

### **“Japan Night” Held at the Tokyo National Museum 1600 Guests from Japan and Overseas Savor Japanese Culture**



Japan Night was jointly hosted by JATA Tourism Expo Japan 2014 and Visit Japan Travel Mart (VJTM) 2014 at the Tokyo National Museum in Ueno Park, Tokyo, on September 25.

The Japan Tourism Agency designated the week of September 24th to 30th, when the above events and Visit Japan Mice Mart 2014 were held, as Japan Travel Week. The aim was to create synergy by linking the events as well as to boost the recognition of each of the events in Japan and overseas.

Around 1,600 guests, including participants in each of the events from Japan and overseas, were invited to Japan Night at the Tokyo National Museum, a unique Japanese venue. As Japan Night was the kick-off event for Japan Travel Week, it was an opportunity to publicize Japan's objective of being a tourism-oriented country.

The chairman of the Organizing Committee of JATA Tourism Expo Japan 2014, Norio Yamaguchi, who is also chairman of the Japan Travel and Tourism Association, addressed the guests, stating, "These are three-in-one events that combines domestic, outbound, and inbound travel, and some of the aims are to attain 20 million inbound foreign travelers to Japan annually and to prepare for the year 2020 when the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics will be held." He expressed a positive outlook, saying, "We have exhibits from 151 countries and regions around the world and from all 47 prefectures in Japan. Through these events, which are among the largest of their kind internationally, we want to communicate to the world the entirety of Japanese culture in the form of tourism."

Also in attendance at Japan Night was Akihiro Ohta, Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport, and Tourism, who is also the minister in charge of Japan's development as a tourism-oriented country. He spoke with high hopes, saying, "Last year, we achieved our long-sought goal of 10 million inbound foreign visitors annually, and I would like to have Japan Week and the series of events during this week be a major starting point for the expansion of exchanges between individuals and exchanges between cultures through both inbound and outbound travel."

The attendees at Japan Night appreciated a taste of the Akita Kanto Festival in front of the main gate of the Tokyo National Museum, and inside the venue, foreign invitees and others relished the depths of Japanese culture together with the menu which featured various kinds of Japanese foods from around the country. On stage, a calligraphy performance was presented by the calligraphic artist Reisei, who wrote the character for "Journey" (旅), and a martial arts demonstration was performed by members of the Japanese women's team who were the Kata Division champions at the World Karate Championships.

Prior to Japan Night, a Japan Travel Week Joint Press Conference

was held at the Toyokan (Asian Gallery) of the Tokyo National Museum by four bodies, the Japan Tourism Agency, Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO), Japan Travel and Tourism Association, and Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA). At the press conference, representatives from each body spoke about their hopes and expectations for each upcoming event during the week.

### **12 Bodies in Japan Sign the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism Participate in Standards Aiming to Resolve Universal Issues**

On September 25 in the International Meeting Room of the Japan Tourism Agency in Kasumigaseki, Tokyo, a ceremony was held to sign the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, which was adopted by the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and approved by the UN General Assembly. The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism was adopted at the 13th UNWTO General Assembly held in Chile in October 1999 and was approved by the UN General Assembly two years later.

Shigeto Kubo, commissioner of the Japan Tourism Agency, presented the opening greetings at the signing ceremony, noting, "Led by the government and people involved in the tourism industry, which includes the travel industry, lodging industry, and airline industry, we are working to realize the goal of making Japan a travel destination. However, the realization of Japan as a travel destination must be done in a sustainable manner. In the tourism field, there are various issues, such as protection of the natural environment, protection of cultural heritage, and the labor environment. The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism sets forth important standards for finding resolutions to these universal issues in tourism." He stressed, "By having those who support the purpose of the global code sign the document, we communicate to the world our strong resolve to work on the sustainable development of Japan's tourism industry."

Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General of UNWTO which hosted the signing ceremony, expressed his gratitude, saying, "I would like to thank you who are involved in Japan's tourism industry for making this wonderful commitment and displaying a good example." He said, "What draws the world to respect Japan is the Japanese people's characteristically high awareness of ethics. I welcome the fact that leading figures in the tourism industry have gathered for this signing so that Japan, too, can participate in the global code."

According to Secretary-General Rifai, since the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism was first signed by the relevant Spanish tourism figures in front of the King of Spain in 2011, it has already been signed by around 300 organizations in 40 countries.

Given the reality that 1.1 billion travelers around the world are moving across national borders, Secretary-General Rifai underscored the role of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism by pointing out, "While the increase in travelers presents opportunities, it also inevitably leads to the expansion of adverse effects. That is why we need a code of ethics concerning our responsibilities to people and to the Earth."

Twelve bodies in Japan attended the signing ceremony, including JATA and JATA member companies JTB, KNT-CT Holdings, Nippon Travel Agency, World Air-Sea Service, Okinawa Tourist Service, and H.I.S. as well as Japan Airlines (JAL), All Nippon Airways (ANA), Japan Travel and Tourism Association, Japan Hotel Association, and Japan City Hotel Association.