

## Preface

### Prosperity of Asia through a good relationship between Japan and China

Katsumi Koga (NIHONKAI International Exchange Center)

It has been 45 years since the diplomatic relations between Japan and China were restored. The re-establishment of the relations with China meant a great deal to Japan because it means that both countries have overcome their miserable history. Now the countries have the second and third largest economic powers in the world. The two countries are geographically close. The economic and political ties between these two countries have been strengthened and such ties have resulted in mutual economic benefits and opportunities. Their national developments can hardly be discussed without considering their good relationship.

It is important to deepen mutual understanding among countries to preserve peace and maintain development in the age of globalization, in which many countries are tied together deeply in various fields and could mutually recognize the culture and diversity of each other.

I founded the NPO Corporation (NIHONKAI International Exchange Center) in Kanazawa City about 20 years ago and began mainly an exchange with Dalian City, China. I have been visiting the city once a month. I recognized that 'interaction with people in other countries' was the basis of international exchange by continuing the interaction with the people in various fields and societies. Namely it is necessary to meet face to face and communicate with each other. As a result, the friendship and the bonds of reliance could be cultivated stronger by triumphing over the differences between Japanese and Chinese cultures and customs.

NIHONKAI International Exchange Center has acted as an intermediary between Japan and China in a wide range of subjects, namely in industry-government-university sections. Our activities are small compared with the activities between the countries. However, many small activities build the veritable friendship between nations.

Many Chinese tourists (about 6.4 million) visited Japan in 2016. Foreign visitors to Japan in the year reached 24.04 million. The rate of Chinese people is 27 % and the largest. However, the number of Chinese overseas tourists is estimated as 100 million. The rate of Chinese visitors to Japan is only 6%.



Figure 1: Conclusion of friendship exchange agreement with Dalian Maritime University

Therefore, China still has a great potential in sightseeing exchange.

We all wish for peace and happiness even if there are differences in the cultures and customs of the countries. It is necessary to respect mutually and understand the cultures of both countries. It is also necessary to accept the mind and admit differences to each other. It is the first step to conduct a sincere exchange for constructing 'peace'. Ultimately, a good relationship between Japan and China can contribute largely to stability and prosperity in the whole of Asia. It is necessary to promote various types of exchanges including tourism and education between both countries.

#### About the author

Katsumi Koga, President of NIHONKAI International Exchange Center, Executive chairman of ALP Co., Ltd., Honorary president of Japan-China Friendship Association of Ishikawa Prefecture, Honorary citizen of Dalian City, China.