

UNAFEI

150th International Senior Seminar

Closing Ceremony –8 February 2011

Farewell Speech

Ms. Pattraporn Pommanuchatip

Thailand

Honorable Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Mr. Tatsuya SAKUMA, Director of UNAFEI;

Mr. Haruhiko UKAWA, Deputy Director of UNAFEI;

Mr. Hisanao NODA, Deputy Director of TIC, JICA;

Mr. Osamu SHIMIZU, President of the Research and Training Institute of the
Ministry of Justice;

Faculty and Staff Members of UNAFEI; JICA Staff Members; Distinguished
Guests; Fellow Participants; Ladies and Gentlemen;

Good evening.

In December last year, 21 of us here received an official invitation to the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Senior Seminar of the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders. All of us were excited by the chance to meet people of different backgrounds, cultures and practices and to share our experience and knowledge with them. Many of us had never visited Japan before, and we knew that we would be strangers to each other and in an unfamiliar land.

However, the tremendous support of UNAFEI and the Japanese International

Cooperation Agency, beginning before we departed for Japan, then upon our arrival here, and right throughout the duration of our stay, has allowed us to make the most of this opportunity, both on personal and professional levels. We have learned so much about Japanese society, economy, education, history and culture, and began to understand a little more of Japan and its successful modernization of its society

Our Seminar aimed to provide us the opportunity to share experiences, gain knowledge and examine measures against human trafficking. Participants were senior officials whose work relates to trafficking in persons.

The informative and comprehensive lectures, individual presentations, group workshops and observation visits have led us to a remarkable result. We have discussed, shared and learnt the current situation of our respective countries, from each other and from distinguished lecturers of wide experience and true expertise. We recognize that human trafficking is a problem of the whole international community and that cooperation between and among countries is vital to combat trafficking in persons. The traffickers have become more sophisticated, crossing borders and creating transnational organized criminal networks. While government agencies face certain limitations due to territorial jurisdiction, the criminal groups have no boundary limits. Moreover, they take advantage of different social and economic circumstances and use the gap arising from such differences and the governments' territorial limitations to act with impunity. Detection, investigation and prosecution of this crime meet critical obstacles deriving from social and economic factors, the vulnerability of victims, the lack of public awareness, the weakness of law enforcement and the lack of international cooperation. Victims, who are the most important witnesses, suffer grievous damage

and need protection. It is necessary for government officials to develop our capacity, enhance our knowledge and establish international cooperation in order to overcome these obstacles and to render justice.

The study trips and observation visits to various organizations of the Japanese criminal justice system deepened our understanding of the systematized functions and interaction among Japanese criminal justice agencies. We visited a court room and facilities for witness protection at the Tokyo District Court; the Tokyo District Public Prosecutors Office evidence handling and storage facilities; the Supreme Court; Kyoto Public Prosecutors Office; Kansai Airport Immigration Office; the 6th Regional Coast Guard Office; and Aiko Juvenile Training School for Girls. We appreciate such a varied programme of visits and also the privilege of meeting with the Minister of Justice and a Justice of the Supreme Court.

It was also our honour to enjoy the parties hosted by the Vice Minister of Justice; the UNAFEI Alumni, and the Asia Crime Prevention Foundation (ACPF). Also we met with the Volunteer Probation Officers and the members of ACPF and took lessons from our interactions with them. We visited several interesting places, including shrines, temples and Hiroshima's Peace Memorial. Again, in Hiroshima, the warm welcome party hosted by the ACPF provided us with an opportunity to understand more about Japan and to socialize with esteemed members of the ACPF.

The Table Tennis Tournament and Lounge B karaoke parties allowed us to get to know each other and also the Director, Deputy Director and professors and staff of UNAFEI in a relaxed and informal way.

By our own assessment, the Seminar achieved its objectives far beyond our expectations. Not only did we attain a deeper knowledge of our own sociological

environments and legal frameworks, but we enjoyed a platform of intellectual exchange, inter-system communication and the chance to discuss future good practice. We participants have extended our knowledge and understanding and have broadened our horizons as criminal justice practitioners in a globalized world. We are newly sensitized to the subject area and promise to maintain a new international network against trafficking in persons. We will seek to influence the future with the best practices identified in the Seminar.

Many people have contributed to the success of this Seminar. On behalf of all the participants of the 150th Senior Seminar, I would like to express our profound and sincere gratitude and appreciation to the Government of Japan, the Japanese People, JICA and UNAFEI for granting us this opportunity.

I would like to mention and acknowledge JICA and its staff, in particular, Ms. Yamamoto, for coordinating and facilitating our logistics.

I also would like to express my acknowledgement, gratitude and appreciation to the Director of UNAFEI, his deputy, and the professors and staff for the invitation, convention and administration of this Seminar, their advice and support both inside and outside UNAFEI, and for their cheerful, helpful, cooperative and kind hospitality. I would like to thank the professors and staff who escorted us on our observation visits and study trip. I also give thanks to the kitchen staff for the good food they have served to us, and to the housekeeping staff for our clean and comfortable accommodation. Also I would like to acknowledge the ACPF for their support of our programmes and activities.

Lastly, I have to say thank you to the Japanese participants, who have kindly devoted their valuable time to us, teaching us the Japanese language and culture,

participating in our Japanese classes, assisting our research and arrangements, leading and accompanying on our days off, even spending time away from their lovely families.

Your work and hospitality have been flawless. Our success, comfort, and happiness here was so much dependent upon your work, patience, kind contribution and hospitality. This was a memorable and enjoyable time and you will remain forever in our memories. We all look forward to keeping in touch, and seeing you again.

Thank you.