

Remarks by Mr. Seena Kitami, a researcher /advisor of the Embassy of Japan in Finland, on the occasion of Travel Seminar in Kalajoki on 14 February 2019

Thank you for giving me this precious chance to attend the seminar & reason to come to beautiful Kalajoki. Today, I am here to deliver messages and to encourage success of the seminar on behalf of Japanese Ambassador, HE. Mr. Jota Yamamoto. He had to send his regrets due to previous engagement he has today. I am Seena Kitami, a researcher and advisor of the Embassy of Japan in Finland.

This year marks “Japani Suomi 100”, and Japan is among 6 countries to celebrate centenary with Finland. I am proud to share the common voices of how much we have cherished partnership with Finland for the past 100 years. The common agenda is how to pass this precious heritage to the next upcoming 100 years. I believe that this kind of seminar, will give us a lot of hints on how to make it possible in terms of the connections of human connections.

Thus I really appreciate & thank Mr.Jukka Puoskari & Mr.Anttila Janne and the team to give me this marvelous opportunity. I really appreciate & thank delegation from Izumo City, led by Mr. Masahide Fujikawa, the vice mayor of Izumo city, Mr. Hidehiro Fukushima, Chairman of Izumo City Council, Mr. Kazuo Honda, Director of NPO Izumo Finland Society, and Ms. Tanja Severikangas, coordinator for International Relations of Izumo City Government. Your presence shows that the affinity between Kalajoki and Izumo.

Traveling topics between Japan and Finland.

As everybody here benefits, traveling between two countries is very easy and conformable thanks to Finnair, and Japan Airlines. Both companies use the newest and the most beautiful air planes, such as Airbus350 and Boeing 787. The number of direct flights between Helsinki and Japan will be 41 per week in this summer. This destined for four different cities, Tokyo, Nagoya, Osaka and Fukuoka. Adding to that, Finnair announced that Sapporo as a new destination in winter time.

The most recent Japanese movie called “Yuki no Hana”, is expected to become a tourism advantage to Finland. The movie was filmed in Levi with the full of beautiful scenes on the screen along with the story of love. It is expected that many Japanese tourists will visit the actual locations in the film. For making the film, 25% of incentive was utilized. This was a great initiative led by Business Finland, and it is a great example of successes for attracting the Japanese tourists.

Our constant agenda is how to keep, promote and reproduce the precious & necessary human connections of the two nations. Overall environment is more & more encouraging. This month, for example, Japan-EU EPA, entered into force. Japan enhances its trust upon Finland as the effective business partner not only in a bilateral context but in the broader context of the entire Europe & Asia. Now more than 200 Japanese companies have stepped into Finland, and the number is simply increasing. In terms of the business, it is a very good sign that a big Finnish business delegation is visiting to Japan in this week.

Another good news is that the mini-encyclopedia of Japan written in easy Finnish language is ready to be distributed to Finnish libraries, schools. etc. Most certainly, this encyclopedia will help us to nourish human connections towards future between our two countries.

We wish to deepen the relationship and exchanges between two nations further and further.

Once again, thank you very much for this great opportunity, I wish you all a successful seminar.

Kiitos!