Members



**Karen Nishina**  
Assistant Director  
Sophia University



**Yuno Sudo**  
Reporter  
Yokohama National University



**Kazuha Ishii**  
Reporter  
Tokyo University of Science



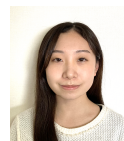
**Miku Irisawa**  
Reporter  
Seijyo University



**Ayano Shirai**  
Reporter  
Senzoku Gakuen High School



**Aoi Usuda**  
Reporter  
Hosei University



**Mayu Pae**  
Reporter  
Meiji Gakuin University



**Oriie Nishina**  
Chief Manager



**Masayuki Nishina**  
Chief Executive Officer



We aspire to convey the meaning of world peace through the importance of tradition cultural diversity, environmental preservation, and social, gender, and ethnic equality.