

NEAR News

One Northeast Asia Region, One Community NEAR

2015. 1-2

Vol. 60

The 10th NEAR General Assembly



Special Contribution - New Year's Greetings

NEAR Secretary General | Chair of NEAR, Governor of Irkutsk Oblast, Russia
Governor of Khuvsgul Province, Mongolia | Governor of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea
Governor of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, China | Governor of Tottori Prefecture, Japan

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The Association of
Northeast Asia Regional
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NEAR News

"NEAR News" was launched in 2005 to serve as a messenger between NEAR member regions and promote sharing of information. The bi-monthly magazine is published and distributed to NEAR members and other relevant organizations free of charge, containing information on NEAR activities, news from members, international issues, contributions and announcements (also available free at <http://www.neargov.org>). You can take part in creating NEAR News anytime by contributing articles and creative ideas (Contact the NEAR Secretariat).



Vol. 60





NEAR is...

a representative regional diplomacy cooperation and international organization by 76 regional governments (71 member regions and 5 observers) in 6 Northeast Asian countries, including South Korea, China, Japan, Russia, North Korea, and Mongolia.

Since the adoption of the NEAR Charter based on mutual prosperity, NEAR has carried out extensive exchange and cooperation projects in various fields ranging from economy and humanities exchange, education & cultural exchange, environment, disaster prevention, cross-border cooperation, science & technology, ocean & fisheries, tourism, mineral resources development & coordination, energy & climate change, women & children, bio-medical industry to agriculture.

Partnering with and promoting joint projects by strengthening the exchange with international organizations such as AER (The Assembly of European Regions), the largest independent network of regional authorities in Europe, and R-20 (Regions of Climate Action), NEAR takes the lead in building an international cooperative network communicating with the world beyond Northeast Asia.

NEAR is open to all.

Any local government located in the Northeast Asian region sharing the founding purpose of NEAR can join us through the NEAR General Assembly.



The Association of
Northeast Asia Regional
Governments

Special Contribution



Kim Jae-hyo
NEAR Secretary General

Wishing for New Transition in Northeast Asia

Leaving the year 2014 behind, when the conflicts and confrontation are severe than ever not only in Northeast Asia but also around the world, we greeted the year 2015, the year of the Sheep expecting peace and stability.

Global economic crisis which has continued since 2008 has been on the recovery track focusing on the United States last year, but, the difficulties in Europe and Japan continued and emerging economy such as China and Russia doesn't recover enough.

It looks the economic situation is expected to be better this year, but, as QE (Quantitative Easing) terminated in the United States is expanded by Europe and Japan, it seems that it has an adverse effect on global economic outlook by triggering artificial currency war.

In addition, tensions by Ukraine crisis in Eastern Europe and Islamic State crisis in the Middle East have reached a boiling point in terms of political and security matters. As there is no effective solution to the problems this year, a tension would remain. Ebola Outbreak in West Africa is also threatening us.

Fortunately, even though worldwide actions regarding climate change which have continued since 1992 have not reached to the agreement and went drift, after COP 20 held in Lima, Peru, in the end of 2014, at COP 21 which is scheduled to be held in December, 2015 in France, we are hopeful that compromise for future of the earth will be reached among leading countries, the United States and China and specific goal and action plan for climate change will be arranged. Climate change is becoming geographically uncertain factor human faces beyond threatening factor caused by a simple natural phenomenon. If it is not addressed, it would be expanded to security risk such as regional conflicts.

Conflicts and confrontation caused by territorial dispute and historical revisionism were intensified in Northeast Asia last year. This year seems to be a turning point focusing on Korea, China, and Japan. Along with a harmonious atmosphere among nations, more active exchange and cooperation among regional governments are anticipated.

Even though there are variables, the artificial currency devaluation due to Quantitative Easing in Japan and China, Free Trade Agreement (FTA) within regions are actively proceeding. So, positive effect in the middle and long term is expected and tourism activation is also predicted.

In terms of climate change, infectious disease, poverty, and lack of food human faces, Northeast Asia is no exception to this. For this, positive and joint efforts by all member regions in NEAR are required and the need to perform a variety of Sub-Committee activities with common goal is increased. Above all, bottom-up policy led by regional governments and participated by central governments is required more than ever.

**Sergey Yeroshchenko**

*Chair of NEAR
Governor of Irkutsk Oblast, Russia*

Honorable member regions of the Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments!

Honorable NEAR NEWS readers!

At this time wrapping up the year 2014 and greeting the year 2015, as always, we look back what we haven't achieved and what we've achieved for the past year, take a second look at what we've achieved, and let the failure be a lesson.

Last year, a variety of remarkable events, including many great international events were held in Irkutsk. Irkutsk has paid attention to the investment attraction activities targeting Asia Pacific countries and Northeast Asian nations for a long time.

In particular, Irkutsk provided an opportunity to promote active cooperation and growth in economic trade and humanitarian affairs with Northeast Asia while preparing for the 11th NEAR General Assembly 2016.

As Irkutsk has welcomed guests with know-how to organize international events, Irkutsk will be a proper place to hold the NEAR General Assembly. Also, we will do our best to hold the best General Assembly in every way.

I wish you a happy new year filled with happiness and health along with prosperity and success.

**A. Erdenebaatar**

*Governor of Khuvsgul Province,
Mongolia*

On behalf of the Khuvsgul Province, I give my greetings to NEAR members and the NEAR Secretariat for the New Year.

Khuvsgul Province, located in the northern part of Mongolia borders on the North with Russian Federation. It has the largest population in Mongolia after Ulaanbaatar, the capital of Mongolia. 'Khuvsgul' Province originated from Khuvsgul lake as known a Blue Pearl in Mongolia and key location for tourism such as minority culture, shaman culture, historical remains, and natural view in Mongolia.

Khuvsgul Province has developed friendly relations with Republic of Tuva, Russia and Daejeon Metropolitan City, South Korea. Khuvsgul signed a cooperative agreement with Niigata, Japan in 2014. This year was meaningful in terms of international exchange by dispatching a staff to the NEAR Secretariat.

The Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments has held regular and a variety of events and acts as a bridge to enhance mutual understanding and cooperation among regional governments. I hope the activities of the Association is expanded requesting members' active participation in the events to achieve co-prosperity of the regions.

Lastly, Happy New Year and I wish NEAR and member regions good luck in 2015.



Kim Kwan-yong

*Governor of Gyeongsangbuk-do
Province, South Korea*

Celebrating year of the Sheep 2015, I express my greetings to member regions of the Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments (NEAR).

Last July 1, reelected as the 6th by the popular vote, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province opened a new era of a great scheme.

In 2015, Gyeongsangbuk-do Province will support NEAR member regions along with opening an era of new Gyeongsangbuk-do Provincial office increasing internationalism of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province to a higher level with a new vision and strategy.

The NEAR International Forum held in August in Khabarovsk, Russia, the center of its government, economy, and military in the Far East Russia was meaningful to promote northern exchange. Gyeongsangbuk-do Province served as important momentum to open the gate for exchange in a variety of fields such as tourism, medicine, and trade by signing an agreement for a friendly exchange with Khabarovsk Territory. NEAR members was expanded to 73 regional governments by joining of Jilin Province, China and Republic of Khakassia, Russia as NEAR members.

NEAR plays bridge role to bring substantial benefits with international exchange and cooperation among members, promotion of sisterhood regions, and participation in and promotion of international events. I request your active attention to make mutual exchange and regional diplomacy among 73 member regions more active.

Gyeongsangbuk-do Province commits ourselves to leading creative economy and cultural prosperity pursued by the present government with Korea Silk Road Project, Gyeongju World Culture Expo, Saemaul Globalization. In addition, 'Daegu-Gyeongbuk World Water Forum', 'Silk Road Culture Festival', and 'International Military Sports Festival' are scheduled to be held in Gyeongsangbuk-do Province in 2015. I hope your success, happiness, and health requesting your active attention and support for successful international events.

Happy New Year.

**Liu Hui**

*Governor of Ningxia Hui
Autonomous Region, China*

The "Year of the Horse" ends and the "Year of Sheep" comes. The New Year means a beautiful new beginning. On behalf of People's government of Ningxia and 6.54 million Ningxia people, I express my greetings to NEAR members for the new year.

The Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments has consistently solidified the relations such as mutual win-win, exchange and cooperation, and open competitiveness among all members since its founding and abundant and excellent results in cooperation, including economic trade, culture & tourism, agricultural development, technology, and infrastructure facilities were achieved.

The Association plays a role of the mediator to express strategic thinking of significant figures of regional governments, plays as a stage to explore a way for growth to experts and scholars, and acts as an important liaison to improve understanding on every class of society.

Ningxia, located in Western China and enjoying the fame as 'Frontier Pearl' shows its strong point in energy, agriculture, and tourism. Ningxia where national oil and gas pipes pass through was an important course for ancient Silk Road. Ningxia has been designated as the only Inland Opening-up Pilot Economic Zone for the regional government and has high potentials for development. As one of the 73 members of NEAR, Ningxia has performed its duty and participated in NEAR events expanding exchange and cooperation with members. The 9th General Assembly was successfully held working together with participants in Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, 2012.

China's President Xi Jinping proposed "Silk Road Economic Belt" and "21st century's Ocean Silk Road" and received widespread support from Northeast Asia and related countries. Ningxia makes its utmost efforts to become a main channel of a new Silk Road taking the opportunity of nation's strategic policy.

In addition the 2nd China-Arab States Expo will be held in Yinchuan in 2015. We cordially welcome you to the expo. I hope you share the chance for growth and find a path for growth. We would like to reinforce the cooperation in energy efficiency, environmental protection, cultural tourism, climate change, and anti-desertification.

Let's make a prosperous and beautiful future for harmony and exchange in Northeast Asia with effort for more advanced exchange and generous development joining hands.

Lastly, may your home be filled with happiness and warmth wishing you a happy new year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading '刘慧' (Liu Hui).

**Shinji Hirai**

*Governor of Tottori Prefecture,
Japan*

I express my greetings for the New Year.

The Secretariat of the Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments (NEAR) founded to contribute to mutual exchange among the regions, co-prosperity, and world peace greets its 20th anniversary soon.

Along with expectation for the potential to grow in the future and incredible economic growth, Northeast Asia has established a notable place in the world preparing for big events such as Pyeongchang Olympic Winter Games 2018, Tokyo's 2020 Olympics, and Paralympics.

Tottori Prefecture promotes active international exchange in various areas thinking that connecting link to Northeast Asian regions is really help future development. Among this, Tottori Prefecture has regular gatherings with the heads of Gangwon-do Province, South Korea, Jilin Province, China, Primorsky Territory, Russia, and Tuv Province, Mongolia and shapes 'solidarity- five sided figure' among regional governments in Northeast Asia. 'Northeast Asia International Exchange · Cooperative Regional Governments Summit' has been held since 1994 to discuss co-prosperity of each region by all the regions in rotation.

Last year (2014), Tottori Prefecture appealed for importance of exchange in China-Japan regional government-level by participating in 'China-Japan Governor Forum' held in Beijing as a governor to celebrate the 20th anniversary of exchange.

Taking advantage of its geographical position that Tottori Prefecture is close to many countries across the sea, Tottori Prefecture conducts infrastructure maintenance for transportation to form connection for traffic with Northeast Asia and Japan by designing 'Gateway to Northeast Asia.' In particular, DBS Cruise Ferry has opened regular runs out of Japan and Korea to Russia in cooperation with Gangwon-do Province, South Korea and Primorsky Territory, Russia.

'Northeast Asia Regional Government Cooperative Committee Meeting' for the GTI (Greater Tumen Initiative) as a part of UNDP(United Nations Development Programme) was held in Tottori Prefecture and it suggested establishment of 'platform' (logistic committee) to professionally solve logistics issues related to unit load system integrating sea and land.

The name of Tottori Airport will be nicknamed 'Tottori Sakyu Conan Airport' this spring as there are 'Tottori Sakyu' and 'Detective Conan (cartoon).' Tottori Prefecture is hometown where Shigeru Mizuki, author of 'Ge Ge Ge no Kitaro' and Gosho Aoyama, author of 'Detective Conan' were born. There is 'Tayoma' and 'Conan' town in the Prefecture.

Also, there are the 'Sanin kaigan geopark' and 10 hot springs in the Prefecture. Whether 'World Trails Conference' for trail walking promotion is held in Tottori Prefecture or not will be determined in Jeju Special Self-Governing Province. In addition, as 'Asia Trails Conference' is to be held in Tottori Prefecture this year, the conference will be crowded with many visitors from Northeast Asia, including South Korea and China. Welcome to Tottori Prefecture.

Lastly, I wish all the best and success for you.

NEAR Activities

The 2nd Youth Essay Contest Award

The NEAR Secretariat held the second NEAR Youth Essay Contest to promote exchange and cooperation among member regions aimed at the youths of member regions (aged 14-18). With the topics regarding Northeast Asia, a total of 46 essays, including six from China, four from Japan, nine from South Korea, five from Mongolia, and 22 from Russia, were submitted. The Grand Prize was awarded to Heo Seon-yong, who is in first grade at Pohang Women's High School, located in Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea. Meanwhile, Excellence Awards were given to five students, including Park Soo-wan in Korea, Zhang Yuan in China, Mishima Aoi in Japan, and Battsetseg in Mongolia, Shyza Alexandra in Russia.

The Grand Prize Winner work is published this month and Excellence Prize works will be included in the next month (3-4).



NEAR Secretariat Delegates Visited Liaoning Province and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, China



With Staffs of the Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of Liaoning Province



Zhang Huaiyi of Asian Affairs Division (left) and Director General Lee Jong-hwan(right)

The Secretariat delegates, including Director General Lee Jong-hwan visited Liaoning Province and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region on November 24-28 to promote exchange and cooperation among regional governments and to attract new members.

At the meeting and welcome dinner held at the Liaoning Friendship Hotel in

Shenyang, Liaoning Province on the 24th, staffs and Gao Aihua, Deputy Director General of the Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of Liaoning Province welcomed the Secretariat delegates and Director General Lee Jong-hwan briefly introduced the NEAR and requested them to join NEAR. Deputy Director General Gao Aihua said that Liaoning Province is participating in NEAR as an observer and will promote more exchange and cooperation with NEAR in the future.

Also, the delegates visited Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region where the 9th General Assembly was successfully held in 2012

and shared opinion on how to promote exchange and cooperation listening to the opinion at the meeting with staffs and Director General Zhang Huaiyi of Asian Affairs Division at Foreign Affairs Office of the People's Government of Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region.

Secretariat News

Participation in the 7th International Academic Conference

The 7th International Academic Conference supervised by the Northeast Asian Community Studies Institute (NACSI) was held on November 6 at the Seoul Press Center under the theme 'Future Vision for a Unified Korean Peninsula through International Cooperation'.

The Conference was arranged to find productive and sustainable measures for a unified Korean peninsula by discussing a harmonized strategy in the U.S.-South Korea military alliance and promotion strategy for South-North Korean economic community through cross-border economic cooperation in celebration of the 7th anniversary of the establishment the Institute (NACSI).

The conference consisted of two sessions; International Academic Conference (1st part) and the ceremony of the 7th founding anniversary (2nd part). The first part was composed of three sessions following opening remarks by President Lee Seung-ryul of the Northeast Asian Community Studies Institute (NACSI) and keynote speech by Chairman An Chung-young of Korean Commission for Corporate Partnership. The first session was held themed 'Promotion strategy for South-North economic community through international cooperation' and the second session was held themed 'the

U.S.-South Korea military alliance and a China-South Korea security cooperation toward unification'. The third session was held with discussions.

In the ceremony, Wada Haruki, Emeritus Professor of Tokyo University was awarded 'the 7th Northeast Asia International Cooperation prize' in appreciation of his efforts to build peaceful community in Northeast Asia and to write 'the modern history of North Korea', 'How can resolve territorial issue in Northeast Asia', 'Joint home in Northeast Asia'.

NEAR Secretary General Kim participated in the academic conference and shared the vision for international cooperation of Northeast Asia and peacefully unified Korean peninsula.



Director of Cultural and International Division of Shimane Prefecture Paid a Visit to the NEAR Secretariat



Director Wakatsuki Shinju of Cultural and International Division of Shimane Prefecture visited NEAR Secretariat on November 10.

Director Wakatsuki exchanged views on NEAR's development and international exchange between Korea and Japan, especially, exchange activities between Gyeongsangbuk-do Province and Shimane Prefecture by meeting with NEAR Secretary General Kim and NEAR staffs and decided to make its efforts for it.

The purpose of visit to Korea by Director Wakatsuki was to grant 'Shimane Prefecture's Governor Prize' participating in 'Japanese Speech Contest' hosted by Japanese Consulate in Busan on November 7 and he also visited the NEAR Secretariat.

Shimane Prefecture held the 1st meeting of 'the Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments' before the founding of 'the Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments' and has conducted international exchange programs aimed at youths in NEAR regions as a coordinator of the Sub-Committee on Educational and Cultural Exchange. Matsuo Shuichiro has been working since he was seconded from Shimane Prefecture to the Secretariat in March.

Participation in New Diplomatic Order in Northeast Asia and Korea's Diplomatic Policy Seminar



New Diplomatic Order in Northeast Asia and Korea's Diplomatic Policy Seminar was held on November 12 at the auditorium of National Assembly Library.

The seminar led by Shim Yoon-joe, member of the National Assembly, was joined by 250 people from Korea and professor Jo Yang-hyeon of Korea National Diplomatic Academy, Dr. Lee Tae-hwan of the Sejong Institute, and head Kim Jin-wook of Korea Research institute of Military Affairs discussed on 'New Diplomatic Order in Northeast Asia and Korea's Diplomatic Policy.'

NEAR Secretary General Kim Jae-hyo took part in the seminar and promoted the role of NEAR.

Meanwhile, the seminar was sponsored by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of National Defense and cooperated with National Diplomatic Academy, the Sejong Institute, and the Northeast Asian Community Studies Institute.

Participation in Incheon Familiarization

NEAR public officials seconded from foreign countries participated in the Incheon Familiarization hosted by Incheon International Relations Foundation on November 28.

The Tour co-hosted by Incheon International Relations Foundation and Incheon Development & Tourism Corporation was held on November 28 in Songdo, Incheon, under the theme of 'The past, present, and future of Incheon 2014'. The event was arranged to promote Songdo, Incheon growing day by day by inviting staffs of international organizations and international relations organizations in Korea and to provide an opportunity to introduce Korean traditional culture and provide an opportunity to experience it.

In the morning, with a presentation on Songdo, Incheon, participants visited G-Tower and tried out water taxi. In the afternoon, participants paid a visit to Songdo Conventia and experienced how to make Kimchi, and looked around unusual accommodations such as Oakwood Hotel and Nest Hotel.

Two NEAR Secretariat staffs with public officials seconded from foreign countries joined the event and talked with staffs of Incheon Metropolitan City. It was a chance to experience Korea through trying Korean food and experiencing traditional culture noticing growth in Incheon increasing its status in the world.

On the 27th, they made a tour of Suwon Hwaseong and a temporary palace built by King Jeong-jo of the Joseon Dynasty of Korea and watched martial arts used in military training.



NEAR Member News

Hunan Province - China

“China (Changsha) International Sculpture Festival 2014” held

China (Changsha) International Sculpture Festival 2014 proposed by Head Lei Yixin of the Hunan Academy of Sculpture was successfully held on September 16 to October 30.

As “the Martin Luther King, Jr. statue” by Head Lei Yixin was erected on National Mall, Washington, DC in early 2012, “Chinese Lei” has received consistent praise in international sculpture. After that, Lei Yixin had a dream that by holding International Sculpture Festival in Changsha to develop urban sculptures and present the beauty of convergence of sculpture art and city humanistic spirit.

Themed “Urban spirit, urban culture, and urban creation”, the festival was participated by the 21 well-known sculptors from 17 countries leaving their work for a month. Also, the locals had free talk on sculpture art with college students, and experienced the art.

Jilin Province - China

China Changbai Mountain International Snow Festival 2015 & Changbai Mountain International Ice and Snow Carnival 2015

Changbai Mountain with the tourism resources is best known for the snow town in China. “China Changbai Mountain International Snow Festival 2015” scheduled from November 1, 2014 to April 30, 2015 will showcase the enchantment of winter of the mountain.

During the festival, tourist destinations and attractions in Changbai Mountain will open up and visitors will enjoy winter sports in the snow experiencing a variety of tours. In addition, the highlights include related events such as Chingbai Mountain snow sculpture competition, the volcano & hot springs tour, delicacies week event, China-Europe small city forum, ice and snow cultural youth forum, 1st snowfield golf contest, and Changbai Mountain international ice and snow photo festival.



Toyama Prefecture - Japan

Toyama Prefecture, Japan, Joined ‘the Most Beautiful Bays in the World Club’

Toyama bay’s (located in Toyama Prefecture, Japan) becoming a member of the Most Beautiful Bays in the World club was decided on October 18 at the World Congress of the club held in Yeosu, Jeollanam-do Province, Korea. ‘The Most Beautiful Bays in the World (headquarters: France) club’ is an NGO aiming at promoting tourism and preserving resources using bays, joined by 38 bays of 1 region from 24 countries such as Mont Saint-Michel Bay in France, Hạ Long bay in Vietnam, and San Francisco bay in the United States and sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

You can enjoy both the whole view of peaks of Mt. Tateyama across extraordinary ocean and rare animals and plants such as the firefly squid along with a mysterious natural phenomenon including mirage. The place was rated highly in the world with ‘forest creation with a lot of water and trees’ participated by the residents in the Prefecture. Toyama became the 37th team in the club and it was the first time in the East Sea.

Toyama is doing its best to show its attractiveness suitable for the title ‘the most beautiful bay in the world’ by promoting marine sports, attracting cruise, expanding marina facilities, and attracting owners for ships along with maintaining cycling course, cycle station, and café that allow visitors to enjoy the view of Toyama.



The Tateyama Mountain Range beyond the sea



Memorial Monument (Imizu City, KAIO MARU Park)

Aomori Prefecture - Japan

The 10th Anniversary of the Signing of the 'Friendship Economy-Cultural Exchange Agreement' between Aomori Prefecture-Aomori City and Dailan, Liaoning Province, China

The 10th anniversary of the signing of the 'Friendship Economy-Cultural Exchange Agreement' between Aomori Prefecture-Aomori City, and Liaoning Province, China was held on October 28 at a hotel in Dalian.

Exchange agreement with Dailan City represents that the exchange will be done focusing on economy with Aomori Prefecture and on culture with Aomori City. Since the agreement in December 2004, Aomori Prefecture has made an effort to promote relations with Dalian City rapidly developing by building a business support center and organizing conferences.

Also, Aomori City paid a mutual visiting between designated schools aimed at elementary/middle school students.

The ceremony was joined by 120 representatives of 'Friendly baduk match' held on the same date and both sides promised to make an effort for mutual development in the future looking back 10 years of exchange. Moreover, they also promised to cooperate to realize practical exchange in tourism and agriculture, forestry and fishery and to promote business and youth exchange.



to present souvenirs to a representative of Baduk Association of Dailan City and Aomori at the Ceremony (from right, Shikanai, Mayor of Aomori and Vice Governor of Aomori Prefecture)

Gwangju Metropolitan City - South Korea

Korea-China Senior Citizens Become One with Cultural and Sports Exchange

Gwangju Metropolitan City held 'Cultural and sports exchange event for senior citizens of Korea and China' on November 4-5. Senior citizens of China visited Gwangju Metropolitan City and took part in a variety of events.

63 people of cultural and sports exchange team of Wuhan Si, Hubei Province, China promoted friendships playing a friendship gateball match with more than 100 people belonging to the Bitgoeu Senior Citizen's Town on the 4th. On the 5th, more than 90 people of private exchange team of Xuancheng, Anhui Province, China and 70 people of Seniors Welfare Center of Gwangju interacted with each other through performances at the Gwangju Traditional Culture Center.

They spent time understanding mutual culture and sympathizing with each other with Gwangju senior citizens' showing off sports dance, Samulnori, and Korean traditional dances and China senior citizens' Taegeukseon for health,

and Taegeuk Geommu. Chinese senior organizations enjoyed the taste and beauty of Gwangju by visiting Chungjang-ro and Gwangju National Museum.

Gwangju Metropolitan City has focused on tourism market in China in order to attract senior's organizations in China since 2009. More than 22,000 people and 7,000 seniors of Gwangju are interacting with each other by attracting senior exchange associations in 10 regions such as Henan Province, Jilin Province, and TianJin City.

A staff of Gwangju said that "We will try to attract more tourists by developing a variety of exchange programs in order to promote cultural exchange among senior citizens of Korea and China".

Chungchengnam-do Province - South Korea

The Chungnam Grand Festival of Architecture & Public Culture 2014 held

The Chungnam Grand Festival of Architecture & Public Culture 2014 was held on November 6-9 at Seochon, the ecological city in the world. The festival themed 'Public design respecting architecture and life adapting to nature' was prepared to impart philosophical meanings to nature and human, nature and architecture, and nature and design.

In the field of architecture, child's home drawing and making and best work exhibition along with best art exhibitions of Chungnam Festival of Architecture & Public Culture. In the field of public design, best work exhibition of Public Design Contest 2014 and design certified exhibition of best works and best public facilities were held.

In addition, the exhibition included history of Chungnam architecture, private view by university professors and international public designers, Chungchengnam-do Education Office exhibition, painting exhibition, and public design exhibition in Seochen area. Also, themed trip aimed at the National Institute of Ecology, Town of Spring, and Cultural and Artistic Creation Space was held.

Accompanied events included opening ceremony and award ceremony at Marine Biodiversity Institute of Korea in Seochon. On the 7th, 'Green Tomorrow' seminar was held at the Marine Biodiversity Institute of Korea. On the 9th, many elementary students attended 'Gentleman Cho's creative experiential activities.'



Govi-Altai Province - Mongolia

The 9th Camel Festival held

The "Camel Festival of Great Gobi 2014" was held on November 16-17 in Tugrug Sum, Govi-Altai Province. The festival showed camel-related traditions and cultural performances beginning with a parade of camels and continuing with the demonstration to load a camel.

Highlights of the festival included a variety of programs such as exhibition of milk products, camel wool, and folk art along with a meeting to discuss issues for breeding environment participated by camel researchers and residents.

As camels can live for several days without water, they are suitable animal for a nomadic lifestyle. So, Mongolia has put a lot of effort to enhance preservation, breeding, and economic benefits of the camels.

Meanwhile, 30 percent of the bactrian camel lies in Mongolia.



Altai Territory - Russia

The 8th SCO Education Week and the 5th SCO Education Ministers Meeting held



The 8th Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Education Week and the 5th SCO Education Ministers Meeting were held on October 6-7 at the Altai State University. It was the first time to hold the meeting related to SCO not at the central universities, but at the Altai State University since its founding.

The event was attended by Vice Minister of the Russian Ministry of Education and Science, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Education and Science of Kazakhstan, Vice Minister of Ministry of Education and Science of China, Minister of Ministry of Education and Science of Kyrgyzstan, Vice Minister of Ministry of Education and Science of Tajikistan, Director of SCO Secretariat, and President of SCO University Federation, along with the heads of over 25 leading universities from Russia and Central Asia nations.

Since the 8th opening ceremony of Education Week, the meeting was held themed 'The role and status of the SCO universities'. The meeting highlighted the real problem on 'the SCO University' system integration, innovative program of long-term and growing education and specific activities of the graduate course, and joint educational program. After the meeting, the continuity in cooperative activities in educational area composed of expert working group was emphasized.

The 5th SCO Education Ministers Meeting held on October 8 unified the rule and form of 'the SCO University' diploma. Meanwhile, the event included opening ceremony for drinking water and monument for cooperation among 'the SCO Universities' with SCO participating countries.

※ the SCO University (University of Shanghai Cooperation Organization):

International Educational Program University with cyber network among SCO member states. 82 universities of Russia, China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan belong to the SCO University.

The International Events Guide for NEAR Members

'The Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum' – Developmental Strategy among Russia and Asia-Pacific Nations



The 12th Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum will be held on February 26-28, 2015 in Krasnoyarsk City. The forum is one of the top three forums in Russia along with Sochi Forum and Saint Petersburg Forum. The theme is 'relations between Russia and Asia-Pacific nations, relations between Russia and BRIC countries, and import substitution'.

The highlights of the forum include a prospect to enlarge integrated process of EEU (Eurasian Economic Union) launching on January 1, 2015 by Russia, Belarus, and Kazakhstan and the competitiveness reinforcement in the Russian economy. Moreover, regional issues, regional development, and improvement of welfare discussed at the Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum every year will be the issue.

The forum prepared a round table conference to discuss a real issue on agricultural development, infrastructure investors, communication, and IT industry. The Krasnoyarsk Economic Forum is famous enough to have 'Krasnoyarsk type' so it is a place for discussion participated by high-level officials of Russian Federation and experts. After panel discussion and plenary session end, practical contract is signed at the place where the forum is held.

※ Please refer to the official site <http://krasnoforum.ru/> for more details.

The 2nd NEAR Youth Essay Contest

Overview

The NEAR Secretariat held the second NEAR Youth Essay Contest to promote exchange and cooperation among member regions aimed at the youths of member regions (aged 14-18). With the topics regarding Northeast Asia, a total of 46 essays, including six from China, four from Japan, nine from South Korea, five from Mongolia, and 22 from Russia, were submitted. The Grand Prize was awarded and Excellence Awards were given to each country.

The 2nd NEAR Youth Essay- Grand Prize Winner Work

Looking into the Situation in Northeast Asia



Heo Seon-yong

Freshman, Pohang Women's High School

Recently, it has become clear that the role of Asia, particularly Northeast Asia is becoming increasingly important at the global level. Examples to illustrate this point include the formation of the Group of Two (G2), which is a relationship between two influential and powerful countries leading main issues in world economic order and security, the United States and the People's Republic of China. The latter is also referred to as B1G1, indicating that the country has greater influence than the United States. Japan, with its strong economy is awakening the power of the East, and South Korea has become more powerful in the IT sector owing to its abundant human resources.

I believe South Korea plays an important role in connecting South Korea, China, and Japan in Northeast Asia. Since South Korea is located between China and Japan, the connection of Trans-Siberian Railroad and Trans-China Railway will play an important role in connecting Korea, Russia, and China, and the Korea-Japan Undersea Tunnel will play an important role for those two countries. These projects would complete a great traffic network among four countries connecting undersea tunnel with Japan. South Korea will play an important role in the economic exchange between the great nations leading Northeast Asia. There are other connections beyond those four nations' borders, but it shows harmony of Northeast Asia greatly affecting world affairs.

Several months ago, I went to Seoul to be mentored at the Department of Veterinary Medicine. In my anatomy dissection class at Konkuk University, I saw a canine bone sample for the first time. I realized that the bones, one convex, one concave, come together to form the joint, and that both their presence and their shape are necessary for the joint to work as smoothly as it does.

It struck me as similar to the importance of harmony among three nations in Northeast Asia.

First, the goals and standpoints of nations should be harmonized such that all concerned nations are treated fairly. If one nation moves in a different direction, it will soon cause friction. Although each nation plays a different role, these roles should be consistent with each other, as the final goal is mutually beneficial: peace, stability, and cooperation in Northeast Asia. It shares the need for harmony.

Furthermore, I think that a country's youth are the brain of a nation. Is the system and policy established with the signal of the brain? I think that youth's understanding and attention to other nations are significantly important.

As a 17 year-old, I am ashamed to say that I never thought of the specific parts of Northeast Asia, even though I was proud of being a citizen of a Northeast Asian country. So, I would like to emphasize that we should have emotional ties.

As freshman in high school, the most beautiful season in my life, I am full of hope to make my dream come true and follow my passion. It is my dream that all 17 year-old girls in Northeast Asia will experience the happiness I do.

I thought about what the girls in China and Japan were like 60 years ago. The nations of Northeast Asia should combine their concerns and solutions for historical issues and work towards mutual understanding.

I would like to make programs for cultural exchange and discussion on history.

Therefore, Northeast Asia should go forward towards one future beyond the past..

When I make my arguments, try to achieve my goals, and learn consideration for my neighbors, I will be able to make an effort to solve problems and prevent the disasters that happen in every nation. I would like to meet students after settling these conflicts. I want to sing a song together, sharing our story and knowing how girls all over Asia live.

The 10th NEAR General Assembly

The 10th NEAR General Assembly was held on October 21-24 in Jeollanam-do Province, South Korea themed “Creation of Joint Cooperation Age of New Northeast Asia”. The meeting was joined by 120 representatives of NEAR member regional governments from five countries, including China (6), Japan (4), South Korea (12), Mongolia (6), and Russia (6) along with observers and related organizations.

The opening ceremony was led by Governor Lee Nak-yeon of Jeollanam-do Province and congratulatory remarks were delivered by both NEAR Secretary General Kim Jae-hyo and Chair Myung Hun-kwan of Jeollanam-do Province. The General Assembly was composed of activity reports of the Secretariat, presentations by member regional governments, General Assembly agendas, and reports. Also, there were proposals by the Secretariat and Jeollanam-do Declaration.



Secretary General Kim Jae-hyo presiding over the meeting



Chairmanship Handover Ceremony to Irkutsk, Russia
at Jeollanam-do Province

Activity Report of the Secretariat

Jeollanam-do Province reported on the result of the 9th Working Committee meeting. The report included selection to host the next General Assembly, revision of the NEAR Charter, revision of the Sub-Committee name, creation of the new Sub-Committees, and research result of the Secretariat's new vision. The NEAR Secretariat emphasized that the NEAR Secretariat has made an effort to support projects for exchange and cooperation among member regions and to build cooperative network with other international organizations by signing MOU with R20.

Meanwhile, participants were reported on 8 Sub-Committee activity reports held over the two years: Sub-Committee on Ocean & Fishery (Shandong Province, China)- held a forum on emerging ocean industry and construction of Blue Silicon Valley, Sub-Committee on Environment (Toyama Prefecture, Japan)- conducted 3 individual projects, including the International Environmental Ecological Forum "Nature without Borders", Sub-Committee on Disaster Prevention (Hyogo Prefecture, Japan)- delivered the lectures regarding the reaction to Great Hanshin Awaji Earthquake and Great East Japan Earthquake and case presentations, Sub-Committee on Educational and Cultural Exchange (Shimane Prefecture, Japan) - reported that they have established mutual exchange and network of Northeast Asia, by hosting the Northeast Asia Wings of Exchange in Shimane 2013 and International Culture Palette of Northeast Asia, Sub-Committee on Life & Medical Science- exchanged a variety of opinions regarding life & medical industry, Sub-Committee on Agriculture (Jeollanam-do Province, South Korea)- discussed stable production of agricultural products upon climate change, Sub-Committee on Economy and Humanities Exchange (Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea)- reported best cases of village enterprises and cooperative associations under the theme of 'the meeting of the Northeast Asia region economy and humanities exchange', Sub-Committee on Mineral Resources Development & Coordination (Magadan Region, Russia) -discussed and delivered a presentation on how to share information regarding natural resources with mining enterprises and investment companies, and to find the possibility to develop joint resources among member regions.

Presentations by Member Regions

Henan Province, China shared its Zhongmu County business; Hyogo Prefecture, Japan introduced international environmental cooperation with Mongolia and its environmental technology; Shimane Prefecture, Japan reported on the activities as NEAR Sub-Committee coordinator; Arkhangai Province, Mongolia reported on developmental policy of agriculture and farming industry; Bulgan Province, Mongolia on general introduction of Bulgan Province; Republic of Buryatia, Russia on regional development business; Republic of Sakha, Russia on sport-related business and 'Children in Asia' international contest; and Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, South Korea on introduction and promotion on Gyeongju World Culture Expo.

Agenda for the General Assembly and Activity Report

The agenda for the 10th General Assembly is summarized as follows: the membership registration of the new members from regional governments, Jilin Province, China and Republic of Khakassia, Russia, revision of NEAR Charter (regarding the time to hold the Working-Committee and placement of the Secretariat in the long-term). Finally, the next General Assembly is voted to be held in Irkutsk Oblast in 2016.

Proposals by the NEAR Secretariat

The Secretariat proposed the introduction plan of the membership fee system and the effective management plan of Sub-Committees at the General Assembly. The Working Committee 2015 shall review on the introduction of the membership fee and consented to member regions' opinion on the effective management plan of Sub-Committees.

1. Lee Nak-yeon, the 10th Chair of NEAR and Governor of Jeollanam-do Province, reading a welcoming speech
2. Presentation by Magadan Region, Russia
3. Agenda Presentation and Discussion at the General Assembly
4. Visit to Gwangyang POSCO
5. Visit to International Garden Exposition Suncheon Bay Korea



Jeollanam-do Declaration

The 10th General Assembly of the Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments (hereinafter referred to as “NEAR”) was held on October 21–24, 2014, in Jeollanam-do Province, South Korea. Participants included 33 member regional governments from five countries, including the People’s Republic of China, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mongolia, and the Russian Federation, along with observers and nonmember regions.

With the theme of “Creation of Joint Cooperation Age in New Northeast Asia,” the General Assembly was held to meet the challenge of the times referred to as “the 21st century is the age of Asia” as well as to resolve conflicts among regions in Northeast Asia. Representatives agreed that exchange and cooperation among regional governments are required more than ever and agreed to make concerted efforts to realize “One Northeast Asia Region, One Community.”

Since its founding in 1996, with a vision of “peace and co-prosperity” and a goal of “regional competitiveness is nation’s competitiveness,” NEAR has realized remarkable achievements through practical exchange and cooperative projects involving 14 Sub-Committees, including economy, environment, culture, disaster prevention, science and technology, and sports. The Association shared the understanding that the status of NEAR must be enhanced through active participation and attention by member regions.

Members of the General Assembly agreed on the following after broad discussions regarding agendas for the development of NEAR:

1. The General Assembly shall approve the admission of two regional governments: Jilin Province, the People’s Republic of China, and the Republic of Khakassia, the Russian Federation.
2. The 11th General Assembly shall be held in Irkutsk Region, the Russian Federation, in 2016, for a two-year term.
3. The General Assembly shall revise the regulation that states that “the Working Committee is held one year before the General Assembly.” The General Assembly also shall revise related regulations, particularly the decision of the 9th General Assembly to place the NEAR Secretariat in Gyeongsangbuk-do Province in the long term.
4. The General Assembly shall make a decision regarding the NEAR basic membership fees, proposed by the Secretariat. This decision shall be made before 2016, the year of 20th anniversary of NEAR’s founding. The proposal will be on the agenda of the 10th Working Committee in 2015, which will formulate a final proposal regarding the introduction of a membership fee as well as a management plan.
5. The General Assembly shall formulate operation plans for the current 14 Sub-Committees based on a proposal by the Secretariat. The proposed plans shall be on the agenda for discussion at the 10th Working Committee Meeting in 2015.
6. The General Assembly shall decide to conduct PioNEAR (Youth Internship Program) for future generations, led by the Secretariat. NEAR will hold a Song Contest as well as a Youth Essay Contest, participated in by member regions.

October 22, 2014

Jeollanam-do Province, South Korea



Group Picture of the General Assembly

Special Feature for the Year-end Holidays

Story behind NEAR Events



There were a variety of events hosted by the NEAR Secretariat throughout 2014: NEAR Working-level Workshop in May, NEAR International Forum in August, NEAR General Assembly in October, and Sub-Committees organized by member regions. NEAR News includes diverse of working-level officials of NEAR member regions with the year-end holidays approaching.



▲ Jeollanam-do Province's team members after the 10th NEAR General Assembly

▼ With POD Communication staffs after the event



◀ Participants of
Sub-Committee on Disaster-Prevention 2014



▲ Mongolian participants at cultural visit during the 10th General Assembly in Jeollanam-do Province



▲ Professor Sung Won-yong at the dinner after the NEAR International Forum



▲ Meeting with a Mongolian friend at the Working-level Workshop



▶ Secretary General Kim Jae-hyo enjoying a tea ceremony with women of the Tang Dynasty

The Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments



The Association of Northeast Asia Regional Governments

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