

UNAFEI

154th International Training Course

Closing ceremony

27th June 2013

Farewell Speech by Mr. Supachoke Khuanruechai

From Thailand

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

Mr. Tatsuya SAKUMA, Director of UNAFEI;

Mr. Kenichi KIYONO, Deputy Director of UNAFEI;

Honorable Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

JICA Staff Members;

Faculty and Staff Members of UNAFEI;

Distinguished Guests;

Fellow Participants;

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of my fellow participants from Japan and overseas, allow me to express our profound gratitude and sincere appreciation for having been granted the opportunity to participate in this 154th International Training Course. We extend our genuine gratitude to the Government of Japan, the organizations of JICA, UNAFEI and the ACPF, and all the people who have made our participation not only possible but manifestly a successful experience.

This training course involves 19 participants from 8 different countries, including Japan, and of different criminal justice backgrounds: the judiciary, the police, prosecutors and correctional officers. The theme of our

course, "Stress Management of Correctional Personnel —Enhancing the Capacity of Mid-Level Staff", has been explored, discussed and deeply analyzed through various methods and processes of learning: lectures delivered by UNAFEI professors, international visiting experts and Japanese ad hoc lecturers, individual presentations by the participants, group workshops and plenary sessions, observation visits, and so on. All these methods, together with the favourable learning environment, deepened our knowledge and broadened our views of the issue.

Our training course focused on officers who engage in the treatment of offenders. They often must suppress their emotions, manage stress, and maintain patience on the job. Naturally, treatment of offenders can be stressful, and officers experience work-related stress. For example, crimes are often caused by offenders' cognitive distortion, which in turn results in unreasonable claims or violent acts directed against officers in correctional settings. Even in these cases, officers must treat offenders calmly and dispassionately without anger, injustice, or hatred. Furthermore, the rising populations of both traditional offenders and difficult-to-treat special offenders increase the quantity of work of correctional staff which results in a loss of focus on offender treatment. Some offenders may feel they are not treated appropriately and become aggressive. As a result, correctional officers' stress will become more serious.

For the purpose of preventing the serious problems caused by officers' stress, mid-level staff must improve their capacity for stress management. There are three important things for capacity-building of mid-level staff: identifying correctional officers' stress, analyzing the causes of their work-related stress (problems), and learning how to implement appropriate solutions to such causes. One of the main causes of correctional officers' stress is the treatment of difficult-to-treat offenders and to solve this problem, many advanced techniques can work. Furthermore, the capacity for mid-level staff will be enhanced by anger management, staff training for stress management and offender treatment programmes.

In this regard, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all of the Japanese lecturers, Volunteer Probation Officers and the international visiting experts whose presentations were very informative and interesting.

Additionally, I would like to highlight the study tours which allowed us to acquire further information and explanations from officials, experts and practitioners.

In particular, it was a great honor for all of us to be granted an audience with the Honorable Vice-Minister of Justice and to attend the wonderful party he hosted and to which he invited officials from some of our respective countries' embassies in Tokyo.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of my fellow participants I would like to express our sincere gratitude to the ACPF for its valuable assistance. We will never forget their hospitality while hosting the first dinner party after our arrival at UNAFEI. We were extremely delighted also to watch the live SUMO competitions and attend a dinner party. And above all, the most memorable event hosted by the ACPF was the Yokohama Harbor Dinner Cruise which was an experience of a lifetime and a dream come true.

We really feel indebted to the ACPF for its generosity, warm hospitality and continuous assistance.

Madams and Sirs

It is said that "first impressions are lasting"; for this reason, we would like on this occasion to express our profound gratitude and appreciation to JICA's officials and staff members for their warm welcome, punctuality, hospitality and continuous caring. JICA was our first home in Japan, and the JICA staff were our first guides who successfully introduced us to Japan, through useful orientation sessions and corresponding lectures about Japanese culture, society, economy, politics and so on.

Thank you JICA, we will remain indebted to you forever for all you have done for us from our arrival in Japan until our departure. And today, we cannot talk about the intensive efforts made by JICA without mentioning "HOSHINO-san", who was omnipresent during the whole programme as JICA's Coordinator and to whom we are so grateful for her patience, tolerance and, above all, warm caring.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Before coming to Japan, we overseas participants had never heard about UNAFEI until it became really our familiar home for more than a month. Each time, after our observation visits, we realized how comfortable and wonderful it was to be back in our familiar rooms. On this occasion I would like to express our sincere gratitude to all the staff of UNAFEI who were always there at the front door waving with both hands, wishing us a good trip; and when we were back, they were always there once again waving with both hands, welcoming us so warmly whatever the time or the weather. This would not be possible without a totally devoted, committed and tireless staff.

In this regard, special thanks go to our tender leader and silent example during the whole programme, the director of UNAFEI. SAKUMA san, you did not give any lecture in this training programme; however, you can be sure that what we learned from you during this period was just as important as what we learned in our classes. You have given us an example of a modern leader, a caring father, a gentleman – a man of manners, and a source of insight and inspiration. We could all see in you how leading by example is the best way to build team work and make the change we need.

It is worth noting here, that we all envy you SAKUMA san, for the great and valuable team that you have in UNAFEI. It is really a team that accepts challenges and a team of persistence, self denial and preparedness. We would like to express our genuine gratitude to all members of this team starting from the cleaners, kitchen staff, administrators, programme officers, and all knowledgeable professors namely: Deputy Director KIYONO for his friendly assistance, the “tireless” YOSHIMORA San, TASHIRO San, NAGAI san, TSUNODA San, IWASHITA San, MIO San , MORIYA San and HIROSE San.

Thank you mother UNAFEI, for in the absence of our families, you have been our family.

Madams and Sirs,

Very special thanks go to the Japanese participants who facilitated and accelerated our adaptation to the Japanese environment. Thanks to them, our everyday lives have been made so exciting and interesting through spontaneous interaction and weekend tours at the expense of their rest and their families. Special thanks to them for providing us with insightful explanations

about Japanese traditions and ways of life. They were always close at hand when called upon to give information and answer our questions, even while doing some shopping or choosing our food on our outside visits. We overseas participants feel very glad, even very proud, of the time we shared with them the during programme.

Last but not the least, we would like to thank UNAFEI for allowing us to experience the Japanese language course, to make self introductions in Japanese, to witness a Japanese traditional tea ceremony, to sing some Japanese folk songs, and above all to experience wonderful karaoke moments in Lounge B .

Madams and Sirs

In conclusion, and on behalf of my fellow participants, I would like to assure you that, after the completion of our Training Course, we will endeavor, persist, and raise the bar, whatever the obstacles and difficulties, until change is achieved and challenges are met, for we really feel now more empowered and equipped with this rich learning experience that we have undergone.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Forgive my long speech, but it is not a mere formality on the occasion of this closing ceremony. We genuinely feel that whatever words and expressions of gratitude we use, they will not be enough, and they will never reveal the wonderful feelings we would like to convey.

May God Almighty bless this wonderful country and its friendly people and bless us all.

Thank You Very MuchArigato Gozaimas