The Sasakawa Japan-China Friendship Fund

1 – Fostering Human Resources for 21st-Century Japan-China Relations
2 – Deepening Mutual Understanding in the 21st Century
3 – Activities to Promote Japan-China Relations in the 21st Century
4 – Activities to Advance the Fund’s International Role
1. Fostering Human Resources for 21st-Century Japan-China Relations

The Sasakawa Peace Foundation, Asian Forum Japan (Japan)
For FY2006: ¥7,051,494 (¥880,000 in self-operated project expenses)

Chinese personnel involved in Japan-China security affairs have fewer opportunities than people in other fields to undergo training in Japan, and too few are fluent in Japanese. Developing personnel with advanced language skills and a deep understanding of Japanese politics and defense policies is of long-term significance for Japan-China security relations. This project is comprised of a component that supports training in Japan for Chinese personnel in the security field (see below) and a self-operated component designed to enable former trainees who have performed particularly well to pursue master’s degrees at Peking University’s School of International Studies.

This year, SPF provided support to two trainees who had returned to China after completing their training in Japan, covering their master’s degree programs at Peking University’s School of International Studies (a three-year course for working people). One trainee took advantage of his experience in a PKO to write a master’s thesis entitled Thoughts on Japan’s UN Peace-Keeping Operations. The other is planning to complete the program in the summer of 2008.

Past trainees are now serving in positions such as Japan relations specialist at the Ministry of National Defense and Japan researcher in an education and research institution. The project is thus receiving acclaim for fostering personnel who will be responsible for Japan-China security relations in the future.

(3rd year of a 5-year project)

Asian Forum Japan (Japan)
For FY2006: ¥6,171,494

A long-term challenge in the area of Japan-China security affairs is the lack of Chinese personnel with a level of Japanese fluency needed to support security exchanges, and the lack of personnel prepared to take a multifaceted approach to the analysis of Japanese security policies. The Sasakawa Japan-China Friendship Fund provided a total of 10 people with an opportunity to study for one year in Japan through a program entitled “Cultivating Specialists in International Security Issues” (fiscal 1999–2003). This program, which was launched in 2004, provides training every year to two Chinese personnel involved in security affairs to help them improve their language skills and develop their expertise in international relations and security policies.

This year, two trainees in their late 20s were sent from the China Institute for International Strategic Studies to undergo training at Waseda University’s Graduate School of Japanese Applied Linguistics and the Graduate School of Asia-Pacific Studies. They toured a farming village in Takahata Town, Yamagata Prefecture, and interpreted for a group of field officers who had come from the People’s Liberation Army under the Program for Promoting Japan-China Exchange in the Field of Security (See page 37) and at the 7th Symposium on Northeast Asian Security Issues (See page 38).

After finishing the training program, the two trainees submitted reports in Japanese describing their personal experiences, Japanese society, and their views on Japan-China relations. They are expected to become active players in the promotion of Japan-China security exchange in the future.

(3rd year of a 5-year project)

China Association for International Friendly Contact (China)
For FY2006: ¥5,759,529

This project provides scholarships to undergraduate and graduate students of Japanese enrolled in Chinese universities. Recipients are selected for their academic excellence and the quality of their application essays. The objective of the project is to raise the level of student interest in Japanese language study and to contribute to the development of personnel who will sustain Japan-China relations in the future. The first two phases of the project lasted 10 years, beginning in 1995. Phase III, which is expected to last five years, began in fiscal 2005.

This year, scholarships of 2,000 yuan were awarded to each of a total of 105 students: 15 each from Beijing Foreign Studies University, Shanghai International Studies University, and Dalian University of Foreign Languages; 10 each from Sichuan International Studies University and Guangdong University of Foreign Studies; and five each from Guangxi University, Northwest University, Hunan University, Guizhou University, Nanjing University, Heilongjiang University, Xiamen University, and Shandong University. More than 1,100 students have received scholarships over the course of the project, and many of them are now working for public institutions, media organizations, and the international divisions of large companies. Efforts have also been made to conduct a post facto survey of past scholarship recipients and to create a system for follow-up. The universities involved are now considering new steps such as holding Japanese language speech contests and roundtable discussions with Japanese university students to further increase the effectiveness of the project.

(2nd year of a 5-year project)
Field officers from China’s People’s Liberation Army pay a courtesy call on the vice chief of staff of the Western Army Headquarters, Japan Ground Self Defense Force under a project entitled “Program for Promoting Japan-China Exchange in the Field of Security/Phase II” (October 2006).
The Symposium on Northeast Asian Security Issues has been held annually since 2000 to provide an opportunity for Japanese and Chinese security experts, such as staff from the Japan Defense Agency (now the Ministry of Defense) and mid-ranking officers of the People’s Liberation Army, to engage in a dialogue through private-sector channels.


Some participants from Japan expressed the hope that China would take a leading role in achieving a swift resolution to North Korea issues through systemic transformation. Participants from China, however, indicated that since the origins of the problem lie with both the US and North Korea, the key to a solution does not lie with China. They emphasized the need to achieve a resolution through six-party talks. In response to a request by Japanese participants that China improve the level of transparency of its national defense white paper, Chinese participants cited internal factors, such as the complicated procedures involved in revising classified information regulations, as challenges. The topics covered during the discussions were recorded in a report that was distributed to all relevant organizations.

(A one-year project)

In contrast to the growth of their economic ties, Japan and China have remained in a political deadlock in recent years, with mutual mistrust between the citizens of both countries on the rise. Under this project, researchers conducted a survey of Japanese attitudes toward China, whose results will be used to discuss the future of the relationship between the two countries. In China, Peking University has likewise conducted a survey of public attitudes toward Japan.

The survey in Japan was conducted among 1,000 respondents 18 years of age or older in 50 locations throughout the nation. It asked questions regarding the respondents’ interest in China and Japan-China relations, their source of information about China, their basic knowledge and impressions of China, historical issues, and China’s influence. The results showed that about 90% of respondents have never been to China, and that many people obtain their information about China from the news media, view China as being nationalistic and economically oriented, and are concerned about China’s rise in the international community. About 40% feel that China poses a military threat, while more than 30% feel it poses an economic threat.

The survey in China likewise revealed that more than 90% of respondents obtain their information about Japan from the news media, and that more than 50% view Japan as being militaristic and nationalistic.

The survey results were announced at the 2nd Annual Tokyo-Beijing Forum held August 2, 2006 (co-sponsored by Genron NPO, the China Daily newspaper, and Beijing University), where they prompted an active discussion.

(A one-year project)