

Chapter
3

Planning and Preparation



Decision of the Participating Countries and Countries to be Visited

In the Ship for World Youth Leaders program for the fiscal year of 2015, youth from eleven countries including Japan visited two countries, namely India (port of call in Chennai) and Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka (port of call in Colombo).

In addition to these two countries visited, following eight countries were invited which summed up to ten participating countries from overseas: Australia, Kingdom

of Bahrain, Republic of Chile, United Mexican States, New Zealand, Russian Federation, United Republic of Tanzania, United Arab Emirates.

Necessary procedures for inviting OPYs and preparation for the ports of call activities proceeded between the respective governments of the invited countries and the countries to be visited.

Selection of the JPY and Preparatory Training Session

The qualifications for JPYs were as follows:

- a) Must hold a Japanese nationality and 18-30 years of age (as of April 1, 2015).
- b) Involved actively in international exchange or youth activities locally, professionally or through school or youth organizations, and who can be expected to continue to remain committed to such involvement upon returning from the program.
- c) Must be physically and mentally fit, can act in harmony, can follow a regimented program, and have the discipline to live in a large group.
- d) Possesses considerable knowledge or skill in areas such as Japanese society, culture, sports, etc.
- e) Must have interest and understanding of the countries to be visited.
- f) Must have sufficient command of English to participate smoothly in activities during the program.
- g) Must attend all the programs for Preparatory Training Session, Pre-Departure Training Session, Onshore Training Session, Onboard Training Session, and Post-Program Training Session.

After conducting the initial screening of the application materials, the Cabinet Office shortlisted the applicants based on general education, English proficiency and personality evaluation for three days on May 30, 31 and July 25 in Tokyo and Osaka, and 125 individuals passed

the screening as JPYs (of which 2 cancelled before the Preparatory Training Session).

Furthermore, for six days from September 12 to 17, Preparatory Training Session was conducted at NYC, which was also carried out as the final selection process. To effectively achieve the goal of the program, live-in training session was arranged. The objectives of the Preparatory Training Session were to ensure that the JPYs fully understood the aim and objectives of the program, mentally prepare them as Japanese representatives, and to have them gain the fundamentals of what large group activities involve. During the Preparatory Training Session, activities such as orientation including explanation on the program, ice breaking session lead by the NL, seminars on leadership, cross-cultural understanding and project management, discussion training, preparation for Course Discussion and committee activities, lecture on protocols, and meeting with ex-PYs of the program were arranged.

On the last day of the Preparatory Training Session, 123 delegates (excluding NL and SNL) were determined as JPYs. To lead the JPYs, Ms. Miho Suzuki was appointed as the Japanese NL, and Mr. Hiroomi Ide was appointed as the Sub-NL (SNL) respectively.

Due to the cancellations of 4 individuals until the completion of the program, the final number of the JPYs was 119 (excluding NL and SNL).

Selection of the OPYs and NLs

The call for applicants and selections of OPYs and NLs were made by the governments of the participating countries, at the request of and in coordination with the Japanese diplomatic establishments abroad. The candidates for the program were submitted by the Japanese diplomatic establishments abroad upon consultation with the governments of the participating countries, and the

Director General for International Youth Exchange Affairs, Cabinet Office gave final confirmation for 110 OPYs and 10 NLs.

Due to the cancellations before the commencement of the program, the final number of the OPY became 102 (excluding NLs).

Overseas Participating Youth

The basic qualifications for OPYs (except the NL) were as follows:

- a) Must be 18-30 years of age (as of April 1, 2015);
- b) Must be able to participate in the entire duration and in all the activities of the program;
- c) Must be in good physical and mental condition and can endure a voyage onboard;
- d) Must fully understand the objective and aim of this program and are capable to follow a regimented program;
- e) Can contribute greatly to the various activities for

promoting sound development of youth and/or to play an active role in the area of international exchange in their community, occupation, schools, youth organizations and the like;

- f) Have a good command of English to be able to participate in activities such as university-level discussions;
- g) Interested in and has certain understanding of Japan;
- h) Must have no prior experience in international youth exchange programs sponsored by the Cabinet Office, including the Ship for World Youth program.

National Leader

In addition to previously mentioned items 1 – (b) to (g), the qualifications for NL were as follows:

- a) Preferably in their thirties;
- b) Capable of performing the expected duties and responsibilities, such as taking the leadership of his/her delegation, participating in various activities as leaders of mixed nationality groups, which are basic units for all activities and life onshore as well as onboard,

and taking a role as a member of the NL Meeting in discussing and deciding the fundamental matters related to onshore and onboard activities;

- c) Preferably belonging to youth organizations as officers or in the governmental organization related to youth affairs;
- d) Preferably with experience of the Ship for World Youth program as a PY.

Facilitators Meeting

For smooth and effective implementation of the program, six facilitators in charge of the Course Discussion for the Ship for World Youth Leaders were invited to attend Facilitators Meeting for four days from August 4 to 7, 2015. During this meeting, they were provided with an overview of the Ship for World Youth Leaders and

the Course Discussion activity including the objectives and outline thereof. The attendees focused their dialogue on the program objectives and its operation to ensure that everyone had a common understanding of the matters related thereto.

NL Meeting

To ensure the smooth operation of the program, pre-program communication, meetings and discussion with the NL of each of the delegations were necessary. Thus, the NL Meeting was held prior to the program for four days from October 19 to 22, 2015.

During this meeting, Cabinet Office officials gave an overview of the aims and objectives of the program,

activities in Japan, general life, onshore and onboard activities, and activities at the ports of call. This was followed by discussions among the NLs. The discussion, passionate but painstaking at times, was held to determine, the day-to-day schedules and rules, pre-participating preparations, and other matters related to the program.

Schedule of Activities in Japan for OPYs

The activities in Japan for the OPYs of the Ship for World Youth Leaders were divided into two main parts; activities in Tokyo and the Local Program visiting suburban cities in local prefectures (which includes the homestay).

Tokyo Program

The program in Tokyo consisted of an orientation, training sessions by Letter Groups (Tokyo City Tour), training sessions by Course Discussion theme group (topic-related institutional visits), audience with His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince, and a courtesy call on the Prime Minister.

Local Program

In April 2015, the Cabinet Office requested the five prefectural governments of Iwate, Yamanashi, Fukui, Mie, and Shiga to host the OPYs for the Local Program and to organize courtesy calls, welcome ceremonies, homestay, and institutional visit or cultural experience. In response, each prefecture submitted to the Cabinet Office its own outline of schedules for the Local Program. On October 13, 2015, the representatives from the hosting prefectures were invited to a meeting at the Cabinet Office to discuss the plans. After the meeting, the Cabinet Office coordinated with the representatives from the hosting prefectures through the Center for International Youth Exchange, which is an organization commissioned to coordinate the activities for the Ship for World Youth Leaders, and finalized the itinerary. Each prefecture then began its preparation for the Local Program such as selecting host families and others.

Planning the Itineraries for the Ports of Call

Arranging the Schedule of Port of Call Activities by the Cabinet Office

The Cabinet Office coordinated and finalized the itinerary with the persons-in-charge from respective governments through the Center for International Youth Exchange, which is an organization commissioned to coordinate the programs. For the activities in the visited countries, namely, India and Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, places were selected for the visits related to Course Discussion themes and to understand traditional cultures of the respective countries. As for Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, host families were selected for the home visit.

For two days from July 7 to 8, 2015, government representatives were invited for the meeting at the Cabinet Office, and discussions on ports of call activities were held according to the proposals made by the respective government. After the Cabinet Office examined the content of the activities, necessary preparations were made with respective governments through the Japanese diplomatic establishments abroad.

Preliminary Visits

The Cabinet Office officials conducted preliminary visits to India and Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka and met with the concerned officials involved in the ports of call activities in the visited countries. During this preliminary inspection, details of the ports of call activities were communicated and arranged, and on-site inspections of the port and institutions to be visited were conducted to thresh out problems that could arise when touring or moving in large groups.

Finalizing the Port of Call Activities

After the aforementioned visits and making the necessary budgetary adjustments, the Center for International Youth Exchange that was commissioned to do the job, coordinated the schedules of activities in the ports of call in close communication with the persons-in-charge in the respective countries.