

The Intlschool Network News

International School Network News from Japan

April 2015 #6

Kingdom of Bahrain National Day Reception



The International School Network was invited to the National Day Reception of the Kingdom of Bahrain by Ambassador Dr. Khalil Hassan. The reception was held at the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo in December 2014, celebrating the 40th Anniversary of the country's independence.

The reception was hosted by the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Bahrain to Japan, His Excellency Dr. Khalil Hassan, and his wife, Her Excellency Dr. Yoshiko Hatakeyama. With over 1,000 guests, the reception was a very astounding and exceptional experience for us.

Ambassador Dr. Khalil Hassan presented a speech about the growing relations of Bahrain and Japan at the beginning of the reception. On the left is a photo of the International School Network with the Ambassador.



Above is a photo with the Second Secretary, Mr. Ahmed Al Teraifi, and his wife, Mrs. Shaima AlBahrani.



We were able to enjoy delicious traditional cuisine and performances of Arabian and Japanese music at the reception.



Above is a group photo with the Beninese Ambassador to Japan, His Excellency Mr. Zomahoun D. C. Rufin.

Reported by Madoka Nishina

Maid Cafe in Akihabara @home cafe

I visited the maid cafe in Akihabara with my friend, Moe. It was our first time. Three maids welcomed us at the entrance and took us to our seats.



They introduced themselves and gave us the menu. There were a variety of foods and drinks.

We ordered two drinks, a plate of omelet rice, and two parfaits.



At first, Moe got a drink called "Furi-Furi-Shyaka-Shyaka-Mix-Jyuuchyu." We mixed the liquid in a shaker and cast a spell to make it delicious. I got "Matcha-Latte" which was sweet green tea with milk on the top matcha green tea on the bottom. President and Representative Maid Hitomin (in the middle) drew a cute cat on the latte for me.

Then we were served the omelet rice. Ms. Hitomin drew us a poodle on the omelet with ketchup. It was very cute. To make the omelet rice better, we cast a spell that goes, "Moe-moe-kiyuun!" Finally, we got our parfait. We said "pyonn-pyonn-pyonnpyokorin" to make it delicious. Lastly, we wore a headband with sheep ears and took a special photo with the three maids on the stage. The maids are studying English very hard for the foreign customers. A lot of the customers were from other countries. The menu is translated into English and Chinese. Their website is translated into English, Chinese, and Korean. Customers are given of chopsticks which has the Japanese flag and the customer's country's flag as a present.

Reported by Karen Nishina

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 :5 to 12 years old

Sunday Elementary Class : Sunday 9:00-15:00

Middle school Class Age :11 to 15 years old

Sunday Middle School Class : Sunday 15:00-17:00



• Totsuka School
3940 Totsuka-cho, Totsuka-ku, Yokohama,
• Fujisawa School
17-1 Minami-Fujisawa, Fujisawa,
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Please send us an e-mail; we will be willing to interview you. Please contact us if you would like to post written work. We are also accepting advertisements. Thank you for reading.

Director: Madoka Nishina (11th grade St. Maur)

Reporters: Kate Shimizu (11th grade Seisen), Karen Nishina (5th grade St. Maur)

Ethiopia Embassy Interview

In December 2014, the International School Network visited the Embassy of Ethiopia to interview the Ambassador, His Excellency Mr. Markos Tekle Rike.



Ethiopia is a landlocked country in East Africa, with a culture of diverse ethnicities. Over 80 independent languages are spoken in the country. The Ambassador commented that it is important for the people to recognize and accommodate the beauty of diversity. The official language of Ethiopia is Amharic, yet different regions of Ethiopia have their own official languages. Children are taught in their regional mother tongues at schools.

The people in Ethiopia use a unique calendar and time system, different from the Gregorian calendar, which is widely used in the West.



Ethiopian families are highly extended, and the people value supporting family members. As the founding country of coffee, Ethiopian people socialize with their friends, neighbors, and relatives by drinking coffee together. The Ambassador commented that the sound of grinding coffee beans will automatically invite neighbors over to the house. We were served very delicious coffee at the embassy.

Injera is a popular food eaten in Ethiopia, and grain is the staple food of the country. Raw meat is also widely eaten by the people.



Ethiopia and Japan have had very good relations, and embassies were made in both countries at early stages. The royal families of both countries shared excellent relations. Recent relations between the two countries are shown through product exchange, as Japanese cars are popular in Ethiopia, and Ethiopian coffee is popular in Japan.

The Ambassador wishes to bring a stronger connection between Ethiopia and Japan. He has mentioned that he wishes to deepen the understanding of Ethiopia in the Japanese community, and that he would like bring Ethiopian products such as flowers and sesame to Japan as well as bringing Japanese technology and businesses to Ethiopia.

Reported by Madoka Nishina

Samoa Embassy Interview

In December 2014, the International School Network went to the Embassy of the Independent State of Samoa to interview the Ambassador, His Excellency Dr. Kilifoti Eteuati.



Samoa is an island country that developed unique traditions with a strong relationship to nature. Music and dancing have always been an important part of their lives. People often sing together in the streets, on boats, and in churches. This contributes to the joyous mood of the community. People dance, sing, and have great feasts at their unique rituals and festivities, including weddings and ceremonies of tattoo work. The Samoan people have a very preserved tradition, maintained by their social structure which is based on the ownership of land.

80~85% of the population live in traditional villages run by chiefs. Samoan societies are therefore stable and secure.



Samoa is blessed with a tropical climate and beautiful natural environment. Beaches, covered by thick coral sand, attract tourists and allow bountiful fishing. The Ambassador mentioned that seawater in Samoa is very warm, and so on many occasions, he has had to swim away from shore where the water is cooler. Samoa is a mountainous volcanic island, with diverse natural features. The main islands are covered in tropical rainforests, waterfalls, and streams. The environment is well preserved, as the country hosts regional environmental organizations. Japan and Samoa have very friendly relations.



Japan has contributed to Samoa's society by building hospitals and schools, and by showing support to their energy resources. Japan had helped to build The National University of Samoa. Samoa has supported Japanese opinions in international conferences such as the United Nations. At the end of the interview, Ambassador Dr. Kilifoti commented that he wishes to continue supporting the positive relations between Samoa and Japan. He aspires to keep close relations with the Japanese community through political and social aspects. *Reported by Madoka Nishina*



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Tunisia Embassy Interview

On December 24, 2014, the International School Network visited the Embassy of the Republic of Tunisia. The Ambassador, His Excellency Mr. Farhad Khlif, and the First Secretary, Mr. Boughanmi, welcomed us warmly.



Tunisia is the Northernmost country in Africa, with four moderate seasons. Summer in the south is hot and dry, whereas on the coast, the climate is warm and moderate. Tunisia has various natural features, including mountains, plains, fertile land useful for agriculture, and the Saharan desert. Couscous is a staple food in Tunisia, often eaten with red sauce and vegetables. It has become a globally popular dish. Seafood is also a popular food in Tunisia, especially cooked fish, octopuses, and squids.



We were served delicious pastries and mint tea at the embassy. "Ears of the judge" is a spiral-shaped sweet seasoned with sesame and honey. "Makrouth" is a small cake filled with date paste. These pastries are served in family gatherings, and at dinners during the Ramadan month in Tunisia. "Kaak Warka" is a round, white sweet, with a water rose scent. This treat is served at weddings and celebrations in Tunisia.



The Tunisian Ambassador to Japan, His Excellency Mr. Farhad Khlif, kindly explained to us his mission and goals as an ambassador. First, he stated that his main mission was to strengthen the relationship between Tunisia and Japan. Mr. Khlif is eager to increase the promotion of Tunisia in Japan to increase the number of Japanese tourists in his country. He wishes to connect the people's hearts and explore each other's beautiful cultures. *Reported by Madoka Nishina and Kate Shimizu*



Iraq Embassy Interview

On February 24th, 2015, the International School Network visited the Embassy of Iraq. We interviewed the Ambassador of the Republic of Iraq in Japan, His Excellency Mr. Alaa Majid Al-Hashimy, and the First Secretary, Ms. Zena H. Al Khaleel.



Iraq is a country in Middle Eastern Asia, rich in history and culture. The educational focus of primary school education in Iraq is on writing and speaking in Arabic. Many people are able to speak English as a foreign language, as it has recently been implemented into the education. English is offered from the first grade in primary school. Kurdish is an indigenous language spoken in Northern Iraq.



The civilization of Iraq had developed along the Tigris and Euphrates river. Mountains and lakes cover Iraq in the North, flat land in the center, and rivers and lakes are found in the South of the country. The summers in Iraq are hot and dry, with the temperature reaching up to 50 . However, snow is present on high mountains in Iraq. The cultural values of the people in Iraq include life and family. People tend to eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner at home with their families. Arabian music and Kurtish music are popular in Iraq, and musical contests are enjoyed by a wide range of audience. The Ambassador stated that the date palm trees are like the "Mother" of Iraq. There used to be approximately 30 million date palms in Iraq, which allowed the country to be the home to the largest number of date palms. These trees provided the people of Iraq with shadows, protecting them from the heat. There are about 300 types of date trees, and their leaves and wood were used for houses and construction. Date trees play a large role in the foundation of the Iraqi people's lives. They are now used as a symbol in Iraqi coins.



Ambassador Mr. Alaa Majid Al-Hashimy wishes that the Japanese people would learn more about Iraq and the Iraqi culture. He states that people should not completely follow the media, as they only show the tragic side of events. He also wishes to convey that most of Mesopotamia had been in Iraq, and that there is a colorful history through this connection. The Ambassador explained that his goal is to spread the beauty and greatness of Iraq to the people of Japan.

Reported by Madoka Nishina



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Romania Embassy Interview

The International School Network went to the Embassy of Romania to interview the Ambassador, His Excellency Dr. Radu Petru Serban, about his country.



During the encounter, the Ambassador introduced us to the various aspects of his country, including the nation's delicious cuisines, and his opinions on the Romania-Japan relationship. Romania is located in southeastern-central Europe and borders countries such as Hungary, Serbia, Ukraine, Moldova, and Bulgaria. The nation is well known for its natural ecosystem. Romania has a very precious environment that is home to about 50% of Europe's brown bears.

Romania is also well known for their food production due to their highly-advanced agriculture. Some popular foods we were introduced to that day were mamaliga (a Romanian cornmeal porridge), mititei (the Romanian word for "little things", which is a dish consisting of beef, lamb, and pork with spice seasonings), papanasi (a fried pastry with cheese, sour cream, and jam), and sarmale (rolled cabbage made of grape leaves). The Ambassador explained to us that sarmale is often eaten during special occasions such as Christmas or the New Years. Additionally, mititei is most commonly eaten during Labour Day.

We were served delicious Romanian cheese cookies at the embassy. At the end of the interview, Dr. Serban presented to us about the relationship between Romania and Japan. Romania and Japan share a very good relationship.



Presently, Romania has about 170 Japanese companies operating and offering a good amount of employment. As for trading, the two countries' commerce has reached to about six thousand million dollars. The most impressive episode to me was the warm support of the Romanian students towards the victims of the Great Tohoku Earthquake.



Supportive messages and drawings were sent to the children around the Fukushima area. The art works have carried out the strong bond between Japan and Romania, which has developed into a friendship exchange relation.

Reported by Yukika Tomizawa and Kurumi Onishi

Bosnia and Herzegovina Embassy Interview

The International School Network went to the Embassy of Bosnia and Herzegovina in Tokyo on February 6, 2015. We interviewed the Ambassador, Her Excellency Ms. Anesa Kundurovic, about her country.



The people in Bosnia and Herzegovina have the cultural value of sharing with one another. The cross of civilizations allowed the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina to respect their own culture and those of their neighbors. The Ambassador commented that boundaries would not matter if people are connected. She stated that connections give people the opportunities to learn, meet other cultures, and respect others.

Ms. Kundurovic commented on the importance of educating people on the preservation of nature. Bosnia and Herzegovina has one of the world's cleanest water and air. Ms. Kundurovic said that the world must work to preserve nature and to reduce pollution, especially because of the climate changes the Earth is facing. She mentioned that the average person uses about 20-30 liters of water in vain every year in the morning, and that one thing we can do to reduce this number is by closing the water faucet as frequently as possible.



Ms. Anesa Kundurovic explained to us that it is important to know what you want in life, set goals, and study hard, although education does not cover everything one should know. She told us that it is important to find confidence within



ourselves, and to succeed step by step towards our goals. She told us a saying that states, "One closing door means the opening of another". This means that one must not give up when something is not going well. Instead, one should learn from mistakes to find more opportunities.

Her Excellency Ms. Anesa Kundurovic commented that being an Ambassador is a large responsibility, but is very rewarding, as it allows her to meet people and see the various cultures of the world.

Reported by Madoka Nishina

Netherlands Interview at the Ambassador's Residence

The International School Network went to the residence of the Ambassador of the Netherlands to Japan on February 20th, 2015. We interviewed His Excellency Mr. Radinck Jan Van Vollenhoven about his country.



The Ambassador's residence is located at the highest point of Tokyo, and its 1st floor is beautifully designed with Dutch works and museum pieces, including vases, porcelain tableware, paintings, and modern furniture and lights.



Dutch art has a very strong tradition, and it is internationally very well known. The garden of the Ambassador's residence was of a Japanese style.



We were able to see an impressive view of Tokyo Tower from the garden in the night sky. It was lit up in bright orange, which is the national color of the Netherlands.

Tokyo Tower is located very close to the Ambassador's residence.



Students in the Netherlands are ranked to have one of the best well-beings in the world. Ambassador Mr. Van Vollenhoven believes that the freedom granted to the children leads them to develop talents and skills from curiosity and critical mindedness. Many people in the Netherlands are fluent speakers of multiple languages, and the English language takes a large part of their everyday lives. An example of this is the language of movies, as English movies are shown in English instead of being dubbed into Dutch.



Japan and the Netherlands have had a very close and friendly relationship. The royal family of the Netherlands and the imperial family of Japan have had state visits in 1991, symbolizing the excellent relationship of the two countries at the highest level. The Ambassador commented that the Netherlands and Japan are able to speak to each other as friends.



As a message towards Japanese people, the Ambassador commented on the systems of whaling and the death penalty in Japan. Whaling is not justified in the Netherlands. The Ambassador believes that Japan should take measures to stop the fishing for whales. The Ambassador suggested that Japan should take steps towards the abolishment of the death penalty, such as by issuing moratoriums.



Another element the Ambassador mentioned as a message to Japanese people was that he hopes the Japanese soccer team will do well in world championships. He also hoped that a Dutch coach would be chosen to coach for the Japanese soccer team.

Reported by Madoka Nishina



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Jordan Interview with the Spouse of the Ambassador at the Ambassador's Residence

The International School Network went to the residence of the Ambassador of Jordan to Japan to interview the Ambassador's spouse, Her Excellency Madame Shifa Haddad.



Madame Haddad specializes in landscape architecture, which includes the architecture of houses in relation to gardens. She has a Master's Degree in the history of architecture, as she studied architecture and its harmony with nature. She is also very good at the Japanese language, and was before awarded with the Monbusho Scholarship. Her interest in the Japanese culture started when she watched her mother practice ikebana, Japanese flower arrangement. Her mother used only three flowers in her work. The flowers symbolized humans, earth, and heaven. Madame Haddad was amazed by the simplicity and beauty of ikebana.

Madame Shifa Haddad commented that the number of staff members in the Embassy of Jordan is rather small, with 10-11 people. She is proud that the embassy members support each other to undergo many activities that are normally done by more people. Madame Haddad's responsibilities as the Jordanian Ambassador's spouse covers social and cultural aspects. She gives lectures and does story-telling, meets people and groups, and organizes bazaars, charities, exhibitions, and cooking classes. Madame Haddad presented to us several interesting cultural similarities and differences between Jordan and Japan. Jordan and Japan were historically connected by the Silk Roads, where traditional objects, along with ideas, were traded and shared. Similar traditions of the two countries in art include wooden mosaics and floral designs. Similar to the traditional Japanese houses, traditional Jordanian houses are delicate and open to the environment and nature. They have no doors at entrances, making them open for guests.

Traditional Jordanian houses are made of mud. They have a plain beige color which allows them to blend in with nature. From the outside, these houses are not very colorful except for during the short period of spring, when flowers and green plants grow in the mud. In contrast to the simple exterior, Jordanian homes are colorful and rich on the inside. The colors used indoors contrast nature, which is opposite to Japanese homes, because traditional Japanese homes are colorful on the outside but are rather plain on the inside.

Jordanians were traditionally bonded with one another by families and towns through the tribal systems. People were very welcoming to guests, allowing them to visit and stay in their houses. Jordanians are very hospitable, as the people took care of guests in their homes without inquiring questions for three days and three nights. Another sign of hospitality in Jordan is the slaughtering of sheep for guests done by traditional Jordanian shepherds. This sacrifice of valuable sheep for guests shows the generosity of the people of Jordan.

Madame Shifa Haddad's message towards Japanese people and students is to be proud of yourself, to not be shy or afraid to make mistakes when learning foreign languages, and to take good care of your culture. *Reported by Madoka Nishina*



Madame Shifa Haddad embraced me in a hug when I expressed my thanks towards the people in Jordan for their support for the Japanese people considering the unfortunate events in the Middle East. Madame Haddad mentioned that she was good friends with Mr. Kenji Goto. She met him in Jordan in 2004 where she worked as a translator in an NHK television show.



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