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*The Establishment of International Standards of Soroban Education
Let's Make History.*

Sanzo Hosaka, Chairman of ISDF, Ex-Minister of State

Crown Princess Masako marked her 52nd birthday on 9th December 2015. The Japanese people feel relieved that her health condition has been improved. She has been trying to do as much as she can do in her public duties. She might be encouraged by her diplomatic decision.

The symbolic event was her visit with Crown Prince Naruhito to a pro-Japanese country, the Kingdom of Tonga last July. Tonga, which is a kingdom situated in the South Pacific and has a history of friendship with Japan, was the best choice for her. They were invited to the coronation ceremony of the King. Besides she attended the national cultural festival and she met with Japanese residents of Tonga. It was a substantial visit.

In Tonga, soroban is a compulsory subject of the 3rd to the 5th graders of all elementary schools these days, which is quite effective. Moreover, they are interested in Japanese language and culture through soroban. Tonga is like Japan in spite of the English-speaking world. I wish that the Crown Prince and Princess had seen children start calculating with soroban at the moment of the call "Teuteu Kamata!" at All Tonga Soroban Competition.

The projects for soroban diffusion to the world of International Soroban Diffusion Foundation, a nonprofit organization, have greatly influenced every country's education. The analysis and evaluation from abroad that Japan has high level of manufacturing technology and frequent Nobel prize winners for the fundamental education of "reading, writing, and soroban" seems to be the boomerang effect of reevaluating soroban in Japan and giving the persons of soroban education the incentive.

I hope that ISDF will establish international standards and give world-wide soroban licenses in cooperation with the chambers of commerce, the head of soroban education, and that Japanese soroban education will make more contribution to the world. I wish the enthusiasms and efforts of soroban teachers will bear fruit.

New Year's Greetings
from the Members of the Board of ISDF 2016

New Year's Greetings

Masao Fujii (Tokyo) President of ISDF

After ISDF discussed International Soroban Test with the League of Japan Abacus Associations for two years, it will finally start on 24th (Sun) January 2016. ISDF and the League reached an agreement that the Test shall be made by the League and administered by ISDF in order to answer lots of questions asking, "How can I get a certificate of Japan Soroban/Anzan Level Examination?" to both ISDF and the League.

ISDF hopes that soroban education will satisfy both children and parents through the project of International Soroban Test overseas.

There were 50 participants from 7 foreign countries in International Friendship Soroban Camp Training last year. Both children and teachers were trained to improve their soroban skills before, but at the request to give a class for Japanese method of teaching soroban, we plan to give such a class to teachers this year. I think that ISDF will cooperate in improving overseas soroban schools.

In early January, the project for soroban diffusion in Palau will also start, as announced in this News.

I am pleased that more people than expected attended a briefing session for International Soroban Mission held on the 15th anniversary. I hope that overseas soroban education through ISDF is authentic and realistic.

Every project of ISDF seems to be picking up from every point of view, but I think that we should be careful in our work so as not to fail to live up to the expectations of the people who work on soroban education abroad.

My Motto 2016

Shigeharu Takarada Vice-President of ISDF

I feel secure since every member makes every effort to diffuse soroban to the world.

I am most impressed by foreigners' friendliness whenever I meet them on the soroban diffusion mission and the friendship soroban camp training held every year.

It is very hard for the Japanese people to open their mind. I think it is modesty, Japanese virtue, but my motto 2016 is to say hello actively before it is said.

If I don't know the language, I will say "How are you?" in Japanese. I believe there

will be a new road. Greetings are to show sympathy and consideration.

The person to your face is your mirror. Dale Carnegie wrote about “six ways to make people like you” in a longtime seller book “How to Win Friends and Influence People.”

1. Become genuinely interested in other people. 2. Smile. 3. Remember a person's name. 4. Be a good listener. 5. Talk in terms of the other person's interest. 6. Make the other person feel important sincerely.

In the end, a person is liked because he or she likes. If someone treated me coolly, I shall reflect that I might do him coolly. Mr. Kenji Suzuki who was an announcer of NHK says, “Greetings are to open your mind and approach the person you meet.”

My Hopes 2016

Toshiyuki Kazamatsuri Executive Director of ISDF

Last year, International Friendship Soroban Camp Training received fifty people from seven foreign countries, which was a record number.

It was very international. Besides English, Arabic, Afrikaans, Indonesian, and Tongan were spoken there.

I also saw them to the hotel on the previous day of the event and guided them to Disneyland on the following day. My English is so poor that I can't lay an electronic dictionary aside, but I completed the schedule all right with the cooperation of the leaders of every country.

Though I was in Japan, I realized keenly the necessity of English. I hope to improve my English and guide foreigners as thoroughly as I can without an electronic dictionary this year.

My Wishes in the New Year

Mieko Sakuma (Chiba) Executive Director of ISDF

At the beginning of the New Year, I pushed a train of my thought about my age and illness away and looked back on my happy days when I joined ISDF. I remembered the places and people that I visited, especially sweet children I met abroad, with nostalgia. It filled me with my wishes to long, meet, see and go. I got to feel quite good to be alive. I had never thought that life and death or words of my predecessors could encourage and revive me. Though my physical condition has not been yet perfect, but International Soroban Diffusion Foundation, NPO, seemed a reason for living to me. I also got to wish to go out to even the nearest. I have been in the garage, but I shall start my engine. I wish that children all over the world whom I will meet somewhere someday will be all well and there will be no war. I wish the New Year happy.

The 15th Anniversary of the NPO

Takayoshi Sano (Shizuoka) Executive Director of ISDF

Dr. Nakano, Honorary President of ISDF, brought his years of efforts to develop International Soroban Diffusion Foundation to the charter of NPO 15 years ago.

I feel keenly time flies like an arrow. I will look back upon the 15-year-progress of ISDF.

Firstly, ISDF made a large contribution to the internationalization of soroban education. With the international soroban training courses held by ISDF, many countries in the South Pacific, Europe and Africa started soroban education eagerly and joined ISDF.

Secondly, at their request, International Soroban Test will start, and ISDF's contribution will be larger.

Let's work harder for the internationalization of soroban education in union without satisfaction in the present situation.

About the Organization of Soroban Mission to Palau

The late Mr. Teiichi Domoto who served as a Japan government officer of the South Sea in Koror, the Republic of Palau, lived in a town where I live, after the war.

Related to him, His Excellency Mr. Francis M. Matsutaro was present at the anniversary of the founding of the town on 15th July last year. At the reception held the previous day, I handed my calling card to him. He had known "soroban" and took a great interest in it.

After the ceremony, the Ambassador and his staff came all the way to my soroban school and requested me to teach soroban to elementary school teachers in Palau. Mr. Fujii, President of International Soroban Diffusion Foundation, thankfully cooperated with me to do so.

Ms. Noriko Nishi, the late Mr. Domoto's daughter, also gave her great cooperation to me. (Written by Katsunori Goto)

So I consulted with Mr. Goto and Ms. Nishi, and explained the soroban diffusion project in Palau to H.E. Mr. Matsutaro in the Palau Embassy. He agreed to our proposal, and the schedule was made out then and there. I asked Ms. Kaoru Kitayama, a member who was interested in Palau, to join us. Six people including Ms. Kitayama and her friend will visit Palau as Soroban Mission from 4th to 10th January.

(Written by Masao Fujii)

The Report of International Soroban Camp 2015

Toshiyuki Kazamatsuri

Chairman of International Soroban Camp Committee

International Friendship Soroban Camp Training is held every summer holiday. In 2015, it was held from 17th (Mon) to 20th (Thu) August at Hotel Tamakiya (Supporting Corporate Member of ISDF) situated at the gateway to Oze National Park, whose rooms were wholly used for the event.

There were 123 participants, consisted of 58 people from Japan, 50 people from the other seven countries, which is a record number, and 15 accompanists.

The participants from abroad were as the following (in random order).

From Tonga, Ms. Malia Ta'ofi, a teacher of elementary school, and Viliami (10) worked hard at soroban lessons with Japanese children for four days. Ms. Malia took part, on the recommendation of the Ministry of Education, to learn the method of teaching soroban and to accompany Viliami who was the 5th grader champion of All Tonga Soroban Competition held last March.

From Indonesia, there were 5 accompanists, including Ms. Susanti Kho who is a representative of SEMPOA SIP (Supporting Corporate Member of ISDF) and also took part in 2010 and 2013, and 2 children.

From South Africa, there were 5 teachers, including Mr. Norman Cloete who also took part in 2014, and 9 children of CMATHS (Supporting Corporate Member of ISDF) from which 3 teachers took part in 2014. There were also 4 teachers and 2 children of ABACUS MATHS, including Ms. Sharné Bresler who is a representative of the group, through the introduction of Ms. Tomoe Fujimoto, a member of the board of directors of ISDF. ABACUS MATHS has been just founded in 2011, but there are approximately 40 teachers and 2000 learners. I was deeply impressed by the accompanists of both the groups who worked hard among children to improve their own soroban skills.

From Lebanon, there were 3 teachers, including Dr. Hadi Hamza who also took part in 2013 and Ms. Kazuko Ishida who has been living there, and 2 children and 1 guardian of Genius Map (Supporting Corporate Member of ISDF), whose representative is Dr. Hadi Hamza.

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From UAE, a parent and child of Haj Hassan, seven family members of Abu Qamar, and three family members of Amiri of the Dubai branch of Genius Map.

From Ireland, Mr. Suresh Kumar who would start officially soroban lessons joined to study the method of teaching.

From England, there were Rui Robinson (13) who has lived in London and has learned soroban there for five years and his father Mr. Lee Robinson.

From Japan, there were 58 people, consisted of 18 boys and 40 girls, from the youngest Koya Kita (7) to the oldest Nao Shimokawa (23), including Saya Ito (15) who has continued to take part for seven years.

They practiced soroban for 24 hours 30 minutes in all during the four days.

The Overseas Supporting Corporate Members of ISDF

CMATH (South Africa), Indian Abacus Private Limited (India), and ABACUS MATHS (South Africa) became members of ISDF in 2015. I apologize for the delay of the announcement.

There are six overseas supporting corporate members from five countries at present as the following (in random order).

Indian Abacus Private Limited (India)

SEMPOA SIP (Indonesia)

Genius Map (Lebanon)

Big Head pvt (Malaysia)

CMATH, ABACUS MATHS (South Africa)

The Editor's Postscript

International Friendship Soroban Camp Training has been steadily developing. Almost 50% of the participants were from abroad in August 2015. Japanese and English were mainly spoken during the training, and the other four languages were spoken in daily conversation as well. The teachers and accompanists will need more communication ability in the future. It is hard, but I think it is one of the gratifying problems which we can't avoid so that the camp training will develop more and more.