The Association of North East Asia Regional Governments

Annual Report 2021

The Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR) was founded to pursue the mutual development of Northeast Asia and contribute to world peace by establishing networks for exchange and cooperation between regional governments based on the spirit of mutual benefit and equality to build trust-based relationships. It is one of the largest international organizations in Asia with 79 participating local and metropolitan governments from six countries, China, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, North Korea, and Russia, embracing 70 million people.
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The 13th NEAR General Assembly
After 25 years together, into the future we go!

Tuesday, August 10, 2021, POSCO International Center | Chair Regional Government: Sakha Republic (Yakutia), Russia
Greetings

Honorable Members of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR)!

The world is experiencing many difficulties as a result of the global challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the crisis has also created new opportunities.

To overcome this common crisis, the world has made concerted efforts to display the power of solidarity at every turn. NEAR member regional governments have demonstrated once again the importance of cooperation and solidarity through their support for associate member Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Moreover, every effort has been made to continue exchange activities between member regional governments by transitioning to contact-free video conferences.

In August last year, NEAR held the 13th General Assembly online, which had been postponed due to COVID-19. Marking the 25th year of NEAR’s establishment, representatives of 73 member regions from six countries attended the General Assembly, which was themed, “After 25 years together, into the future we go!”

In addition to holding the online meeting, opportunities for exchange through art were given to the youth of Northeast Asia, the leaders of the next generation. The Ninth Northeast Asia Youth Art·Poster Contest was themed, “Northeast Asian countries I want to travel to after COVID-19 is over.” The traveling exhibitions, which featured award-winning works from previous contests, were held in four cities.

Despite the common hardships due to the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic, NEAR continues to explore ways to strengthen exchange in many forms, such as holding online and offline meetings.

If the countries of our member governments develop as an economic community in Northeast Asia through active exchange and cooperation, this will lead to the peace of Northeast Asia beyond the Korean peninsula in the future. Therefore, I hope that we can surmount the numerous crises as one by discussing solutions together. I look forward to meeting all of you in Ulsan. Thank you.

Chairperson of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments (NEAR)
Mayor of Ulsan Metropolitan City

Song Chul Ho

I wish for the good health and happiness of the members of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments in 2022. I would also like to convey my gratitude to every one of you for having supported NEAR in 2021.

Last year, NEAR successfully held the 13th General Assembly, which had been postponed for a year, at a time when face-to-face exchange between members was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The General Assembly was held under the theme, “After 25 years together, into the future we go!” and proved to be a meaningful event to set milestones for the next 25 years. It was attended by representatives of 73 member regional governments from six countries, China, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, Russia, and Vietnam (associate member), and enjoyed the highest number of attendees in NEAR history. Notably, the eighth UN Secretary-General, Ban Ki-moon, delivered a congratulatory speech and gave an assessment of the course followed by the Association over 25 years. Furthermore, he asked NEAR to serve as a United Nations between Northeast Asian regional governments. This was truly meaningful in highlighting the importance of the Association as a platform for multilateral exchange between regional governments in Northeast Asia.

Moreover, the first online subcommittee meetings were held successfully by Shimane Prefecture and Toyama Prefecture, Japan, which have acted as coordinators of subcommittees for many years. In addition, Shandong Province, China, is making preparations to host an online subcommittee meeting. The efforts made by members to continue the tradition of exchange while adjusting to the changing circumstances have been truly outstanding.

Last year, the NEAR Secretariat received more invitations to international events of Chinese, South Korean, and Russian members and requests for cooperation, demonstrating the significance of cooperation with the Secretariat. We invite all our member regional governments to make the best use of the Secretariat going forward.

The NEAR Secretariat made considerable efforts to communicate closely with members by updating the latest information from member regions on the website, including the resignation and inauguration of the heads of members, among other things. As a result, visits to the NEAR website surpassed 30 million in 2021, up by 14 million more than those of 2020. This indicates that much attention was given to cooperation between regional governments in Northeast Asia last year.

In the New Year, the NEAR Secretariat will endeavor to create more opportunities to bring members together online and offline, such as assisting the chair regional government in preparing for the NEAR Working Committee meeting and holding the NEAR International Forum, which will be hosted and organized by the Secretariat. We ask for your active participation.

Secretary-General of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments

Kim Ok Chae
Main Activities of the Association

I. The 13th NEAR General Assembly

1. Overview
The Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments held the 13th NEAR General Assembly online at the POSCO International Center, Pohang City, on August 10, and it was themed, “After 25 years together, into the future we go!” A total of 239 participants from 73 local and metropolitan governments of six countries participated in the event. Participants included representatives of 70 member regional governments of five countries, excluding North Korea, and associate member, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Having been postponed by one year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the General Assembly was held in Pohang City, South Korea, the location of the Secretariat, taking into account the characteristics of an online meeting.

The participant member regions in the General Assembly are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number of Participants</th>
<th>Member Regional Governments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>15 from 8 regions</td>
<td>Aomori Prefecture, Akita Prefecture, Shimane Prefecture, Tottori Prefecture, Toyama Prefecture, Niigata Prefecture, Hyogo Prefecture, Yamagata Prefecture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| South Korea | 48 from 16 regions     | Busan Metropolitan City, Daejeon Metropolitan City, Incheon Metropolitan City, Ulsan Metropolitan City, Sejong Special Self-Governing City, Jeonbuk-gi, Gangwon-do Province, Chungcheongnam-do Provinces, Jeollabuk-do Provinces, Gyeonggi-do Province, Gyeongsangnam-do Province, Wuhan Metropolitan City, Daegu Metropolitan City, Incheon Metropolitan City, Gwangju Metropolitan City, Daejeon Metropolitan City, Ulsan Metropolitan City, Sejong Special Self-Governing City, Gyeonggi-do Province, Gangwon-do Province, Chungcheongnam-do Provinces, Jeollabuk-do Provinces, Gyeonggi-do Province, Gyeongsangnam-do Province, Wuhan Metropolitan City, Daegu Metropolitan City, Incheon Metropolitan City, Gwangju Metropolitan City, Daejeon Metropolitan City, Ulsan Metropolitan City, Sejong Special Self-Governing City, Gyeonggi-do Province, Gangwon-do Province, Chungcheongnam-do Provinces, Jeollabuk-do Provinces, Gyeonggi-do Province, Gyeongsangnam-do Province, Wuhan 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In the opening remarks, NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae said, “When we reflect upon the founding philosophy of our association, the goal of our association should be to become a UN of regional governments in Northeast Asia,” and asked members to make full use of the Secretariat in international exchange and cooperation between member regions.

**Session I**

Presentation of Agenda and Resolution

For the 13th General Assembly, two items on the agenda below were resolved in writing in advance, taking into account technical matters of an online meeting environment, time constraints, etc. As a result, the agenda was unanimously approved by all 76 members, excluding North Korea.

1. Decision on selecting Ulsan Metropolitan City, South Korea, as the venue of the next General Assembly (Selection of Chair Regional Government)
2. New membership of Liaoning Province, China

**Speeches by Heads of Ulsan Metropolitan City and Liaoning Province**

Mayor Song Chul-ho of Ulsan Metropolitan City, who took the 14th NEAR chairmanship, stated, “I thank the member regional governments for their trust in Ulsan Metropolitan City,” and “I hope we can gather together in Ulsan and exchange opinions on the common prosperity of NEAR member regional governments after COVID-19.” Governor Liu Ning of Liaoning Province, which joined NEAR as the 79th member said, “It is a pleasure to have a new opportunity to get deeply involved in regional cooperation in Northeast Asia by joining NEAR.”

**Session II**

In Session 2, the Republic of Sakha reported the outcomes of the 12th Working Committee meeting and the Subcommittee on Sports. In addition, there were also reports on the outcomes of the Subcommittee on Oceans and Fisheries of Shandong Province of China, the Subcommittee on Disaster Prevention of Hyogo Prefecture of Japan, the Subcommittee on Educational and Cultural Exchange of Shimane Prefecture of Japan, and the Subcommittee on Economy and Humanities Exchange of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province of South Korea. The plans for upcoming Subcommittee meetings were also announced.

Furthermore, representative presentations were made by member regions, China’s Heeran Province, Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, and Huizhi Province, South Korea’s Jeong Special Self-Governing City, Jeodam-ri do Province, and Jeju Special Self-Governing Province, Mongolia’s Uvurkhangai Province and Uvs Province, and Russia’s Kamchatka Territory. Finally, the General Assembly ended with the Declaration of the 13th General Assembly.

**The Declaration of the 13th General Assembly**

In the 13th General Assembly on August 10, 2021, which was held online for the first time in the history of NEAR, representatives of 70 member regional governments and two observer members from five countries, the People’s Republic of China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, and the Russian Federation, and associate member regional government Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, participated. In particular, the 8th UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stated in his congratulatory speech that NEAR is a platform for multilateral cooperation and has the potential to contribute to common prosperity and peace in Northeast Asia. This remark affirms the founding philosophy of NEAR which states that NEAR will realize peace in Northeast Asia through exchange and cooperation between regional governments, and it shows that the organization has gained international recognition.

At the General Assembly, which was held under the theme, “After 25 years together, into the future we go,” we became keenly aware of the necessity of exchange between member regional governments, which was brought to a standstill due to the spread of COVID-19. In light of this, based on our experience accumulated over the last 25 years, we will begin the next quarter of a century to make Northeast Asia more abundant and peaceful, and declare as below:

- In the spirit of reciprocity and equity, we will remind ourselves of the initial spirit to contribute to the common development and peace in Northeast Asia.
- We will stand united, centering around NEAR, by participating in exchange and cooperation between regional governments more actively despite the restrictions due to the spread of COVID-19.
- We will share our experience and best practices with one another, cooperating to respond jointly to global issues, such as climate change, environmental issues, and the spread of infectious disease.
- We will make efforts to raise NEAR’s status and attract more members so that NEAR can serve as a UN among regional governments in Northeast Asia.

Furthermore, at this General Assembly, we have concluded on the selected items for the development of the association as below:

1. The General Assembly has concluded that Ulsan Metropolitan City, which will assume a two-year term chair, will host the 14th General Assembly in 2023.
2. The General Assembly has unanimously approved the application for membership of Liaoning Province, China.

NEAR member regional governments resolve to do their best to implement the above declaration and resolutions through cooperation.

August 10, 2021
All Representatives of Regional Governments Present in the 13th NEAR General Assembly
II. Subcommittees

1. Overview of Subcommittees

The Subcommittee on Economy and Humanities Exchange was established in 1998 and as of 2021, 17 subcommittees are in operation and are being held annually or biennially.

Composition of Subcommittees and Major Areas of Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subcommittee</th>
<th>Coordinator</th>
<th>Established Year</th>
<th>Total Number of Meetings</th>
<th>Major Areas of Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economy and Humanities Exchange</td>
<td>Gyeonggi-do Province, South Korea</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Promotion of trade, trade consultation, seminars, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment</td>
<td>Tottori Prefecture, Japan</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>Drilling matter research, environment symposium, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Prevention</td>
<td>Hyogo Prefecture, Japan</td>
<td>1998</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Prevention of damage from disaster, enhancement of disaster prevention capabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational and Cultural Exchange</td>
<td>Shimane Prefecture, Japan</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>Cultivation of human resources, promotion of cultural exchange, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism</td>
<td>Honan Province and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, China</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Exhibitions on tourism, promotion, cooperation forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oceans and Fisheries</td>
<td>Shandong Province, China</td>
<td>2008</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Use of marine resources, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mineral Resources Development</td>
<td>Magadan Region, Russia</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mining and processing mineral resources, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy and Climate Change</td>
<td>Shanxi Province, China</td>
<td>2010</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Energy, climate change, cooperative systems, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bio-medical Industry</td>
<td>Chungcheongbuk-do Province, South Korea</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Exchange and cooperation in the medical industry, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>Jeollanam-do Province, South Korea</td>
<td>2011</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Exchange of information and technology on agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>Republic of Sakha/Yakutia, Russia</td>
<td>2013</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Information and exchange on sports</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logistics and Transportation</td>
<td>Heilongjiang Province, China</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Exhibitions on logistics and cooperation forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-Commerce</td>
<td>Henan Province, China</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>International e-commerce industry forum, business matching, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Exchange of Human Resources</td>
<td>Jilin Province, China</td>
<td>2017</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Cooperation forum on human resources projects for Northeast Asia, sharing of information on human resources and manpower resources, and exploring of ways to cooperate, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation Plus</td>
<td>Hunan Province, China</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Information and exchange on innovation in sciences, products, and cultural management</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Policy</td>
<td>Krasnoyarsk Territory, Russia</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Information on youth policy and youth-supporting areas, and exchange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional Medicine</td>
<td>Shaanxi Province, China</td>
<td>2018</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Information on traditional medicine, and exchange</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Subcommittee Meetings Held in 2021

The 18th Subcommittee on Disaster Prevention

1. Overview

Hyogo Prefecture, Japan, the Coordinator of the Subcommittee on Disaster Prevention has held the Subcommittee meeting every March, sharing its measures on disaster prevention and reduction with member regions. However, in 2021, a face-to-face meeting was replaced by data distribution due to the prevalence of COVID-19. At the request of Hyogo Prefecture, the Secretariat provided assistance by sending the related data to all member regional governments.

2. Main Content


Hyogo Prefecture’s decision to hold the Subcommittee meeting in 2021 in the form of data distribution is viewed as a new model for international exchange between NEAR member regions in a post-COVID-19 era.

The 19th Subcommittee on Educational and Cultural Exchange

1. Overview

The 19th meeting of the Subcommittee on Educational and Cultural Exchange was held online on August 21, September 26, October 30, and November 6 in 2021. This event was attended by 28 college students from six regions of four countries, China (Jilin Province and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region), Japan (Shimane Prefecture), South Korea (Dongguk University and Uiduk University in Gyeongsangbuk-do Province), and Russia (Primorsky Territory and Irkutsk Region). Meetings of the Subcommittee have been held annually to promote mutual understanding and friendly exchange and to build new networks through interaction between youth from different countries of Northeast Asia.

2. Main Content

Starting with the opening ceremony on August 21, the online program was held four times in total. Exchange between students took place online as they introduced their culture, experienced other cultures, and exchanged opinions. NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae delivered congratulatory remarks via video in the opening ceremony. Mr. Kim stressed that young college students who respect and understand one another without prejudice against the thoughts and cultures of neighboring countries could help bring about peace and stability in the region.

- Saturday, August 21, 2:00 – 4:00pm: Opening ceremony, self-introduction, exchange activities
Main Activities of the Association

Sunday, September 26, 2:00 – 4:00pm: Introduction to each country

Saturday, October 30, 2:00 – 4:00pm: Introduction and experience of Japanese culture

Saturday, November 6, 2:00 – 4:00pm: Opinion exchange

The 15th Subcommittee on Environment

1. Overview

Hosted by Toyama Prefecture, Japan, the 15th meeting of the NEAR Subcommittee on Environment was held online on November 17, with member regions from five countries present, including China, Japan, South Korea, Mongolia, and Russia. In this biennial meeting, there were exchanges between local governments from each country, reviews on individual projects, reports on the outcomes, and the exchange of information to prepare measures to preserve the environment in Northeast Asia. More than ten staff members from the NEAR Secretariat, including Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae, experts on each country, and resident officers, participated in the event.

In his congratulatory speech, Secretary-General Kim stated that since it was established in 1999, the Subcommittee on Environment has been an exemplary platform for exchange and cooperation, bringing about participation from many member regions. He also said that the Secretariat had been making efforts, such as applying for the Asian Environmental Awards, which are co-hosted by Korean and Japanese press companies, to make the activities of the Subcommittee widely known in Northeast Asia so that it can encourage more member regions to participate.

2. Main Content

The Subcommittee meeting was attended by 38 participants from 13 member regions of five countries: China (Shaanxi Province, Liaoning Province), Japan (Yamagata Prefecture, Toyama Prefecture), South Korea (Gangwon-do Province, Chungcheongnam-do Province, Gyeongsangnam-do Province), Mongolia (Govisumber Province), and Russia (Primorsky Territory, Khabarovsk Territory, Amur Region, Tomsk Region). There were reports on the outcomes of individual projects for 2021 and suggestions for individual projects for 2022. In addition, there were opinion coordination and agreement between member regions on plans of future meetings of the Subcommittee on Environment. Gyeongsangnam-do Province and Tomsk Region made case presentations and information exchange on advanced environmental policies.
Main Activities of the Secretariat
Main Activities of the Secretariat

I. Hosting Two Rounds of the 2021 Secretariat Experience and Training Program for Local High School Students

1. Overview
The NEAR Secretariat held the Secretariat Experience and Training Program for high school students in South Korea twice, from January 11 to 13 and from January 18 to 20. The number of participants was 17 in total.

2. Main Content
The participants attended lectures by experts on Russia, Mongolia, Japan, and China. There, they learned about each country’s geography, economics, climate and art, etc., exchanged opinions and held discussions with foreign seconded officers, and experienced cultures, trying on traditional costumes and playing musical instruments, among other things.

The participants said that they gained fresh perspectives and a deeper understanding of the histories and cultures of neighboring countries through the lectures. They also showed a deep interest in exchange between regional governments in Northeast Asia centered around NEAR. They also said that the training program gave them an opportunity to learn about the qualifications required to work for international organizations and respect other cultures.

II. Holding Video Conference with NEAR Youth Honorary Ambassadors from the Republic of Sakha, Russia

1. Background
In February, Maksim Ryazanskiy, 23 years old, the head of a public youth organization of the Republic of Sakha, Russia, and Aleksander Novepriezzhiy, 23 years old, a student of North-Eastern Federal University, hosted an online “Model NEAR Conference” for 15 local high school students. This served as an opportunity to make known the roles of NEAR to the local communities of the Republic of Sakha.
In response, the NEAR Secretariat appointed two youths as NEAR Youth Honorary Ambassadors in April. The Secretariat held the first video conference to present the activities of the honorary ambassadors for them.
In October, the NEAR Secretariat held a video conference for over 30 youths of the Republic of Sakha, including Youth Honorary Ambassador Maksim. A presentation on NEAR’s major activities was given and discussions were held on youth activities linked to NEAR.

2. Main Content
The NEAR Secretariat appointed two persons of the Republic of Sakha as NEAR Youth Honorary Ambassadors and helped local youths increase their understanding of NEAR through a “Model NEAR Conference” and other activities. The Secretariat staff also participated in the meeting and communicated with them through a presentation on the Young Leaders Forum, a project that youths can participate in, and a Q&A session.
III. Holding Video Conference Related to Liaoning Province, China, Joining NEAR

1. Background
NEAR observer Liaoning Province, China, submitted an application for NEAR membership to the NEAR Secretariat on March 23.
In response, Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae held a video conference with Director Ying Zhongyuan of the Foreign Affairs Office of Liaoning Province, regarding Liaoning Province’s application on April 12.

2. Main Content
Through the video conference, Secretary-General Kim expressed his gratitude to Liaoning Province for applying for NEAR membership and gave a detailed presentation on ways that Liaoning Province could collaborate with the Secretariat.
In response, Director Ying introduced Liaoning Province’s comparative advantages and its future development direction as well as its experience of exchange and cooperation with other Northeast Asian countries. He also expressed his expectations of utilizing the NEAR platform upon joining NEAR to strengthen cooperation with Northeast Asian provincial cities.
Liaoning Province, a major area of the three provinces of Northeast China, became the 79th official NEAR member upon approval at the 13th General Assembly, which was held on August 10.

IV. Participating in the 17th Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum of Russia Online

1. Overview
The NEAR Secretariat took part in the main online session of the 17th Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum, hosted by NEAR member Krasnoyarsk Territory, Russia, which took place from April 12 to 16. The main session was held for two hours on April 14. In this forum titled, “Economy and Pandemic: Russian Perspective,” many Russian figures in political and business circles, such as Deputy Prime Minister Yury Borisov of the Russian Federation, Governor Alexander Uss of Krasnoyarsk Territory, experts, and businesspersons, participated. The online-offline hybrid forum was attended by over 8,000 offline participants and over 7,000 online participants from a total of 30 countries.

2. Main Content
Five staff members from the NEAR Secretariat, including Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae, attended the main session of the forum online.
Economic experts who participated in the forum stated that the pharmaceutical, fuel, energy, and defense industries were able to progress a step further even in the global economic recession of Russia and beyond in 2020. They also stressed that it was important to overcome crises quickly and effectively without coming to a standstill through strengthening the process of technicalization even amid the pandemic.
In addition, investment contracts worth RUB 53.5 billion were made at the forum for a total of 20 projects in the infrastructure improvement of mineral industry, and tourism and service industries at the forum.

3. Notes
The Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum was launched in 2004, and 2020 marked its seventeenth run. It is one of the three major Russian economic forums along with the Eastern Economic Forum and the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (SPIEF). This year, the forum was conducted both online and offline through live broadcasts in four regions, Moscow, Krasnoyarsk Territory, Berlin, and Singapore.
V. Participating in the 14th General Assembly of the Northern Forum Hosted by Russia Online

1. Overview
On April 28, the NEAR Secretariat participated online in the opening ceremony of the 14th General Assembly of the Northern Forum at the invitation of Vladimir Vasilev, the executive director of the Northern Forum. The General Assembly was held both online and offline in Nenets Autonomous District. It was attended by representatives of the private, public, and academic areas from three countries and those of six NEAR member regions, including the Republic of Sakha, Russia. Notably, the Mayor of Reykjavík City, Iceland, and the Governor of Lappi, Finland, participated in the forum.

2. Main Content
Six staff members from the NEAR Secretariat, including Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae, attended the forum’s opening ceremony online.

In the opening ceremony of the General Assembly, the representative of Nenets Autonomous District, the chair region of the Northern Forum, gave a presentation on the major activities of the Northern Forum. Also, representatives and experts of member regions reported on their activities and promoted their events to revitalize the Northern regions. At the end of the General Assembly, Lappi, Finland, was elected as the chair region of the forum for the 2021 – 2023 term, and it was decided that the 15th General Assembly of the Northern Forum would be held in Lapland in 2023.

3. Notes
The Northern Forum is an international organization composed of 14 local and metropolitan governments of five Northern countries, Russia, South Korea, the United States, Iceland, and Finland. It aims to improve life and develop tourism in the northern region and to cooperate between regions in social and economic areas.

Of the fourteen member regions, six Russian regions, including the Republic of Sakha, and one Korean region, Gangwon-do Province, are NEAR members.

VI. Appointing Promotional Ambassadors for the NEAR Secretariat and Meeting with Promotional Ambassadors

1. Overview
NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae appointed Lim Byoung-jin as a promotional ambassador to China on May 10. Mr. Lim formerly served as the Minister to the Korean Embassy in China and the South Korean Consul General in Shenyang. Furthermore, the Secretariat invited promotional ambassadors Yang Gye-hwa (former South Korean Consul General in Sendai) and Kim Kyung-ho (former South Korean Minister to Russia) as well, and held a meeting with them.

2. Main Content
It is expected that the appointment of a promotional ambassador to China following the appointment of promotional ambassadors to Japan and Russia in the previous year will strengthen the international advisory and public relations roles of the Secretariat based on their rich international networks. Also, they talked about ways to develop NEAR with the Secretariat staff, including NEAR’s roles in supporting the local governments of each country in their public diplomacy.

VII. Delivering Congratulatory Video Message to the 12th Central China Investment and Trade Exposition Hosted by Shanxi Province, China

1. Overview
The 12th Central China Investment and Trade Exposition took place in Taiyuan City, Shanxi Province, a NEAR member, in an online-offline hybrid format from May 21 to 23. In the expo under the themes, “Opening-up and Cooperation” and “Transformation and Innovation,” 71 various events, including presentations on investment policies and environment in central China, product exhibitions, forums, etc., were held.
2. Main Content
The exposition was attended by high-profile figures from 15 countries, including South Korea and Russia, and 1,012 enterprises. Notably, high-ranking government officials, including Vice Premier Hu Chunhua of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China and Prime Minister Pravind Jugnauth of Mauritius, participated. A total of 433 contracts were made in six provinces of Central China. Shanxi Province’s total global trade value amounted to USD 13.37 million while the Chinese total domestic trade value reached CNY 2,518.16 million(approx. USD 397.21 million).

NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae delivered a congratulatory message via video at the opening ceremony. In his speech, he stated that this exposition would contribute not only to the economic development of China’s central region but also to common prosperity and peace in Northeast Asia.

3. Notes
The Central China Investment and Trade Exposition is a large-scale national-level event co-organized by China’s Ministry of Commerce and Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the State Administration for Market Regulation, the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce, the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, the China Federation of Industrial Economics, and the governments of six provinces (Shanxi Province, Anhui Province, Jiangxi Province, Henan Province, Hubei Province, and Hunan Province). Since 2006, the six provinces in central China have taken turns to host the expo biennially to revitalize the economy of the region and enhance relations with the regions outside the central area.

VIII. Delivering Congratulatory Video Message to the Second Eurasian Women’s Forum Hosted by Kemerovo Region, Russia

1. Overview
The Second Eurasian Women’s Forum took place in Kemerovo City of NEAR member Kemerovo Region, Russia, to mark the 300th anniversary of the development of the Kuznetsk coalfield from May 24 to 25. Accordingly, NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae delivered a congratulatory message via video at the opening ceremony in the session titled, “The role of women in a changing world: COVID-19” on May 24.

2. Main Content
In his speech, Mr. Kim stated that there had been discussions on women’s enhanced roles in NEAR members. He also said that, going forward, the forum would contribute to enhancing mutual understanding and trust between Northeast Asian regional governments.

3. Notes
The Second Eurasian Women’s Forum is a large-scale international event sponsored by the Russian Federation Council and the Ministry of Industry and Trade of the Russian Federation. At the 2020 forum, there were discussions under the theme of “The expansion of women’s economic potential in the global challenge era.” The forum was conducted both online and offline due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It attracted over 2,000 participants offline and over 100,000 participants online from 15 countries.
Main Activities of the Secretariat

IX. Visiting the Next Chair Region, Ulsan Metropolitan City, South Korea

1. Overview
On July 15, Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae and four delegates from the NEAR Secretariat visited Ulsan Metropolitan City, which expressed its desire to take the next chair. They met with Song Chul-ho, the mayor and Choi Jai-chel, the ambassador for international relations and others.

2. Content
Secretary-General Kim explained about the Secretariat’s roles in assisting the chair region and international exchange events anticipated to take place in the coming years. As the next chairperson, Mayor Song stated that he would make an effort to expand exchange and cooperation among NEAR member regional governments by collaborating with the Secretariat.

X. Delivering Congratulatory Video Message to the Fifth China-Arab States Expo Hosted by Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, China

1. Overview
The Fifth China-Arab States Expo took place from August 19 to 22 in Chinese NEAR member Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. The expo was held under the theme of “Joint Construction of the Belt and Road through Strengthened Cooperation in Economics and Trade”.

2. Main Content
 Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the expo was held both online and offline. Over 1,200 enterprises in the areas of medicine, new materials, and eco-friendly energy exhibited their work in the booths set up online and offline. NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae delivered a congratulatory speech in which he stated that the expo would serve as a bridge to connect Northeast Asia and the Arab world. He also stressed that sustainable development could be realized when we respect one another in the spirit of reciprocity and equality. Mr. Kim’s speech was also reported in the Ningxia Ribao, the Ningxia government newspaper, and on Sina.com, the largest Chinese-language web portal.

3. Notes
The China-Arab States Expo is a national-level exposition, co-hosted by China’s Ministry of Commerce, the China Council for the Promotion of International Trade, and the People’s Government of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. Since 2013, the expo has been held a total of five times in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region. It is an important platform, where China can share the latest policies, facilitate trade, and create opportunities for exchange and cooperation with countries of the Belt and Road Initiative, including the Arab world.
XI. Delivering Congratulatory Video Message to the 2021 Taiyuan Energy Low Carbon Development Forum Hosted by Shanxi Province, China

1. Overview
The 2021 Taiyuan Energy Low Carbon Development Forum took place in Taiyuan City of NEAR member Shanxi Province, China, in an online-offline hybrid format from September 3 to 4. At the forum, which was held under the theme of “Energy, Climate, and Environment,” there were deep discussions through diverse forums on global agenda, such as carbon neutrality, response to climate change, and protection of ecology and environment, etc.

2. Main Content
In the opening ceremony of the forum, representatives of 26 countries, friendship cities, and international organizations participated online and offline. Notable participants include Premier Li Keqiang of China, President Sahle-Work Zewde of Ethiopia, Governor-General Bob Dadae of Papua New Guinea, Prime Minister Hun Sen of Cambodia, Prime Minister Xavier Bettel of Luxembourg, and Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa of Sri Lanka.

NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae delivered congratulatory remarks via video at the opening ceremony. In his speech, he stated that Shanxi Province had made great efforts to build a better future for humanity through carbon neutrality and green growth.

3. Notes
The Taiyuan Energy Low Carbon Development Forum is an international professional forum held at the national-level, which has been co-organized by institutions such as China’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Development and Reform Commission, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Ministry of Ecology and Environment, the Ministry of Commerce, and the People’s Government of Shanxi Province, since 2016. It is a platform for high-level dialogue and cooperation which has international recognition in the area of energy.

XII. Delivering Congratulatory Video Message to the First China (Ningxia) International Wine Culture and Tourism Expo Hosted by Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, China

1. Overview
The First China (Ningxia) International Wine Culture and Tourism Expo took place in Chinese NEAR member Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region in an online-offline format from September 25 to 27.
2. Main Content
The expo was held under the theme of “Chinese wine that surprises the world.” The expo covered many events that include world wine conferences, the Second China-France Wine Culture Forum, and wine exhibitions and product shows.

Notable figures from home and abroad attended the opening ceremony; and they include Vice-Chairperson Chen Zhu of the Standing Committee of the National People’s Congress, Communist Party Secretary Chen Runer of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, former Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin of France, and Uruguay’s Minister Fernando Mattos of Livestock, Agriculture, and Fisheries.

NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae delivered congratulatory remarks via video at the opening ceremony. In his speech, he congratulated Ningxia on its success in the global wine market. He also wished Ningxia further success in the future through the NEAR platform. Mr. Kim’s remarks were reported in China via the local press, including the Guangming Daily and the China Youth Daily.

3. Notes
The China (Ningxia) International Wine Culture and Tourism Expo is China’s first national-level comprehensive exhibition of wine, culture, and tourism. It is co-hosted by China’s Ministry of Agriculture and Ministry of Culture and Tourism, the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, and the People’s Government of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region.

XIII. Delivering Congratulatory Video Message to the Second Northeast Asia Cooperation Roundtable Hosted by Jilin Province, China

1. Overview
The Second Northeast Asia Cooperation Roundtable was held in Jilin Province, China, on September 22. It was co-hosted by Chinese NEAR member the People’s Government of Jilin Province and the Chinese People’s Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. At the roundtable, there were in-depth discussions on practical ways to strengthen exchange and cooperation between provincial cities in Northeast Asia in a post-COVID-19 era. The roundtable was held under the theme, “To Connect Market Resources and Jointly Build a Northeast Asia Maritime Economic Cooperation Community.”

2. Main Content
The roundtable was held on a large scale, with more than 140 participants from six Northeast Asian countries present, including participants from NEAR members Hamgyeongbuk-do Province and Rasun Special City, North Korea. The joint statement, including the decision to hold the next roundtable in 2023, was adopted. NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae delivered a congratulatory speech via video at the roundtable as the representative of one of the co-hosting organizations. Mr. Kim commended Jilin Province on its efforts to contribute to exchange and cooperation in Northeast Asia. He also stressed that regional governments in Northeast Asia should pursue sustainable development through earnest communication and exchange. His remarks were reported in China via the local press, including Xinhuanet and the Jilin Daily.

3. Notes
As a major event of the China-Northeast Asia Expo, the Northeast Asia Cooperation Roundtable serves as a platform to promote exchange and cooperation and realize common prosperity among provincial cities. The conference was first held at Changchun City, Jilin Province, in 2019, under the joint auspices of NEAR and Jilin Province, a NEAR member. Currently, representatives of regional governments from six countries: China, North Korea, South Korea, Mongolia, Japan, and Russia, which have NEAR member regional governments have participated.
XIV. Participating in the Third Korea-Russia Regional Cooperation Forum
Hosted by Ulsan Metropolitan City, South Korea

1. Overview
Six NEAR Secretariat staff members, including Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae, participated in and supported the Third Korea-Russia Regional Cooperation Forum as a cooperative body. The forum was organized by the NEAR chair member, Ulsan Metropolitan City, South Korea, and took place from November 3 to 5 in an online-offline format. Among NEAR member regional governments, 12 South Korean regions, including Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, and five Russian regions, including Sakhalin Region, participated in the forum offline. Beginning with the opening ceremony of the information center on Wednesday, November 3, the opening ceremony, official luncheon, bilateral talks between local governments, summits, and welcoming dinner were held on Thursday, November 4.

2. Main Content
The NEAR Secretariat arranged the “Bilateral Summits Between Local Governments” on behalf of Korean member Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea, and Russian members, including the Republic of Sakha, Sakhalin Region, and the Republic of Buryatia, respectively and provided interpretation services. The bilateral talks is a core event of the Third Korea-Russia Regional Cooperation Forum.

In the summit between Ulsan Metropolitan City and the Republic of Sakha, the 13th chair region, there was a handover ceremony of the NEAR chair flag. The flag was handed over from the Republic of Sakha to Ulsan Metropolitan City, which had been elected as the 14th chair regional government. As chair regions, they discussed ways to implement joint projects to develop exchange and cooperation between regions in Northeast Asia.

3. Notes
The Korea-Russia Regional Cooperation Forum was established in 2017 under the agreement by South Korean President Moon Jae-in and Russian President Vladimir Putin for the purpose of coming up with a platform for exchange and cooperation between regional governments of both nations and to promote joint growth. It is a forum that 18 local governments of the Russian Far East and Arctic and 17 local and metropolitan governments of South Korea take turns to host annually.

XV. The Outcomes of the Ninth NEAR Youth Art · Poster Contest

1. Overview
Since 2013, the NEAR Secretariat has held an annual Art · Poster Contest to promote understanding of the cultures and traditions of neighboring countries through works of art such as paintings, among youths in Northeast Asia, who will be the leaders of the next generation.

2. Main Content
The theme of the year was “Northeast Asian countries I want to travel to when the COVID-19 pandemic is over.” A total of 456 artworks were submitted by five countries: 250 from China, 49 from Japan, 29 from South Korea,
17 from Mongolia, and 71 from Russia.

The results of the screening were released. A total of 180 artworks won awards. “Somewhere in Mongolia” by Susina Eva from Irkutsk Region, Russia, won the first prize. In addition, Wu Jiamin from Tumote High School in Hohhot City, Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, China took second place for the artwork “Lion Dance”. Ojima Rie from Horikawa Junior High School in Toyama Prefecture, Japan and Kim Seo-young from Changwon Daesan High School in Gyeongsangnam-do Province, South Korea received participation awards for their artworks: “Old Streets in Jiufen” and “Japan”, respectively.

3. Notes
The NEAR Youth Art · Poster Contest celebrated its 9th run in 2021. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, submissions hit a record high of 456 works, demonstrating high interest from youths in the region. Since 2019, the NEAR Secretariat has held traveling exhibitions of award-winning works of the contests in Gyeongsangbuk-do Province and other regions. There are plans to display the award-winning works by youths
XVI. Online and Offline Exhibitions of Award-winning Works of the NEAR

Youth Art · Poster Contests of Five Northeast Asian Countries

1. Overview
The NEAR Secretariat selected and exhibited over 80 award-winning works of the NEAR Youth Art · Poster Contests held over the past five years, in South Korea.

2. Main Content
The exhibitions of award-winning works were held at Ulsan Metropolitan Library, Gimcheon City Library, Gyeongbuk Library, and Chungnam Library from September 7 to October 29, 2021. They provided opportunity for local residents in South Korea to appreciate the different cultures and traditions of Northeast Asia.

In addition, the Secretariat produced an online exhibition video so that more people could view the award-winning works amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Afterwards, at the request of Pohang Hotel Art Fair, the artworks were displayed online from October 12 to 14 alongside the works by professional artists.

Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the exhibitions were introduced on a local radio program and local press (89 companies), which allowed many local residents to view the works.
Main Activities of the Secretariat

| ▲ Exhibition at Gyeongbuk Library (October 5 – 16, 2021) |
| ▲ Exhibition at Chungnam Library (October 18 – 29, 2021) |
| ▲ Exhibition at Ulsan Metropolitan Library (September 7 – 17, 2021) |

XVII. Providing Support for Associate Member Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, Regarding COVID-19

1. Overview
On August 23, NEAR associate member Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, requested the NEAR Secretariat for support due to the surge in COVID-19 cases and the difficulties in securing medicines and vaccines. As a result of circulating this request to all member regional governments, three South Korean members, Chungcheongbuk-do Province, Gangwon-do Province, and Ulsan Metropolitan City, expressed their intention to provide aid and rendered support.

2. Main Content
Sugentech, Inc., a COVID-19 test kit manufacturer based in Chungcheongbuk-do Province, donated 10 million KRW through the Vietnam Red Cross in late October, and requested that the funds be used to help Ho Chi Minh City overcome its COVID-19 crisis. The test kit maker held a donation ceremony at the Chungcheongbuk-do Province Governor’s office on October 26. In early December, Gangwon-do Province and Ulsan Metropolitan City delivered 80,000 health masks and 1,500 COVID-19 test kits, respectively. The Ho Chi Minh City branch of Gangwon-do Office held a masks delivery ceremony with the Department of External Relations of Ho Chi Minh City on December 28. Ho Chi Minh City sent “Thank You” letters to all local and metropolitan governments that provided aid in response to the surge in COVID-19 cases.
Cooperation Activities with Related Organizations
Cooperation Activities with Related Organizations

I. Participating in the Youth Exchange Webinar Hosted by the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS)

1. Overview
12 NEAR Secretariat staff, including NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae, participated in the youth exchange webinar on March 17, held by the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS), located in Seoul, South Korea, to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the organization.

2. Main Content
During the discussions, TCS Secretary-General Michigami Hisashi and President of Dongseo University Chang Jeolik answered questions about the difficulties of trilateral youth exchange during the COVID-19 pandemic and opportunities for cooperation in the post-COVID-19 era. Secretary-General Michigami shared his thoughts about South Korea and China, having lived in both countries, mentioned the implications of each of the three countries having for one another, and stressed the importance of trilateral cooperation of South Korea, China, and Japan. Also, college students from the three countries took part in the discussion online to share their experience, including different college life during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Notes
The TCS is an international organization which was established in Seoul in September 2011 with a vision to promote peace and prosperity among South Korea, China, and Japan.

II. Participating in the 2021 International Forum for Trilateral Cooperation Hosted by the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS)

1. Overview
On April 27, the NEAR Secretariat participated online in the International Forum for Trilateral Cooperation hosted by the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS). It was held under the theme, "The New Trilateral Partnership in the Next Decade," on the 10th anniversary of the TCS.

2. Main Content
In the forum, TCS Secretary-General Michigami Hisashi gave an opening speech, followed by congratulatory remarks by Choi Jongmoon, Second Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, South Korea, Aiboshi Koichi, Japanese Ambassador to South Korea, and Xing Haiming, Chinese Ambassador to South Korea. A keynote speech by the 8th UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon followed.
In the main sessions, presentations and discussions were held under the themes, "Achievements of TCS and Future Trilateral Cooperation," "Voices from the Business Community – The Path Forward for Revitalized Economic Cooperation amid the Pandemic," and "Empowering the Future Generation–Trilateral Youth Community Building."

III. Participating in the 2021 North-East Asia Development Cooperation Forum Hosted by the UNESCAP-ENEA Office

1. Overview
NEAR Secretariat staff participated online in the 2021 North-East Asia Development Cooperation Forum hosted by the East and North-East Asia (ENEA) Office of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission (UNESCAP) from August 26 to 27.

2. Main Content
In the forum, Head of the ENEA Office Ganbold Baasanjav gave welcoming remarks on August 26. For two days, there were a total of four sessions held under the themes, "Changing Face of Development Cooperation in Post-COVID-19 Era," "The SDGs in the Post-COVID-19 for Regional Development Cooperation," "East Asia Poverty Alleviation Experience and Its Implications for Other Developing Countries," and "Russia’s Role in Achieving the SDGs in the Post-COVID-19 Context." The sessions consisted of presentations by key speakers,
Cooperation Activities with Related Organizations

3. Notes
Since launching in May 2010 in Incheon Metropolitan City, South Korea, the UNESCAP-ENEA Office has been working closely with six Northeast Asian member states to build and strengthen multilateral partnerships and intergovernmental cooperation for inclusive and sustainable development in Northeast Asia.

IV. Sponsoring and Participating in the Seventh Economic Cooperation Forum of CEOs in Northeast Asia Hosted by Pohang City, South Korea

1. Overview
On September 10, Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae attended the Seventh Economic Cooperation Forum of CEOs in Northeast Asia as a guest. The forum was hosted by Pohang City, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea and sponsored by the NEAR Secretariat. It was held both online and offline at the POSCO International Center.

2. Main Content
Under the theme, “The Roles and Tasks of Focus Cities in Northeast Asia for Innovation of Business,” officials and CEOs from Vladivostok City of Russia, Joetsu City of Japan, Hunchun City of China, and Pohang City of South Korea made presentations via video, followed by experts presentations and panel discussions.

In his opening remarks, Mayor Lee Kang-deok of Pohang City said we had entered a new era. He stated that amid the dual crises of the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, have accelerated the demand for the fourth industrial revolution, including digital transformation and the need for carbon neutrality. Thus, the survival of local governments would no longer be guaranteed without genuine innovation. He also expressed his hope that focus cities in Northeast Asia would continue with active exchange and substantial cooperation.

3. Notes
On the sidelines of the forum, consultation meetings on international trade, organized by the Gyeongbuk Economic Promotion Agency, were held.

V. Hosting Video Conference with the Secretariat of the Forum of Vice-Governors of the Argentine Republic (FOVIRA)

1. Overview
At the request by the Secretariat of the Forum of Vice-Governors of the Argentine Republic (FOVIRA), the NEAR Secretariat held a video conference with FOVIRA staff members on September 15. During the video conference, they discussed ways to cooperate.

2. Main Content
From the NEAR Secretariat, four staff members, including Kim Won-gon, Director of the Department of International Cooperation and Seok Jayoung, Expert on English attended the meeting. They introduced NEAR and gave a presentation on NEAR activities and the roles of the Subcommittees, etc.

From the Cooperation and International Relations Secretariat of the Senate of Buenos Aires, which also serves as the FOVIRA Secretariat, Ramiro Ordoqui, the head of the organization and Ignacio Portela and Lucia Olivera, counselors attended the meeting. They gave a presentation on the purpose of FOVIRA and expressed their hope to cooperate with the NEAR Secretariat in areas such as NEAR Subcommittees. Furthermore, they said that NEAR is the first Asian organization that FOVIRA had met with. Finally, they stated that they hoped to expand opportunities to create exchange with Asia based on their cooperation with NEAR.

3. Notes
FOVIRA is a forum consisting of vice governors of 23 states and one autonomous city of the Argentine Republic. It was established in February 2021, aiming to discuss institutional cooperation between states and expand collaboration between regional governments.
VI. Participating in the Fifth WeGO General Assembly Organized by WeGO

1. Overview
On Monday, October 18, the NEAR Secretariat participated online in the Fifth WeGO General Assembly hosted by the World Smart Sustainable Cities Organization (WeGO). The theme was “New Normal with Smart Sustainable Solutions for All.”

2. Main Content
In the opening ceremony, Oh Se-hoon, Mayor of Seoul and WeGO Chair delivered an opening speech, followed by congratulatory remarks by Paulo Ricardo Nunes, Mayor of São Paulo, and Kriangyos Sudlabha, Deputy Governor of Bangkok. Maimunah Mohd Sharif, UN-Habitat Executive Director gave the keynote speech.

During the main session, Paik Ji-ah, Ambassador for International Relations at the Seoul Metropolitan Government, and Park Jung-sook, the Secretary-General of WeGO, served as the chair and the moderator, respectively. They passed a total of seven items on the agenda, including “WeGO 2030 Masterplan” and “Selection of the Host City of the 6th General Assembly.”

3. Notes
WeGO is the first international association of cities and corporations in the field of Smart City. It strives for the development of sustainable cities and aims to narrow the digital divide. As of 2021, WeGO has 213 members around the world.

VII. Participating in the 26th Conference of Major Cities in the East Sea Rim Region Hosted by Pohang City, South Korea

1. Overview
Six NEAR Secretariat staff members, including Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae, attended the 26th Conference of Major Cities in the East Sea Rim Region on November 19. The conference was hosted by Pohang City, South Korea, and it was held both online and offline.

2. Main Content
The theme of the meeting was “Ways to Conduct Economic Exchange and Vitalize Culture and Tourism Between Major Cities in the East Sea Rim Region.” There, representatives of 11 local governments from four countries—China’s Hunchun, Tumen, and Yanji Cities, Japan’s Sakaiminato, Tottori, and Yonago Cities, South Korea’s Pohang, Donghae, and Sokcho Cities, and Russia’s Vladivostok City and Khasan County—gave presentations on member cities and exchanged opinions.

3. Notes
The Conference of Major Cities in the East Sea Rim Region is a regional multilateral consultative group established in October 1994 to pursue joint projects between local governments in Northeast Asia. It consists of cities of NEAR member regions. Hence, NEAR will strengthen cooperation with the conference going forward.
International Cooperative Networking
On April 15, Tsogto Urunzaya, the newly appointed Mongolian Consul in Busan, visited the NEAR Secretariat and engaged in dialogue with Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae. They exchanged opinions on ways the consulate could collaborate with the NEAR Secretariat. Secretary-General Kim highlighted that every metropolitan and regional government in Mongolia were NEAR members. He suggested that, going forward, the Secretariat could support Mongolian member regional governments in international exchange through close trilateral cooperation among Mongolian regional governments, the consulate, and the NEAR Secretariat.

Chang Jeluk, President of Dongseo University, South Korea, visits the NEAR Secretariat on May 31
President of Dongseo University, Chang Jeluk, visited the NEAR Secretariat on May 31. He listened to the presentation on the current status of the Secretariat. He exchanged opinions on exchanges between Northeast Asian universities and youth using the NEAR platform through talks with NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae.

NEAR Secretariat Visits Korea-Japan Calligraphy Exhibition Held in Busan, South Korea
On November 16, NEAR Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae and Secretariat staff visited the Korea-Japan Calligraphy Exhibition, co-hosted by the Consulate General of Japan and Trinity University in Busan. The exhibition was from November 13 to 19. There, Mr. Kim met with Consul General Masayuki Kohisé and President Chun Hirohito of Trinity University.

Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae Visits the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat (TCS) on June 17
Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae visited the Trilateral Cooperation Secretariat based in Seoul, South Korea, on June 17. He had a meeting with TCS Secretary-General Michiyuki Hashi and Deputy Secretary-General Ko Ho-jo and exchanged opinions on ways to cooperate between NEAR and the TCS. Secretary-General Kim gave a presentation on close cooperation between the Assembly of European Regions (AER) and the European Union (EU). Furthermore, since TCS is in charge of cooperative works between central governments, and NEAR is a platform for exchange between regional governments, he suggested that the two should cooperate. As a result, he would generate synergies.

Secretary-General Michiyuki stated that NEAR is a platform that may continue on with exchange more fluidly than the TCS, whose exchange can be affected by political situations. Mr. Kim said that the TCS had focused on material cooperation among South Korea, China, and Japan. However, it has decided to open its doors to other countries in Northeast Asia, adapting to the progress of its projects. He also said that going forward, he would include the fields in which the two organizations could cooperate.

Newly Appointed Director of the Division of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea, Pays a Courtesy Visit on January 11
Lee Eun-yi Kim, the newly appointed Director of the Division of Foreign Affairs and Trade of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, visited the NEAR Secretariat to pay his respects and meet Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae. He discussed the support of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province and cooperative areas related to promoting the projects of the Secretariat for 2021.

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Director General of the Maritime and Fisheries Bureau of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea, Visits the NEAR Secretariat on March 15
Lee Young-wook, newly appointed Director General of the Gyeongsangbuk-do Province Maritime and Fisheries Bureau, visited the NEAR Secretariat and spoke with Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae, exchanging opinions on ways to cooperate with NEAR on March 15. Secretary-General Kim said that Shandong Province, China, hosted the Subcommission on Ocean and Fisheries, one of the 17 NEAR subcommittees, and asked Director General Lee to participate in the Maritime and Fisheries Bureau. Director General Lee previously served as the Director of the Gyeongsangbuk-do Province Division of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which was in charge of cooperation with NEAR. He demonstrated a deep understanding of the work of NEAR and stated that he would participate in international exchange events in the area of ocean logistics as well as maritime fisheries going forward.

Director General of the Job Creation and Economy Bureau of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea, Visits the NEAR Secretariat on May 17
Rai Sung-ik, Director General of the Job Creation and Economy Bureau of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, visited the NEAR Secretariat on May 17. There, he met with Secretary-General Kim Ok-chae and listened to the presentation on the current status of NEAR. Then, Secretary-General Kim gave a presentation on the role of NEAR as a platform to promote public diplomacy between regional governments. Mr. Kim and Mr. Rai exchanged opinions on effective ways to conduct exchange between member regional governments and the roles of the Secretariat as a bridgehead.

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Introduction:
NEAR Secretariat
1. Establishment of the Secretariat

In 2004, the resolution for establishing a permanent secretariat of a four-year term was adopted at the 5th General Assembly held in Heilongjiang Province, China. Accordingly, it was decided at the General Assembly that the permanent secretariat be established, as Gyeongsangbuk-do Province proposed that it would host the permanent secretariat, provided that it would cover all costs. Later, at the 9th General Assembly held by the Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, China, in 2012, it was decided that Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea be chosen as the site of the permanent secretariat, to ensure consistent operational practices of the Secretariat.

2. Secretariat Organization and Personnel

The Secretariat is managed by the Secretary-General and the two-part system (Department of Planning and Public Relations and Department of International Cooperation), and it is staffed by experts and public officials seconded by Chinese, Japanese, South Korean, Mongolian, and Russian regional governments.

3. Budget

The operating costs of the Secretariat are approximately KRW 1.5 billion (USD 1.28 million / CNY 8.94 million / JPY 140 million), and it is covered by Gyeongsangbuk-do Province (70 percent) and Pohang City (30 percent) of South Korea.

4. Task

A. Coordinating between member regional governments
B. Supporting the operation of the General Assembly, Working Committee, and Subcommittees and the execution of their decisions
C. Conducting projects of the Secretariat such as the NEAR International Forum, Working-level Workshop, Northeast Asia Young Leaders Forum, etc.
D. Developing and investing in exchange programs for the development of the Association
E. Establishing networks with international organizations and regional research institutes
F. Conducting international public relations and operating the Honorary Ambassador system
G. Preparing business plans, annual reports, and accounting reports
H. Budgeting and executing the budget

5. Secretariat Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Photo</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Secretary General</td>
<td>Kim Ok-chae</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, Department of Planning and Public Relations (Gyeongsangbuk-do Province)</td>
<td>Lee Kum-yong</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager, Department of Planning and Public Relations (Gyeongsangbuk-do Province)</td>
<td>Kim Dae-gyun</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert on China</td>
<td>Cho Sun-hwa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert on Japan</td>
<td>Son Mi-kyoung</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Expert on Mongolia</td>
<td>Lkham Khishigjargal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert on Russia</td>
<td>Egorov Artem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert on English</td>
<td>Seok Ji-young</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations Officer</td>
<td>Do Eon-seok</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director, Department of International Cooperation</td>
<td>Kim Won-gon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager, Department of International Cooperation</td>
<td>Chai Ju-hwa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manager, Department of International Cooperation</td>
<td>Masuda Ayako</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shimane Branch of the NEAR Secretariat</td>
<td>Cheng Anni</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer seconded from Mongolia</td>
<td>Batsaikhan Munkhtsetseg</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Officer seconded from Russia</td>
<td>Rebus Igor (Sleptsova Irina)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Officer</td>
<td>Kim You-jin</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative Officer</td>
<td>Kim Su-hyun</td>
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Charter of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments

Preamble
In the spirit of reciprocity and equity, representatives of regional governments in the Northeast Asian region, which has unlimited potential to contribute to the international community, have resolved to combine our efforts to accomplish co-development in the region and, at the same time, to contribute to world peace by promoting exchange and cooperation in all fields of administration, economy, and culture. Accordingly, to accomplish these noble aims, the representatives have agreed to the present Charter of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments and do hereby establish an international organization known as the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments.

Chapter 1 Name and Purposes of the Association

Article 1 (Name) This organization shall be named “The Association of North East Asia Regional Governments” (hereinafter referred to as “the Association”).

Article 2 (Purposes) In the spirit of reciprocity and equality, the Association has the purpose of pursuing the joint development of the Northeast Asian region and, at the same time, contributing to world peace by building trust based on mutual understanding through the establishment of networks for exchanges and cooperation among member governments.

Article 3 (Agenda) “The Association” shall perform the following clauses:
1. Regularly hold the General Assembly of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments
2. Collect and distribute information on economic and technological development within the region
3. Support and execute projects related to exchange and cooperation
4. Review projects necessary to accomplish the purposes of the Association

Chapter 2 Scope and Rights & Obligations of Members and Others

Article 4 (Membership Scope) The members of the Association shall be the regional governments of the People’s Republic of China, the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea, Japan, Mongolia, the Republic of Korea, and the Russian Federation which have agreed to the purposes of the Association and obtained the approval of membership by the General Assembly. (newly enacted on September 27, 2016)

Article 4-2 (Associate Membership Scope) The associate members of the Association shall be the regional governments of countries located in Asia, excluding the Northeastern region, which have agreed to the purposes of the Association and obtained the approval of membership by the General Assembly. (newly enacted on September 27, 2016)

Article 5 (Rights and Obligations of Members) Members shall have the right to participate in various projects and activities performed by the Association and have the obligation to comply with the provisions stipulated in the Charter.

Article 5-2 (Rights and Obligations of Associate Members) Associate members do not have the right to vote and are not eligible to run for election as addressed in Article 7 and the right to vote as addressed in Clause 1, Article 9. (newly enacted on September 27, 2016)

Chapter 3 Organization and Functions

Section 1 The General Assembly

Article 6 (Structure and Operation) The General Assembly is the supreme legislative body of the Association, which consists of heads of member regional governments. The General Assembly is held biennially. (revised on September 27, 2016)

Article 7 (Executives) The General Assembly shall be given due authority to appoint executives to positions specified in the clauses below:
1. The General Assembly shall designate one person as the chair who represents the Association. The head of the regional government, which holds the General Assembly, shall ex officio become the chair of the General Assembly. The chair’s term of office ends on the last day of the General Assembly. However, when the chair is absent, the deputy representative of the regional government shall act as the chair on behalf of the representative. (revised on October 28, 2010)
2. Each country shall have an auditor. Auditors shall be elected out of director general or director levels at the General Assembly and administer accounting and audit. The auditor’s term of office is as stipulated in Clause 1. (revised on September 27, 2016)
3. In accordance with the Regulation of Member Rights in the Regulations for the Membership Fee System, the right to vote and be elected for chair stated in Clause 1 and for auditor in Clause 2 can be restricted. (newly enacted on September 27, 2016)

Article 8 (Functions) The General Assembly shall perform the following clauses:
1. Resolution of member and associate member admission and dismissal (revised on September 27, 2016)
2. Determination of membership fees
3. Amendment of the Association Charter
4. Determination of termination and liquidation of the Association
5. Determination of the Secretariat venue
6. Appointment of auditors
7. Approval of budget settlement of accounts and project plans
8. Approval of the Regulations for the Membership Fee System (newly enacted on September 27, 2016)
The Working Committee shall perform the following clauses:

1. The Working Committee consists of director-general level or administrator-level staff nominated by the head of each member regional government. The executive or chair of the Working Committee will convene in the year before the General Assembly is supposed to be held. However, if deemed necessary by the executive of the Working Committee, a meeting of the interim working committee may convene. (newly enacted on October 22, 2014) <revised on October 29, 2018>
2. The chair of the Working Committee shall be the vice head of the chair local government.
3. The chair of the Working Committee shall report the result of the meeting to the General Assembly. <revised on October 22, 2014>
4. For smooth operation of individual projects and other works, a separate subcommittee or subcommittees for each field of work may be organized as a supporting organization for the Working Committee. However, the newly established subcommittees shall be reported to the General Assembly. (newly enacted on October 21, 1998) (revised on October 29, 2018)
5. Other functions deemed to be necessary

Section 3 The Secretariat

The Secretariat shall perform the following clauses:

1. Budgeting and budget execution
2. Documentation of business plans, annual reports, and accounting reports
3. Liaison and coordination among members
4. Execution of decisions made by the General Assembly and the Working Committee
5. Other functions deemed to be necessary

The Secretariat shall have the following executives and staff:

1. The Secretary-General shall be one person. The Secretary-General shall be recommended by the head of the member regional government where the Secretariat is located and be appointed by the chair of the Association.
2. The executives and staff of the Secretariat shall be comprised of government officials dispatched by the Association in principle. However, when it is deemed necessary by the Secretary General, it can be constituted separately after receiving approval from the chair of the Association.

The Secretariat shall have the following executives and staff:

1. The accounting of the Secretariat shall be treated as special accounting, and its operations shall be covered by membership fees and other miscellaneous income.
2. Accounting shall tentatively be carried out in accordance with the following clauses:

1) The members of the Association shall pay the membership fee and the matters necessary for the management and operation of the membership fee shall be prescribed in the separate Regulations for the Membership Fee System. (revised on September 27, 2016)
2) All expenses incurred by holding the General Assembly and the Working Committee shall be covered and shared as follows:
   A. Half of the total expenses shall be borne by the regional government hosting the conference.
   B. The remaining sum will be divided among the rest of the regional governments of the Association excluding the host of the conference.
   C. If the number of regional governments participating in the conference is less than the total number of regional governments minus the host, the balance shall be borne by the regional government hosting the conference.
   D. In the event that a member regional government is unable to bear a significant portion of the expense
due to unavoidable circumstances such as natural disasters etc., the expense to be borne may be
partially reduced to a reasonable level based on the agreement of other member regional
governments.
E. During the General Assembly, the regional government which proposed to host the next General
Assembly shall submit tentative accounting of expenses for organizing the General Assembly and the
Working Committees.
3. The operating expenses of the Secretariat shall be borne by the member government which hosts the
Secretariat.
4. Expenses for other individual exchange and cooperation projects shall be covered by the member
government which proposed those projects. However, based on agreement, they may be shared among
participating members which desire to join the projects.

Section 4 Associated Supporting Organizations

Article 16 (Establishment) Aimed at contributing to the development of the Northeast Asian region, each member
regional government may establish a supporting organization (hereinafter referred to as “Supporting Organization
of the Association”) to support the activities of the Association. (newly enacted on September 1998)

Article 17 (Registration)
1. In the event that a member regional government establishes a Supporting Organization of the Association,
it can register the organization by submitting an application. (newly enacted in September 1998)
2. The Supporting Organization of the Association shall report its activities to the Association. (newly enacted
in September 1998)

Chapter 4 Final Provisions

Article 18 (Effectuation) This Charter shall take effect from the 27th of September 2016. (revised on September
27, 2016)

Article 19 (The Scope of Members) The founding members of the Association consist of regional governments,
which attended the conference of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments in 1996 and agreed
to the basic spirit of the Charter.

Article 20 (Language) This Charter shall be written in English and in the languages of the countries where the
member regions belong. Original copies of which shall be kept at the archive of the Secretariat and copies of
which shall be kept by each member. (revised on October 28, 2010)

The representatives of the regional governments who have been given due authority from each member
government have signed the present Charter of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments in

Gyeongju City, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, the Republic of Korea on the 12th day of September 1996.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect from October 21, 1998.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect from September 11, 2002.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect from September 8, 2004.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect from October 28, 2010.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect from October 22, 2014.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect from September 27, 2016.

Supplementary Provision
This Charter shall take effect from October 29, 2018.
Regulations for the Establishment and Operation of Subcommittees of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments

(Establishment) October 21, 1998
(Partial Revision) September 4, 2007
(Partial Revision) September 2, 2008
(Partial Revision) October 28, 2010
(Partial Revision) July 19, 2011
(Partial Revision) September 11, 2013
(Partial Revision) September 26, 2017
(Partial Revision) October 29, 2018

The present regulations stipulate rules regarding the establishment and operation of subcommittees in accordance with Clause 4 of Article 10 of the Charter of NEAR. <revised on September 26, 2017>

Article 1 (Establishment) For smooth operation of individual projects or tasks (hereinafter referred to as “Individual Projects”) proposed at the General Assembly or the Working Committee of the Association of North East Asia Regional Governments, subcommittees shall be established for each field of work. <revised on September 26, 2017>

Article 2 (Name and Working Area) The names of the subcommittees shall be as follows:

1. Subcommittee on Economy and Humanities Exchange <revised on September 11, 2013>
2. Subcommittee on Environment
3. Subcommittee on Educational and Cultural Exchange <integrated on September 2, 2008>
4. Subcommittee on Disaster Prevention
5. Deleted <September 26, 2017>
6. Deleted <September 26, 2017>
7. Subcommittee on Oceans and Fisheries <newly established on September 2, 2008>
8. Subcommittee on Tourism <newly established on September 2, 2008>
10. Subcommittee on Energy and Climate Change <newly established on October 28, 2010>
11. Deleted <September 26, 2017>
13. Subcommittee on Agriculture <newly established on July 19, 2011>
14. Subcommittee on Sports <newly established on September 11, 2013>
15. Subcommittee on Logistics and Transportation <newly established on September 26, 2017>
16. Subcommittee on International Exchange of Human Resources <newly established on September 26, 2017>
17. Subcommittee on E-Commerce <newly established on September 26, 2017>
18. Subcommittee on Innovation Plus <newly established on October 29, 2018>
19. Subcommittee on Youth Policy <newly established on October 29, 2018>
20. Subcommittee on Traditional Medicine <newly established on October 29, 2018>

Article 3 (Functions)

1. Each subcommittee shall review and discuss methods to coordinate opinions among regional governments and realize project plans to promote effective execution of “Individual Projects” led by member regional governments. <revised on September 26, 2017>

2. Each subcommittee shall report the results of the review and discussion on “Individual Projects” proposed by regional governments to the Working Committee. <revised on September 26, 2017>

Article 4 (Structure) Each subcommittee consists of directors of local government divisions who have an interest in the field that each subcommittee is responsible for.

Article 5 (Operation)

1. An elected member regional government (hereinafter referred to as “Coordinator”) shall be in charge of liaison, coordination, and operation of each subcommittee. <revised on September 26, 2017>

2. The office term of a Coordinator is two years, and it can be reelected. Upon request, a subcommittee can be operated jointly with a joint coordinating government. <revised on July 19, 2011, September 26, 2017>

3. In principal, liaison, and coordination for the operation of a subcommittee shall be based on telecommunications such as postal mail, fax, and e-mail.

4. The Coordinators of each subcommittee should host a subcommittee meeting or participate in NEAR-related activities at least once during its term. <revised on July 19, 2011, September 26, 2017>

5. The Coordinator should endeavor to attract many participants from NEAR member regional governments to participate in the subcommittee meeting. <newly enacted on July 19, 2011, revised September 26, 2017>

6. If necessary, the Working Committee can conduct evaluations on the subcommittee’s operation. <newly enacted on July 19, 2011>

7. The NEAR Secretariat may propose a replacement of Coordinators to the Working Committee if the Coordinator has not run subcommittee meetings for more than two years and another regional government wishes to take over the role of Coordinator. <newly enacted on October 29, 2018>

8. The replacement of the Coordinator will be decided at the Working Committee where the majority of the members are present and the members with the right to vote cast a majority (more than half) yes vote. <newly enacted on October 29, 2018>

Article 6 (Participation)

1. All member regions are eligible to participate in a subcommittee. <revised on July 19, 2011>

2. For efficient operation and practical outcomes of each subcommittee, the Coordinator may invite specialists, experts, or businesspersons from NEAR member regional governments. <newly enacted on September 26, 2017>

Article 7 (Expense) Expenses for the operation of each subcommittee shall be borne by the “Coordinator.” In the event of a subcommittee meeting being convened, expenses for transportation and accommodation shall be covered by participating regional governments, in principle.
Article 8 (Relation to the Secretariat) Each "Coordinator" shall send information organized and updated at the subcommittee to the Secretariat, which shall distribute the documentation to the rest of the regional governments. <revised on July 19, 2011, revised on September 26, 2017>

Article 9 (Revision of Regulations) Revision of the present regulations shall be decided by the Working Committee.

Supplementary Provision
These regulations shall take effect on October 21, 1998.

Supplementary Provision
These regulations shall take effect on September 4, 2007.

Supplementary Provision
These regulations shall take effect on September 2, 2008.

Supplementary Provision
These regulations shall take effect on October 28, 2010.

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These regulations shall take effect on September 26, 2017.

Supplementary Provision
These regulations shall take effect on October 29, 2018.

Regulations for the Membership Fee System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(Establishment)</th>
<th>September 28, 2016</th>
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<tr>
<td>(Partial Revision)</td>
<td>September 26, 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>(Partial Revision)</td>
<td>August 7, 2019</td>
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<tr>
<td>[Enforcement]</td>
<td>August 7, 2019</td>
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Article 1 (Purpose)
This regulation seeks to prescribe matters related to the management and operation of the membership fee and its usage.

Article 2 (Principles of Accounting)
Accounting shall be conducted according to the principles below:

1. The Secretary General shall maintain transparency and reliability of the accounting process by submitting objective and evidential documents.
2. The Secretary General shall disclose information on the operation of the membership fee when requested by members.
3. The Secretary General shall manage the membership fee effectively.

Article 3 (Fiscal Year)
The fiscal year of the Association shall be from January 1 to December 31 of each year.

Article 4 (Responsibilities in Accounting)
The Secretary General shall be responsible for the management of the membership fee, and any related processes.

Article 5 (Membership Fees)
The membership fee shall be applied in accordance with the following clauses:

1. Each member shall pay an annual fee of USD 1,000.
2. The currency that shall be used for paying the membership fee is the currency of the country where the Secretariat is located, and the fee shall be paid by April 30 of each fiscal year. NEAR members who are new to the Association shall pay the fee starting in the year following the approval of its membership.
3. The amount of the annual membership fee stipulated in Clause 1 may be adjusted at the General Assembly depending on economic status.

Article 6 (Regulation of Member Rights)
When a member fails to pay the membership fee for two fiscal years, the rights to vote and run for election provided in Article 7 and the right to vote in Clause 1, Article 9 may be restricted by the Secretariat. However, the member regional government with restricted rights may recover its right as a member in the fiscal year when the membership fee is paid.
Article 7 (Usage of Membership Fee)

The membership fee shall be used for the development and projects of NEAR to meet the common goals of the members. The Secretariat shall gather the opinions of members when selecting projects that require funding.

Article 8 (Installation, Composition, and Operation of the Deliberation Committee)

The Deliberation Committee shall be installed, formed, and operated in accordance with the following clauses:

1. The Deliberation Committee constitutes of people at the director general or director level of each member country that have dispatched public officers to the Secretariat. However, in the case of the Republic of Korea, the Committee member will be elected from regions other than Gyeongsangbuk-do Province and the member regions including auditors will be excluded.
2. The term of each committee member shall be within the period of secondment of dispatched officers from each member country.
3. The Deliberation Committee shall have a chairperson and he/she will be elected by mutual vote.
4. To facilitate the smooth operation of the Deliberation Committee, the committee shall be operated by a suitable person who is in charge of the Secretariat.
5. The Chairman of the committee shall hold a meeting more than once a year. However, if there is a difficulty in convening the committee meeting, it can be resolved in writing.
6. A meeting of the Deliberation Committee shall be formed by more than half of the committee members present and resolved by the votes of more than half the members.

Article 9 (General Budget Planning)

The Secretary General shall draw up and submit a budget plan and business plan (hereafter referred to as “General Budget Planning”) for the following year to the board of directors of the committee for approval by June 30.

Article 10 (Deliberation on General Budget Plan)

1. In case of a budget plan submitted by the Secretary General, the Deliberation Committee shall review it and submit it as a bill for approval to the General Assembly or Working Committee which will be held in the year.
2. Financial plans shall be approved by the decision of the General Assembly or Working Committee. The deliberation in Clause 1 shall be carried out at least one month before the General Assembly or Working Committee is held.

Article 11 (Execution of Budget and Project Plans)

1. The Secretary General shall execute budget and project plans approved at the General Assembly or the Working Committee.
2. The Secretary General may make necessary expenditures after receiving the Chairperson’s approval in case of extraordinary disbursements. In such cases, the Secretary General shall need to report and get approval at the General Assembly or the Working Committee held for the current year.

Article 12 (Examination of Accounts)

1. The Secretary General shall prepare a periodical financial report for every fiscal year and submit it to auditors by May 31.
2. Auditors shall submit the audit reports and comments to the Secretariat at least a month before the General Assembly or the Working Committee is held, and the reports shall be approved at the meeting.

Article 13 (Appointment and Term of Auditors)

The appointment and term of auditors shall be executed in accordance with Article 7 (Executives) and Article 8 (Functions) of the Charter.

ADDENDUM

The Regulations shall enter into force on January 1, 2017. (However, the payment period of the annual membership fee will be delayed for the time being.) Revised on September 26, 2017, Revised on August 7, 2019.