

UNAFEI

170th International Training Course

Closing Ceremony

20th Sep 2017

Farewell Speech by Ms. Nanja LIMBO

From Namibia

Honorable Members of the Diplomatic Corps;

Mr. Takeshi SETO, Director of UNAFEI;

Ms. Kayo ISHIHARA, Deputy Director of UNAFEI;

Mr. Takahiro Moriya, Deputy Director General, TIC, JICA;

Faculty and Staff Members of UNAFEI;

JICA Staff Members;

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 170th International Training Course. Our genuine gratitude goes to the Government of Japan, the organizations of JICA, UNAFEI and ACPF, and all the people who have made our participation not only possible but remarkably a successful experience.

This training course involved 25 participants from 16 different countries, including Japan, and of different professional backgrounds: the Judiciary, Corrections, Parole and Police. The theme of our course, "Treatment of Illicit Drug Users", 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

favorable learning environment, deepened our knowledge and broadened our views of the issue.

Our training course focused on identifying best practices for the effective treatment of illicit drug users who came into contact with the Criminal Justice System. During the course we learned and discussed key points to remember when continuing our work in our home countries: (1) that drug use is a public health problem and requires treatment approaches which incorporate harm reduction strategies; (2) community based treatment options as an alternative to custodial treatment were viewed as more effective; (3) drug users required special risk and needs assessments protocols due to their multifactorial health disorders and thus required diversified treatment options and (4) most importantly that the criminal justice sector adopt evidence based diversion and treatment systems that included health, social and other community based organizations supporting the effective treatment of drug users during the pre-sentencing, incarceration and aftercare services . We are now aware of international trends and wish to remain so, via the establishment of a global network for the exchange of updated information on the practices of the participating countries.

In this regard, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to all Japanese lecturers, Volunteer Probation Officers and the international visiting experts whose presentations were very informative and interesting. The visiting experts truly represented the meaning of the word, expert. They were vastly experienced practitioners in the field of treatment of illicit drug users, with special reference to Ms. Harue KAMIOKA of DARC and the VPO's for their outstanding passion and support.

I would also like to highlight the study tours which allowed us to acquire further information and explanations from officials, experts and practitioners. I could not forget Hiroshima's Peace Memorial Museum and the Kyoto temples. The extreme contrast of human destruction and human tranquility reminded me that human beings are able to change and improve towards peaceful existence with the right support.

In particular, it was a great honor for all of us to be granted a courtesy visit 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.

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 sweet home in Japan, and our first guide who introduced us successfully to Japan as a whole, 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 “HISA-san and MINASE-san”, who were omnipresent throughout the programme as JICA’s Coordinators and to whom we are so grateful for their patience, tolerance and, above all, warm caring.

Distinguished Ladies and gentlemen,

Having been adequately prepared, we left for UNAFEI. Upon arrival, we were treated with an unforgettable reception; such had never been seen or experienced before. In short, it is difficult to find words that will do justice in describing this reception; the first impression really lasted forever.

Before coming to Japan, we, overseas participants, had never heard about UNAFEI until it became our sweet 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. SETO san, you did not give many lectures in this training programme; however, you have given us an example of a modern leader, a caring father, a gentleman and a source of insightful 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. Thanks for all your attention, despite your busy schedule and responsibilities.

It is worth noting here, that you are truly blessed SETO san, for the great and valuable team that you have at UNAFEI. It is really a team that embraces challenge, persistence, self-denial and preparedness. We would like on this occasion to express our genuine gratitude to all members of this team starting from the cleaners, kitchen staff, administrators, programme officers, linguistic advisor and all knowledgeable professors namely: the deputy director ISHIHARA san for her friendly assistance, the programming officer YAMAMOTO san and OTANI san , KITAGAWA san, WATANABE san, YAMADA san, HIRANO san, FUTAGOISHI san, OHINATA san, FURUHASHI san, and TSUJI san for their tireless efforts that improved our knowledge and experiences.

Thank you mother UNAFEI, for in the absence of our families and friends, you really have been our families and our friends.

Distinguished Ladies and gentlemen

On behalf of my fellow participants I would like to express our sincere gratitude to ACPF for its valuable assistance. During the short period of time that we were here, we could observe the importance of the ACPF's continuous support for UNAFEI's training programmes: this is recognized by all of us, and, I could not forget to mention the ACPF Branch Study Tours in Fukushima, Sapporo, Nagano, Yokohama, Nagoya, Saitama and Osaka that provided us with wonderful tours, hospitality and more than enjoyable receptions that allowed us to show case our Japanese language and dance skills. We really feel indebted to the ACPF for its generosity, warm hospitality and continuous assistance.

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 life has 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 satisfactory explanations about Japanese traditions and ways of life. They were always near at hand when called upon to give information or answer our questions, even while doing some shopping or choosing our food on our outside visits. We were extremely delighted also to enjoy Japanese dishes such as takuyaki, tempura, yodufu and okonomiyaki

with them. We, overseas participants, feel very glad, even very proud, for sharing with them the same 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 practice some Japanese folk songs, and above all to experience wonderful karaoke moments in lounge B. Also, we will not forget the fun-filled table tennis tournament, during which we enjoyed the participation of the director, his deputy and UNAFEI'S professors and staff. In addition, the unforgettable visit to FUJI Mountain.

Madams and Sirs

In conclusion, the course achieved its objectives and on behalf of my fellow participants, I would like to assure you that, after the completion our Training Course, we will strive with persistence to 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 for it is not a mere formality on the occasion of this closing ceremony. We really feel that whatever the 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. I have said it before and wish to say it again; Japanese hospitality is SUBARASHIDESU.

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

Thank You Very MuchDoumo Arigato Gozaimas