

JATA Sends a Mission to France and Belgium to Reestablish Travel Demand Confirming Safety Measures and Establishing a Cooperation System for Tour Promotion



The press conference held in Paris

JATA sent a mission to France and Belgium in January 2016 to reestablish travel demand after the terrorist attacks that took place in Paris in November 2015. The mission confirmed the safety measures taken in these countries and exchanged views with concerned persons in the countries in order to establish a cooperation system to promote the recovery of tourism.

In France, the mission expressed its condolences and offered flowers to the victims of the terrorist attacks and also held a press conference with concerned local personnel. During the conference, JATA discussed specific examples of safety measures taken for tourists by the Paris City government and the French government and emphasized its intention to support the French travel industry by reestablishing demand by Japanese tourists, who are the most “safety- and security-sensitive” tourists in the world.

Recovery of the Japanese Market, a Challenge for France

The joint government-private mission (Leader: Ms. Yuri Furusawa, vice commissioner of the Japan Tourism Agency; Subleader: Mr. Jungo Kikuma, vice chairman of JATA) was created to reestablish travel demand after the terrorist attacks in Paris. On January 15 and 16, the mission offered flowers in front of Bataclan Theater, visited France's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development and the Prefecture of Police of Paris, held a press conference, exchanged opinions with persons involved in the French travel industry, and toured around Paris.

At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development, Mr. Pierre, Secretary General requested that the mission look at the alert level which was raised after the terrorist attacks, together with living and tourism conditions that have returned to a normal state. The Secretary General expressed his hope that Japanese tourists, who demand high service levels including safety, will come back to France.

He also pointed out that the recovery of the Japanese market is an issue for France and that travel demand for France is recovering in other countries including the US. The ministry is trying to promote new types of tourism in France, such as tours in safe, attractive “local areas,” bicycle tours, and slow tourism.

Ms. Furusawa, vice commissioner of the Japan Tourism Agency, requested that France secure the safety of Japanese tourists and provide safety information to Japan. She informed France of a joint campaign considered by Atout France and the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO), and of the travel industry’s promotion plan using an industry logo.

State of Emergency as a Measure to Strengthen Safety

At the Prefecture of Police of Paris, the mission met with Latron, director of Chief Commissioner's office and other concerned police personnel in a special conference room next to the Emergency Operation Center. The mission received a briefing on safety measures taken by the authorities and counterterrorism measures taken after the terrorist incident.

The police department takes country-specific safety measures for tourists visiting Paris. It exercises safety precautions at seven sites and accommodations, including the Eiffel Tower, Notre-Dame Cathedral, and Avenue des Champs-Élysées, in order to reduce crimes against tourists from Asia. It has also increased its patrol frequency from two or three times to 15 times per day to strengthen safety measures. A pamphlet in the Japanese language has been created to protect Japanese tourists from violence, theft, pickpocketing, etc. In addition, a warning announcement is made in Japanese on subway trains.

After the terror attacks in November, the state of emergency was announced as a counterterrorism measure, giving investigative authority to governors. The authorities requested that the mission note that the state of emergency does not indicate a risk level, but it is a measure to strengthen “safety and security” that allows special counterterrorism measures. According to the police department, France has established a close communication system with the embassies of Asian countries, particularly the Japanese, Chinese, and South Korean embassies.

Japan and France in the “Same Boat”

At an opinion exchange meeting between persons in the Japanese and French travel industries, Mr. Christian Mantei, general manager of Atout France, said, “I would like to take this meeting as an opportunity to let participants know the attractiveness of local areas, in addition to the charm of Paris, through initiatives to reestablish demand.” He expressed his expectations for travel business development in the future. Mr. Kikuma, vice chairman of JATA, stressed that “Japan

and France are in the same boat” to French participants and showed his determination to “make the meeting a productive opportunity.”

Mr. Kikuma highly appreciated the initiatives of the Prefecture of Police of Paris and the measures designed to create a safe environment, such as country-specific measures. Reviewing the quick recovery of demand achieved by timely campaigns after various incidents including the terrorist attacks in the US, Mr. Kikuma said, “French recovery will lead to the recovery of Europe as a whole.” He stressed that the Japanese travel industry has great expectations of the mission, which is composed of key persons in the travel industry.

At the opinion exchange meeting, Mr. Kikuma also informed France of Japan’s requests, including (1) messages from the Mayor of Paris and the French Prime Minister, etc., to Japanese tourists, (2) limited service offers until summer for tour product planning, and (3) cooperation with the travel promotions to be launched in Japan.

Japanese Departures Decrease to 16,212,100 in 2015, Down 4.1%;

Foreign Visitors Increase to 19,737,000, Up 47.1%, Marking a Record

According to a preliminary report published by the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO) in January 2016, the number of travelers who left Japan in 2015 was 16,212,100 persons, down 4.1% year-on-year.

By month in 2015, the number of Japanese departures increased only in September (0.3%) when compared with the same month of the previous year. The number decreased in the remaining 11 months. In particular, the number showed a two-digit decrease (-10.5%) in February, and negative growth over 7% was seen in three months from June to August. As a result, the number decreased by 4.9% year-on-year in the first half of 2015 and by 3.4% in the second half of 2015, resulting in a 4.1% decrease during the full year.

On the other hand, the number of tourists who visited Japan in 2015 increased to 19,737,000, up 47.1% year-on-year, which was the largest growth since 1964 when JNTO started keeping statistics. The number was also larger than the record high in 2014 (13,413,000) by approximately 6 million and exceeded the number of Japanese departures for the first time in 45 years, since 1970.

In JNTO’s analysis, the largest-ever number of foreign visitors resulted from demand increase factors such as an increase in port visits by cruise ships, an expansion of airline routes, cheaper airfares resulting from a decrease in fuel surcharges, and continuous inbound tour promotion.

JNTO notes that other factors contributing to the growth of foreign visitors include the weak yen and the resulting comparatively inexpensive tours to Japan, the significant easing of visa requirements, and the expansion of the

consumption tax exemption system, etc.

By market, 19 of 20 major markets, excluding Russia, set records on an annual basis. In particular, China became the largest market for the first time, with 4.99 million visitors (up107.3% year-on-year).

According to JNTO, the number of US tourists in the US/Europe market exceeded one million for the first time, and the number of outbound tourists in six Southeast Asian markets (Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Vietnam) exceeded two million in total.

In January, the Number of Japanese Departures Increase for the First Time since September 2015

According to estimates announced by JNTO on February 16, the number of Japanese departures increased to 1,276,000, up 3.3% year-on-year, in January 2016. This was the first positive growth since September 2015. Expectations for the recovery of overseas travel demand are increasing.

The number of foreign visitors also increased to 1,851,800, up 52.0% year-on-year, in January 2016, showing a high growth rate. The growth rate exceeds the 2015 annual growth rate (47.1%) by approximately 5 percentage points, which is a good sign for the achievement of the goal of 20 million inbound tourists on an annual basis.

2015 Visitor Arrivals & Japanese Overseas Travelers (Unit: Persons)

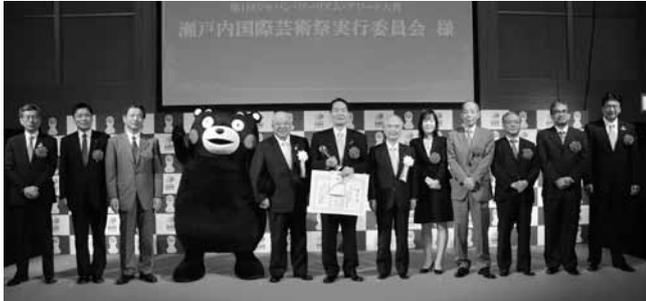
Month	Visitor Arrivals			Japanese Overseas Travelers		
	2014	2015	Change %	2014	2015	Change %
1 Jan.	944,009 (730,519)	1,218,393 (978,476)	29.1 (33.9)	1,253,404	1,235,612	-1.4
2 Feb.	880,020 (688,902)	1,386,982 (1,207,242)	57.6 (75.2)	1,404,873	1,257,154	-10.5
3 Mar.	1,050,559 (802,434)	1,525,879 (1,236,489)	45.2 (54.1)	1,596,751	1,534,026	-3.9
4 Apr.	1,231,471 (1,020,474)	1,764,691 (1,528,848)	43.3 (49.8)	1,189,132	1,144,833	-3.7
5 May	1,097,211 (892,577)	1,641,734 (1,411,626)	49.6 (58.2)	1,280,765	1,262,103	-1.5
6 Jun.	1,055,273 (866,883)	1,602,198 (1,398,845)	51.8 (61.4)	1,289,029	1,190,805	-7.6
7 Jul.	1,270,048 (1,080,552)	1,918,356 (1,712,803)	51.0 (58.5)	1,414,912	1,309,956	-7.4
8 Aug.	1,109,569 (903,919)	1,817,023 (1,584,484)	63.8 (75.3)	1,783,127	1,653,622	-7.3
9 Sep.	1,099,102 (846,241)	1,612,208 (1,316,488)	46.7 (59.1)	1,520,863	1,525,777	-0.3
10 Oct.	1,271,705 (1,029,922)	*1,829,265 (1,564,772)	43.8	1,417,766	1,412,466	-0.4
11 Nov.	1,168,427 (943,831)	*1,647,600	*41.0	1,355,246	*1,339,246	1.2
12 Dec.	1,236,073 (1,074,350)	*1,773,100	*43.4	1,397,520	*1,346,500	*-3.7
1~12 Jan.-Dec.	13,413,467 (10,880,604)	*19,737,400	*47.1	16,903,388	*16,212,100	*-4.1

◆Note 1. The figures for Jan.-Nov.2014 are provisional, while * stands for the preliminary figures estimated by JNTO.

◆Note 2. Provisional and definitive figures for Visitor Arrivals are compiled by JNTO (source: Ministry of Justice), and provisional and definitive figures for Japanese Overseas Travelers are provided by the Ministry of Justice.

◆Note 3. The figures in () represent the number of tourists among the total.

Make 2016 the Year for a “Jump” as the Culmination of the Three Years Aim at a Further Leap Forward, Looking Ahead to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games



The Setouchi Triennale Organizing Committee won the Grand Prize at the first Japan Tourism Awards

This year, JATA Tourism EXPO Japan marks its third year following the first and the second expos in 2014 and 2015. The event is an integration of two former events, JATA Tabihaku Travel Showcase organized by the Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA) and Tabi Fair Japan organized by the Japan Travel and Tourism Association (JTTA). JATA Tourism EXPO Japan 2016, the third expo, will take a further leap forward, aiming to become the world’s largest, most comprehensive tourism event and looking ahead to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

To Impress Japan’s Attitudes on the World

Mr. Hiromi Tagawa, chairman of JATA, who also serves as the chairman of the JATA Tourism EXPO Japan Organizing Committee, made a comment on JATA Tourism EXPO Japan 2016 during a New Year’s interview on January 7. He has positioned 2016 as the year for a “jump,” following the year for a “hop” in 2014 and the year for a “step” in 2015. He expressed his vision, saying “I intend to put the finishing touches on each event, including exhibitions, international tourism forums, and Japan Tourism Awards. I would like to establish them as JATA’s core projects.”

Last year, Japan became a member of the United Nations’ World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) Council. This increased expectations for Japan’s leadership in international tourism. Mr. Tagawa said, “JATA will support the UNWTO’s activities from the private sector’s standpoint,” and stressed the importance of JATA Tourism EXPO Japan as the place to impress Japan’s attitudes on the world.

At JATA Tourism EXPO Japan 2015 held in the year for a “step,” the first Asia Tourism Leaders Forum was co-organized by JATA and the Japan-ASEAN Center under the theme “How will tourism change with the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community?” In the forum, presentations and open discussions involving tourism industry personnel from ASEAN countries took place regarding the marketability of



Outbound and domestic business meetings were held in the same venue

outbound tours in the ASEAN travel market and the direction of tourism services. The forum attracted people’s attention as an opportunity to present tourism trends in Asia to the world.

In addition, the first

Japan Tourism Awards were presented. The “local regeneration initiative through the Setouchi Triennale” of the Setouchi Triennale Organizing Committee won the Grand Prize, and other domestic and overseas initiatives were also recognized

Well-Received Overseas/Domestic Business Meetings

At JATA Tourism EXPO Japan 2015 held in September 2015, 1,161 enterprises/organizations from 141 countries/regions displayed their exhibits. The total number of visitors reached 173,602, exceeding the 157,589 in 2014.

During the expo, an urban MICE event, Japan Night 2015, was held on Gyoko-dori Street in front of Tokyo Station in the Marunouchi area. At an international tourism forum on the theme of “Tourism and Culture,” a heated discussion took place around Japan’s role in global tourism

In addition, outbound business meetings and domestic business meetings were held between Japanese travel agencies and domestic/overseas sellers over the course of two days, with participation by a total of 633 companies/923 persons. Sellers appreciated the convenience of being able to learn about the Japanese market by visiting buyers’ desks (outbound business meetings) and the meaningful opportunity to make the attractiveness of local destinations known (at domestic business meetings).

JATA Tourism EXPO Japan 2016 will be held in the year for a “jump” as the culmination of three years of efforts. Japan will begin to attract the attention of the world for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games immediately after the Rio 2016 Olympic Games in Brazil. JATA Tourism EXPO Japan 2016 is increasingly attracting domestic and international expectations as a great tourism event incorporating inbound, outbound, and domestic travel.

JATA Tourism EXPO Japan 2016 Exhibitors Invited!

Exhibitors are invited to JATA Tourism EXPO Japan 2016, to be held at Tokyo Big Sight in Ariake, Tokyo, from September 22 to 25 this year.

Eligible exhibitors are (1) enterprises and organizations related to domestic/overseas travel and tourism, (2) municipalities, (3) enterprises and organizations which are working on or considering local revitalization or a partnership with the travel industry, and (4) enterprises, NGOs, etc., which hope to develop new business opportunities.

The advantages of presenting exhibits at JATA Tourism EXPO Japan 2016 include (1) the opportunity to make a direct appeal of the attractiveness of the exhibitor because approximately 80% of visitors are domestic repeat travelers, (2) the opportunity to transmit information through the media that report the event, (3) the possibility of sending off more tourists through the sale of new products by participating in the business meetings that boast an 85% satisfaction rate and potential contract signing over 70%.

You can submit an exhibit application on the official website at <http://t-expo.jp/biz/>.

[For application and inquiries]

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