

## ◆ Part 2 ◆

**Primary Measures Related  
to Immigration Control  
Administration in FY 2009**

**Chapter 1****Formulation of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control (4th Edition)**

Toward the realization of proper and smooth immigration control administration, the Minister of Justice shall formulate the Basic Plan for Immigration Control, which aims to clarify the situation of foreign nationals who enter and reside in Japan, and to stipulate the guidelines for management of immigration and residence of foreign nationals and other necessary matters concerning related measures.

The fourth edition of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control was formulated on March 30, 2010. Its aim is to present fundamental concepts for immigration control administration measures both at home and abroad, and provide proper responses under the changing circumstances affecting immigration control. The said measures include facilitating the acceptance of foreign nationals revitalizing our society, promoting measures against illegal foreign residents toward the realization of a safe and secure society, smooth introducing of the new system of residence management and developing immigration control administration based on such system, and efforts for promoting appropriate and prompt refugees protection. The plan was formulated based on reports of discussion meetings on Immigration Control Policy, which was a private consultative group of the Minister of Justice, opinions collected through the request for public comments, and discussion with related administrative agencies.

The Basic Plan for Immigration Control was first formulated in 1992, and the second edition and the third edition were formulated in 2000 and 2005, respectively.

**Section 1 ♦ Considerations Regarding Formulation of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control (4th Edition)****1 Holding of a Discussion Meeting on Immigration Control Policy****(1) Deliberations in the Discussion Meeting on Immigration Control Policy**

The Discussion Meeting on Immigration Control Policy (hereinafter referred to as the “Policy Discussion Meeting”) was established so that the Minister of Justice can hear a broad range of views on immigration control administration from intellectuals in various fields. Past editions of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control had been based on deliberations in the Policy Discussion Meeting.

The Fifth Policy Discussion Meeting, which was established in October 2005 after formulation of the third edition of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control, conducted 23 meetings until December 2009 to discuss, from a broad viewpoint, issues which were supposed to be examined hereafter as determined in the third edition, and issues to be addressed in the fourth or later Basic Plan for Immigration Control. Specifically, topics of discussion included smooth and proper acceptance foreign nationals in response to changes in economic and social circumstances, efforts toward realization of a society that generates no illegal residents, etc., and development of immigration control administration based on the new system of residence management.

The Policy Discussion Meeting summarized the matters discussed in the above meetings, and submitted a report entitled the “Ideal Situation of Immigration Control Administration” to the Minister of Justice on January 19, 2010.

## (2) Outline of Report of the Discussion Meeting on Immigration Control Policy

The report entitled the “Ideal Situation of Immigration Control Administration”, which was submitted to the Minister of Justice on January 19, 2010, outlined matters to be examined for implementation of various efforts in terms of the fact that immigration control administration should contribute to maintenance and improvement of Japan’s economic vitality and people’s lives, and ensuring the public safety and security (See Data Section 4).

### A. Smooth and proper acceptance of foreign nationals in response to changes in economic and social circumstances

#### (A) Promotion of acceptance of foreign workers in professional or technical fields, including highly-qualified human resources

Amid the serious decline in the population owing to the declining birthrate and the ageing of society, it is necessary to actively promote acceptance of highly-qualified human resources in order for Japan to achieve a sustainable economic growth. The Ministry of Justice needs to immediately carry out a detailed examination to introduce the preferential system utilizing points-based system proposed in the report of the Highly-qualified Human Resources Acceptance Promotion Conference. Possible preferential measures for a preferential system utilizing points-based system include simplified and priority processing of applications for certificate of resident eligibility and other immigration control procedures, permission of the maximum period of stay (5 years), and provision of permanent resident status after a five-year stay at the minimum.

In addition, acceptance of foreign workers who have expertise and technical capabilities in various fields should be continuously and actively promoted as in the past year, from the standpoint of revitalization of the whole economic society in Japan. In relation to immigration control administration, it is important to consider measures to simplify procedures and improve convenience. At present, the company environment is becoming more diversified and complicated, and from the perspective of corporate management, companies need to introduce a flexible system to recruit human resources with diverse knowledge, values and ideas. Under such circumstances, it is necessary to fully grasp the actual employment situation of foreign employees working for companies, and consider measures for their status of residence that allows them to engage in a wider range of activities.

#### (B) Acceptance of foreign workers in the medical and nursing care services

It is pointed out that there is no need to put restrictions on those who have obtained professional qualifications authorized by the Japanese government, such as dentists and nurses, based on length of their service. We will promote a review of the elimination of such restrictions on dentists,

nurses, health workers and midwives holding professional qualifications authorized by the Japanese government, based on length of service, in accordance with the existing landing permission criteria.

With regard to acceptance of foreign workers in nursing care services, it is appropriate to give consideration to acceptance of those who have graduated from a Japanese university, etc., and have obtained qualifications authorized by the Japanese government that require a certain degree of expertise, such as certified careworkers, in the light of the current employment situation of certified careworkers accepted under the Economic Partnership Agreement (hereinafter referred to as the “EPA”).

## **B. Efforts toward the realization of a society that generates no illegal residents, etc.**

### **(A) Promotion of measures against illegal and false residents**

To strengthen countermeasures against illegal entry at the border is very important and effective in preventing undesirable foreign nationals, such as illegal and false residents, terrorists and criminals, from entering the country, and in ensuring security in the country and safety of the people. In addition to the existing measures, the Ministry of Justice needs to take appropriate action, including landing examination using information on personal identification, and strengthened countermeasures against illegal entry at the border using information obtained through collaboration with related organizations.

In order to promote efficient and effective detection of illegal residents and to clarify the actual situation of false residents and further reduce the number of such residents, the Ministry of Justice needs to take appropriate measures, including prompt detection and reinforcement of collection and analysis of information on illegal and false residents, in addition to the existing measures, while respecting the human rights of foreign nationals.

### **(B) Treatment of offenders against the law in consideration of their circumstances**

In terms of fair immigration control, strict responses should be made to illegal residents in principle, while at the same time those under exceptional circumstances should be treated in consideration of such circumstances. The Ministry of Justice needs to properly maintain a special permission to stay system and to make further efforts to improve the transparency of the system as in the past.

## **C. Development of immigration control administration based on a new system of residence management**

### **(A) Realization of proper residence management**

Establishing a system to continuously keep precise basic information on foreign nationals, including status of residence and residence forms, is essential in making smooth and proper responses to the policy issues described above. It is necessary to give special attention to the handling of personal information on foreign nationals, and ensure proper residence management for foreign nationals by analyzing such information promptly and appropriately and making effective use of such information for immigration control administration, including detection of illegal and false residents.

(B) Building a foundation to realize a society where Japanese and foreign nationals can live together in harmony

In view of introduction of the new system of residence management, it is necessary to steadily promote various measures to ensure that foreign nationals legally residing in Japan can more stably engage in activities in Japan, as well as to continuously and actively give support for improvement in administrative services in cooperation with related administrative agencies, including municipalities.

## 2 Request for Public Comments

In the process of formulating the fourth edition of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control, public comments on the plan (draft) were requested on the front page of the electronic government (e-Gov) website from February 15 to March 5 in 2010. A total of 25 comments on 149 issues regarding overall immigration control administration, including acceptance of highly-qualified human resources and measures against illegal residents, were sent from groups and individuals. Received comments are made available on the same website.

## Section 2 ◆ Basic principles for Basic Plan for Immigration Control (4th Edition)

### 1 Basic Concepts

The objective of immigration control administration is to ensure the equitable control of the entry and departure of all persons. To achieve this objective, it is necessary to promote proper and smooth acceptance of foreign nationals, as well as to prevent the entry or stay of foreign nationals who may threaten our national security, such as terrorists and criminals, thereby contributing to revitalization of our society, sound development of internationalization, and ensuring the safe and secure livelihood of the people.

Concrete measures to be implemented toward the above goals should be planned in response to the situation of foreign nationals entering and residing in Japan and the changes in social circumstances surrounding immigration control administration. There, the fourth edition of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control defines the basic principles for efforts in immigration control administration with consideration for the changes in the situation after the formulation of the third edition of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control in 2005. The municipalities therefore need to develop a register system for foreign residents who stay in Japan legally to keep correct records, by referring to the Basic Residents' Registration System.

### 2 Four Basic Principles for Future Immigration Control Administration

Amid the serious decline in the population owing to the declining the birthrate and the ageing of society, Japan is facing a serious decline in the total population, especially the productive-age population. Our country experienced drastic changes in economic conditions after the emergence of the bubble economy, and has been affected by a serious economic slump due to the global financial crisis since late 2008. Under such circumstances,

it is important to maintain the vitality of our society and ensure sustainable development. It is also important to introduce the vitality of Asian countries which have grown significantly in recent years. On the other hand, there is a need to address problems, including unemployment and unstable employment of long-term foreign residents, and particularly those of Japanese descent. In the light of these changes in social circumstances both at home and abroad, this edition of the plan stipulates the first basic principle, “to promote measures for active acceptance of foreign workers with the aim of maintaining the vitality of our society, ensuring sustainable development in an age of depopulation, and introducing the vitality of other Asian regions”.

Recently, the number of illegal residents in Japan has steadily decreased due to implementation of strict countermeasures of illegal entry at the border and measures against illegal residents by the Immigration Bureau. However, there are still many illegal residents, and a wider distribution of employment makes it difficult to carry out efficient detection. There is concern over an increase in false residents who disguise themselves as illegal residents by falsifying their status of residence and purpose of stay in the form of fake marriages, fake students, etc., and countermeasures at the border against foreign nationals who may threaten our national security, such as terrorists and criminals, are still an issue. In view of these changes in the situation of illegal residents, etc., this edition of the plan stipulates the second basic principle, “to strictly prevent terrorists and criminals from entering the country at the border, and strongly promote measures against illegal residents whose number is still quite large and false residents who are expected to increase in future with the aim of maintaining the social order, and the safety and security of the people in our country, as well as to promote proper treatment for offenders against the law”.

Foreign nationals residing in Japan has been increasing in number year after year, and their activities have diversified. Besides, many of them tend to stay for a long period. Under the existing system, the actual situation of their living conditions cannot be sufficiently comprehended, which brings about obstacles to proper residence management. To cope with this situation, the law for amendment to the Immigration Control Act, etc., which included drastic revisions to the residence management system, was enacted in the ordinary Diet session in 2009. The said amended law is supposed to be enforced within three years from the date of promulgation. Its aim is to appropriately administer the new system of residence management as a basis for future immigration control administration, and to ensure fair residence management. It is expected to contribute to the creation of a society in which Japanese and foreign nationals can live together in harmony. In the light of such circumstances, this edition of the plan stipulates the third basic principle, “to appropriately administer the new system of residence management, which will be introduced to accurately keep the living and residence conditions of foreign residents in response to an increase of foreign residents living in Japan and diversification of their activities, as well as ensure fair residence management by utilizing information, and improve the convenience of foreign nationals by providing local authorities with information necessary for smooth implementation of administrative services”.

Finally, in consideration of the recent situation, where it takes longer to examine the application for recognition of refugee status because of the rapid increase in the number of applicants and where the legal status of those to be recognized as refugees should be secured early, the fourth basic principle is “to promote appropriate and prompt refugee protection as a member of the international society”.

Thus, Japan is facing diverse problems arising from a mid-and long-term structural population decline, changing economic conditions and trends, and an increase of foreign residents with the advance of globalization. Therefore,

the government should work together to take various measures toward the resolution of those problems. As the immigration control authority, the Immigration Bureau needs to contribute to realization of a society in which Japanese and foreign nationals can live together in harmony by preserving the safety and security of the people, and ensuring that the vitality of our society and people's lives are maintained and improved.

As stated above, the Basic Plan for Immigration Control (fourth edition) stipulated these four basic principles on efforts for immigration control administration from the standpoint of creating a “vibrant, prosperous society”, “safe and secure society”, and “harmonious society coexisting with foreign nationals” in the next five years.

## Section 3 ◆ Key Issues of Basic Plan for Immigration Control (4th Edition)

The fourth edition of the Basic Plan for Immigration Control consists of two parts, “circumstances surrounding entry and residence of foreign nationals”, and “key issues on immigration control administration and future policies”. The second part presents measures to be implemented for the next five years in accordance with the basic principles set forth in the previous section, as shown below:

### 1 Smooth Acceptance of Foreign Nationals Vitalizing Japanese Society

In order to powerfully attract foreign nationals who will revitalize our society, such as highly-qualified human resources, students and tourists from foreign countries, including Asian countries, the following measures will be promoted.

#### (1) Acceptance of Human Resources Who Meet the Needs of Society Such as through Contributing to Economic Growth

Among foreign nationals who intend to work in Japan, it is generally recognized that foreign workers in professional or technical fields should be actively accepted because they are expected to contribute to revitalization of the economic society in our country. As measures to promote acceptance of highly-qualified human resources who will bring new energy into our economic society and significantly contribute to enhancement of competitiveness, the introduction of a preferential system utilizing points-based system on immigration control for highly-qualified human resources will be discussed.

In recent years, against the backdrop of the rapid advance of the falling birthrate and the aging population in Japan, the discussion on how we should accept foreign workers in medical care and nursing care services has become more heated. Consequently, the review of landing permission criteria for those who have obtained professional qualifications authorized by the Japanese government, such as dentists and nurses, will also be discussed.

With regard to acceptance of foreign workers in nursing care field, in the light of the employment situation of foreign care workers accepted under the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), consideration of how to decide the acceptance of those who have graduated from a Japanese university, etc. and have obtained



qualifications authorized by the Japanese government that require a certain degree of expertise, such as a certified careworker, will be advanced.

## **(2) Acceptance of Foreign Nationals of Japanese Descent**

Since the second half of 2008, economic conditions have been deteriorating, and problems concerning foreign nationals of Japanese descent who are in unstable employment as temporary or contract-based workers, including employment, living conditions and education of their children, have become more serious. With the aim of enabling foreign nationals of Japanese descent to exercise their duties as a member of our society and live a stable life in Japan, the review of requirements of entry and stay will be discussed so as not to place an excessive burden on foreign nationals of Japanese descent who wish to enter and stay in Japan, especially those who are now residing in the country.

For sound development of children of foreign nationals of Japanese descent, if the examination of application for extension of period of stay reveals that the person has a school-age child who does not go to school, action to encourage him/her to put his/her child into school will be taken in cooperation with related organizations.

## **(3) Further Promotion of International Exchanges**

Realization of a tourism-oriented country is significant in various aspects, including realization of an affluent life of the people through revitalization of regional economy and deepening of international mutual understanding. Efforts to further decrease the waiting time for examination at the airport will be promoted by making effective use of the Advance Passenger Information System (hereinafter referred to as “APIS”), introducing a “secondary examination” system, ensuring flexible allocation of immigration inspectors, and installing displays of the waiting time, with the aim of improving administrative services.

## **(4) Efforts to Ensure Appropriate Training and Technical Internship Programs**

Training and technical internship programs are designed to make international contributions by supporting cultivation of human resources in developing countries. The programs have been used steadily, mainly in small-and-medium-sized enterprises, while some accepting organizations have treated trainees and technical interns improperly as if they were low-wage laborers. Such problems have become obvious mainly in acceptance under the association-supervised scheme. Therefore, it is a pressing issue to make efforts for proper implementation of the programs.

In line with revisions to the Immigration Control Act in 2009, measures to strengthen protection of trainees and technical interns have been taken. Efforts for proper implementation of training and technical internship programs will be promoted through measures to protect technical interns, strict response to organizations that engage in misconduct, and proper selection of dispatching organizations.



## **2 Promotion of Measures against Illegal Foreign Residents Aiming for the Realization of a Safe and Secure Society**

In order to maintain our country's security and the safety of the people, we will strive to prevent foreign nationals who intend to engage in illegal employment and illicit activities in Japan, such as terrorists, from entering the country at the border, and to rightly and promptly displace illegal or false residents who are hiding in the country. In addition to the above, the following measures will be promoted.

### **(1) Efforts to Further Improve the Treatment of Detainees**

Through activities of the "Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee" consisting of outside intellectuals, which was newly established in accordance with the revision to the Immigration Control Act in 2009, efforts to increase transparency and ensure proper treatment will be made based on the opinions of outsiders.

### **(2) Proper Operation of Special Permission to Stay**

So far, various measures, including formulation and announcement of the "Guidelines for Special Permission to Stay" (formulated in October 2006, revised in July 2009), have been taken to enhance the transparency and predictability of the special permission to stay. The Immigration Bureau will make further efforts to increase transparency by encouraging those who may obtain special permission to stay to appear voluntarily at an immigration office, granting appropriate permission to those who are considered eligible, and enabling them to secure stable legal status as soon as possible.

## **3 Smooth Introduction of a New System of Residence Management and Expansion of Immigration Control Administration Based on the System**

In view of the circumstances where it is increasingly important to accept foreign nationals, the following measures will be promoted through fair residence management toward realization of a safe and secure society in which Japanese and foreign nationals can live together.

### **(1) Actualization of Appropriate Residence Management Utilizing Information**

We will try to ensure proper residence management of foreign nationals by reinforcing the mechanism to promptly and precisely analyze information obtained under the new system of residence management, and by making effective use of such information for immigration control administration, including measures against illegal and disguised residents.

### **(2) Efforts for the Realization of a Harmonious Society Coexisting with Foreign Nationals**

We will provide support to municipal governments by providing them with precise information on basic matters for identification of foreign nationals obtained under the new system of residence management, so

that they can smoothly offer foreign nationals administration services, including insurance, pension and child allowances.

In addition, the Immigration Bureau will make efforts to reduce the number of documents to be submitted for application of permission for extension of period of stay, permission for change of status of residence, etc., and simplify procedures in order to ease burdens on foreign residents.

## **4 Promotion of Appropriate and Prompt Refugee Protection**

In keeping with the changes in the international situation, the following measures will be promoted to ensure proper and prompt offer of asylum to refugees.

### **(1) Efforts for Appropriate and Prompt Refugee Recognition**

In cooperation with the UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), the Immigration Bureau will make efforts to maintain basic data on the international situation, to foster personnel with expertise, and to enhance the refugee examination counselors system. Through such efforts, the Bureau aims to enable those who should be recognized as refugees to ensure stable legal status, and to protect them through strengthened collaboration with related organizations.

### **(2) Acceptance of Refugees through Resettlement to a Third Country**

In line with the program to accept Myanmar refugees who have been protected temporarily in Thailand launched as a pilot case from FY 2010, the Bureau will work together with concerned administrative agencies to ensure smooth acceptance, and will promote discussion on the future direction of acceptance, based on the results of research and verification on how accepted refugees have settled in our country.

## Chapter 2

# Efforts for Smooth Introduction of the New System of Residence Management

## Section 1 ◆ Outline of the System

### 1 New System of Residence Management

The “Law for Partial Amendment to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Special Act on the Immigration Control of, Inter Alia, those who have Lost Japanese Nationality Pursuant to the Treaty of Peace with Japan” was approved and enacted at the 171st Diet session on July 8, 2009, and was promulgated on July 15 in the same year (Law No. 79 of 2009). In accordance with the law, the Alien Registration Act forming the basis of the alien registration system was abolished, and all residence management functions were governed integrally by the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act, which led to the introduction of a “new system of residence management” that enabled the Minister of Justice to continuously keep information necessary for residence management of foreign nationals residing in Japan with proper status of residence for a medium to long term.

#### (1) Process and Background of Introduction

In recent years, with the progress of globalization in Japan and the rapid increase in the number of foreign nationals who newly entered the country or applied for alien registration, foreign nationals called “newcomers” have increased and their nationalities have diversified. There were an increasing number of newcomers who have not established a stable basis for living in Japan. Many of them failed to submit the correct application for alien registration, frequently transfer without submitting any application, or disappear without indicating their intention to re-enter after obtaining a re-entry permit and returning to their own country.

Due to structural changes in the numbers of foreign nationals and changes in their behavior patterns along with those changes, it has been more difficult to accurately grasp the actual residence situation of those foreign nationals under the existing dualistic information collection system based on the Immigration Control Act and the Alien Registration Act. This situation has also caused problems in ensuring immigration control administration and proper administrative services for foreign nationals.

Consequently, based on the proposal, etc., from the Policy Discussion Meeting, which was a privative consulting group of the Minister of Justice, it was concluded that the residence management system, including the alien registration system, should be drastically re-examined. Then, the “Draft Law for Partial Amendment to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Special Act on the Immigration Control of, Inter Alia, those who have Lost Japanese Nationality Pursuant to the Treaty of Peace with Japan”, incorporating the establishment of a new system of residence management, was submitted to the 171st Diet session. The draft law was approved, enacted and promulgated after partial amendments were made in the process of Diet deliberations.

## (2) Measures to be Introduced under the New System of Residence Management

The new system of residence management is expected to facilitate the following processes for foreign nationals residing in Japan for a medium to long term: (i) issuance of a residence card after obtaining a permit, such as landing permission, permission for extension of period of stay, and permission for changes of status of residence; (ii) report of changes by foreign nationals to the Minister of Justice during the period of their stay; and (iii) provision of information about foreign nationals to the Minister of Justice from organizations, to which they belong such as a school at which they study. This will enable the Minister of Justice to precisely and continuously keep information related to the residence conditions of foreign nationals. Information about the situation of foreign nationals residing in Japan for a medium to long term will be carefully kept under the system and will be reflected in the Basic Residents' Registration for Foreign Nationals in municipalities, which will be newly established in accordance with the Act for Partial Amendment of the Basic Residents' Registration Act (Act No. 77 of 2009). As a result, foreign residents will be able to receive enhanced administrative services.

Along with the introduction of the system to keep precise information necessary for residence management, provisions to enhance convenience, including extension of the maximum period of stay and review of the re-entry permit system, will be established. The detailed provisions are as shown below. Measures under the new system of residence management shall be implemented from the date designated by the cabinet order within three years from the date of promulgation (specifically, it is expected to be around July 2012).

### A. Measures for establishing a system that enables the Minister of Justice to keep necessary information continuously

- (A) The Minister of Justice shall grant a residence card specifying basic matters for identification, status of residence, period of stay, etc., to foreign nationals residing in Japan with the status of residence under the Immigration Control Act as medium to long-term residents (hereinafter referred to as "medium to long-term residents"), except those who fall under any of the following: (i) those whose period of stay for three months or less has been approved; (ii) those whose status of residence as "Temporary Visitor" has been approved; (iii) those whose status of residence as "Diplomat" or "Official" has been approved; or (iv) those who are stipulated as equivalent to the above foreign nationals by the Ordinance of the Ministry of Justice.
- (B) Medium to long-term residents shall inform the Minister of Justice of the addresses of the main residence in Japan where they decide to reside after landing through the head of the municipality where they live, within a certain period of time (The place of residence will be included on their residence cards).
- (C) Medium to long-term residents shall inform the Minister of Justice of any change in not only the matters contained in their residence cards (change of place of residence will be informed through the municipal head), but also the organizations to which they belong and their personal status or position, according to their status of residence.
- (D) The Minister of Justice shall be allowed to obtain information about medium to long-term residents

from the organizations to which they belong.

- (E) The Minister of Justice shall be allowed to conduct surveys to confirm matters notified, if necessary, in order to continuously keep information about medium to long-term residents.
- (F) Registration of a false place of residence and failure to continue to engage in activities as a spouse while residing in Japan for six months or more in spite of residing under the status of residence as a spouse without due reason, shall be added to the causes for revocation of status of residence.
- (G) With regard to forgery of residence cards, penal provisions and reasons for deportation shall be established. Penalty related to illegal employment shall be revised.

## B. Measures for enhancing convenience of foreign nationals legally residing in Japan

- (A) The maximum period of stay shall be extended from three years to five years.
- (B) The validity period of re-entry permits shall be extended. In principle, foreign nationals who have valid passports and residence cards and who re-enter Japan within one year from their departure shall not need to apply for re-entry permits.

## (3) Measures for Special Permanent Residents

Along with the introduction of the new system of residence management, the special permanent resident system was reviewed.

As there has been no particular problem with the special permanent resident system, the system was overhauled to enhance convenience, practically maintaining the status quo, as follows (the overhauled system is expected to be enforced around July 2012, as is the new system of residence management):

- A. The Minister of Justice shall grant a special permanent resident certificate that certifies legal status as a special permanent resident.
- B. Special permanent residents shall be allowed to extend the valid period of re-entry. In principle, special permanent residents who have valid passports and residence cards and who re-enter Japan within two years from their departure shall not need to apply for re-entry permits.

## 2 Basic Residents' Register System for Foreign Residents

### (1) Establishment of the Residents' Register System for Foreign Nationals

Municipalities virtually treated foreign nationals who have applied for alien registration as their residents, and used such information as a basis for providing various administrative services. However, a difference in idea and purpose between the Alien registration System and the Basic Residents' Registration System caused serious problems in provision of administrative services. Therefore, there was a need to establish a registration system for legal foreign residents based on the Basic Residents' Registration System.

The "Three-Year Plan for Promotion of Regulatory Reform (revised)", which was decided by the Cabinet on March 25, 2008, stipulated that the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and the Ministry of

Justice shall take a proper and steady approach to the establishment of such a registration system with due consideration given to the opinions of local authorities.

Under such circumstances, both ministries jointly developed the “Basic Concept of a Registration System for Legal Foreign Residents” in March 2008. Since April of the same year, the ministries have also served as the joint secretariat of the “Discussion Meeting on the Alien Registration System” and have held meetings to discuss the registration system. The results of discussions in those meetings were reported in December 2008.

As a result, the “Law for Partial Amendment of the Basic Residents’ Registration Act”, which stipulated that foreign nationals should also be subject to the Basic Residents’ Registration, was approved and enacted in the ordinary Diet session on July 8, 2009 and was promulgated on July 15, 2009 (Act No. 77 of 2009). The enforcement date of this law is the same as the enforcement date of the revised Immigration Control Act, etc., in relation with the new system of residence management.

## **(2) Basic Residents’ Register System for Foreign Residents**

The details of revisions related to foreign residents are described below:

### **A. Issuance of residence cards for foreign nationals**

Residence cards shall be issued to foreign nationals residing in Japan with status of residence as medium-to-long-term residents, except those whose period of stay for three months or less has been approved or those whose status of residence is “temporary visitor”, “diplomat” or “official”, and foreign nationals as special permanent residents designated by the Special Act on Immigration Control who have an address.

### **B. Matters contained in residence cards for foreign residents.**

Residence cards for foreign residents include the description of not only basic matters for identification, including name, date of birth, gender and address, as with Japanese nationals, but also matters concerning national health insurance and national pension as insured persons, and matters specific to foreign residents, such as nationality or region, status of residence, and period of stay.

### **C. Notifications regarding foreign residents**

Foreign residents who change their address shall submit notifications on moving in/out in accordance with the Basic Residents’ Registration Act, as with Japanese nationals. Although the provisions of the revised Immigration Control Act stipulate that foreign nationals should submit notifications of their address to the Minister of Justice, they shall be considered to have submitted the relevant notifications if they submit notifications on moving in/out, to the heads of their municipalities.

### **D. Notice from the Minister of Justice**

When a foreign resident submits a notification of change of name, etc., to a regional immigration bureau, or obtains permission for change of status of residence, extension of period of stay, etc., the

description in his/her residence card needs to be modified. Therefore, the Ministry of Justice shall notify such changes to the municipality exercising jurisdiction over the place of the relevant foreign resident's address, and the municipality shall modify the description in the residence card based on the notification. This process aims to alleviate the notification burden on foreign residents and ensure the accuracy of records.

## Section 2 ◆ Progress in efforts toward introduction of the system

### 1 Smooth Transition to the New System of Residence Management

In order to ensure a smooth transition to the new system of residence management, the Immigration Bureau is working with related ministries and agencies to examine how to develop a computer system and how to conduct joint operations with municipalities.

The introduction of the new system of residence management has a great impact on foreign nationals residing in Japan and their related parties. Therefore, we are planning to distribute a leaflet at the counter of regional immigration offices, and are considering efforts to familiarize the new system by calling for the cooperation of municipalities, related administrative organizations, overseas diplomatic missions and the press.

### 2 Smooth Transition to the Basic Residents' Register System for Foreign Residents

#### (1) Cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and Local Government, and Provision of Information to Them

The Immigration Bureau is preparing for the transition to the new system in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications and local authorities. Specifically, the Bureau sends staff including the Director of the Registration Division to meetings of the "Study Group on Transition to the Basic Residents' Registration System for Foreign Residents" ([http://www.soumu.go.jp/main\\_sosiki/kenkyu/daityo\\_ikou/index.html](http://www.soumu.go.jp/main_sosiki/kenkyu/daityo_ikou/index.html)) organized by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications to discuss various practical issues on the law which are supposed to be enforced within three years from the date of promulgation. The Bureau also provides information on the transition to the new system in the Municipal Representative Conference on Foreign Registration Services and other conferences.

#### (2) Measures to Ensure Accurate Registration

In preparation for implementation of the Basic Residents' Registration System for foreign residents, provisional residence cards shall be made for foreign nationals who have been registered in the alien registration records and who are anticipated to fall under foreign residents residing in the relevant municipalities on the reference date before implementation, and such provisional resident cards shall be used as authoritative resident cards on the implementation date. Because these provisional resident cards are prepared based on information including matters contained in alien registration records, it is important to enhance the accuracy of the alien registration records under the existing system in order to ensure a smooth transition. Therefore, the Immigration Bureau is



taking a series of measures.

Specifically, in FY 2007, posters in various languages were posted at the counters, etc., of municipal offices and regional immigration offices all over the country, to call on foreign residents to apply for registration with accurate details. Measures were taken to ensure prompt notification of departure to the municipalities in which foreign nationals have registered with alien registration records in case they leave Japan without having a re-entry permit issued.

Further, the Team for Enhancement of Accuracy and Improvement of Operations was set up in the Registration Division of the Immigration Bureau in April 2008. This team started quick acceptance of inquiries from municipalities by setting up an exclusive e-mail address for inquiries, and encouraged municipalities to send alien registration records which were suspected of being left for a long time without reflecting the actual situation, to the Ministry of Justice. Further measures to enhance accuracy shall be taken to ensure a smooth transition to the new system.

## Chapter 3

# Smooth and Strict Implementation of Immigration Examination

It is necessary to promote smooth immigration examination for the great majority of trouble-free foreign nationals who come to Japan, while ensuring strict immigration examination for foreign nationals who intend to work illegally in order to prevent them, without fail, from entering Japan. Since there are an increasing number of foreign nationals visiting Japan as a result of various efforts to achieve a tourism-oriented country, it is very important to prevent terrorists who are disguised as tourists from entering the country at the border. It is also necessary to satisfy two seemingly contradictory objectives: smooth but strict implementation of immigration examination.

The Immigration Bureau is making efforts to implement flexible examination on a case-by-case basis to achieve such objectives.

## Section 1 ◆ Efforts for Promoting a Tourism-Oriented Country

### 1 Efforts to Reduce the Waiting Time for Examination

Japan is now making government-wide efforts for promoting a tourism-oriented country, and needs to enhance international cooperation and exchange that will contribute to realization of a tourism-oriented country through smooth immigration examination.

The Immigration Bureau has already been making efforts to ensure smooth landing examination procedures at each airport and seaport, and now is promoting the secondary examination system introduced in FY 2005. The Bureau also set up an examination support team in the Chitose-Tomakomai Branch Office and the Haneda Airport Branch Office in FY 2006, and in the Fukuoka Regional Immigration Bureau in FY 2009, for the purpose of providing more efficient examination support to local ports, etc.

In addition, the Bureau is promoting efforts to design an examination system that enables immigration officials to take a flexible response to passengers according to congestion level in the landing examination area, such as guiding passengers on how to form queues, and to request airline companies, etc., to give instructions on how to properly fill out ED cards (Embarkation/Disembarkation Card).

### 2 Automatic Gates

Smooth and strict examinations have been further assisted by installation of automatic gates, which allow Japanese nationals who have registered themselves as a user of automatic gates, or foreign nationals who meet certain requirements such as having been issued with a re-entry permit, to go through immigration procedures without undergoing immigration examination at an ordinary immigration booth. Specifically, new automatic gates were installed at Narita Airport in November 2007. In September 2009, new gates were installed at Chubu Airport and Kansai Airport, and additional gates were installed at Narita Airport.

Applications for user registration of automatic gates were first accepted at the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau and the Narita Airport District Immigration Office in November 2007, followed by the Nagoya Regional Immigration Bureau, the Chubu Airport District Immigration Office, the Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau and the Kansai Airport District Immigration Bureau in September 2009.

[Topic: Promotion of efforts for realizing a tourism-oriented country]

The “New Growth Strategy” (decided by the Cabinet on June 18, 2010), presenting a strategy to bring about a “strong economy”, stipulates that the number of foreign visitors should be increased to 25 million by the beginning of the year 2020 and to 30 million people in the not-so-distant future. The Immigration Bureau is working on further shortening of the time required for immigration examination procedures.

## Section 2 ◆ Strengthened Countermeasures at the Border

To protect the lives and safety of the general public, it is extremely important to unfailingly prevent terrorists, etc., who are disguised as tourists, from entering the country at the border. Since the terrorist attacks on the United States in 2001, the Immigration Bureau has been continuously implementing strict immigration examination in order to remove such terrorists at the border.

### 1 Implementation of Immigration Examination through the Use of Personal Identification Information

Since November 20, 2007, foreign nationals who intend to enter Japan have been required to submit personal identification information (fingerprints and a facial photograph). This enables us to accurately and promptly confirm that an applicant for landing permission is identical to the passport holder, and to check the applicant against the blacklist maintained by the Immigration Bureau. In addition, it has become possible to detect, without fail, those who have previously been displaced and again try to enter the country illegally using forged or altered passports or others' passports by checking them against data on fingerprints and facial photographs of those displaced in the past, which is maintained by the Immigration Bureau.

On the other hand, after the implementation of immigration examination through the use of personal identification information, there have been many cases of illegal immigrants who try to enter the country illegally with fake fingerprints by damaging them directly or going through a surgical procedure, or with altered passports, in order to avoid detection of their displacement in the past. If such fake fingerprint cases occur, the Immigration Bureau should not only adopt procedures for displacement, but also cause them to be subject to strict punishment, including criminal punishment. Therefore, the Bureau makes a report and accusation of illegal entry to investigative authorities, and is striving to detect fake fingerprints by upgrading devices.

### 2 Use of the ICPO's Database on Lost and Stolen Passports

The “Action Plan for the Prevention of the Terrorism” (decided by the Headquarters for the Promotion of Measures against Transnational Organized Crime (TOC), Other Related Issues and International Terrorism on December 10, 2004) stipulated that a system to use the ICPO's Database on Lost and Stolen Passports in the

process of immigration examination should be introduced and operated as “Preventive Measures to be Taken Immediately to Fight Terrorism”. To that end, it was decided that examination procedures using the said database were put into effect in August 2009.

### 3 Immigration Examination through the Use of APIS

The Immigration Bureau is working to track international terrorists, etc., and collect information related to them in close cooperation with related organizations to prevent them from entering Japan and committing terrorist acts. In the process of landing examination, the Bureau is trying to detect terrorists, etc., by unfailingly checking foreign nationals against the blacklist based on such information.

Since February 1, 2007, all vessels and aircrafts calling at a port in Japan have been required to submit, in advance, a list of passengers containing their identification data. Since February 21, 2010, it became possible to receive advance passenger information about aircraft calling at an airport through the Air-NACCS (Nippon Automated Cargo and Port Consolidated System) operated by the Nippon Automated Cargo And Port Consolidated System, Inc., and a new air cargo advance passenger information system was launched.

## Section 3 ♦ Other Efforts

### 1 Revision of Public Notice Concerning “Designated Activities” on Working Holiday Scheme

#### (1) Residents in Taiwan

On April 3, 2009, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs gave the Minister of Justice notice that Taiwan residents who meet certain requirements would be eligible for a working holiday visa.

With this notification, Taiwan residents who satisfy the requirements were added to those eligible for a working holiday scheme, who were designated by public notice concerning designated activities (revised on May 29, 2009, and enforced on June 1, 2009).

#### (2) Residents in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region

On October 27, 2009, the Japanese government notified, through a verbal note, the government of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People’s Republic of China of the following: Hong Kong residents who satisfy certain requirements would be eligible for a working holiday visa; those with the working holiday visa would be allowed to stay in Japan for at least one year from the date of entry; the relevant Hong Kong residents would be able to engage in work voluntarily to cover travel expenses during their stay in Japan; and those measures would be implemented from January 1, 2010.

With this notification, Hong Kong residents who meet the requirements were added to those eligible for a working holiday scheme, who were designated by public notice concerning designated activities (revised on December 25, 2009, and enforced on January 1, 2010).

## 2 Measures against New Influenza Virus

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In April 2009, cases of new influenza were confirmed in various countries, including Mexico. On April 25 in the same year, a special response team was set up in the Ministry of Justice. Regional immigration Bureaus became more cautious about examination of applicants for landing permission after the emergence of influenza, and strengthened cooperation with quarantine stations.

On April 28, the World Health Organization (WHO) announced that the alert level would be raised to Phase 4, and consequently, those infected with new influenza were required to be kept in isolation or detention, and were deemed to be subject to refusal of landing permission under the provisions of Item 1, Paragraph 1, Article 5 of the Immigration Control Act. As a result, task forces were set up in the Ministry of Justice and the regional immigration bureaus. Regional immigration bureaus throughout the country took various measures, including further strengthening of cooperation with quarantine stations, implementation of cautious examination of applicants for landing permission who came from countries where an outbreak of new influenza had been confirmed, and thorough prevention of illegal landing by reinforcing patrols in the immigration examination area.

## Chapter 4

# Efforts for Promoting Acceptance of Human Resources in Specialized Fields

## Section 1 ◆ Review of Ministerial Ordinances to Provide for Criteria on Intra-company Transferees

### 1 Revision of the Ministerial Ordinance to Provide for Criteria on the Status of Residence of “Researcher”

The “Three-Year Plan for Promotion of Regulatory Reform (revised)” (decided by the Cabinet on March 25, 2008) stipulated that the range of activities permitted under the status of residence of “Intra-company Transferee” should be reviewed and some measures should be taken during FY 2008. In response to this, the ministerial ordinance to provide for criteria was revised on March 31, 2009. The former ordinance obliged foreign nationals who intended to enter Japan with the status of residence of “Researcher” to meet the requirements: (i) the applicant must have a master’s degree or at least three years’ experience in an area of related research after graduation from a college or equivalent institution; or (ii) the applicant must have at least ten years’ experience in an area of related research. The revised ordinance exempts the following foreign nationals from the above requirements: those who intend to engage in an activity with the residence status of “Researcher” in an office in Japan in the form of intra-company transfer, who have engaged in an activity which falls under any of the activities listed in the right-hand column of the category “Researcher” in appended Table I (2) of the Immigration Control Act, at an overseas office immediately before the transfer subject to the application (Revised on March 31, 2009, and enforced on July 1, 2009).

### 2 Revision of the Ministerial Ordinance to Provide Criteria on the Status of Residence of “Intra-company Transferee”, etc.

The former criteria stipulated that foreign nationals who entered Japan with the status of residence of “Intra-company Transferee” must have work experience at a main or branch overseas office of a public or private organization in Japan immediately prior to the transfer to Japan. In response to requests for criteria submitted at “Nationwide Collection of Regulatory Reform Requests” in FY 2009 (accepted in June), it was stipulated that the above work experience should include the period when they worked at an office of said public or private organization in Japan immediately prior to the transfer. According to the revision described in the previous paragraph, necessary revisions were made to the status of residence “Researcher”, to which similar criteria apply in relation to acceptance of foreign nationals in the form of intra-company transfer (Revised on March 31, 2010, and enforced on July 1, 2010).

## Section 2 ◆ Simplified Documents to be Submitted and Expedited Procedures for Applications Regarding Immigration and Residence

With the advance of internationalization of corporate activities, there has been an increasing need to simplify and expedite the procedures for employment of foreign nationals, and measures to simplify documents to be submitted have already been promoted with regard to application for a certificate of residence eligibility made by foreign researchers, etc., accepted by a company which was deemed to be unlikely to cause problems, such as illegal stay, in view of its past performance and size. In July 2009, the format of application forms regarding immigration and residence was changed, and accepting organizations, etc., were also obliged to prepare an application. Since September of the same year, foreign nationals who work for a company with a certain scale, such as a listed company, have been required to submit only the application form with the aim of drastically simplifying the documents to be submitted. In addition, it was required that application for a certificate of resident eligibility should be processed promptly within about ten days from the date of receipt of application.

[Topic: Acceptance of highly-qualified human resources]

In order to bring new vitality to Japan's economic society and enhance international competitiveness, there is now an increasing need for acceptance of foreign workers in specialized fields, including highly-qualified human resources.

The "New Growth Strategy" defines the goal of doubling the number of highly-qualified foreign residents by promoting the cultivation of human resources and the acceptance of highly-qualified human resources under 21 national strategic projects for the revitalization of Japanese society. The Immigration Bureau is considering the introduction of a mechanism to provide preferential system utilizing points-based system on immigration control administration so as to attract excellent foreign human resources to Japan.



**Chapter 5****Measures on the Training and Technical Internship Programs****Section 1 ◆ Actions for Improvement of the System**

The training and technical internship programs are designed to train human resources who will assist in the economic progress of various countries through the transfer of technology and skills to trainees and technical interns. It can be said that those who enter Japan with a status of trainee and those who apply to change their status to a technical intern have been on the rise, and the programs have become established in Japan, although the number of such foreign trainees and technical interns decreased due to the global economic recession in 2009.

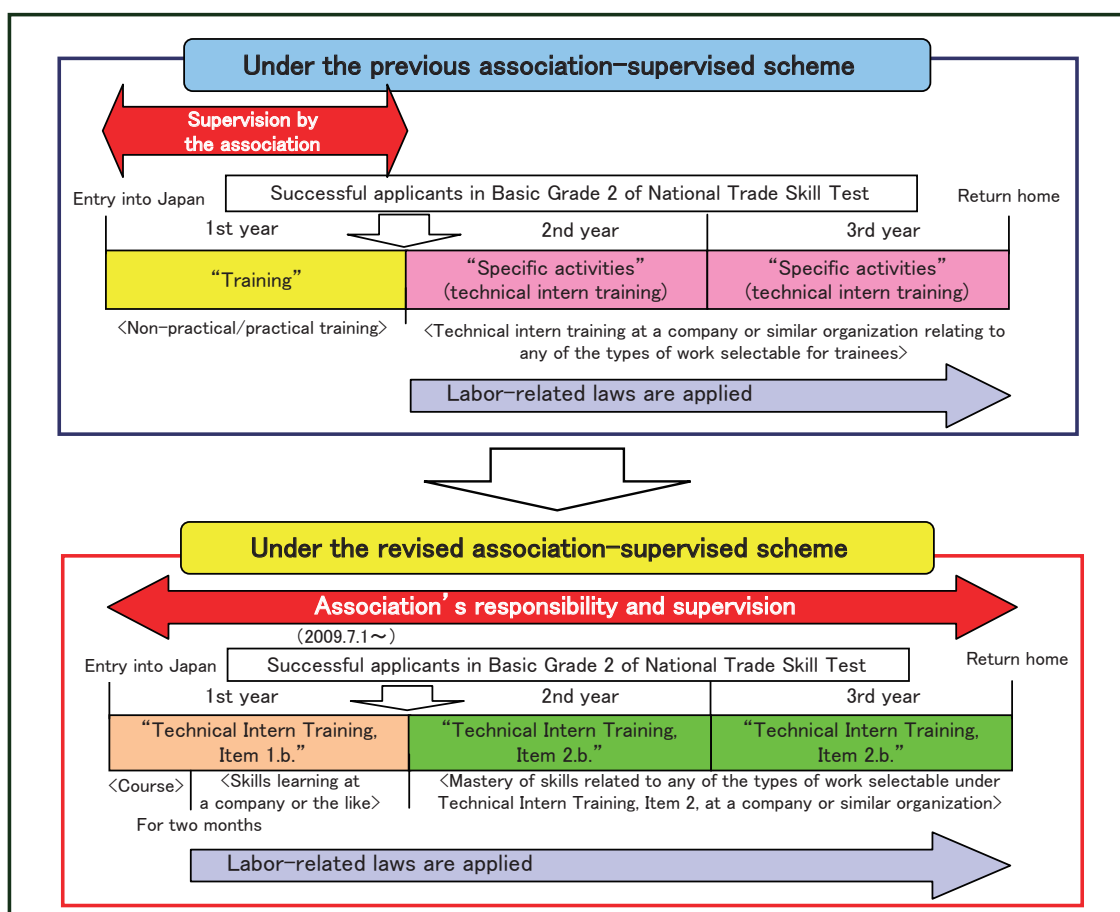
However, recently, an increasing number of accepting organizations that do not understand the objectives of the programs treat the trainees and interns improperly and pay them low wages. In addition, it has been pointed out that some accepting organizations do not provide adequate guidance and supervision for their umbrella organizations, and there are brokers who obtain unfair profits from intermediary services for trainees.

In order to respond to the present situation, the training and technical internship programs were reviewed in line with revisions to the Immigration Control Act promulgated in July 2009. As a result, internships are required to involve activities to acquire skills under the contract of employment, in principle, so that interns can be protected in accordance with the Labor Standards Act and other labor-related laws and regulations, including the Minimum Wage Act. In the case of acceptance under the supervision of organizations, accepting organizations had previously supervised technical internships only in the first year. After the revision, such organizations are required to implement technical internships in the second year or later under their responsibility and supervision.

A new ordinance of the Ministry of Justice requires accepting organizations to receive lectures on information necessary for legal protection of technical interns, which will be given by an expert. In order to reinforce the instruction, supervision and support system of supervising organizations, it also stipulates the requirements of supervising organizations as follows: (i) the staff of supervising organizations shall visit the facility where programs are conducted at least once a month to confirm the situation of technical internship programs and give directions; (ii) board members of supervising organizations shall conduct an audit at least once every three months, and report the results to the relevant regional immigration bureau; (iii) supervising organizations shall provide counseling staff who give advice to technical interns.

The new training and technical internship programs were initiated on July 1, 2010. (With regard to the overall outline, see Data Section 3).

Chart 21: Comparison of the outline of association-supervised scheme under the current and revised systems



## Section 2 ♦ Response to Cases of Inappropriate Acceptance

Under the provisions of the ordinance of the Ministry of Justice, the Immigration Bureau may make a finding of “misconduct” with regard to organizations that have acted inappropriately regarding training and technical internship programs and suspend such organizations from accepting trainees and technical interns for three years. The number of organizations that were recognized to engage in “misconduct” during the year 2009 was 360.

According to the type of receiving arrangement, there were 2 organizations (0.6%) accepting trainees under the company-arranged scheme and 358 organizations (99.4%) accepting trainees under the association-supervised scheme. According to the type of receiving organization, there were 34 organizations (9.4%) as primary receiving organizations (entities like cooperative associations, which implement training programs as an undertaking), and 324 organization (90.0%) as secondary receiving organizations (entities like membership companies, which accept trainees). (Table 49)

Three major categories of misconduct in descending order are “violation against labor-related regulations” committed by organizations which have technical interns work in violation of labor-related regulations, including unpaid wages, “work in excess of statutory working hours” committed by organizations which have trainees work other than training hours or holidays when they are prohibited to work, and “name lending” committed by organizations which allow other organizations that had not applied for acceptance to accept trainees and technical interns, and these three categories account for 76.6% of all misconduct. (Table 50)

Table 49: Changes in the number of organizations subject to a finding of misconduct by type of receiving arrangement

Organizations subject to a finding Type of receiving arrangement		2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Company-arranged scheme		5	11	9	7	2
Association-supervised scheme	Primary receiving organization	17	28	36	29	34
	Secondary receiving organization	158	190	404	416	324
Total		180	229	449	452	360

Table 50: Number of findings of misconduct by category (2009)

Findings Category		Company-arranged scheme (2 organizations)	Association-supervised scheme		Total (360 organizations)
			Primary (34 organizations)	Secondary (324 organizations)	
1st Category	① Dual contract	0	0	0	0
	② Variance compared with training and technical internship plan	0	14	14	28
	③ Name lending	0	9	87	96
	④ In addition to the foregoing, preparation and use of fraudulent documents	0	19	2	21
2nd Category	Work in excess of statutory working hours	1	9	111	121
3rd Category	Malicious acts of infringement of human rights, etc.	0	3	28	31
4th Category	Failure to report serious cases, etc.	0	3	1	4
5th Category	Employment of illegal foreign workers	0	0	20	20
	Violation against labor-related regulations	1	2	120	123
6th Category	Recurrence of similar acts	0	0	0	0
Total		2	59	383	444

(\*) If one accepting organization is recognized as having committed "misconduct" of more than one category, it is listed for the respective categories, and as such, the number of accepting organizations is not identical to the number of recognized cases by category.

## Chapter 6

# Proper and Smooth Acceptance of Foreign College Students and Pre-college Students

## Section 1 ◆ Proper and Smooth Implementation of Immigration and Residence Examination of Foreign College Students and Pre-college Students

Acceptance of foreign college students is meaningful in many aspects, such as strengthening of international goodwill, deepening of mutual understanding and friendship by creation of a human network, international contributions through human resource development, creation of an international campus environment in universities, and acceptance of human resources who will play a part in economic activities in Japan. The government formulated the “300,000 Foreign College Students Plan” to set a goal of increasing the acceptance of foreign students, and is working on government-wide measures toward realization of the goal.

For the purpose of realizing the plan, immigration control authorities continue efforts to ensure proper residence management in cooperation with educational institutions, and to promote proper and smooth acceptance of foreign college students. Specifically, with respect to applications made by educational institutions that do not give rise to overstayers or illegal workers by proper enrollment control, the documents to be submitted should be drastically simplified. On the other hand, with respect to applications made by educational institutions that give rise to large numbers of overstayers or illegal workers, strict examination needs to be carried out as in the past.

## Section 2 ◆ State of Implementation of Measures on Acceptance of College Students and Pre-college Students

The gist of the “300,000 Foreign College Students Plan” was formulated by relevant ministries and agencies in July 2008, and the Policy Discussion Meeting compiled the “Proposal on Acceptance of College Students and Pre-college Students” in January 2009. Based on the above plan and proposal, the following measures on acceptance of foreign students have been taken:

### 1 Proper and Smooth Implementation of Immigration and Residence Examination

To ensure proper and smooth implementation of immigration and residence examination, in the case of universities and other educational institutions which do not give rise to overstayers or illegal workers by proper enrollment control, the documents to be submitted should be drastically simplified. In principle, application forms shall be the only documents to be submitted.

## 2 Employment-related Support to Foreign Students Provided in the Procedures for Residence

- (1) With regard to foreign students who graduate from a college and apply for permission to change their residence status for the purpose of getting a job at a company in Japan, especially those who intend to change their residence status to “engineer” or “specialist in humanities/international services”, the adequateness of their residence status shall be determined based on flexible judgment of a connection between their major subject in college and the company activities in which they will be involved.
- (2) Since March 2008, the types of jobs that foreign students can get have been published on the website in order to improve clarity and transparency in the process of determining residence status.
- (3) In order to ensure that foreign students can conduct a job search satisfactorily, in the case of those who have no problem residing in Japan and have received an endorsement regarding continuation of job-search activities from their universities, etc., the maximum period of job-search activities in which they can engage after graduation shall be extended from 180 days to one year. This measure has been taken since April 2009.
- (4) It was decided to make reviews on the formats of documents, including the application form for permission to change the status of residence, and such reviews were contained in the revised Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act, which was enforced in July 2009. Since September 2009, foreign students who apply for permission to change their status of residence for the purpose of getting a job at a listed company, etc., in Japan shall be allowed to submit only an application form, in principle. This measure aims to simplify the documents to be submitted and shorten the examination period.

## 3 Extension of the Period of Stay

In order to ensure that foreign students can continuously and steadily devote themselves to study, it was decided to add two new categories of period of stay, “two years and three months” and “one year and three months”, with regard to the residence status of “College Student”. Such an addition was contained in the revised Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act, which was enforced in July 2009.

## 4 Integration of the Two Categories of Status of Residence, “College Student” and “Pre-college Student”

In recent years, the number of overstayers with the residence status of “Pre-college Student” has been on a downward trend, and the characterization of the residence status of “Pre-college Student” as a preparatory step to the residence status of “College Student” has become commonly accepted. In view of such circumstances, it was decided to integrate the two categories of status of residence to be granted to foreign nationals who receive education with “College Student”. Such an integration was contained in the revised Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act, which was enforced in July 2010.

## 5 Review of Permission to Engage in Activities other than those Permitted

Along with the integration of categories of residence status, it was decided to comprehensively permit foreign students to engage in activities outside the scope permitted up to hours a week, in principle.

The Ordinance for Enforcement of the Immigration Control Act was revised to stipulate that permission to engage in activities other than those permitted shall not be required for activities as a teaching assistant or research assistant in a university, etc., in receipt of remuneration. The revised ordinance was enforced in July 2010.

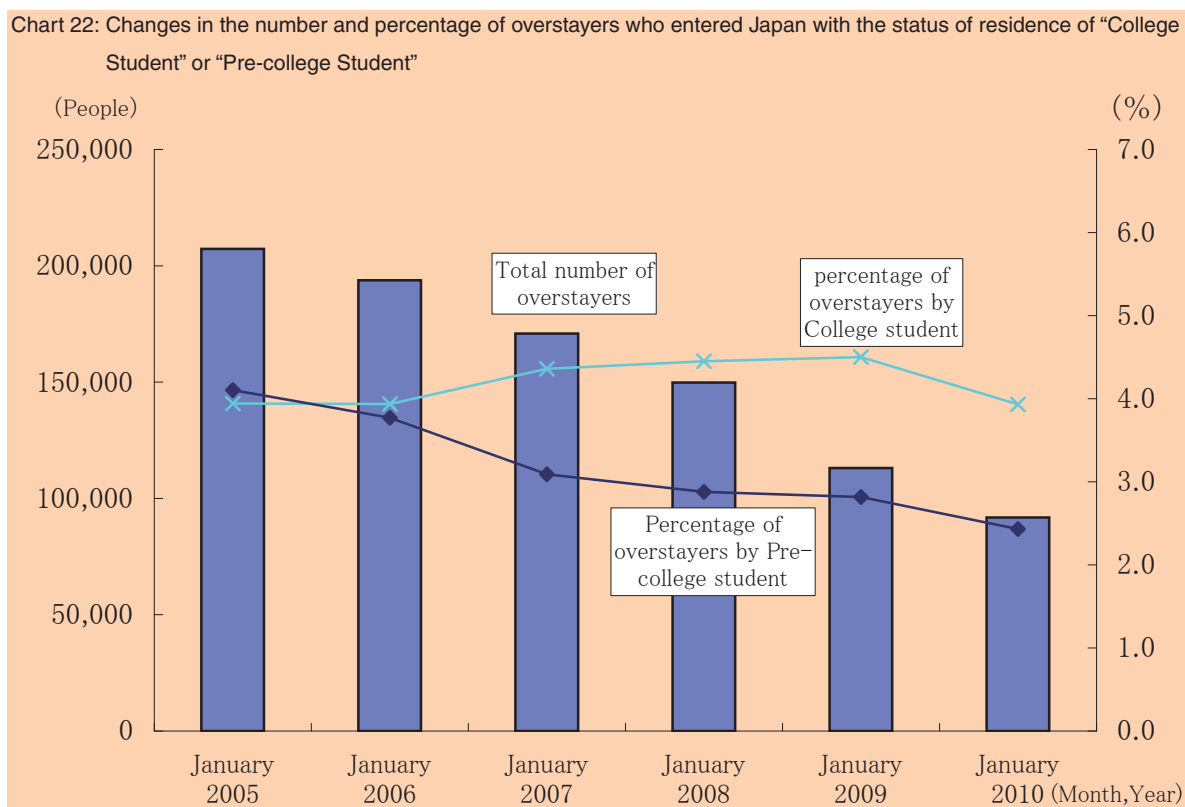


Table 51: Changes in the number and percentage of overstayers who entered Japan with the status of residence of "College Student" or "Pre-college Student"

Division \ Date	January 1 2005	January 1 2006	January 1 2007	January 1 2008	January 1 2009	January 1 2010
Total number of overstayers	207,299	193,745	170,839	149,785	113,072	91,778
College Student	8,173	7,628	7,448	6,667	5,090	3,610
Percentage of total (%)	3.9	3.9	4.4	4.5	4.5	3.9
Pre-college Student	8,506	7,307	5,281	4,311	3,186	2,232
Percentage of total (%)	4.1	3.8	3.1	2.9	2.8	2.4

**Chapter 7****Measures against Illegal or False Foreign Residents in Japan****Section 1 ◆ Implementation of Measures against Illegal Foreign Residents****1 Past Efforts to Reduce the Number of Illegal Residents**

Based on the “Five-Year Plan for Halving Illegal Residents” launched in 2004, each regional immigration bureau has actively promoted various measures, including strict implementation of landing/residence examination, aggressive public relations activities regarding illegal employment, strengthened detection by detection officer units, etc., wider application of custody transfer in accordance with Article 65 of the Immigration Control Act, and encouragement of appearance of illegal residents under the departure order system. As a result, the number of illegal residents, which was about 250,000 at the start of the plan, decreased to about 130,000 as of January 2009, and its goal was almost accomplished.

Based on the “Action Plan for the Realization of a Society Resistant to Crime” aiming to “create a society that generates no illegal residents, etc.. under the new system of residence management”, the Immigration Bureau has continued efforts to further reduce the number of illegal residents, which decreased to about 110,000 as of January 1, 2010.

**2 Efforts to Further Reduce the Number of Illegal Residents**

The Immigration Bureau thinks that the number of illegal residents in Japan has steadily decreased due to past efforts. However, it is estimated that there are still over 110,000 illegal residents in hiding, so the Bureau is making the following efforts to further reduce the number of illegal residents.

**(1) Strengthened Detection**

Since FY 2004, the Immigration Bureau has established “detection officer units” that are supposed to engage full-time in detecting offenders against the Immigration Control Act in the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau, Nagoya Regional Immigration Bureau, Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau, and Yokohama District Immigration Office, which are located in large city areas with many offenders (6 units in the Tokyo Bureau, 2 units each in the Nagoya Bureau and the Osaka Bureau, and 1 unit in the Yokohama Office). In addition, the Immigration Bureau has enhanced the capacity of bureaus and offices\* along with the construction of new office buildings to improve the ability to detect illegal residents, and is promoting joint detection by strengthening cooperation with the police.

However, it has become obvious that illegal residents tend to exist in smaller groups separately in wider areas, and the number of those who are detected at one site has been decreasing. Therefore, the Bureau is working to promote efficient detection by making more effective use of information provided on illegal



residents.

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\* (Note) Capacity enhancement

- Narita Airport District Immigration Office: 350 persons (August 2006)
- Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau: 42 persons → 200 persons (October 2007)
- Nagoya Regional Immigration Bureau: 120 persons → 400 persons (March 2008)
- Yokohama District Immigration Office: 50 persons → 200 persons (June 2009)

## (2) Reinforced Collection and Analysis of Information on Illegal Residents

The Immigration Bureau receives a lot of information on illegal residents from the public. By checking information on illegal residents, including the above information and information obtained from related organizations (e.g., notification from the police, information about reports on employment of foreign workers from the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare), against various data maintained by the Immigration Bureau, the Bureau is trying to ensure that accurate analysis of information is carried out, aiming at facilitating efficient detection.

## (3) Encouragement of Voluntary Appearance at the Immigration Office

With the aim of encouraging illegal residents hiding in various parts of the country to appear at the immigration office voluntarily, the Immigration Bureau is taking the following measures: (i) introduction of the departure order system; (ii) revision of the guidelines for special permission to stay; (iii) public relations to encourage voluntary appearance at the immigration office.

The departure order system is a system under which overstayers satisfying certain requirements, such as those who appear at the immigration office voluntarily to return to their home country, are allowed to leave Japan in accordance with simplified procedures without being detained, as an exception to the preparatory detention policy. About 9,000 people were allowed to leave the country under this system in 2009 (see Item 5, Section 2, Chapter 2, Part I).

On the other hand, the guidelines for special permission to stay which were formulated and announced in 2006 were revised in July 2009 in order to increase the transparency of their operation. The revised guidelines show that if illegal residents appear at the immigration office voluntarily, it is more likely that they will obtain special permission to stay.

The Immigration Bureau is also taking measures to publicize the system and the revised guidelines for special permission to stay by conducting active public relations activities regarding the departure order system, aiming to encourage illegal residents to voluntarily appear at the immigration office\*.

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\*(Note) Examples of public relations activities

- (i) During the “Campaign for Measures against Illegal Foreign Workers” every June, public relations for prevention of illegal employment are conducted.
- (ii) A page for “Procedures for Voluntary Appearance at Immigration Office” was created on the websites of the Ministry of Justice and the Immigration Bureau in order to give clear explanations about the benefits of appearance at an immigration office voluntarily, and the procedures after appearance, both to those who wish to return to their home countries and those who wish to continue staying in Japan.

## Section 2 ◆ Implementation of Measures against False Foreign Residents

### 1 False Foreign Residents, etc.

False residents means “foreign nationals who falsify their status of residence and purpose of stay in the form of fake marriages, fake college students, fake employment, etc., and disguise themselves as legal foreign residents with a legal status that falls under any of the legitimate statuses of residence to work illegally in Japan”. Measures against them have become an important issue in immigration control administration, as well as measures against illegal residents. Although they practically appear to be “legal residents” and precise data on their actual number has not been obtained, there is concern over an increase of false residents who choose to false themselves as a means to enter and reside in Japan.

The existence of false residents abusing the residence status system cannot be overlooked, and may shake the foundation of immigration control administration in our country. Therefore, the Immigration Bureau is striving to strengthen measures against them.

### 2 Crackdown on False Residents, etc.

#### (1) Strengthened detection of Those Engaged in Activities other than those Permitted

When it is found that those who reside in Japan with a residence status that has a limit to activities, engage solely in work beyond the scope permitted under the status of residence granted at the time of entry, they are suspected to engage in activities other than those permitted and are subject to deportation. Therefore, detection of such offenders has been actively promoted.

#### (2) Reinforcement of Collection and Analysis of Information

In order to promote measures against false residents, it is important to carry out more effective detection based on collected and analyzed information.

For that purpose, by making use of information obtained through information exchange with related organizations, such as the police, and information about reports on employment of foreign workers provided by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, in addition to a lot of information on illegal residents sent from the public as stated above, the Immigration Bureau is working to find and detect disguised residents, and deals with them strictly.

## Section 3 ◆ Efforts toward Proper Treatment

### 1 Efforts toward more Proper Treatment of Detainees

In immigration detention centers, etc., proper treatment of trainees has been ensured with sufficient attention given to human rights by providing them as much freedom as possible within a scope which does not affect security. In July 2010, the “Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee” consisting of outside experts

was established with the aim of increasing transparency in security treatment, and improving and enhancing operations of immigration detention centers, etc.

## **2 Activities, etc., of the Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee**

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There are 22 immigration detention centers and departure standby facilities, which should be inspected by the Immigration Detention Facilities Visiting Committee. Duties to inspect such facilities and interview detainees are shared by each committee established in the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau and the Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau. Based on the results, each committee submits an opinion on the operations of those facilities to directors of detention centers or director-generals of regional immigration bureaus (hereinafter referred to as “directors, etc.”), and the directors, etc., promptly undertake reviews of the opinions submitted by each committee and take appropriate action on them, starting with those which can be dealt with immediately.

Committee members are selected from personnel who have an excellent personality and deep insight and who show enthusiasm for improving the operations of immigration detention centers, etc., and are appointed as part-time staff by the Minister of Justice. Specifically, ten or less members are appointed for each committee from intellectuals in diverse fields, including academic experts, legal experts, medical experts, NGO workers, international organ workers, and representatives of local communities.

## Chapter 8

# Proper Operation of the Special Permission to stay

Under the Immigration Control Act, the Minister of Justice is authorized to grant special permission to stay to an offender against the law, and his decision shall be made individually with respect to each case by comprehensively judging it from various factors, including the reason for stay, family conditions, behavior, current situation both at home and abroad, need for humanitarian considerations, and impact on other illegal residents.

The Immigration Bureau is taking various measures, including formulation and announcement of the “Guidelines for Special Permission to Stay” and announcement of the “Cases where Special Permission to stay was granted and Cases where Special Permission to Stay was denied”, to enhance the transparency and predictability of special permission to stay.

### Section 1 ◆ Formulation and Announcement of the “Guidelines Relating to Special Permission to stay”

Whether or not to grant special permission to stay shall be decided by the Minister of Justice based on comprehensive consideration of various factors with regard to each case, and general criteria shall not be fit for such permission. However, in order to further enhance the transparency and fairness of the special permission to stay, the “Guidelines for Special Permission to Stay”, summarizing what is to be considered in judging whether special permission to stay should be granted or not, was announced in October 2006.

After that, the circumstances surrounding illegal residents changed because more than two years and a half had passed since the formulation of the guidelines, and social conditions changed both at home and abroad. Then, the ideal system for special permission to stay was discussed in Diet deliberations on the revisions of the Immigration Control Act. In view of such situation, the said guidelines were revised in July 2009.

This revision aims to give more details about matters to be considered in judging whether to grant special permission to stay or not. It also aims to present the concept for judgment, and to provide examples for each case to be considered in either of the directions toward “granting special permission to stay” or “ordering deportation”.

### Section 2 ◆ Announcement of the “Cases where Special Permission to Stay was Granted and Cases where Special Permission to Stay was Denied”

The Immigration Bureau has made public, examples of those who are granted special permission to stay and those who are not granted on the website of the Ministry of Justice since August 2004 for the purpose of enhancing the transparency and fairness of the special permission to stay.

These examples to be made public were reviewed one by one, and in April 2010, in order to plainly and clearly show examples, they were classified and sorted by category and arranged in a new table.

## Chapter 9

# Promotion of Appropriate and Prompt Refugee protection

## Section 1 ◆ Efforts to Ensure Appropriate and Prompt Procedures for Recognition of Refugee Status

As a result of a drastic review on the Refugee Recognition System according to revisions made to the Immigration Control Act in 2005, the number of applicants for recognition of refugee status has increased rapidly in recent years. In 2008, it reached 1,599, a record high, almost double that of the previous year. In 2009, it remained at a high level, standing at 1,388.

Under such circumstances, in order to ensure appropriate and prompt examination, the Immigration Bureau is trying to improve and consolidate the clerical work processing system for refugee recognition by upskilling the staff through training programs and increasing the number of staff engaged in refugee-related work. The Bureau is also trying to speed up processing of applications by strengthening cooperation with UNHCR, etc., and maintaining basic data on refugees' countries of origins and the international situation.

With regard to those who do not satisfy the requirements for recognition of refugee status as stipulated in the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees but who cannot return to their home country due to the situation of their country or have a special reason for being allowed to stay in Japan, their circumstances shall be taken into account individually, and if they should be treated based on humanitarian considerations, special permission to stay in the country shall be granted. The Bureau will continue to respond to applicants for recognition of refugee status, giving full attention to their circumstances, etc.

## Section 2 ◆ Acceptance of Refugees through Resettlement to a Third Country

Resettlement to a third country aims to transfer and resettle refugees who have evacuated from their home countries and are temporarily taking shelter in a refugee camp in a neighboring country, to another country (third country) which agrees to accept such refugees. Resettlement to a third country is deemed to be one of the permanent solutions for refugee problems, as well as “voluntary repatriation” and “resettlement of the first countries of asylum”

The UNHCR encourages each country to accept refugees based on resettlement to a third country from the standpoint of proper sharing of burdens in relation to refugee problems in the international community.

Until now, Japan has also taken measures to support resettlement of those recognized as Indochinese refugees and other refugees. To cope with various problems relating to refugees in the Asian region, the government reached a Cabinet understanding on the introduction of the third country resettlement system (“Concerning the

Implementation of Pilot Cases relating to the Acceptance of Refugees by Resettlement to a Third Country”) on December 16, 2008.

In accordance with the content of the said Cabinet understanding and the “Detailed Measures for Implementing Pilot Cases relating to the Acceptance of Refugees by Resettlement to a Third Country” (Decision by the Liaison and Coordination Conference for Countermeasures for Refugees on December 19, 2008), a project for acceptance and resettlement support of Myanmar refugees who are staying in the Maela Camp in Thailand was launched as a pilot case in FY 2010. Based on the results of the pilot case, verification from various angles will be carried out in cooperation with concerned administrative agencies to further discuss the future direction of acceptance.

The Immigration Bureau mainly took charge of screening procedures for refugees to be accepted, and conducted an on-site interview survey at the camp by refugee inquirers in February 2010. The Bureau will continue to be actively engaged in these duties in cooperation with relevant administrative agencies.

## Chapter 10

## Addressing the Global Community

### Section 1 ♦ Treaties and International Conventions

#### 1 Negotiations on Treaties

##### (1) Major Actions for Negotiations on Conclusion of EPAs with other Countries

An Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) aims to promote liberalization and facilitation of trade between signatory nations, as well as coordination of policies, relaxation of regulations, and cooperation in various economic areas, including tariffs, trade in services, investment, intellectual property, and personal exchanges. The Immigration Bureau has been actively involved in negotiations on conclusion of each EPA with various countries: Singapore (effective date: November 2002 (the effective date is stated similarly hereinafter)), Mexico (April 2005), Malaysia (July 2006), Chile (September 2007), Thailand (November 2007), Indonesia (July 2008), the Philippines (December 2008), Switzerland (September 2009), and Viet Nam (October 2009)\*. In these negotiations, the Bureau has offered explanations of the immigration control system in relation to the “movement of natural persons”.

As of April 2010, the Bureau has been involved in negotiations on conclusion of each EPA mainly with Australia, India and Peru.

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\* (Note)

(i) Japan-Indonesia EPA

An agreement between Japan and the Republic of Indonesia on an Economic Partnership came into force on July 1, 2008. With regard to the movement of natural persons, the two nations agreed on the acceptance of short-term business visitors, intra-corporate transferees, investors, independent professionals (e.g., attorneys), contractual service suppliers (those under the status of residence of “Engineer” or “Specialist in Humanities/International Services”), and nurse and certified careworker candidates. The two countries are also considering programs for training and a technical internship program in the area of hotel service as relevant cooperation. In order to introduce the required provisions for nurse and certified care worker candidates, the Ordinance for Enforcement and Public Notice on Designated Activities was partly revised and the “Guidelines on the treatment of Indonesian nurses, etc. subject to the provisions of the agreement between Japan and the Republic of Indonesia on an economic partnership in relation to the Immigration Control Act” was formulated (announced on May 26, 2008 and came into force on July 1, 2008).

(ii) Japan-Philippines EPA

An agreement between Japan and the Republic of the Philippines on an Economic Partnership came into force on December 11, 2008. With regard to the movement of natural persons, the two nations agreed on the acceptance of short-term business visitors, intra-corporate transferees, investors, independent professionals (e.g., attorneys), contractual service suppliers (those under the status of residence of “Engineer” or “Specialist in Humanities/International Services”), and nurse and certified careworker candidates. In order to introduce the required provisions for nurse and certified care worker candidates, the Ordinance for Enforcement and Public Notice on Designated Activities was partly revised, and the “Guidelines on the treatment of Philippine nurses subject to the provisions of the agreement between Japan and the Republic of the Philippines on an economic partnership in relation to the Immigration Control Act” was formulated (announced on November 6, 2008, and came into force on December 11, 2008).



## (2) Reports and Examinations in Accordance with Human Rights Treaties/Covenants

Japan is a signatory nation to various treaties, including the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD), and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT). With regard to government reports on the status of implementation of those treaties, the Immigration Bureau is involved in the drafting of reports, review of governmental reports, and follow-up thereof from the perspective of immigration control administration. In this context, meetings to review the sixth governmental report on the CEDAW and the third to sixth governmental reports on the CERD were held in July 2009 and March 2010, respectively, and the Immigration Bureau was involved in the reviews relating to immigration control administration.

## 2 International Conventions

### (1) G8 Rome/Lyon Group Migration Experts Sub-Group Meeting

The Migration Experts Sub-Group Meeting, one of the sub groups of the G8 Rome/Lyon Group, which is a working experts' group to discuss measures against international terrorism and transnational organized crime at the G8 level, is discussing measures that the G8 members can take cooperatively in the area of illegal immigration and the forging or alteration of documents.

In 2009, three meetings in total were held in Italy. Officials from the Immigration Bureau attended all three meetings to exchange information and opinions with their counterparts in other countries.

### (2) Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Conference of Directors-General of Immigration

This meeting has been held every year since 2002 as a place where immigration officials from Asian and European countries can gather and discuss issues such as illegal entry and stay. It provides participants with opportunities to exchange and collect opinions and information that are useful in considering measures against issues such as illegal immigration. For this reason, the Immigration Bureau sends its officials to participate in opinion and information exchange of opinions and information. In 2009, the eighth meeting was held in Goa, India to discuss policies toward legal and illegal immigrants.

### (3) Other International Conventions

In addition to the international meetings mentioned above, the Immigration Bureau sends officials to attend consultation meetings on counter-terrorism measures and on consular services, with the aim of actively explaining Japan's position and building cooperative relations with other countries. The bureau also sends officials to participate in meetings intended for information sharing and exchange of opinions, such as the IATA/CAWG (International Air Transport Association/Control Authorities Working Group).

## Section 2 ◆ Holding of Seminar on Immigration Control

Since FY 1987, the Immigration Bureau has been inviting executive officers of the immigration control authorities of Asian countries and regions to seminars every year to exchange opinions and information on immigration control affairs in Asia. These constructive exchanges have helped the participating countries to effectively design and implement immigration control measures.

The 23rd seminar was held in December 2009. The seminar was attended by the immigration authorities of 18 countries and regions in Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Rim, etc. (U.S.A., Australia, Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Canada, China, China (Hong Kong), China (Macao), R.O.Korea, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Viet Nam), and by responsible persons from three international organizations: The European Union (EU), The International Organization for Migration (IOM), and the UNHCR as observers. They actively exchanged opinions on the topics: “the developments over the past year in the immigration control administration of each participating country (region)”, “the current situation of trafficking in persons and countermeasure of each country” and “the current situation of irregular and illegal entry and departure and countermeasure”.

## Chapter 11

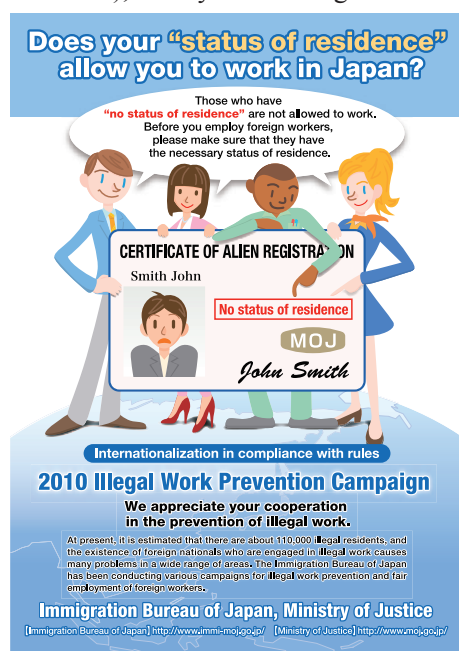
## Improvement Public Relations and Administrative Services

## Section 1 ◆ Promotion of Public Relations

Recognizing that public relations and awareness-raising activities inside and outside the country play a great role in the smooth implementation of immigration control, the Immigration Bureau is promoting more active public relations than ever before.

The Immigration Bureau, as a government agency to take charge of immigration and residence management of foreign nationals, has promoted various measures to prevent illegal employment in pursuing its basic goals of preventing illegal foreign workers from staying in Japan and further reducing their number. The Bureau holds the “Illegal Work Prevention Campaign” as part of the campaign for “Foreign Labor Problem Awareness Month” conducted by the government every June, so that the general public, companies hiring foreign nationals, related organizations and governments in other countries can gain a correct understanding of these issues and secure their cooperation. In 2009, the bureau promoted awareness-raising activities for prevention of illegal employment by distributing leaflets in cooperation with related ministries and local authorities, etc.

With regard to the “Law for Partial Amendment to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act and the Special Act on the Immigration Control of, Inter Alia, those who have Lost Japanese Nationality Pursuant to the Treaty of Peace with Japan” promulgated on July 15, 2009, the Bureau is working to disseminate the law before its enforcement by establishing a special page on the website (<http://www.immi-moj.go.jp/newimmiact/newimmiact.html>), and by distributing leaflets.



Front page of the leaflet for the Illegal Work Prevention Campaign



Scene from the Illegal Work Prevention Campaign

## Section 2 ♦ Improvement of Administrative Services

### 1 Facilitating the Landing Examination Procedures

The Immigration Bureau has made efforts to facilitate the landing examinations at airports and seaports, but foreign nationals who visit Japan through airports have pointed out that they have to wait in line for a long time for the landing examination. In response to this complaint, measures have been taken at the immigration counters at large scale airports to resolve this problem, by assigning some immigration inspectors in charge of examining Japanese nationals to the examination of foreign nationals, and transferring immigration inspectors between immigration counters depending on the degree of congestion. In addition, the expected waiting time for examination of foreign nationals is indicated and priority lanes for the elderly, the disabled and pregnant women have been established. Thus, the Immigration Bureau has made additional efforts to facilitate procedures and improve administrative services.

In addition, the Bureau has made efforts for smoother immigration procedures by shortening the waiting time for examination, while sometimes asking airlines for cooperation in view of the actual situation of each airport. Specifically, the Bureau adopts a fork line approach, which allows arriving passengers to stand in a single line and to proceed one by one to the next available booth, increases the number of immigration inspectors when the airport becomes congested, allocates crowd-control staff, broadcasts a guidance video explaining how to provide personal identification information, and displays an information board that illustrates how to fill in an ED card.

Moreover, in order to promote user registration at automated gates thus facilitating smooth immigration examination, the Bureau has striven to improve administrative services for those who wish to use automatic gates by introducing a “mobile on-site user registration at automatic gates” system to send staff to companies, etc., and provide registration services.



Priority lanes



On-site Registration for the Automatic Gate

### 2 Information Service for Foreign Nationals

The Immigration Bureau is tackling the “Comfortable Administrative Services Campaign” for the purpose of realizing a friendly and caring administration, while there is a demand from some applicants for reduction of the waiting time for application and provision of detailed and easy-to-understand guidance on procedures. To meet such a demand, regional immigration bureaus are continuously making efforts to improve staff attitudes towards



administrative services and improve the reception manner by holding seminars for a more humanitarian approach, and by improving the environment of the reception counter or using ingenuity in making various kinds of guide services friendly to users.

Further, there are quite a few foreign nationals who are unfamiliar with procedures relating to immigration and residence as well as Japanese laws and social systems due to differences in lifestyle, manners and customs, and language. For the purpose of providing consultation services and information to such foreign nationals, immigration information centers have been established. These centers show foreign nationals and relevant Japanese nationals how to carry the procedures for immigration, residence and alien registration forward, and to fill in documents concerning immigration and residence of foreign nationals.

These information centers were established in the Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau and its Yokohama District Immigration Office, the Nagoya Regional Immigration Bureau, the Osaka Regional Immigration Bureau and its Kobe District Immigration Office, the Hiroshima Regional Immigration Bureau, the Fukuoka Regional Immigration Bureau, and the Sendai Regional Immigration Bureau. They provide consultation on procedures for immigration and residence to foreign nationals on the phone or face-to-face in various languages, such as English, Korean, Chinese and Spanish. In the Sapporo Regional Immigration Bureau, the Takamatsu Regional Immigration Bureau, and the Naha District Immigration Office of the Fukuoka Regional Immigration Bureau, counseling staff have been allocated to provide the same service as the above information centers.

In addition to the above, in cooperation with local authorities, etc., in the regions where many foreign long-term residents live, a one-stop consultation center, which offers services including administrative procedures for immigration and residence, counseling on daily life, and provision of information, was set up and operated in Hamamatsu City, Shizuoka Prefecture in April 2009, in Saitama City, Saitama Prefecture in August 2009, and in Shinjuku Ward, Tokyo Prefecture in November 2009.



Immigration Information Center  
(Tokyo Regional Immigration Bureau)



Consultation Support Center for Foreign Residents  
(Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo)

### 3 Immigration Bureau Website

In March 2002, the Immigration Bureau established its own website separately from the website of the Ministry of Justice. Through this site (<http://www.immi-moj.go.jp>), the Immigration Bureau publishes questions and answers on immigration and residential procedures as well as the addresses, contacts and business hours of regional immigration offices for the convenience of applicants. Since February 2004, the Immigration Bureau has been receiving information about foreign nationals who may be staying illegally by e-mail.

Moreover, to improve information services for foreign nationals, the Immigration Bureau opened a website in English at the end of FY 2005, and websites in Chinese, Korean and Portuguese to provide services in many languages at the end of FY 2006. Thus, the Bureau has been making the website more convenient for foreign nationals.