

Keynote Speech

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1) Introduction and welcome speech

I welcome the participants and guests of the Japan-Russian student Forum 2015. (Plus Japanese and Russian versions of the phrase).

「日露フォーラムの皆様を（心から）歓迎申し上げます。」

"Nichiro fo:ramu no minasama wo (kokoro kara/сердечно, от всего сердца) kangei moushiagemasu."

日露学生フォーラムの参加者、そしてゲストの方々を歓迎します。 Nichiro gakusei forum no sankasha soshite guest no katagata wo kangei shimasu.

От всего сердца приветствую участников и гостей Японо-Российского студенческого форума 2015.

It is a pleasure that from year to year the Forum is consistently developing, becoming a powerful intellectual platform for discussion of key questions of international interaction and communication.

Today, leaning on a wide experience of mutually beneficial Russian and Japanese cooperation, it is important not to limit ourselves with achieved results. We should invoke, promote and broaden the directions of further work, effectively using the potential of young civil society, finding the solution of these tasks. In this case the Japan-Russian student Forum is appealed to play the positive role.

It is significant that the present meeting of Japan-Russian student Forum 2015 takes place in the year of the 160th anniversary of the first treaty of diplomatic relations between the two countries "Treaty of Commerce, Navigation and Delimitation between Russia and Japan".

2) Statement

During the Forum we need to accomplish such global tasks as the organization of world sport events (FIFA World Cup 2018 in Russian Federation and Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games in Japan) by young, talented people. Also we need to develop new innovations for comfortable life of both nations and make offers in the field of the regional Renaissance in a century of internalization of our societies.

These tasks require participation of the young and ambitious specialists inclined to a new format of thinking and search the innovative solutions facing our countries.

3) Japan and Russia now on: learning from the past, living the present and planning the future.

4) Learning from the past

The relations of Russia (after Dissolution of the Soviet Union) and Japan include two decades. However, they develop under the strongest influence of all history of double-sided contacts which began more than three centuries ago. Still in 1705 Peter the Great ordered to open the school of Japanese language in St. Petersburg.

The first Russian-Japanese contract was signed in 1855. It was “Treaty of Shimoda”. According to the 9 articles contract between Russia and Japan "the constant piece and sincere friendship" were established. Citizens from the one party received protection and defense with auspices on the territory of another.

A black stone memorial in honor of the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the Russian-Japanese relations was opened in 2005. You can see it on the following slide. The monument describes a brief history of the Treaty and it was opened by the Consul General of Japan and St. Petersburg Governor in St. Petersburg.

5) Living the present

Today the relations are characterized by the mutual commitment to democratic values, lack of ideological and military confrontation, interests in cooperation on the international arena. Trade and economic relations of Russia with Japan rank high position in the general complex of the bilateral relations. In recent years the role of economic interaction between two countries considerably increased. Russian market remains attractive for Japanese business and vice versa.

I have to say that my hometown Khabarovsk and Niigata are twin towns (sister cities). And I am very proud of being a part of such contribution.

The origin of the friendship between Khabarovsk and Niigata goes back to the summer of 1964 when Japanese city of Niigata was hit by the disaster – a big earthquake and the following floods. As an act of goodwill gesture the residents of Khabarovsk have sent 3 thousand cubic meters of construction wood to Niigata. 7 months after, in April 1965, the “Sister-cities Agreement” between Khabarovsk and Niigata was signed. Since then the relationship with Niigata hasn’t stopped developing and always proved high effectiveness and interest of the countries in the dialogue of two different cultures.

Today the total number of twin towns between Japan and Russia is 43. You can see the list on the following slide. Twin-cities make an important strategic basis for the further cooperation of the two countries.

Longstanding friendly relationship of sister-towns are improving in the spheres of culture, sport, economy and experience exchange of the municipalities work, active works in the field of ecology and environmental protection.

Regular meetings of the heads of the city administrations of Siberia, Far East of Russia with the mayors of the cities of the Western coast of Japan are being held since 1970. They discuss social and economic issues. The Mayor meetings are held every two years in Japanese and Russian cities alternatively.

As the result we should hold such meetings as a forum to help us to strengthen the connection and build the trust not only between the heads of the municipalities but also between citizens.

6) Planning the future

A lot of work is still yet to be done, but the foundation has already been laid.

Planning the future provides achieving certain tasks in spheres of trade and economic area, defensive, political, ecological and especially through the culture sphere.

Culture lets people understand each other better. And if they understand each other better in their spirit, it is easier to overcome some economic and political barriers. But first they have to understand that their neighbor is, in the end, just like them, with the same problems, the same questions.

Both sides could develop cooperation through some culture festivals to introduce Japanese traditions and cultural heritage to the people of Russia and vice versa. That means holding of paintings and graphic art exhibitions which would help to get familiar with sister-cities; exchange of the cultural groups. We shouldn't forget about the matter of language. We need to take certain measures for the promotion of translation and publishing projects, and stimulate young generation to learn languages, because the youth are our future. That is why we should encourage the advancement of exchanges between social organizations including students, youth organizations, and exchange in the sport field, such as gymnastics, volleyball, basketball, table tennis, baseball, judo, athletics competitions and academic research institutions.

We will be remembered only if we give to our younger generation a prosperous and safe world without international terrorism and international organized crime, resulting out of economic prosperity paired up with civilizational heritage.

It isn't wise to be distressed about the past, it is necessary to fight over problems of the present and to look in a bright future.

7) Conclusion

On the following slide you can see the oriental cherry tree. The significance of the cherry blossom in Japanese culture goes back hundreds of years. In Japan, the cherry blossom represents the fragility and the beauty of life. It's a reminder that life is almost overwhelmingly beautiful but that it is also tragically short.

Let me read the Haiky which was written by a 9 year old girl Nastya

Flowers of an Oriental cherry are in blossom,

But petals will fall down soon,

Let's appreciate these moments.

So let's enjoy every moment during the forum.

I am sure that the developed ideas during a meeting and an initiative will enrich Russian-Japanese partner communications, will promote strengthening of friendship and trust between our countries and the people. I wish the Forum productive work and interesting communication to its participants and guests. I wish all of you success!