



Asian-Pacific City Summit Newsletter

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I. 2018 Mayors Conference to be held in Fukuoka City

As a result of written consultation recently conducted, the 12th Mayors Conference will be held as follows.

Host City Fukuoka City, Japan
 Date August 1 – 3, 2018
 Program Mayors Conference, Welcome Reception, Site Visit (Fukuoka City), etc.
 Theme Sustainable Cities and Communities

*This conference will be co-hosted with UN-HABITAT ROAP – Fukuoka.



It is confirmed that the Mayors Conference will be held in Fukuoka City, the founding city of Asian-Pacific City Summit, for the first time in 16 years. It will be co-hosted with UN-HABITAT ROAP-Fukuoka. A detailed program for the conference will be announced later, but the secretariat kindly requests that you save the above date.

The theme of the conference is "Sustainable Cities and Communities".

Participants of the conference will share information and have an active discussion concerning "Sustainable Cities and Communities", #11 on the list of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted at the UN Sustainable Development Summit in 2015.

The "New Urban Agenda", which was adopted at the 3rd United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) held in Ecuador in 2016, will be also included in the program.

SDGs (Sustainable Development Goals)

○What are SDGs?

<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

New Urban Agenda

○Entire Text of the New Urban Agenda (English)

http://nua.unhabitat.org/uploads/DraftOutcomeDocumentofHabitatIII_en.pdf

○Please also refer to the article in the December 2016 edition of Asian-Pacific City Summit Newsletter.





II. News from UN-HABITAT ROAP-Fukuoka (The twelfth installment)

Discuss Urban Issues in Asia-Pacific Region with Diverse Specialists

UN-HABITAT discusses various urban issues in such fields as housing and environment with diverse people including national governments, municipalities and community residents, and towards the solution of such issues, conducts various projects in many developing countries in the world.

Aside from implementing actual projects, our activities also include providing advice and opinions, information provision and dissemination, as well as information campaigns and educational activities. They include providing advice and making proposals on urban policy and planning, disseminating information on challenges that have become tangible, raising people's awareness on upcoming urban issues, or discovering new technologies that can help solve problems, and introducing them to the cities that can make use of those technologies.

From the array of endeavors pursued by the UN-HABITAT Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (ROAP) - Fukuoka, we introduce you to two events, namely, the Asian City Journalist Conference and the Expert Group Meeting, which aim to share information, raise issues, and introduce new technologies.

Firstly, the Asian City Journalist Conference aims to provide an opportunity for Asian journalists to share information and exchange opinions on urban issues in Asia. Since the launch of the conference in August 2007, it has been held annually, and the 11th conference was held in September 2016.

The 11th conference was held under the theme of "Sustainable Cities and Communities – Sustainable Urban Development and Regeneration" and journalists from 7 countries (China, India, Japan, Korea (ROK), Mongolia, Thailand and Vietnam) gathered in Fukuoka City to think deeply on both issues of environment, urban transport and urban infrastructure that are unique to each country, and issues surrounding aging societies that are common in Asia, by visiting areas with advanced cases and interacting with local residents.



(From left to right: Discussion on aging residents in housing complex, visit to a town facing aging and outflowing population, round table with local residents)

At the conference, which was held after visiting sites with advanced cases, participants heard that urban issues differ greatly between each country. This reminded them the diversity of Asian countries, and at the same time, they shared the recognition that issues related to the aging society have become or will soon become a common challenge to all Asian countries. An exchange of opinions took place among participants regarding sustainable cities accommodating the needs of aging population.





Journalists from each country disseminated the conference and issues that have been raised there through media of their countries, and from journalists' position, they sought the world's opinion of sustainable urban development in Asia.

Secondly, the Expert Group Meeting is a meeting aims to match representatives from Asian cities with various issues and Japanese companies with technologies that can contribute to the solution of these issues. The eighth meeting was held in November 2016, under the theme of "Technologies for sustainable and environmentally friendly urban development in Vietnam". From Vietnam, representatives of Ministry of Construction, Tam Ky City, Can Tho City and Da Nang City participated in the meeting.

Vietnam stretches from north to south, and is highly diverse in its natural environment, culture and industry. Every city in the country face an urgent need to address inundation and flooding caused by torrential rain, and to develop transportation infrastructure and housing in response to rapid urbanization.

In order to address these issues, Japanese companies presented on the utilization of various skills and technology, such as collecting rainwater, preventing ingress of water, making high durable manholes, predicting and informing natural disaster based on meteorological data, developing environmentally friendly cooling/heating systems, and formulating housing development plans. Participants considered the possibility of applying such technologies in Vietnam.



(From left to right: Demonstration of a water stop board, which protects buildings from flood damage, technology briefing at the meeting, Deputy Mayor of Tam Ky, Vietnam made remarks)

Vietnamese participants expressed a heightened interest in the unique technologies of each company introduced to them at the meeting. They asked a wide range of questions, including environmental conditions for introducing, product performance, installation cost, and technical assistance.

Individual meetings between each company and each city were conducted after the Expert Group Meeting, where they engaged in in-depth discussion.

Verification tests and workshops are scheduled to be held in Vietnam, and both parties will start concrete discussion toward the adoption of technologies shared at the meeting.

The New Urban Agenda was adopted at the vicennial UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) held in Quito, Ecuador last October. It is a guideline for the international community in pursuit of sustainable urban development. In order to implement the agenda, not only national governments and municipalities, but a wide range of people with various expertise, such as private companies, NGO and NPO, must be involved. UN-HABITAT will continue to lead sustainable urban and community development by collaborating with multiple stakeholders and encouraging many people to join through information dissemination, raising issues, making proposals, and conducting educational activities.

The 12th Mayors Conference of the Asian-Pacific City Summit will be held in Fukuoka City in 2018. UN-HABITAT ROAP – Fukuoka will share its experience of activities in the Asia-Pacific region, information and technical knowledge with participating cities at the conference, and further promote the sustainable urban development in this region.



Articles written by journalists who participated in the 11th Asian City Journalist Conference (English articles only)
(Shanghai Daily / China)

<http://www.shanghaidaily.com/opinion/chinese-perspectives/Journalist-conference-highlights-challenges-faced-by-cities-in-dealing-with-urbanization/shdaily.shtml>

<http://www.shanghaidaily.com/opinion/chinese-perspectives/Rediscovering-the-usefulness-of-the-elderly-can-help-us-better-understand-urban-woes/shdaily.shtml>

(Viet Nam News / Vietnam)

<http://vietnamnews.vn/world/343838/un-releases-document-on-human-settlement-and-urbanisation.html#uwpuqvyyu2vtgEYxk.97>

(The Hindustan Times / India)

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/delhi/lessons-from-japan-on-caring-for-the-capital-s-elderly/story-5I0YGXVjp9GqsgplXhTwHL.html>

Reports on previous EGMs (until 2015) are available from the following links.

<http://www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org/kcap/index.html> (Japanese)

http://www.fukuoka.unhabitat.org/kcap/index_en.html (English)

III. Inscription on UNESCO's List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity

(Article from Kitakyushu City and Fukuoka City)

In November 2016, the "Yama, Hoko, Yatai, float festivals in Japan", comprised of 33 festivals from 18 prefectures in Japan, was inscribed on the list of the intangible cultural heritage of humanity produced by the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The "Tobata Gion Oyamagasa Festival", a government-designated important intangible folk cultural property in Kitakyushu, is one of 33 festivals.

Other festivals in Kyushu, namely, the "Hakata Gion Yamakasa Festival" of Fukuoka City, the "Karatsu Kunchi Festival" of Karatsu City, Saga Prefecture, the "Yatsushiro Myoken Festival" of Yatsushiro City, Kumamoto Prefecture and the "Hita Gion Festival" of Hita City, Oita Prefecture, were also inscribed on the list.

UNESCO registers intangible cultural assets, such as performing arts, social customs, festivals and traditional crafts, to safeguard and raise awareness of their importance. 22 Japanese items, including *Kabuki*, the traditional theatre form, *Gagaku*, imperial court music and dance, and *Washi*, traditional handmade paper, have been registered on the list so far.

The Tobata Gion Oyamagasa Festival is said to be started in 1803 to celebrate the eradication of an epidemic in the region, and remains as an emblematic cultural tradition with over 210 years of history. A unique feature of the festival are the *yamagasa* (floats) change their decoration style from the *nobori-yamagasa* (floats with decorated flags) during the day to the *chochin-yamagasa* (floats with paper lanterns) in the night. As a one of three largest summer festivals in Fukuoka Prefecture, the festival is loved with a nickname of "*chochinyama*".





The "Hakata Gion Yamakasa Festival" is registered as part of UNESCO's record of intangible cultural heritage. This famous festival in the Hakata area, another name for Fukuoka, has a proud legacy of 776 years. The city is crowded with over 3 million spectators each year during the festival.

From July 1 to 15, *kazariyamakasa*, decorated floats which are over 10 metres, are displayed at 14 places in Fukuoka City. *Kakiyamakasa*, carried floats with a weight of one ton, rush through the city of Hakata, and the whole city is filled with a festive mood.

The Hakata Gion Yamakasa Festival starts on July 1, when *kazariyamakasa* go on public exhibition, and a ceremony called the *oshioitori*, in which men cleanse themselves with purified sand and pray for safety. *Kakiyamakasa* appear in town from 10th, when the *nagaregaki* starts.

The *oiyamakasa*, the climax of the festival, takes place in the early morning of 15th. At 4:59 am, around the time when the summer sun rises in the east, the first float starts at the signal of beating drums. In five minute intervals, each *kakiyamakasa* starts the race and men of Hakata unite their hearts to run for the *mawaridome*, the goal.

The shouts of "Oisa, oisa" echoes in the dawning town of Hakata, as *kakiyamakasa* race at full speed through a 5-km course. And the festival comes to a close.

Spectators can also be full of emotions. That is the Hakata Gion Yamakasa Festival.



IV. Sister City Relationship with Yangon (Article from Fukuoka City)

Starting from its technical assistance in the waterworks of Yangon City, Fukuoka City has been deepening exchanges with the city. The two cities signed a sister city agreement on December 7, 2016. This is the first sister city relationship between Myanmar and Japan.

<Introducing Yangon>

Myanmar is a multiethnic country which consists of over 130 ethnic groups. From 1948, when it gained independence from the United Kingdom, to 1998, the country was primarily known as the Union of Burma. The capital of the Republic of the Union of Myanmar is Nay Pyi Taw. 90% of the population is Buddhist, followed by other religious groups such as Christians and Muslims.

The city previously known as Rangoon was renamed as Yangon in 1989, with a population of 5.21 million (2014) and a land area of 599 square kilometres. Yangon was a capital of Myanmar until 2006 and still is the largest city and economic centre of Myanmar.



Citizens of Yangon pray earnestly day and night at Buddhist temples where golden pagodas shine. Other tourist destinations are the Bogyoke Aung San Market, where good items including natural pearls, jewels, bamboo and rattan products are sold, as well as buildings from the British colonial period, such as the office of the Yangon City Development Committee.



Shwedagon Pagoda



Bogyoke Aung San Market

<Relationship with Yangon City>

Fukuoka City has water supply technology which has achieved one of the world's lowest water leakage rates. Exchange between Fukuoka City and Yangon City began in 2012, when Fukuoka City dispatched an officer to Yangon City as a JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) expert to start offering technical assistance.

In 2014, the two cities concluded the "MOU on Cooperation & Support for Urban Development", and Fukuoka enhanced its exchange with Yangon City, through initiatives such as accepting trainees from Yangon City Development Committee. In 2015, in partnership with the private sector, Fukuoka City won the contract of an ODA (Official Development Assistance) project of the preparatory survey for the improvement of water supply in Yangon City.

The exchange of the two cities further deepened, with Dr. Thant Myint-U, Chairman of Yangon Heritage Trust, receiving the Grand Prize of the Fukuoka Prize in 2015. In August of the same year, both Union Minister of Myanmar and Yangon City Development Committee requested that Fukuoka City establish a sister city agreement.



Dispatch of a Fukuoka City employee to Yangon as a JICA expert



Dr. Thant Myint-U
Grand Prize winner of the Fukuoka Prize 2015



Signing ceremony of the sister city agreement

Fukuoka City believes that it will become an asset into the future to further promote friendly relations and strong bonding with Yangon City, which has a long history and rich culture, coexists with historic buildings, and promotes harmonious development.

Other sister and friendship cities of Fukuoka City are Oakland and Atlanta, USA; Guangzhou, China; Bordeaux, France; Auckland, New Zealand; Ipoh, Malaysia and Busan, Korea. Yangon is Fukuoka's eighth sister city.

Fukuoka City and Yangon City will dynamise exchanges in the area of art and culture, and human exchange including the private sector, and promote international cooperation in fields of water supply, sewerage and environment.



★To all persons of contact for our member cities: We are waiting for articles from you.

Please feel free to send us information on hot topics and new projects of your city and your efforts to address urban issues that might be helpful to other cities.

(Newsletters are posted on the Asian-Pacific City Summit website and sent to member cities and other addresses via email.)

Future Asian-Pacific City Summit Conferences

Date	Name of the Conference	Host City
August 1-3, 2018	12 th Mayors Conference	Fukuoka City, Japan

The Asian-Pacific City Summit has been building cooperative relations and networks among cities through Mayors Conferences, Working-Level Conferences and other activities, working toward solutions for urban problems in the Asia-Pacific region.

Asian-Pacific City Summit Member Cities 30 Cities from 13 Countries

Auckland (New Zealand)	Kagoshima City (Japan)
Bangkok (Kingdom of Thailand)	City of Kitakyushu (Japan)
Brisbane (Commonwealth of Australia)	Kuala Lumpur (Malaysia)
Busan Metropolitan City (Republic of Korea)	Kumamoto City (Japan)
Changsha (People's Republic of China)	City of Manila (Republic of the Philippines)
Dalian (People's Republic of China)	Miyazaki City (Japan)
Fukuoka City (Japan)	Nagasaki City (Japan)
Guangzhou (People's Republic of China)	Naha City (Japan)
Gwangyang (Republic of Korea)	Oita City (Japan)
Ho Chi Minh City (Socialist Republic of Vietnam)	Pohang (Republic of Korea)
Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (PRC)	Saga City (Japan)
City of Honolulu (United States of America)	Shanghai (People's Republic of China)
Ipoh City (Malaysia)	Republic of Singapore
Jakarta Capital City Government (Republic of Indonesia)	Urumqi (People's Republic of China)
Jeju Special Self-Governing Province (ROK)	Vladivostok (Russian Federation)

【Editorial/Publication】

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