

Japan Project, 2018/2019

East Asia Student Association Lund

The main body of the project was to organize a trip to Tokyo with 12 participants with a focus on denuclearization, promotion of non-nuclear weapons areas and international economic and peace-promoting collaboration. The trip took place between the 8-14th of April and the members who went met with the following organizations:

- **Tokio Marine Nichido** (largest insurance company in Japan): we met with the President of Tokio Marine, in order to discuss the challenges of insurance companies when dealing with climate change disasters, on a global perspective.
- **Tokyo National Museum:** To deepen the participants' knowledge of Japanese history and culture.
- **European Business Council:** To learn more about economic collaboration for sustainable peace.
- **Business Sweden in Tokyo:** To deepen knowledge of Japan-Sweden business relations.
- **JETRO (Japan External Trade Organization):** To learn about the correlation between peacekeeping and international trade.
- **The Institute of Energy and Economics:** To learn about the current energy issues in Japan and the region as well as learning about the challenges and potential solutions to provide sustainable energy in the future.
- **Peace Boat & meeting with Hibakusha:** To discuss denuclearization and hear the testimony of a survivor from the Nagasaki bombing.
- **Climate Youth Japan:** To meet young people from Japan and discuss climate issues and how international collaboration can help to solve energy problems.
- **REBORN Japan:** In order to, together with Japanese youth, experience cultural exchanges.
- **Swedish Embassy in Tokyo:** To learn about challenges for peace and pacifism from a Swedish and Japanese perspective.

The Goals of the Project were:

- To enable 12 people who otherwise would not have had the opportunity to primarily experience and learn about Japan as a peace-promoting country and how non-nuclear weapons areas can be promoted in other countries, as well as the challenges that exist for the continuity of Japan as a peaceful country and disseminate the information accumulated during the trip to at least 250 people.
- To organize a trip with 12 participants to Japan in February-March 2019 with a focus on disarmament, promotion of non-nuclear weapons areas and international economic and peace cooperation. To disseminate the knowledge participants of the trip gathered through social media, local media (radio and newspaper) and presentation of the trip to members to increase the awareness of at least 250 people.

Overview of the Study Trip:

In October 2018, we appointed two travel coordinators. After announcing the position and interviewing applicants, we realized that two travel coordinators would enhance the effectiveness of the project. Davide La Rocca and Hiroto Ishibashi were appointed as coordinators because of their strengths in the form of language and cultural knowledge, organizational skills, social skills, stress management skills, and complementary leadership styles. In November 2018, we started marketing the trip and started the application process for participation. In December 2018, we accepted participants for the trip and started planning study visits. After consideration, we realized that booking the time of departure, in order to be able to plan the project properly and enable as many people as possible to apply, was April. Therefore, the trip was set instead in April. In January 2019 we booked study visits, discussions, and other activities in Japan. Because of this, it was also able to report later than originally planned.

The feedback from our participants has been highly positive, since the visits were able to fit within the schedule, and to offer a 360 degree perspective concerning all the topics that we aimed to reach: denuclearization, promotion of non-nuclear weapons areas, international economic and peace-promoting collaboration and cultural integration. All our members have been capable of proving a diverse and rich background, with an active participation during all the meetings. Our hosts have been very eager to meet our questions and talks. Nevertheless, the amount of information and learning that the participants have obtained, has been very

valuable, not only to better understand Japan, but also in order to understand the global challenges coming ahead, from an environmental, political, social and cultural perspective. Japan has been a great case study for these purposes, as it stands ahead in many fields, when it comes to economic and technological development. EASA Lund wants to thank Shigeyuki Hiroki, the Japanese Ambassador of Sweden, for the help and support provided during the initial state of the trip-planning.

All the participants have been selected not only based on the individual strengths and motivations, but also with the purpose of building an international team with different backgrounds of study and culture. We also made sure to achieve a fair selection from a gender and nationality perspective, half Swedish, half internationals. Hereby below, the list of the participants, with a small bio:

Davide La Rocca (*travel coordinator*): from Italy, with Master's Degree in Fashion Management in Bologna (IT) and Master's Degree in International Marketing & Brand Management in Lund (SE); experienced in team leading for school trips at Imperial College and King's College in London; previous work experience at Amazon in Romania & Tod's Group in Italy.

Hiroto Ishibashi (*co-travel coordinator*): from Japan, studying International Business at Keio University, with exchange studies at Lund University.

Julia Bergstrom (*President of EASA Lund*): from Sweden, with Master's Degree in Asian Studies at Lund University and Bachelor's Degree in Strategic Communications; with vast experience on Foreign Affairs, Event Management and Analyst for International Events, both at Lund, UPF Lund & GWF Production AB.

Henry Stout (*Head of communication*): from the United Kingdom, with Master's Degree in International Development & Management at Lund University; experienced in international communication & PR for various associations.

Fredrik Prinz Blix: from Sweden, with Master's Degree in Economics and Bachelor's Degree in Politics & Economics at Lund University; experience in Energy Policy, Communication & Marketing.

Klas Bergman: from Sweden, with Master's Degree in Asian Studies at Lund University and on-field research experience on the Fukujima disasters.

Sarrah Bouazizi: from Austria, with Bachelor's Degree in Development Studies at Lund University

Tove Jörgensen: from Sweden, with Master's Degree in Economics at Lund University and experience in Public and Diplomatic Affairs.

Zuzanna Ewa: from Poland, with Master's Degree in Gender Studies at Lund University, and experienced in social development and gender issues, both in Europe and India.

Alva Damberg: from Sweden, with Bachelor's Degree in Social Development at Lund University and experienced in urban city planning throughout her research projects.

Bulent Undes: from Germany, with Master's Degree in Economics at Lund University and Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration at Hohenheim.

Summary of the Discussions with the Organizations

International Economic and Peace-Promoting Collaboration

By visiting companies, government agencies and representational firms in Tokyo, the participants of the Japan study trip received a holistic and in-depth understanding of economic collaboration and its role in promoting peace. With the biggest free-trade agreement (FTA) to date, the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) plays an important part in expanding trading opportunities for European and Japanese firms alike. Although FTAs are not usually associated with peace promoting activities, they do play a significant role in this field and probably to a larger extent in the future.

The representative of JETRO explained that the world trading system has been characterized by increasing levels of protectionism in recent years, mostly due to changes in American trade policy under the Trump administration. This has in turn increased the level of uncertainty as

well as volatility of doing business in world markets, especially in regard to commerce, supply chains, distributions etc. By implementing protectionist measures, there is also a risk for retaliation that can easily escalate and turn into bilateral and plurilateral conflicts. An example of this is the trade war between the US and China or the trade dispute between the US and multiple countries regarding American steel and aluminum tariffs. Trade policies can also act as a tool in other non-trade related conflicts, such as the one between Japan and South Korea in 2019 regarding comfort women issues dating back to Japan's control of the Korean peninsula and WWII. As both sides could not at the time come to an agreement, and the US (which usually acts as a mediator) did not get involved, both sides have introduced protectionist trade policies which has led to a severe deterioration in the diplomatic relationship between the two countries. Some even describes this as the lowest point of the countries' relationship since they normalized their diplomatic relationship in 1965.

By discussing these matters with the representative of JETRO, it became evident that trade policies can be used in a way that risk destabilize regional stability and bilateral relationships in which infectious conflicts may ensue. FTAs, such as the EU-Japan EPA, helps provide better opportunities to mitigate conflicts by providing various chapters, clauses and annexes in the FTA that specifies the framework and procedure(s) in the event of a conflict between companies, other public or private entities and countries that is covered by the FTA. FTAs and their juridical systems are also becoming all the more important as the dispute settlement mechanism in the World Trade Organization (WTO) is not functioning properly. Without a functioning multilateral trading system, the possibility to reach a conclusion or agreement between countries based on a legal system is becoming harder, and thus peace.

Both the representative of European Business Council and Business Sweden highlighted the role of growth and development possibilities for firms by eliminating or severely reduce the number of tariff and non-tariff barriers via FTAs. Ensuring a leveling playing field, i.e. no discrimination, between Japanese and European firms also promotes trust and confidence in one another's markets. In turn, this encourages business development and expansion in which innovations and technology can spread more easily and creates new and more job opportunities. Both the representative of European Business Council and Business Sweden also underlined the importance of this in regard to creating a better business environment where firms can develop new products and services that can help combat climate change. This is something the President of Tokio Marine pinpointed during EASA:s visit. Due to the increasing risks of

climate change related disasters or damages, such as floods, rainfall, storms etc. there is an increasing demand by firms to purchase insurances or insurance strategies against these types of eventualities. As industries and firms are different in what kind of insurance they demand as well as requiring more tailor-made solutions, it puts pressure on companies like Tokio Marine to keep with these changes. In turn, the corporate sector not only helps provide solutions to their clients but also deliver, to higher degree, products and services that are more sustainable and environmentally friendly. This development is also spurred to a higher degree than before as FTAs, to certain degree, lower barriers as well as promote and encourage information and knowledge sharing between industries and companies. However, corporate solutions are not enough, and it requires greater commitment to climate change by countries and governments. The EU-Japan EPA delivers on this as it is the first FTA that has specific commitments to the Paris Climate Agreement as well as ambitious environmental and sustainable development standards. This indicates that FTAs can contribute in a positive way to prevent, limit and mitigate the consequences of climate change by providing better frameworks and conditions for companies and governments to act proactively against climate change. As climate related conflicts are on the rise and is expected to get worse as global temperature increase, these kind of developments on the trade policy arena are important to help maintain sustainable peace.

Denuclearization and Security Issues

During the study trip, the participants had the opportunity to meet the organization *Peace Boat*. This provided valuable insights regarding their advocacy work and campaigns for a nuclear-free world, and the abolition of nuclear weapons and nuclear power. One of the important aspects of their work has been within the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), which became renowned after they received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 for their work in nuclear disarmament. Within this framework, the participants learned more about how Peace Boat and ICAN have been working to achieve the ratification of the United Nation's Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which as of 2020 has 35 out of the 50 signatories that is required for the ratification of the treaty. The treaty states that the development, testing, production, stockpiling, stationing, transfer, use and threat of use of nuclear weapons are prohibited, as well as assistance and encouragement to the prohibited activities. It became clear that although there was support by most countries to prevent the spreading and proliferation of nuclear weapons, no interest was expressed to pursue a treaty that would ban or prohibit nuclear weapons or activities related to it. The representative of Peace Boat clarified that even if countries that do not have nuclear weapons but has uranium indirectly helps to uphold a system

of nuclear weapons by providing the very material that is needed to create the weapons. By pointing out accidents such as those at Chernobyl and Fukushima, the representative of Peace Boat explained why nuclear power is also destructive, and, given the risk of a nuclear meltdown or fallouts and its effects on the societies and people that are affected by it, should be banned as well.

As part of their work, Peace Boat regularly organizes meetings with survivors of the nuclear bombings (Hibakusha), which the participants were privileged to meet during their study trip. By listening to his testimony of the Nagasaki bombing, the participants got an understanding for what happened that day and what devastating effects the bomb created. Given the developments occurring in the world, such as North Korea having access to nuclear bombs and growing military confrontations between countries, he expressed concerns what this will lead to in the future and highlighted the importance of banning nuclear weapons and prohibit all activities surrounding it. Since today's youth in Japan but also most of the developed world has not experienced war or armed conflict, he hoped that by meeting young people, he can remind them of the devastation and atrocities of war and why war is never the solution. Experiences like these show how important is it to keep the testimonies of survivors of any war or armed-conflict alive so that the future generation can take part of it and understand the consequences of war and armed conflicts. Doing so reminds the present and future generations that we should not repeat the past.

The Swedish Embassy provided additional insights into the regional security developments, how it has impacted Japan and peace in the region. Under Article 9 in the Japanese Constitution, Japan renounces war as a means of settling international disputes and prohibits the maintenance of armed forces and other war potential. That has made Japan, since the adoption of its Constitution, embark on a pacifist approach. However, following the construction of nuclear weapons in North Korea and conflict with China over disputed islands, the region has become more unstable and the pacifist approach has been questioned. The Prime Minister Shinzo Abe wants for examples to amend the Constitution to formalize the legal status of the Self-Defense Forces. However, opposition forces fear that a revision of the Article 9 could change the status quo and lead to unrestrained reinterpretation of the article in the future. Consequently, there is no domestic cohesion regarding Article 9 and how Japan should interpret it in regard to the new security situations within its proximity. Another aspect to consider in how the situation will further develop is the US. As the US is a close ally and has military bases in Japan, any

stance Japan will take will depend on American military and defense policies and how these are coordinated with Japan. Although military conflict has not occurred yet, Japan and South Korea has engaged in a trade conflict as aforementioned. This indicates that conflicts and disputes might not necessarily be handled militarily but through other means in the future. Regardless, any actions that may lead to further escalation of a conflict or diplomatic deterioration is a set-back in trying to maintain sustainable peace in the region.

Energy Policies and Climate Change

The visit to the Institute of Energy Economics provided valuable and expert insights into the Japanese energy policies and its opportunities and challenges. One clear challenge has been that of nuclear energy and its role in the future energy mix of Japan. Before the Fukushima accident, Japan received 30 percent of its energy from nuclear energy and was planning to increase it to 42 percent. However, the accident caused a significant decline in attitudes towards nuclear energy and a majority of the population were anti-nuclear. In addition, many and big protests (some consisting of tens of thousands of people) were organized after the Fukushima accident and after nuclear powerplants started operating again after being shut down following the accident. This movement and change in attitudes have obviously made an impact on Japan, especially as the expert at the Institute of Energy Economics commented that even after 8 years, only nine out of the forty-two operable reactors are operating as of February 2019.

However, the significant reduction of nuclear energy has mean that Japan face new challenges in regard to energy security and climate change. To substitute the nuclear energy, Japan imported much more oil and natural gas to satisfy the energy consumption in the country. This development has led to a substantial increase in CO₂ emission and has made the process of achieving the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement even harder. As Japan is the third largest economy in the world and is by many measures an industrial giant, this has meant a significant set-back in preventing global temperatures from increasing. Despite the negative public perception towards nuclear energy, the Japanese government stated that in order to meet its obligation under the Paris Climate Accord, around twenty percent of the Japanese energy mix has to come from nuclear powerplants.

Another aspect that the researchers at the Institute of Energy Economics brought up was the security dilemma connected to energy supplies for Japan. In contrast to Europe where an energy glut in want country can easily be transferred to another country through highly interconnected

power grid system. Consequently, a country that experience a sudden power shortage can relatively easily gain access to energy from other countries. Japan is not as interconnected to other countries in regard to power supplies, one explanation being that they are an island and that it has high mountains throughout the country. Accidents, such as the one in Fukushima, exposes Japan much more to cuts in their energy supplies. Consequently, this makes them reliant on importing energy from other countries to a greater extent when these types of events occur. As a result, Japan face a greater urgency to develop and expand energy sources that is more resilient towards natural disasters but also to a greater extent try to integrate their energy systems with neighboring countries to facilitate energy transfers in time of crisis.

When talking to Climate Youth Japan, the negative public perception that the Institute of Energy Economics described was clear among the youth that the participants met. Due to the disaster that the Fukushima accident created as well as the potential risks that it might happen again made many of the youth present at the discussion meeting wary of nuclear energy. As many other people around the world, they were inspired by Greta Thunberg and pointed out that the path to achieve green, renewable and sustainable energy was possible and that nuclear energy was not the only solution going forward to reduce their carbon footprint. Even though the Friday's For Future movement had yet to gain speed and momentum in Japan at large, many of the youth present at the meeting said that they did their best to still arrange and participate in various events and protests to show their support for the movement. They believed that even though it was a small step, it was better to be vocal about the problem and push for change rather than not making your voiced heard and just let the problem continue and grow worse. They also expressed great positivity and eagerness to learn from others, both in and outside of Japan, in regard to what solutions are out there and what best-practices they can adopt in Japan. From this side, great discussions among the participants at the discussion meeting ensued regarding all areas related to climate action such as recycling policies, taxes on plastics, renewable energy and pushing for more progressive actions by politicians.

Final Words

The EASA board would like to extend their gratitude and appreciation to all the organizations that could meet with the EASA members of the study trip and for all the valuable and knowledgeable discussions with all the people they have met.