MISSION STATEMENT

The Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF) was established in September 1986 as a private nonprofit organization with an endowment from The Nippon Foundation and the Japanese motorboat racing industry.

1. Contribute to World Peace

The Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF) seeks to contribute to the welfare of humanity and the sound development of the international community, and thus to world peace, through activities that foster international interaction and cooperation.

2. Conduct Initiatives Available Only to Private Foundations

SPF provides grants for, and when necessary implements by itself, projects that are intended to help resolve common challenges facing the international community and challenges facing Japan in its relations with other countries, but that are difficult for the state or businesses to undertake.

3. Emphasize Novel Approaches

SPF values progressive approaches through trial and error despite any complications or difficulties that may arise.

4. Tackle Problems Head-on

SPF, together with grantee organizations (or by itself), does not merely consider methods of resolving problems, but emphasizes the actual implementation of those methods in society; it conducts a variety of actions, including public outreach, with the cooperation of non-governmental organizations and other such groups.

5. Promote International Cooperation

SPF regards grant projects as joint efforts undertaken in cooperation with the grantee organizations, and forms partnerships to promote international cooperation. SPF also aims to achieve international cooperation through networks created by SPF itself.

About the Special Funds

There are four Special Funds within the framework of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF), each for a specific part of the world. The Special Funds are:

- The Sasakawa Pacific Island Nations Fund
- The Sasakawa Japan-China Friendship Fund
- The Sasakawa Pan Asia Fund
- The Sasakawa Middle East Islam Fund*

Regular projects tackle issues in a specific sector, whereas Special Fund projects focus on issues in a specific part of the world. All Special Funds are designed to contribute to problem resolution in their targeted area, by developing and implementing uniquely effective programs in collaboration with non-profit and research organizations in various countries.

*The Sasakawa Middle East Islam Fund was established on April 1, 2009.

Interview with the Chairman

Needed Today: Improvements to Existing Frameworks and Mutual Understanding between Peoples

In 2009, the global financial crisis and ongoing recession left the world in a critical situation. We asked chairman Jiro Hanyu about project development in 2009 and the future direction of SPF.

Q: What kind of environment did fiscal 2009 present for SPF?

Hanyu: Ever since the late 1990s people have said at numerous points, “now we have entered a period of global transition,” but in fiscal 2009, with the financial crisis and global recession, the world seems to have turned a significant corner, and visions of the next era are starting to take shape. In that era, the world will be unable to maintain the international economic and social frameworks that were built in the late 20th century as they currently exist. Globalization based on free markets and deregulation has contributed to the economic development of developing countries, but has also widened the prosperity gap between the poorest nations of the world and the developed and emerging economies, creating instability in the international arena. It has also highlighted the vulnerabilities of the developed economies, as seen in the recent financial crisis.

Given these conditions, there is clearly a need for a kind of international cooperation that cannot be achieved through conventional frameworks among governments and industries. For a private non-profit foundation like SPF which strives to solve problems using creativity, unique civil-society strategies, and ideas that transcend the confines of conventional values, the goal must be to offer innovative proposals for improving existing international systems and structures, and to work to promote mutual understanding through interpersonal exchange.

Q: What does SPF need to work toward next?

Hanyu: The time has come to grapple directly with the positive and negative aspects of globalization, a challenge which we gave top priority in our fiscal 2008 Program Policy. In addition to promoting the projects on issues involving demographic changes and population movement, we will carry out practical studies, hold discussions with prominent persons based on those studies, and invest several years in developing thorough policy proposals on the themes of globalization and the prosperity gap, as well as scientific and technological developments and society. In the area of personnel exchanges, particularly in Southeast Asia where our projects have already achieved diverse results, we will focus on human resource development in the late-developing ASEAN countries like Myanmar and Cambodia.

We designated the US and the Middle East as priority regions in our fiscal 2008 Program Policy. Since then, we have been working with the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars in the US to develop multilayered projects, including the expansion of exchange programs focused on political and economic issues. For projects on the Middle East, we plan to keep expanding our Arabic-language website about Japan, which was launched last year, and to hold seminars and symposia to promote mutual understanding between SPF and think tanks in Iran and Egypt.

Q: What is most required of SPF in the future?

Hanyu: In the current climate of instability, we are keenly aware, as is noted in our Program Policy, that SPF, which promotes international interaction and cooperation led by the private nonprofit sector, has a profound potential to advance creative solutions to international problems through cooperation with various organizations in Japan and around the world. We are doing our utmost to develop the new projects needed to fulfill that potential.

We appreciate your ongoing cooperation and support for all of our future activities.

Jiro Hanyu
Chairman
The Sasakawa Peace Foundation