



# CLAIR Singapore Newsletter Vol.47

October 2008

## Greetings from the New Director: Mr. Yutaka OINUMA



**M**y name is Yutaka Oinuma and I have been appointed as the Director of CLAIR Singapore.

CLAIR is a joint organization founded by Japanese local authorities to promote and support their activities overseas. Besides its headquarters in Tokyo, CLAIR has branch offices in seven other major cities in the world (New York, London, Paris, Singapore, Seoul, Sydney and Beijing).

Among these offices, CLAIR Singapore was established in 1990 to promote international exchanges between Japanese local authorities and ASEAN countries. I am the sixth Director of this office.

Currently, CLAIR Singapore carries out various activities in 10 ASEAN countries (Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, The Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam) as well as India. Specifically, our activities are:

- 1) To promote local level exchanges between Japan and ASEAN countries as well as India
- 2) To support the activities of Japanese local authorities in ASEAN countries and India
- 3) To research the local administration and finance systems of ASEAN countries as well as India, and disseminate the relevant

information.

- 4) To introduce the local administration and finance systems of Japan to ASEAN countries and India

In particular, we have supported the Japanese local authorities by arranging appointments, accompanying them on their trips, providing information and conducting briefings for them in these regions (ASEAN and India). Moreover, we have supported the trade fairs held in these regions by the Japanese local authorities, and actively provided and gathered information through the distribution of Japanese local authorities' tourism pamphlets at travel fairs organized in these regions.

In recent years, with the purpose of promoting ties between Japanese local authorities and their counterparts in ASEAN countries as well as India, we have implemented a 'Regional Alliances Promotion Program'. This program, conducted in a host country (ASEAN or India), aims to introduce the participants to both the national and local administration structures of that country, so as to enhance their understanding on the present situation of industries and the possibilities of future exchanges, as well as to introduce them to the key persons from various fields. The program has seen participation from many Japanese local authorities.

In addition, we conduct projects such as the 'Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar' which invites local government executives in these regions to Japan to discuss and exchange information regarding the current situation and issues of local administration. The 'Local Government Officials Training Program' is also held on an annual basis, whereby local government officials in these regions are accepted by Japanese local authorities as trainees in various fields

(general administration, environment, health-care, tourism, economic exchange, etc.) so as to acquire the know-how and skills of Japanese local authorities. Besides the above, in order to support international cooperation activities by sharing skills (law, fire fighting, water supply and sewerage systems, education, welfare, environment, etc.) possessed by personnel from Japanese local authorities, we implement the 'Local Authorities International Cooperation Specialist Dispatch Project' which dispatches Japanese specialists to foreign governments in response to their requests.

CLAIR Singapore covers the largest number of countries among all the CLAIR branch offices. Furthermore, various ethnic groups, cultures and religions coexist intricately in these regions, and as a result the government systems of each country, including the local systems, differ from one another. Moreover, given the huge future economic potential in these regions, along with the East Asian region including countries such as China, it is undeniable that ASEAN countries as well as India are attracting a high level of interest from Japanese local authorities. Therefore, we will continue our efforts to better understand the needs of Japanese local authorities, and based on that, we will actively implement projects which are suitable for each country or region.

Lastly, on behalf of CLAIR Singapore, I welcome any ideas or suggestions with regards to our activities and I look forward to your continuous support and cooperation.

Yutaka OINUMA  
Director, CLAIR Singapore

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## CLAIR Singapore Director lectured for seminar in Thailand



*(Above)  
Mr. Oinuma, the Director of  
CLAIR Singapore is giving a  
presentation*

*(Below)  
Participants listening to the lec-  
ture*

Organized by Thailand's Promotion of Local Administration Foundation, a seminar entitled 'The Reform of Bangkok Metropolitan in the Next Decade' was held in Bangkok on June 27th (Friday). CLAIR Singapore's Director, Mr. Yutaka Oinuma was invited as a guest lecturer for the event.

Due to problems brought by overconcentration of administrative functions, it was pointed out that there is a necessity for Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) to implement administrative reforms. In this respect, distribution of functions between BMA and its 50 districts is seen as one of the most important issues to be addressed.

As a result, the Promotion of Local Administration Foundation in Thailand has organized a seminar pertaining to this subject matter and has requested CLAIR Singapore to give a lecture on the Special Wards System in Tokyo Metropolis, which would serve as a reference for BMA. With the aim of further enhancing the constructive relationships between CLAIR and BMA, CLAIR Singapore's Director participated in the seminar as a lecturer.

The seminar was held in Bangkok's Chu-

labhorn Research Institute, whereby BMA's Governor, Mr. Apirak Kosayothin has given a one-hour lecture on the summary, issues and future challenges of BMA's administration. This was followed by a one-hour lecture from the Director of CLAIR Singapore, which emphasised on the general overview of local government system in Japan, and

also the framework and history of the Special Wards System in Tokyo Metropolis. Around 80 participants from BMA, universities, research institutes and etc attended the seminar. After the lecture, participants have actively asked questions and engaged in constructive discussions with the lecturer.

CLAIR Singapore will continue to explore the various channels of cooperation, so as to strengthen its relations with local authorities in ASEAN countries and India.



# Regional Alliances Promotion Program in Vietnam



(Above)  
Participants of the seminar in front of Ho Chi Minh City Hall

(Left) A snapshot during the Forum

With the Ministry of Home Affairs of Vietnam as the co-organizer, CLAIR Singapore successfully conducted a mission to Vietnam in January 2008 entitled "Regional Alliances Promotion Program in Vietnam" which targeted mainly managerial officials and staff from Japanese local governments.

Vietnam has been drawing a lot of attention from Japanese local authorities which aims at invigorating regional economies such as assisting local industries in their overseas expansion. Thus the mission received overwhelming response with participation from 31 individuals from 19 organizations\*.

The group departed for the five-day program on 21 January, visiting Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City and the Mekong Delta and exchanged opinions with various organizations and groups in diverse fields such as Vietnam governmental organizations and local industries.

One of the highlights of the program was the Forum held in Hanoi. During the Forum, 77 participants consisting of Vietnamese officials from the central and local governments, Japanese local government personnel as well as representatives of Japanese-related institutions in Vietnam were gathered together and they actively exchanged opinions and shared the latest case studies of local administration in both countries.

Two presentations were given from the Vietnamese side. Ms. Ngo Thi Tam, Dep-

uty Director General of Local Authority Department, spoke about "The Local Government System and Their Activities in Vietnam" while Dr. Hoang Dung, Deputy Director General of International Cooperation Department, presented on "The Present State of Vietnam's Administrative Reforms." From the Japanese side, participating local authorities introduced their internationalization policies and their various exchanges with Vietnam.

In addition, an interesting and enlightening account of a Japanese company's experience in expanding its business in Vietnam was given by Mr. Kunihiro Kurokawa, Managing Director of Hue Foods Company, whose brewery manufactures Japanese rice wine and distilled spirits in the city of Hue in Central Vietnam. The presentations were followed by a lively round of Q&A with questions ranging from local administration systems to the trainee dispatch schemes in local authorities.

It is hoped that this program has provided an opportunity for the improvement of mutual understanding and future advancement of regional exchange between Japan and Vietnam, especially in economic exchange such as the expansion of local industries.

### \*Details of participating organizations

**Japanese local authorities:** Iwate Prefecture, Iwate Industry Promotion Center, Fukuoka Prefecture, Nagasaki Prefecture, Sendai City, Kitakyushu City, Mitsuke City of Niigata Prefecture

**Japanese local authorities' representative offices in ASEAN:** City of Osaka (Singapore), Aichi Prefecture (Shanghai), Okayama Prefecture (Shanghai), Fukui Prefecture (Hong Kong), Hyogo Prefecture (Hong Kong), Nagano Prefecture (Shenzhen), Okinawa Prefecture (Hong Kong)

**CLAIR:** CLAIR Tokyo, CLAIR overseas offices.

### Schedule

Date	Topics/Activities
21 Jan, Mon 2008	• Welcome dinner in Hanoi
22 Jan, Tue	• Forum • Networking session • Study tour to FPT University and FPT Software • Visit to Vietnam Museum of Ethnology
23 Jan, Wed	• Visit to Ministry of Planning and Investment • Study tour to Tan Truong Industrial Zone and TOA Vietnam • Visit to Thon Dong Ky • Study tour to University of Languages and International Studies, Vietnam National University [Fly to Ho Chi Minh City]
24 Jan, Thu	• Visit to Ho Chi Minh City People's Committee • Visit to Vietnam-Japan Human Resources Cooperation Center • Study tour to factories of Japanese SMEs • Study tour to blind massage training center in Ky Quang
25 Jan, Fri	• Study tour to AGREX Saigon (food processing company) • Study tour to Mekong Delta [end of the program]

## We have new staffs: Ms. Mochizuki and Ms. Arimitsu



### Sari MOCHIZUKI (from Tokyo Metropolitan Government)

**H**ello. I am Sari Mochizuki, dispatched from Tokyo Metropolitan Government to work in Singapore for two years. I love travelling and have been to many countries, but it's my very first time to live and work abroad. Thus, I am very excited and honored to have this kind of opportunity here in Singapore.

I have worked in several sections at Tokyo Government including the International Affairs section, where I dealt with issues related to sister/friendship city relationship and other international interactions. I realize that major cities in the Asian region share common concerns including environmental conservation and industrial promotion, so I hope to be able to make a contribution in my own ways to resolve these concerns for the further prosperity and development of the Asian region.

### Miyuki ARIMITSU (from Kagoshima Prefectural Government)

**I** am Miyuki Arimitsu, a new staff of CLAIR. I was dispatched to the Singapore office from Kagoshima Prefectural Government since this April.

Kagoshima is situated in the south of Japan, and with the geographical advantage of its location, Kagoshima has exchanges with Southeast Asian countries, China, Korea and the rest of the world.

Spanning 600 kilometres from north to south, Kagoshima also has many interesting historical and cultural sites such as Yakushima (one of the world's natural heritage sites), volcanoes such as the Sakurajima, and hot springs. They make Kagoshima one of Japan's most well-known tourist destinations both domestically and internationally.

I like the culture of Southeast Asian countries, so I have travelled to Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia and Indonesia. It is my first time working and living in a foreign country and I am really pleased to be given the opportunity to work and live in Singapore. I hope that I will be able to go to many ASEAN countries and understand more about them.

Even though I have only 2 years to spend in Singapore, I am sure this will be a precious experience to me.



## Our Tokyo headquarters have moved

As of May 26, 2008, our headquarters in Tokyo were relocated to the address below.

**New Address** Sogo Hanzomon Building,  
1-7 Kojimachi, Chiyoda-ku,  
Tokyo, 102-0083, JAPAN

#### **Floor Guide**

**1st floor** Citizens' International Plaza  
**6th floor** Exchange and Information Department; Collaboration and Cooperation Department; JET Programme Management Department  
**7th floor** Executive Office; General Affairs Department



## About CLAIR

**CLAIR** is a joint organisation founded in 1988 by 47 prefectures and 12 major cities in Japan in order to assist Japanese local authorities with the implementation of their international exchange policies. With its headquarters in Tokyo, CLAIR has seven overseas offices in New York, London, Paris, Singapore, Seoul, Sydney, and Beijing.

**CLAIR SINGAPORE** office was set up in April 1990. It supports and promotes international activities and friendly relations between local authorities in Japan and their counterparts in Singapore and the ASEAN countries as well as India.

For further information on our activities of Japanese Local Authorities, please contact **CLAIR Singapore** office.

### **[CLAIR TOKYO HEADQUARTERS]**

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