

Tokyo Conference for the Ex-PYs of the SWY Programs 2008 – Minutes

Chairperson: Juan S. Betancor

Note taker: Vitta Abdel Rehim Ibrahim and Juan S. Betancor

Conference Delegates:

Ms. Eman Rashed Salman Dhaif Al Banna (Bahrain)
Ms. Vitta Abdel Rehim Ibrahim (Egypt)
Mr. Konstantinos Tsigkaras Konstantinidis (Greece)
Mr. Ravi Chopra (India)
Ms. Tamae Saito (Japan)
Mr. Anthony Tom Oluoch (Kenya)
Mr. Saleh Adullah Mohamed Al-Zadjaly (Oman)
Ms. Isha Gene Pothin (Seychelles)
Mr. Juan Sebastian Betancor Dominguez (Spain)
Mr. Thushara Depal Dias Dahanayake (Sri Lanka)
Ms. Jenny Magdalena Jonstoj (Sweden)
Mr. Charles Alex Murasi (Tanzania)
Mr. Yousef Mubarak Salem Bin Mukhashen (Yemen)

Japanese Committee Members:

Ms. Yuka Teranishi
Ms. Yasuko Nakayama
Ms. Yoko Takashima
Mr. Koki Fukasaku
Mr. Atsushi Tokuno
Ms. Arisa Hayashi

IYEO/CENTERYE

Ms. Reiko Ohashi
Ms. Sayoko Tanaka

Monday, March 17, 2008

Conference 1 - Agenda 1

- **Orientation, self introduction**
- **Preparation for the meeting with the Japanese Government**

Tamae (Japan) introduced the agenda of the Ex-PY Conference 2008.

The delegates introduced themselves and gave a briefing about their expectations about the conference.

Questions for the Cabinet Office raised from the representatives of different AA's were summarized as follows:

1. How does the Cabinet Office evaluate the SWY program?
2. How can SWYAA be involved in the selection of the PYs for the SWY program?
3. Expectations for the post-program activities: in which area should SWYAA focus in its post-program activities?
4. Should the AAs aim at acting as an NGO?
5. What are the differences between the SWY and other international youth exchange programs?
6. How do you choose the port of call countries?
7. What are the expectations of the Cabinet Office for the ex-PY NLs and Advisors so that they can contribute their past experiences to the program?
8. How can different countries contribute financially to the SWY program?
9. How does the Japanese Government benefit from hosting the SWY program?

10. SWYAA would like to have a formal recognition by the Japanese Embassy or Japanese related organizations such as JICA so that our activities in the country will be more effective.

Conference 2 - Agenda 2

– SWYAA Global Assembly

Agenda 2 started with a presentation from Konstantinos (Greece) about the 1st Global Assembly which took place in Greece in September 2007. He showed a video of the event and explained the different activities which took place during the Global Assembly. Furthermore, he explained about the fees which ex-PYs had to pay to attend the Assembly and talked about the three main problems that they faced:

- 1- Last minute cancellations of ex-PYs which created an organizational problem to the host country
- 2- Budget problems as the Greek Government proclaimed early elections that led to cancellation of their financial support
- 3- The AA was not clear about the IYEO's exact expectations on social contribution activities until few days before the reunion.

Then, Konstantinos pointed out that the focus of the Global Assembly was the contribution to society from ex-PYs, especially the promotion of environmental conscious in Athens, supported by Athens City Hall, where the participants joined an environmental awareness campaign. As last summer's huge forest fires ravaged the country resulting in casualties, it was agreed that any fundraising activity through the Global Assembly would be donated to the fire affected people.

Tamae (Japan) explained that IYEO is the main host and the country is the co-cost for the Global Assembly. That is because IYEO will coordinate with the co-hosting country to organize activities, and also in case of an accident IYEO takes the responsibility and looks after the situation. The co-hosting country is expected to receive the applications from the participants, coordinate programs in the country, host a Conference for Post-Program Activities, and organize volunteer activities.

In this 1st Global Assembly IYEO approached Greece as they are a very organized and active AA, and because they were to organize an unofficial reunion anyway.

Tamae talked about the criteria of choosing the country to co-host Global Assembly, which are:

- 1- They must have an active AA
- 2- The country is easily accessible and safe, and also capable for handling the Assembly
- 3- Have experience in hosting unofficial reunions or gathering of ex-PYs in the past

Tamae mentioned that the range of the participation fee was between 300 US\$ and 350 US\$ for four nights and five days, and the host country is asked to minimize the cost or find sponsorship so ex-PYs pay as less as possible.

Tamae also announced that the country which will host the 2nd SWYAA Global Assembly in 2008 will be Japan. From August 21st to 24th, there will be the official Global Assembly in Tokyo. During this time, the participants will stay in a hotel or a hostel. Following this, from August 19th to 20th, IYEO will charter Nippon Maru to hold a reunion cruise for all the former participants of international youth exchange programs, which will be an optional part of the Global Assembly.

Konstantinos explained both the positive and negative points as taken from the evaluation forms that were handed out to the ex-PYs who participated in the 1st Global Assembly.

The positives were:

1. Talks and discussion about common future projects
2. Get to know other SWY people - Recharge SWY spirit batteries
3. Inspiration of projects already achieved in other AAs
4. Networking
5. Fundraising activity
6. Voluntary activity, both entertaining and way to explore the city of Athens
7. Discussion talk on other AAs activities

8. Project exchange activities
9. Giving birth to possible regional SWYAAAs

And the negatives:

1. Try not to make the day so long as people get exhausted
2. Need more days
3. No sudden changes of the schedule
4. Fundraising activities should be bigger
5. Tell what to bring and prepare for the assembly
6. Don't spend too long time on transportations
7. Make fewer activities
8. Wanted to select the volunteer activities
9. Don't start so early

Vitta (Egypt) proposed to have a main theme every year for the Global Assembly, and that every participant would prepare a report on what is happening in his/her country concerning the theme.

Anthony (Kenya) proposed a rotational system of hosting countries so that any country will have a chance to host the Global Assembly.

Tamae (Japan) opened up the discussion about possible social contribution activities for 2008 Global Assembly in Japan.

- Konstantinos (Greece) proposed a visit to language schools in Japan or environmental project associations.
- Saleh (Oman) emphasized that the institutions to be visited should be related to people with special needs, such as NGOs.
- Juan (Spain) pointed out that in Japan there are also people with serious problems, such as homeless, old and disable people.
- Jenny (Sweden) mentioned visiting troubled youth such as juvenile criminals, drug addicted or others in rehabilitation homes or prisons.

Conference 2 - Agenda 3

– Publicity for the SWY and SWYAA

Agenda 3 was about the publicity of the SWY program and how important it is to publicize it to get recognition from the public and institutions.

Tamae (Japan) presented the SWYAA website and explained in depth all of its contents. She emphasized the importance of several sections of the website to publicize the program, with plenty of information about its history and useful data. It was pointed out that the website lacked a modern design look and it should therefore be reviewed in this sense.

Jenny (Sweden) suggested that each AA should be in charge of sending to IYEO an update of the information about each ex-PY, including a photograph and present situation, as well as contact details. This point was agreed by all. In this sense, Tamae (Japan) pointed out that the information on the website should be general for the public to see.

It was agreed that the important thing is to maintain the contact details and information about ex-PYs updated, informed to IYEO, and all AAs should be responsible for this.

Tamae (Japan) emphasized that the database of ex-PYs that is maintained by IYEO can be given only upon a request from the president of an AA.

Konstantinos (Greece) who is a specialist in web design, suggested that SWYAA should use a forum on a website in order to create several smaller forums with different issues for discussions in an organized way.

It could be possible to contact other ex-PYs through this forum. Konstantinos offered himself to help in the creation of this forum.

Vitta (Egypt) suggested that the video and data of the website should be presented in universities, schools and other educational institutions to promote the SWY program.

Anthony (Kenya) mentioned that each AA should promote the SWY program individually through their activities, mainly through social volunteerism. He also mentioned that the SWYAA-Kenya publicized the SWY program through social events such as the 35th IAAF Marathon and Youth Employment Conference.

Gene (Seychelles) explained about how SWYAA-Seychelles accept non-ex-PYs to support the association, though they are not entitled of decision-making.

Eman (Bahrain) shared the experience of their AA participating in the Regional Youth Day where they exhibited in a conference attended by youth from all Middle East. They were awarded by the General Organization of Youth and Sports a plaque as the most active society in Bahrain.

Saleh (Oman) mentioned that they have a good relationship with the Japanese institutions and always participate in exhibitions of the SWY.

Yousef (Yemen) explained the Japanese week which happened this year in Yemen and that AA helped to organize the event and promote the SWY program.

Charles (Tanzania) said that in Tanzania, the Ship is always promoted at youth gatherings.

Kontantinos (Greece) mentioned that the AA members are invited to join the activities conducted by the Japanese Embassy and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce.

Ravi (India) pointed out that 2007 was the year of friendship between Japan and India and many events were organized by AA for culture and arts exchange activities and the SWY program was promoted within this framework.

Saleh (Oman) reported about the Oman Gathering which took place in February 2008. This event was covered by various means of media.

Vitta (Egypt) reported about the International Child Labor Day in 2007 that SWYAA-Egypt participated in, and it was widely covered by media.

Other forms of publicity of the SWY were suggested, such as the creation of promotional flyers or use of the media which covers the activities of the AA. In this sense, Juan (Spain) mentioned that it would be interesting to have in the database of the website, a section with articles about the Ship written from all over the world so that AAs could use them to promote the SWY program in their own countries.

Finally, the first day ended with Vice President of IYEO Reiko Ohashi introducing herself to the delegates, giving thanks to everyone for attending the conference and emphasizing the importance of 2008 as the 20th anniversary of the Ship for the World Youth program.

Tuesday, March 18, 2008

Conference 3

– Meeting with the Japanese Government representatives

Attendees of the meeting at the Cabinet Office:

Mr. Masakazu Nakada, Official in charge of International Affairs, Cabinet Office

Mr. Hideki Uemura, Deputy Director for First and Second International Youth Unit, Cabinet Office

Mr. Yasushi Asai, Chief for First International Youth Unit, Cabinet Office

Ms. Hideko Kobayashi, Second International Youth Exchange Unit, Cabinet Office – observer
Ms. Reiko Ohashi, Vice President of IYEO and Secretary General of Center for International Youth Exchange

The day started with a meeting with the Japanese Government representatives at the Cabinet Office.

The meeting started with a brief introduction of each AA's country report by all the delegates. (*Refer to individual country reports for detail.*) The government representatives listened with interest and Mr. Masakazu Nakada showed his appreciation for promoting Japan abroad and how AAs act as a bridge between Japan and other countries. He supported the idea of creating a European SWYAA, as Konstantinos (Greece) and Jenny (Sweden) both suggested in their presentations, and the making of websites of each delegation to promote the SWY program.

**Refer to the website for the SWYAA country reports:*

http://www.swyaa.org/country_reports/2007-2008/2007-2008_Report.htm

Then Ms. Atsuko Honda, ex-PY of SWY11 and ADM of SWY14/20, explained in detail how the Course Discussions program has been implemented since the SWY17 program. At present there is one main theme for all discussions which is: Participation of Youth in Society. There were six different courses in SWY20:

- 1- Community and Youth: participants found new ways to relate and participate in their communities
- 2- Cross-Cultural Understanding: mainly related to family, national identity and male/female relations
- 3- Education: compiled a book of educational resources “TREASURES (Teaching Resources and Educational Activities and Systems to United Raise Education Success)”
- 4- Environment: formed a group “Team Eco-ship” and compiled a handbook for environment awareness “Eco-recommendations for the SWY21” to be passed on to the next program
- 5- Information and Media: learned about how media, politics, internet, and freedom of speech are related
- 6- Volunteerism: discussed about the problems in the respective countries (poverty, racial inequality, famine, child labor, HIV/AIDS etc.) and discussed why and how volunteers are needed

Next, the selected questions from the conference one day before were presented to the Government representatives, being the answers the following:

- 1- *How does the Cabinet Office evaluate the SWY program (Saleh, Oman)?*

Uemura (Cabinet Office): The SWY program celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. The Cabinet Office appreciates and values the network created by more than 5,000 ex-PYs around the world, and its contribution to important social issues.

- 2- *How SWYAA can be involved in the selection of the PYs for the SWY Program (Thushara, Sri Lanka)?*

Uemura: The selection of PYs depends on each participating country's government and Japanese Government can only recommend to include ex-PYs in the selection process of new PYs. We are not able to make it compulsory for the respective governments to include AA members in the selection process; however, as it is noted so in the invitation letter, we assume that they will take this into consideration.

Ohashi (IYEO Vice President): AAs have to be in close connection with the governments so they can be trusted. One way to gain such trust is to show them how AA can deal with the situation if any problem occurs with the participants. At the present, in Japan, three quarters of local governments invite IYEO members to the interviews, but they don't have any right to choose the candidates to the Ship (only give recommendation). IYEO has also pointed out to local governments that ex-PYs know very well about the program, and thus, can recommend who can be good candidates to participate. In Japan, the selection process has two different stages: 1) regional stage and 2) national stage at the Cabinet Office. In the second stage of the selection, IYEO is not involved in the selection as an organization, but recommends interviewers who can select good candidates and advise the Japanese Government.

- 3- *Expectations for the post-program activities: in which area should SWYAA focus in our post-program activities (Ravi, India)?*

Uemura (Cabinet Office): We respect all areas of contribution, such as international exchange and cooperation, cross-cultural understanding and youth development. We also expect AAs to be active and contribute to the program when hosting the port of call.

4- *Should we aim at acting as an NGO (Konstantinos, Greece)?*

Uemura (Cabinet Office): It's good to be an NGO if it will help the AA to be more active and implement projects.

5- *What are the differences between the SWY and other international youth exchange programs? Can they be combined (Saleh, Oman)?*

Uemura (Cabinet Office): SWY is unique as it happens in a closed environment on board the ship with many people from different countries and religions. It is like a miniature of the world with a lot of interaction between the participants, and I believe that this intensive interaction results to creation of international network. It is a very original and unique program so we believe it cannot be combined with other international youth exchange programs.

6- *How do you choose the ports of call countries (Eman, Bahrain)?*

Uemura (Cabinet Office): Ports of call countries are thought of at the end of the year when the budget for the program appears. Then we study the budget and see where we can go depending of the bound of that year's Ship. Then we study if the AA is capable of helping with hosting the Ship, and we also consult the Foreign Minister Affairs of Japan for recommendation.

7- *What are the expectations of the Cabinet Office for the ex-PY NLs and Advisors so that they can contribute their past experiences to the Program (Anthony, Kenya)?*

Uemura (Cabinet Office): We believe all ex-PYs can give back to society what they've learnt in the Ship. What is important for ex-PYs NLs and Advisors is that their knowledge for the post-program activities are specific so that the participants will understand what to aim after the program, and that they become role models and good leaders to the rest of participants.

Ohashi (IYEO Vice President): Coming back on board the ship as ex-PY NL or Advisor is the best way to contribute for the program, but there are also some risks. One risk is that they compare the program in which they are NLs or Advisors with the program when they were PYs, and don't realize that they are in different position now. Also they can be too demanding with the administration staff or not too humble to deal with authority. Unfortunately, in the past some ex-PYs who became NLs behaved inadequately or with bad manners. Failure of a single person can ruin the reputation of all the ex-PYs who contributed for the program, so we have to be very careful. It took many years for AAs to gain the trust from the Japanese Government to secure some positions for ex-PYs to come back to the program, and we would like to maintain this position. AAs should be responsible for informing the candidates to NLs or Advisors accordingly, and also consider how they can take responsibility when the ex-PY NL or Advisor from their country behaved inadequately.

8- *How can different countries contribute financially to the SWY program (Jenny, Sweden)?*

Uemura (Cabinet Office): We don't have a system to receive financial contribution, but AAs can contribute for the program in different ways, such as organizing preparation trainings for future candidates and with organizing activities in the ports of call.

9- *How does the Japanese Government benefit from hosting the SWY program (Yousef, Yemen)?*

Uemura (Cabinet Office): SWY promotes mutual understanding of the youth and develops future leaders – by implementing such program, Japan contributes to the international society. Ex-PYs can contribute in their own countries by giving back what they gained to the local community and by making the international network of the Ship active, as they are considered as the result of the program.

10- *SWYAA would like to have a formal recognition by the Japanese Embassy or Japanese related organizations such as JICA so that our activities in the country will be more effective (Anthony, Kenya)?*

Uemura (Cabinet Office): AAs should conduct activities in conjunction with the Japanese Embassies and the diplomatic establishments abroad. It is already happening in some countries and we are very happy with that. We will try our best to promote the AAs, but we also ask you to visit the Japanese Embassies once in a while.

Ohashi (IYEO Vice President): In the past a letter was sent to Japanese Embassies in respective countries under the name of the Director of International Affairs to support and promote the SWY and SWYAA. We would like to ask the Japanese Government to send another letter.

Uemura (Cabinet Office): We will take this into consideration.

Finally, Jenny (Sweden) proposed to Japanese Government representatives that the SWY program could benefit if there were more time during the program to discuss and prepare for post-program activities and AAs organization. In relation to this, the background of the recent post-program activities was explained by Sayoko (IYEO/CENTRYE) during the Conference 1. In the recent years, more time is allocated for post-program activities session, and there was some time for regional meeting in SWY20. Programs for the post-program activities sessions change every year.

Conference 4 – Agenda 4 – **Selection procedures**

Agenda 4 started with a detailed introduction to the selection process of ex-PYs for NLs and advisors by Tamae (Japan). The problem she finds is that ex-PYs who come back to the Ship have already a pre-established image of the Ship from their past experiences, without realizing how the program has changed in the last few years. Recent programs have more emphasis on social contribution, discussions, and post-program activities, and less free time. Ex-PYs candidates should be very aware of this change and should not consider themselves in the position of PYs as they were in their own program. Also, they should not feel that they should be treated special being NL or advisor, as they have to follow the same rules of PYs and accept the authority structure of the Ship. Also, ex-PY advisors receive much attention from the PYs, so they have to be very aware that they must be true role models for the rest. AAs are responsible to inform clearly all candidates about this emphasis. If an AA recommends an ex-PY for an NL or advisor, it also must be responsible for his/her behavior, and thus, AA shall be take full responsibility in the initial screening of the candidates. The final selection of the advisors will be done by the Cabinet Office.

For the recommendation for an advisor, AAs must send a CV together with a letter from the President who is supposed to study and analyze very well the candidate's background and personality. It is not only the academic background that should be examined, but also his/her manners and characteristics.

Konstantinos (Greece) pointed out that a Greek ex-PY from SWY10 became an Advisor in the SWY19 because she had done a lot of work in youth programs in Sri Lanka and other countries, including in a non-profit organization, "Citizens in Action" in Athens. She was a perfect candidate for that position.

Anthony (Kenya) asked Tamae (Japan) if CVs from all years are kept in the database of IYEO for future programs. The answer was that they need to be updated every year, though sometimes the Cabinet Office search through the old ones if they can't find appropriate candidates the current year.

Eman (Bahrain) asked about the criteria (age, academic background and personality) each AA should look into when selecting an advisor. Tamae (Japan) answered that in addition to the qualities mentioned previously, the candidates must be at least 30 years old, and aside from running Course Discussion programs, they are expected to contribute to the program (English lessons, for example).

Yousef (Yemen) then asked if non-ex-PYs could become advisors. The answer was that it could happen but in general it is not easy as AA must be responsible for recommending that person. As long as there is a strong recommendation from the AA, the CV can be forwarded to the Cabinet Office for further examination. Also, we should keep in mind that there are only 6 positions for advisors, and at least three of

them are taken by Japanese people, and therefore, there are only three (or less) positions left for international advisors.

Answering a question by Saleh (Oman) about the guidelines for selecting ex-PYs as NLs or advisors, Tamae (Japan) pointed out that there is a NL Preparation Manual in the website of SWYAA which AAs can refer to in order to find out what kind of qualities are needed to be an NL.

**Refer to the website for the NL Preparation Manual: <http://www.swyaa.org/materials/index.htm>*

Conference 4 – Agenda 5

– Networking among SWYAA and Ex-PYs

Vitta (Egypt) suggested to make online interactive calendar of all events for all AAs to be able to know about events and post-program activities in each country with links and contacts that are updated and developed for more details. Tamae (Japan) asked the delegates to send IYEO information of the events to be included in SWYAA Calendar in the official webpage. Delegates agreed to do so.

**Refer to the website for the SWYAA Calendar: http://www.swyaa.org/Calendar/SWYAA_Event_Calendar.htm*

Juan (Spain) was interested in listening from other AAs about their own homestay program, as Spanish AA is planning to make one soon. Yousef (Yemen) pointed out that Yemen AA wants to include in their webpage a section for tourism for ex-PYs traveling their country. Vitta (Egypt) said that the homestay network should be reactivated in all AAs and updated in the websites. Some delegations responded that they do have an active homestay program, such as Sweden, Bahrain, and Greece.

Eman (Bahrain) suggested that the homestay could be added with an additional experience such as volunteer work or internship hence benefiting both sides. Eman shared the experience where Japanese ex-PY friends came to Bahrain and did homestay while she was on a business trip to write a tourist guide about Bahrain. She then went to Greece where ex-PYs hosted her and helped her with her tourist guide.

Then, the discussion shifted towards regional AAs, networking neighbor countries' AAs, such as the European AA, starting from Sweden, Spain and Greece. This issue brought some questions and worries to some delegations, but the overall agreement was that there should be unions between close AAs to become bigger and have more access to resources. Thushara (Sri Lanka) pointed out that regional AAs should be established without harming the overall objective of the SWY program and also without dividing the SWY spirit into regions. As Jenny (Sweden) pointed out, the idea is to grow and be complementary to individual AAs and not to be exclusive. Saleh (Oman) mentioned that the first priority should be given to strengthening your own AA so that each AA can stand on their own feet. Ravi (India) expressed his desire to make SWYAA-Asia. Tamae (Japan) mentioned that IYEO supports the general concept of regional AAs but this the regional network should be created only if it will strengthen and give more power to the concerned AAs, and that there is a need for it. Strengthening the local network within the country should be the priority.

Summarizing agenda 5, Tamae (Japan) defined the following points:

- 1- AAs will inform IYEO about the events in each country to post them in SWYAA Calendar on website
- 2- Homestay network should be established in each AA's webpage, and it should be called "Homestay + One (Plus One)" as the experience should be wider and deeper than just mere tourism, for example volunteerism, visiting schools, lecturing in universities, cooking classes, etc. These extra activities should be also included in the websites.
- 3- SWYAA website should be updated with fresh information from all AAs

Next discussion turned towards the relations between the AAs and the Japanese Embassies. In this sense, Anthony (Kenya) mentioned that this relation should come from both sides and that AAs have to make an effort to approach the Embassies. Eman (Bahrain), Ravi (India) and Saleh (Oman) pointed out that their relations with Japanese Embassies are excellent, similar to Spain and Greece. Also, Vitta (Egypt) pointed out that SWYAA-Egypt has a good relation with the Japanese Embassy in Cairo. The Embassy took the final decision of selecting the PYs, and AA members were invited to give the selected PYs orientation and presentation about the program and to talk about their experiences. They were also invited to the

receptions and to various cultural events. Yousef (Yemen) said that the relationship between the SWYAA-Yemen and the Japanese Embassy is getting better and the AA was invited to many activities last year. Thushara (Sri Lanka) said that it is very important to establish the relationship with the Japanese Embassy and after the conference he will update the result of the conference to the Embassy of Japan in Sri Lanka. Sweden is also invited to the Embassy events. Charles (Tanzania) commented that networking with the Japanese Embassy is good. They also meet periodically during events such as port of call, reunion, and visa application.

Gene (Seychelles) stressed out, however, that there is no Japanese Embassy in Seychelles or a proper selection process for candidates, so it is impossible for them to be involved even if they wanted to.

Juan (Spain) said that a support letter must have been sent to Japanese Embassy in Spain, as they have been very open to ex-PYs opinions and even invited the AA in the selection process. Anthony (Kenya) asked if a copy of the letter that was sent to the Embassies by the Cabinet Office (as IYEO Vice President Ohashi mentioned in the meeting in the morning) could be also sent to the AAs as a proof of Japanese Government interest in the program. IYEO will check on this. Anthony (Kenya) then suggested that probably the best way is to keep a truly fine relationship with the Japanese Embassies to unlock any possible problem between AAs and those institutions.

Atsushi (Japan/committee) suggested that if there were Japanese schools in the countries of the AAs, it would be interesting to contact those Japanese students to make them support the SWY program and create bridges between the Japanese Embassies and communities and the SWYAA. It is because those students from those schools are children of the Japanese families living in the country and sometimes even children of the Embassy staff or Ambassadors. Eman (Bahrain) said that this is already in place and SWYAA-Bahrain always invites the Japanese community to participate in their activities and they also participate in the Japanese school activities.

Next, Tamae (Japan) distributed leaflets of IYEO as examples of publicity for the SWY and SWYAA. These leaflets have all of the information about the organization, such as history, photos and contact details. She also handed out small membership cards which IYEO made to give to all ex-JPYs so delegates can see some examples of helpful publicity of the AAs.

At the end of the session, Tamae (Japan) summarized the different issues which were discussed during the previous Ex-PY Conference in 2007 and stressed out that IYEO needs information from the different AAs for the SWYAA website. The main points which still need feedback from AAs are:

- 1- SWY History on Website: information on the ex-PY's achievements
- 2- Thank You Book: Comments and messages for the proposed book about ex-PYs' thoughts of the Ship in commemoration of the 20th Anniversary of the SWY program (part of this has been done by Canadian AA but still needs to be completed)

A deadline for sending the information from the AAs to IYEO on "Significant Achievements of Ex-PYs" for the SWY History on Website project was set: end of May, 2008.

**Refer to the website for the SWY History on Website: <http://www.swyaa.org/swyprogram/SWYhistory.htm>*

Tamae (Japan) went on explaining the issues for discussion for the next day (agenda 6), including IYEO's idea for the SWY20th Anniversary Commemorative Projects:

- 1- 2nd SWYAA Global Assembly
- 2- Fundraising for the SWY Forest Project, with fund raising activities such as charity walk, selling of commemorative t-shirts and other charity events
- 3- International relief assistance projects

In this sense some comments were brought up by some delegates.

Anthony (Kenya) emphasized that environmental projects were very important as the Kyoto Protocol is coming to an end and actions must be taken in order to maintain commitment to the protection of environment.

Gene (Seychelles) pointed out that SWYAA-Seychelles could be interested in doing some kind of tree planting as part of the SWY Forest Project in Seychelles.

Koki (Japan/committee) introduced some ideas of vigorous campaigns which require all SWY networks.

Finally, Anthony (Kenya) explained to the delegates the present situation of the regarding the humanitarian crisis in Kenya and asked for help to all AAs from SWY.

Wednesday, March 19, 2008

Conference 5 and 6 – Agenda 6

- **SWY20th Anniversary Commemorative Projects**
- **SWYAA Common Activities**

Delegates started the day brainstorming possible projects for the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of SWY. Vitta (Egypt) suggested a one-day gathering or event of ex-PYs on a specific day of the year in each country. Tamae (Japan) mentioned that this day could be the Emperor of Japan's birthday (December 23), as the international youth exchange programs sponsored by the Cabinet Office are implemented to commemorate the Japanese Imperial family's weddings and such. International SWY Day (January 18) could be an option too, although the next International SWY Day will be in 2009.

Jenny (Sweden) pointed out that they are preparing a cruise in the Baltic Sea by the AAs from the Scandinavian countries to celebrate the SWY20th anniversary.

Ravi (India) explained Indian AA's idea for the commemoration this year, which is to invite a famous singer of Bollywood films, who is also an ex-PY, to perform in a musical event to which all ex-PYs from that country are invited.

SWYAA-Oman is preparing a photo exhibition, as Saleh (Oman) explained, as well as SWYAA-Kenya. Greece is preparing fundraising events, at an international level if possible.

Then, Juan (Spain) and Jenny (Sweden) re-mentioned the idea of making a book of thoughts, known as "Thank You Book" from all ex-PYs, or at least to complete the one which started several years ago. Konstantinos (Greece) emphasized that the book should be also uploaded to SWYAA official website so all ex-PYs could read it. Sayoko (Japan/IYEO) that a Canadian ex-PY was working on this, but it has not been completed yet. Jenny (Sweden) will follow up on this project.

Yousef (Yemen) explained his opinion which was to involve the "Japanese Culture Houses" in the different countries to promote and celebrate the SWY anniversary.

Charles (Tanzania) mentioned that in Tanzania they would try to promote a plantation of a forest (which could be considered as part of the SWY Forest Project), promoted by Tanzanian and Japanese governments.

Thushara (Sri Lanka) explained to the delegates that he is trying to promote a project to provide Computers Learning Centres in poor rural areas of his country. He asked for help of SWY AAs to send used computers for the project in Sri Lanka. Ravi (India) explained about the computer literacy project running in India and also offered him software that he could get. Eman (Bahrain) suggested that this information should be publicized and distributed through websites and mailing lists to all AAs to inform ex-PYs about how we can help and contribute as AAs.

Next, Tamae (Japan) summarized different points which had been discussed during the days of the Conference:

List of commitments (things to do):

- 1- SWY History on Website: AAs must submit all the information of "significant achievements of ex-PYs" by the end of May 2008

- 2- The calendar information should be submitted regularly to IYEO to publish it in the SWYAA website.
- 3- AAs must be responsible in including all the “Homestay + One” information in their respective websites.
- 4- The creation of a SWY forum proposed by SWYAA-Greece should start as soon as possible.
- 5- AAs should prepare a list of social contribution activities which they have implemented (including a name of the contact person who can provide further information) to use it as a guideline – Greece to take initiative in compiling this information.
- 6- SWYAA-Sweden will communicate with SWYAA-Canada to further develop the “Thank You Book” project.
- 7- Hosting country of the Global Assembly should announce what kind of social contribution activities will be organized, and SWYAAAs around the world should implement same or similar activity in respective countries during the time of Global Assembly.

Sayoko (Japan/IYEO) took the opportunity to remind the delegates about the Global Photo Contest and the way to participate in it.

Tamae (Japan) opened once more the discussion about possible charity events for the SWY20th Anniversary. In this sense, Koki (Japan/committee) explained in detail his idea of vigorous action, like all ex-PYs doing the same thing at the same moment and recording a video of the performance and uploading in internet. The benefits from this performance are publicity and bringing attention to the SWY, and possibly, collecting participation fee. Other sources of funding could be sponsorship, as Eman (Bahrain) mentioned. Konstantinos (Greece) complemented this idea with the possibility of selling online Nippon Maru’s products and maintaining a profit for social causes.

Yousef (Yemen) proposed establishing a Museum of the SWY.

Next, all delegates were divided into groups to prepare concept papers to summarize all the different projects which had been discussed in the Conference, so that they could act as references to all SWYAAAs.

The following projects were proposed, and a concept paper for each project was written:

- A. **One-Day Event:** gatherings, photo exhibitions, food festivals, Japanese cultural events, etc.
Vitta (Egypt), Saleh (Oman), Yousef (Yemen), Sayoko (Japan/IYEO), Yasuko (Japan/committee), and Yuka (Japan/committee)
- B. **School Project – One More Child Goes to School project**
Konstantinos (Greece), Ravi (India), Thushara (Sri Lanka), and Atsushi (Japan/committee)
- C. **“Homestay + One (Plus One)” Project**
Eman (Bahrain), Tamae (Japan), Jenny (Sweden), and Arisa (Japan/committee)
- D. **Environmental Projects, including SWY Forest Project**
Anthony (Kenya), Gene (Seychelles), Charles (Tanzania), and Yoko (Japan/committee)
- E. **Youth Leadership Projects**
Eman (Bahrain), Tamae (Japan), Jenny (Sweden), and Arisa (Japan/committee)

It was also agreed by all the delegates to categorize the above-mentioned projects into two groups:

1. SWY20th Anniversary Commemorative Projects – A and D
2. SWYAA Common Projects – B, C, and E

In addition to the new projects that were raised, it was emphasized that there are following on-going projects that each SWYAA should work on:

- Global Photo Contest – carried on since Ex-PY Conference 2004
- SWY History on the Web – carried on since Ex-PY Conference 2007
- Thank You Book – carried on since Ex-PY Conference 2007

■ Concept Papers for Projects A – E

Project A – One-Day Event: SWY Friends Forever

Aims:

For ex-PYs:

- To celebrate the SWY20th Anniversary
- To revive SWY ex-participants to get together
- To strengthen the network of SWYAA's

For non-ex-PYs:

- More publicity of SWY
- To introduce Japanese Culture
- To introduce various cultures
- To involve youth in different events and activities

Explanation:

We are celebrating SWY20th Anniversary this year. It was agreed that every SWYAA should work on commemorative projects during this special year, so through this project it will be an opportunity to:

- Get together and to put our efforts to let local/international community know SWYAA's strong network and SWY experiences,
- Spread the experiences gained from SWY program and update the community of our past, current and future activities.

How to implement:

- 1- Contact all ex-PYs in your country
- 2- Make project committee members
- 3- Decide the project leader
- 4- Set date and time
- 5- Decide small committees and distribute the work
- 6- Make proposal and get approval
- 7- Start implementation
- 8- Follow up
- 9- After the event evaluate ourselves, report and feedback.

Ideas for the project:

- SWY EXPO
- Exhibitions
- Food festivals
- Japanese cultural events
- School visit
- Seminar, lecture, presentation, etc.
- Visit to home for elderly people
- Visit to home for people with special needs, etc.

Project B – School Project: One More Child Goes to School

- A model project to be referred by the SWYAA's around the world

Introduction:

The One More Child Goes to School Project was initiated in year 2005 just after the Tsunami occurred and made a massive destruction to the coastal areas of Sri Lanka. All the ex-PYs around the world were so much concerned about this and inquired what kind of assistance is needed to provide relief to the affected victims. As a result of this SWYAA Sri Lanka were able to establish relationship with an NGO in Greece where an ex-PY of the SWY was working. This way SWYAA Sri Lanka and the NGO in Greece were able to come up with the One More Child Goes to School Project. After several

discussions through email, both organizations agreed upon on the mechanism to implement this project and an official agreement was signed between the two parties.

Background:

This project was launched in Sri Lanka as SWYAA Sri Lanka identified that there is a greater need in the country to implement this project. In Sri Lanka many of the children give up their education at the primary level as they face numerous financial problems. Therefore if any of the SWYAA countries implement this project it is very much needed to understand the correct requirement and adjust the project to meet that requirement. If any of the SWYAA countries are going to implement this project SWYAA Sri Lanka is very much willing to provide the initial required information/consultation of the project.

Aims:

- 1) To provide financial and other assistance to children to continue their education up to high school.
- 2) To provide information to other AAs to adopt, support and make this project more sustainable by reaching as many children as possible
- 3) Increase awareness of the project in SWY so more people or NGOs can be involved.

How can you find the donors/find funds?

The beauty of the project is that you do not need a huge financial assistance to initiate this project. As a start, members of the AA can sponsor around 2 to 5 children from their own contribution. This will be around 10 US\$ per month per each child. SWYAA Sri Lanka initially started with 10 children for the first year and within the end of two years we were able to sponsor 81 children around the country with the assistance from many organizations.

Another way to find funds is to look for a sponsorship from private organizations in your country. SWYAA Sri Lanka is willing to provide any of the promotional information/successful stories that will be needed by other AAs to find sponsors for this project.

Explanation about the project:

One More Child Goes to School Project provides the assistance to children in the following way.

- For every student 5 euros will be transferred to his/her account every month.
- A gift packet containing school stationeries and other things required will be delivered to the students every three months.

Basic implementation steps to start the project:

- A co-coordinator should be appointed in each district where the project will be implemented.
- The co-coordinator will be responsible of selecting the children who are in actual need for the scholarship.
- An application form template is given to the coordinator to collect the required information of the children and the coordinator should get a photo of the child and the required documents to open a bank account according to your regulations in the country.
- A bank account has to be opened for the selected child and the student information should be recorded manually or in a database.
- Deliveries (school material and stationeries) have to be made for the children in every three months.
- Delivery information and other needed financial reports have to be submitted for the individual sponsors or donors.

How can you help?

If any of the AA is willing to assist this project they can provide the assistance in following ways.

1. AA can sponsor any number of children they wish to and the AA can send the money to the AA that is implementing the project.
2. If the AA is not willing to send money, they can send school materials, stationeries which the children will need to continue their studies.
3. Any AAs who have good relationship with the institutions in their country can introduce this project to get sponsorship.

Feedback:

The AA that is implementing the project shall provide a full report about the children which the specific AA will sponsor and will also provide a financial report with the required proof of the expenses.

Promotional ideas to the project:

- Inform SWYAA representatives through Ex-PY Conference. Give information, promotional material (country specific) e.g. in Japanese language.
- Provide information through the forum, SWYAA website, SWYAA Sri Lanka website as well as SWYAA Greece website.
- Involvement of ex-PYs to the project through 'Homestay + One' project and visit to the local schools where the project is implemented.
- Provide photos and drawings of students during the Global Assembly in Japan.
- Exchange of letters between students and foster parents.
- Establishment of Computer Learning Centre in schools with the cooperation of other AAs and donor organizations: donate used computers and have them shipped to Sri Lanka.

Contact for assistance:

President of SWYAA Sri Lanka
Mr. Thushara Deepal Dias Dahanayake
Ship for World Youth Alumni Association of Sri Lanka
142/3, Kirimandala Mawatha, Narahepita, Colombo 05, Sri Lanka
T.P: +94- 777-334015
Email: thushara@swyasl.org
Website: www.swyasl.org

Project C – Homestay + One Project**Aims:**

- To Activate and develop the current Homestay Network
- Get an insight or experience in the local society by participating in local community activities
- Establish a professional/international network

Explanation:

This project is aimed at giving ex-PYs opportunities to experience something more than homestay/vacation. It is an opportunity for ex-PYs to get involved in the society and volunteer for the benefit of the country he/she is visiting. In return, such international and cultural experiences will benefit him/her, who will have a chance to practice professional skills in a new environment.

The "+ One" part of the project can be as short as one day (ex. institution visit or school visit) to few months (ex. internship at NGO) depending on the nature of the experience.

How to implement this project:

1. Construct an action plan within the SWYAA
 - Appoint a project leader
 - Establish policies on liabilities (insurance, costs etc.)
 - Find accommodation/host families
 - Establish contacts with local NGOs or key stake holders and agree on the program
 - Develop an application (and selection, if necessary) process
2. Publicize the project
 - Establish a web-page on the project within the country website
 - a. Include a list of activities that visitors can experience in the country
 - b. Include procedure to apply and a deadline for application
 - Inform about the project using mailing lists
 - Circulate the information by word of mouth

Ideas for the “+ One” part of the project:Short-term projects (one day to few days)

- School visit (ex. lecture at school, introducing culture or language)
- Organize cultural classes (ex. cooking, dancing, language, national costume)
- Visiting local events or forums for social awareness
- Institutional visit (ex. old people’s home, school for children with special needs, NGO)
- Join volunteers activities (ex. clean-up campaign, blood donation)
- Join projects implemented by the SWYAA of the visited country

Long-term projects (one week to few months)

- Internship/volunteer work at NGOs, companies, organizations
- Make research and write articles to promote the country/inter-cultural understanding
- Baby sitting

Project D – Environmental Project: SWY Forest Project (Tree Plantation)**Introduction:**

The SWY will be commemorating its 20th anniversary and as part of our commemorative project, protection of the environment is considered to be one of the ways of ensuring common participation among all SWYAAs.

In particular, the planting of trees will be known as the SWY Forest and will be carried out mainly by 4 countries, which are Japan, Tanzania, Seychelles and Kenya. The Japanese project involves raising 500,000 yen for planting a SWY Forest in Indonesia. The size is estimated to be 0.3 hectares (covering 3,000 sq. meters).

This project is expected to be replicated in three other countries and any other AAs who would like to carry it out.

Aim and objectives:

The aim is to have a permanent project to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the SWY program. This project will culminate in the Global Assembly in Tokyo, Japan in August 2008. All AAs should aim at having a SWY Forest within their country. Therefore, the SWY Forest will be a continuous project after the SWY Global Assembly.

The objective of the Tree Planting Project is for protection of the environment in as many part of the world as possible, with the specific object of reducing the speed of global warming by absorbing carbon dioxide and emitting oxygen. It will also regenerate the forest around the lake, which will provide clean water to the local residents.

Project proposals and implementations:

- a. The Tree Planting Project will be administered by SWY members in different AAs with the support of friends of the alumni.
- b. The project will involve the local government, Japanese school and Japanese Embassy through invitations by the AAs.
- c. All AAs may be able to use the Tree Planting Project for:
 - Publicizing
 - Network with other stakeholders
- d. The project may be used to send an appeal to the world leaders in particular the G8 countries which will be gathered in Tokyo in August to discuss a new framework for the protection of the world environment in particular reaching new targets for the reduction of Greenhouse Gas emissions into the global environment.

Note, the Kyoto Protocol which committed the World Leaders to protection of global environment climate will come to an end in 2008.

- e. Photo Exhibition: Photos on environmental protection and exchange of messages between schools in

- Japan, Tanzania, Seychelles and Kenya will be exhibited.
- f. Identification of land with the assistance of local authority for permission or licence if necessary.
 - The AAs will have to request for donations of seedlings from the Ministry of Environment, Forest Department or NGOs.
 - The AAs will issue letters of invitation to the Embassy, Japanese school, companies, organisations and a guest of honour, (e.g. Nobel Prize Winner), to increase the publicity of the event.
 - g. The AA will inform the media and invite them for coverage and will prepare a short background and summary of the AA. One week before, the AA will request short interviews to publicize the event.
 - h. Prepare an appeal summarizing the state of the global environment and global warming, the role and limitations of the Kyoto Protocol which comes to an end in 2008 and conclude with an appeal for fresh commitment by G8 Leaders.
 - i. AAs will gather signatures from youths around the world to be compiled into a book to be sent to the World Leaders through the United Nations. The book will include a summary of the appeal by SWY community, the signatures and messages from youth all over the world. It will be coordinated by one key person from the AAs and messages will be coordinated through forum of the SWYAA website.
 - j. The Japanese Embassy to be requested to host exhibition and to publicize the event to Japanese nationals in each country; this will also assist in networking for the AAs.

Conclusion:

This is one of the most significant ways to commemorate the SWY program because it will enable every country to do the same thing at the same time. The trees to be planted will live for years to come, which is symbolic of the SWY spirit which should be continued forever, as should the protection of the environment.

Project E – Youth Leadership Project

Aims:

- To promote and develop youth leadership within the SWY community
- To share knowledge of different professional careers (professional networking)

Explanation:

The purpose of this project is to conduct discussions within the SWY community regarding youth leadership, career opportunities, and professions through forums or conferences. Ex-PYs will benefit from exchanging information, tips, and feedbacks for their area of profession.

How to implement:

1. Agree on the theme and date (ex. youth development, environment, leadership)
2. Establish an action plan (decide contact person, budget, detailed schedule, etc.)
3. Decide whether the project is only for SWYAA network or open to public
4. Look for advisors or lecturer (ex. ex-advisor of SWY or UN, ex-PYs)
5. Publicize the event through media and SWY network

Ideas for the project:

Small scale projects

- Organize a small forum (ex. within AA, in cooperation with few other AAs, or with other organizations)
- Compile a list of youth leadership opportunities and distribute to SWY community (ex. internships, work opportunities, volunteer works, youth conferences)

Large scale projects

- Organize an international conference (ex. for all ex-PYs, collaboration with other NGOs)
- Organize series of seminars on a specific topic

After the projects were presented some delegates made some comments.

- Jenny (Sweden) mentioned that Swedish delegation will try to implement Project A's points in the cruise in the Baltic Sea which they are organizing.
- Regarding Project B, it was agreed that the know-how of the "One More Child Goes to School" project in Sri Lanka should be transferred to other AAs which could need the information to implement it in their respective countries, such as Kenya.
- The main question about Project C was whether AA members were responsible for a visitor in the "Homestay + One." It was agreed that each AA should have their own policies but in general they do have not responsibilities for the acts of the visitors.
- Anthony (Kenya), one of the writers of Project D paper, emphasized the idea that each AA should sooner or later undertake a project in the environmental sector, such as the SWY Forest Project.
- Regarding Project E, Yousef (Yemen) stressed the idea that all contacts from the AAs should be clearly mentioned in the website for the projects to work smoothly.

Finally all the concept papers for the projects were approved by the conference delegates.

At the end of the day, some comments about the ways to raise money for the projects and what to do with the money were put on the table. Konstantinos (Greece) suggested that in the 2nd Global Assembly there should be an auction or selling of Nippon Maru's products so ex-PYs could buy them and at the same time make donations to the projects. The hosting country for the Global Assembly shall decide where the donations will go.

In this sense some questions came out about how fundraising event can take place the next day for the Kenyan humanitarian crisis. Anthony (Kenya) gave an explanation of the project which Kenyan SWYAA had prepared and everyone agreed to donate some materials and gifts to raise fund for this cause.

Thursday, March 20, 2008

Conference 7 – Agenda 7
– **Miscellaneous**

Floor was open to anyone to raise miscellaneous issues or items that were not discussed.

Support for Kenya Crisis Project

- Koki (Japan/committee) reported that over 1,000 US dollars were raised for this project in the past week by ex-JPYs. This money will be handed to SWYAA-Kenya, and there will be a report from Kenya about how the money was used.
- Anthony (Kenya) mentioned that the result should be tangible.
- Anthony will be the project leader in Kenya, and Koki will be the project leader in Japan.
- Some of the responses for contributions came after direct appeal from the Kenyan batch mates (such as SWY18 and SWY10), and it was agreed that SWY ex-PYs in Kenya should make appeals to their batch mates for help.
- Ravi (India) asked Anthony to report about this project on the website so that other countries can view the situation and offer help.

Jenny (Sweden) asked for the deadline for submitting articles for the SWY News, and Tamae (Japan) answered that the deadline is usually around the end of May, but this deadline may be extended if there were not enough articles.

Jenny (Sweden) asked who would receive the SWYAA activity report, and Sayoko (Japan/IYEO) answered that the report would be sent out to all the SWYAA presidents and the PYs of the latest program. For those who would like to read the minutes and the country reports, all the information will be uploaded on the SWYAA website. On this regard, Ravi (India) mentioned that the official report should be priced so that IYEO can make some money.

Tamae asked if there were any more proposals for the future SWY programs.

- Eman (Bahrain) mentioned that age criteria for NLs should not be so strict, as if they wanted to select an ex-PY as a NL, it would be difficult because majority of the ex-PYs are younger than 30 years old. Tamae (Japan) answered that as long as the local government in charge of selecting the PYs and NLs approved the person, there is a possibility that the NL can be under 30 years old.
- A group of people worked on making a guideline for the NL, but it was agreed that instead of making a new guideline, each SWYAA should refer to the NL Preparation Manual (downloadable from the SWYAA website) and if there is anything that should be added, the proposals should be made.

Finally, the conference delegates confirmed the minutes and signed the agreement.