

## The 1<sup>st</sup> Japan Conference in celebration of the International Archives Day

The 1<sup>st</sup> Japan Conference in celebration of the International Archives Day took place in Tokyo on 9 June 2008, which fell on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the International Council on Archives (ICA), founded on 9 June 1948 with support from UNESCO. As the ICA decided 9 June as the International Archives Day and invited member states to hold celebration events, National Archives of Japan organized the commemorative conference for the International Archives Day in order to advance discussion of future archives in Japan. The event had 150 participants including Minister Yoko Kamikawa, Minister of Public Records Management and National Archives, director-generals of local archival institutions across the country, members of Archives Institutions Association\*, archival officials and parties related to Independent Administrative Institutions and business organizations, those in the mass media and others interested in archives.

The Conference was started with the opening speech by Mr. Mitsuoki Kikuchi, President of the National Archives of Japan. He referred to the background of this Conference, as well as inadequate archival situation in Japan compared with other nations and recent movements for the reexamination of the archival system in Japan. The notable recent movements include urgent proposal made by the league of Diet members on promotion of archives, inclusion of archives and records management issues in Prime Minister Fukuda's policy speech, newly appointment of Minister Yoko Kamikawa, State Minister of Gender Equality and Social Affairs as Minister of Public Records Management and National Archives, the establishment of the office of public records management in the Cabinet Secretariat, and the establishment of advisory panel for proper management, preservation, and use of public records. He also stated that these movements were beyond imagination one year ago. He remarked that he hoped the first International Archives Day would serve as a good opportunity for people involved in archives and records management to raise awareness about their mission once again and to ensure that they will certainly carry out their duties. And also it would be a chance for every citizen to recall the importance of records as common heritage, to think about archives in Japan and to deepen the discussion on it.

The speech was followed by the special lecture by Professor Toshihiko Takano, President of the Japan Society for Archival Science, under the title of "Learn from Archives around the World," where he talked about the importance of learning from archival institutions across the world based on his experience. Professor Takano said that it was important to recognize the status and situation of the archival system in Japan by examining the Japanese history with chronological perspective and to consider how to develop the system by learning from advanced foreign archival institutions with global perspective.

After the lecture, the reports of activities for archives week (the first week of June) organized

by public archival institutions in Chugoku and Shikoku Area, west part of Japan, were presented. Based on the special lecture and the reports by the local public archives, a panel discussion was organized. Mr. Takayama, Senior Vice-President of the National Archives of Japan served as a coordinator, and Prof. Takano, President of the Japan Society for Archival Science, Mr. Takatsu, Director of TEIKOKU DataBank Historical Museum (the Business Archives Association), Mr. Murata, president of the Japan Society of Archives Institutions and Director-General of Osaka Prefectural Archives joined as panelists.

After question-and-answer session, there was an introduction of the 16th ICA Congress to be held in Kuala Lumpur in July 2008. Finally, the appeal of the first Japan Conference for the International Archives Day adopted unanimously.

At the end of the Conference, a speech was delivered by Minister Yoko Kamikawa, Minister for Public Records Management and National Archives, who took time in her busy schedule at end of current Diet session and participated in this event.

In her speech, Minister Kamikawa stated “accurate records of the activities by the government and private sector and those of historical facts should be passed on for future generations as common heritage of human beings. For this purpose, every citizen, people involved in archives and records management in attendance here, organizations and institutions such as government, autonomous communities, universities, and business organizations should work together to do every effort to preserve records and proceed a positive approach to make records accessible and available not only for present generation but also for future generation 1,000 years from now. Today’s International Archives Day is a good opportunity for everyone here to recall these important points. I think that any individual in present and future times, from central and local governments to ordinary citizen, have rights to use public records. Besides, appropriate management of public records serves for the efficiency-enhancing of the administrative work and improvement of work environment. Based on these ideas, I strongly hope to build and realize a perfect ‘gold’ model of archival management, in other words, what archival management should be. Your continued support would be greatly appreciated.” After the Conference, Minister Kamikawa attended the commemorative party for the International Archives Day and exchanged views with director-generals of local public archives across the country and members of the Archives Institutions Association and Independent Administrative Institutions.

The contents of this Conference for the International Archives Day in Japan will be reported to the ICA Congress in Kuala Lumpur, the 60th anniversary Congress of the foundation of the ICA.

\*The Archives Institutions Association was founded in May 2007 and composed of: Tokyo Office of ARMA International, the Business Archives Association, the Records Management Society of Japan, the National Archives of Japan, an Independent Administrative Institution, the Japan Society of Archival Science, the Japan Image and Information Management Association, the Special Committee of the Japanese Historical Council on the National Archives of Japan, and the Japan Society of Archives Institutions (observer).



【Opening speech by President Kikuchi】



【Special lecture by Prof. Takano】



【Report by local public archives】



【Panel discussion】



【Speech by Minister Kamikawa】





【Commemorative party】

## **Appeal adopted by the 1<sup>st</sup> Japan Conference in celebration of “International Archives Day”**

9 June, 2008

1. The International Council on Archives (ICA) was founded on 9 June, 1948 with assistance extended by UNESCO. This year being the 60th anniversary of the ICA, the ICA decided that Annual “International Archives Day” should be celebrated on 9 June and called upon member states to organize appropriate celebration events on this day for the first time.
2. In response to this call, the Japan Conference in celebration of “International Archives Day” took place on 9 June, 2008 in Tokyo, where many participants came together including director-generals of public archives across the country, members of “Archives Institutions Association” (composed of Tokyo Office of ARMA International, the Business Archives Association, the Records Management Society of Japan, the National Archives of Japan, an Independent Administrative Institution, the Japan Society of Archival Science, the Japan Image and Information Management Association, the Special Committee of the Japanese Historical Council on the National Archives of Japan, and the Japan Society of Archives Institutions (observer)) and other people involved in archives and records management, related parties to Independent Administrative Institutions and business organizations, those in the mass media and others interested in archives.
3. On this occasion of the 1<sup>st</sup> Japan Conference in celebration of “International Archives Day,” we people involved in archives and records management, sharing the recognition on the following matters:
  - Archives should be passed on for future generations as common heritage of human being,
  - Archives are essential to look back the past and foresee the future,
  - Archives ensure the accountability for the next generation and constitute the basis for democracy,
  - Archives include records of private sector as well as of public sector including the State and local governments,
  - Preserving archives and making them accessible to the public are the responsibility of archival institutions and the mission of archivists;
4. Swear to do our best from now on to develop archival culture in Japan and furthermore contribute to the development of archives around the world with international cooperation, and urge all people in Japan to increase awareness of the function and role of archives.