

## **New Year' s Greeting of JATA Chairman Hiromi Tagawa**

### **“2016 -the Renaissance Year of Overseas Travel”**

I wish you all a very Happy New Year!

Last year marked a point in Japan's inbound travel history as, for the first time in 45 years, the number of foreign visitors exceeded that of outbound travelers. Visitor spending overpassed the 2.278 trillion yen generated in 2013, which was considered the highest ever, and is expected to rise high above the three trillion level, making the travel industry in a manner of speaking a big export industry in Japan.

The international human exchange in 2030 is expected to grow up to 1.8 billion people and the Japanese tourism industry has to determine its direction and goals with that number in mind.

The Rio de Janeiro Olympics will be held this year and, at the closing of the games, Tokyo and Japan will come under the spotlight as the host of the next games. Therefore, this year will highlight the increasing significance of tourism and, even more importantly, its development after 2020.

For JATA, 2016 is the year of the “renaissance of overseas travel.” Stimulating market demand so that we can reach the goal of 20 million overseas travelers, nurturing a robust market, and expanding mutual travel exchange are the steps which will take us to the establishment of a leading nation based on various exchanges. Through strengthening the relations with local regions we will work for the revitalization of domestic travel, and in the 6th year after the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami, will continue to support the recovery of Tohoku through exchange with the people of the region. As for inbound travel, our goals for the stage following the 20 million target are to not only increase the number of overseas visitors but also to improve the quality of tour products and ensure safe and trouble-free tours for the tourists coming to Japan. In addition, we will continue the realization of the three-pillar – inbound, outbound and domestic travel – policy which JATA published in 2015.

Last year, Japan became a member of the UNWTO Executive Council. From the position of a private-sector organization, JATA will support the endeavor of the country to become a leader in the field of international tourism through, among other activities, education of human resources that can work on the preservation of cultural heritage through tourism. JATA will continue to participate in the projects of UNWTO that aim at ensuring and enhancing the compatibility between cultural heritage and tourism.

After a new beginning, Tourism EXPO Japan, which has become symbolic of JATA's activities, has entered the year of the "jump" from the "hop, step, jump" three-year period. In terms of both BtoB and BtoC promotion, the event is a huge stage from which we can popularize the power and the great possibilities of tourism and JATA will continue to make the presence of Japanese tourism known domestically and overseas.

This year again, we will be grateful for your understanding and support for our endeavors.

Hiromi Tagawa  
Chairman

For inquiries: Japan Association of Travel Agents

Public Relations Office

Nagayoshi (Mr.), Nitta (Mr.), Yajima (Mr.) TEL : 81-3-3592-1244