

Special Interview: JATA executives talk about the JATA TABIHAKU 2013



Mr. Jungo Kikuma, JATA Chairman
Mr. Kotaro Kogi, Chairman of the JATA Travel Showcase Executive Committee

Message from the Asian Market to the World Integrated Promotion of Outbound, Inbound, and Domestic Tours

The JATA TABIHAKU 2013 will be held at Tokyo Big Sight for four days from September 12 to 15. The exhibition is expected to be the largest ever, and the JATA International Tourism Forum will expand its discussion from the Japanese market to include the East Asian market with the participation of top tourism experts and executives from around the world. Mr. Jungo Kikuma, JATA Chairman, and Mr. Kotaro Kogi, Chairman of the JATA Travel Showcase Executive Committee, talked about the upgraded JATA TABIHAKU 2013.

---- At the JATA International Tourism Forum 2013, Mr. Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Mr. David Scowsill, CEO of the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), and industry experts from South Korea and Taiwan will take the rostrum. Please describe the point at the forum where international experts and executives of the travel industry will gather.

Kogi: The keynote panel discussion will be graced with the presence of Mr. Rifai, UNWTO Secretary-General, and Mr. Scowsill, WTTC CEO, as guests, and the panel will hold an in-depth discussion on the future expansion and sound development of the Asian travel market under the theme of “The Rapidly-Growing Asian Travel Market and Japan’s Travel Industry.” The panel discussion will also be distinguished by the participation of South Korean and Taiwanese experts who are active on the frontlines of the travel market, and the discussion will highlight the characteristics and strengths of the Japanese market and industry through a thorough comparison of three markets of Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan.

Kikuma: JATA has long held the international tourism forum and offered various programs to visitors from abroad, with a

focus on the trends in the Japanese market rather than trends in foreign markets. This year, we are trying to upgrade the forum by introducing the trends in the Asian travel market, in addition to promoting understanding of the Japanese market among visitors from abroad. Today, there are not many international tourism forums in the world. Currently, however, the Asian market attracts the attention of the world travel industry and the JATA International Tourism Forum is the representative international tourism forum in Asia. So, I requested the development of upgraded programs so that various opinions will be presented on the present state of the Asian outbound market. We invited the UNWTO Secretary-General and WTTC CEO and, in a literal sense, the world’s top tourism experts and executives will meet at the forum. I believe that people all over the world will recognize the JATA forum as a place that offers full discussions on tourism in Asia. We position the JATA forum as the place for this purpose and plan to strengthen it. Additionally, JATA will conclude a comprehensive partnership agreement with UNWTO, and a signing ceremony will be held at the JATA TABIHAKU. UNWTO recognizes ITB in Berlin, WTM in London, and JATA TABIHAKU in Asia as the top events in their respective areas. The scheduled signing of the agreement will strengthen the cooperative ties between UNWTO and JATA in various aspects.

---On the second day of the forum, a special symposium on the Quality Assurance System for Tour Operators will be held. What will be discussed at the symposium?

Kogi: JATA established this system to improve the quality of tours to Japan. The symposium will discuss the system, in panel discussion style, from its introduction through its future prospects.

Kikuma: Speaking of the system itself, JATA’s “Tour Quality Japan” will make its global debut, publicizing the purpose, etc., of the quality assurance system to the world. I believe that the symposium will also offer an important opportunity where travel agencies will deepen their understanding of the quality assurance system in an open atmosphere and, at the same time, tourism associations engaged in inbound tour operations will become more aware of the system.

