

## THE INAUGURATION CEREMONY ON THE PROJECT FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF FGD FOR THERMAL POWER PLANT IN SERBIA



Mr. Takema Sakamoto, Director General of Middle East and Europe Department of JICA, making the speech at the ceremony

The groundbreaking ceremony for the “Flue Gas Desulphurization (FGD) Construction Project for Thermal Power Plant (TPP) Nikola Tesla A” in Serbia was held on 13 February, 2019. JICA provided a concessional ODA Loan for the project based on the Loan Agreement signed between JICA and Electric Power of Serbia (EPS) in November 2011.

The ceremony was attended by the Minister of Mining and Energy of Serbia, Mr. Aleksandar Antic, Ambassador of Japan in Serbia Mr. Junichi Maruyama, Acting Director of EPS Mr. Milorad Grcic, General Director of JICA for Middle East and Europe, Mr. Takema Sakamoto and Mr. Takanori Nakamoto, Vice-President of the Mitsubishi Hitachi Power Systems (MHPS).

The FGD facility will enable TPP Nikola Tesla to fulfill EU environmental standard - less than 200 mg of sulphur-dioxide concentration in flue gases per cubic meter. This will provide clean air and healthy environment for all citizens of Serbia as well as neighboring countries. The Serbian side has pointed out that the share of domestic companies in the construction of the FGD facility will be 60% which will significantly contribute to the country's economy.

The Japanese side expressed its content that some of the leading Japanese companies were involved in this important project. Moreover, this cooperation will result in transfer of the Japanese technology and know-how to the Serbian partners.

Both sides hope that this project will become a shining example of friendship and economic cooperation between Japan and Serbia.

The construction of the FGD facility will be completed in 2021.



A ceremony called “Kagami biraki” – It is performed at celebratory events in which the lid of the sake barrel is broken open by a wooden mallet and the sake is served to everyone present



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# THE FIRST JAPAN OVERSEAS COOPERATION VOLUNTEER SENT TO SERBIA

Following the agreement between the Government of Serbia and the Government of Japan, signed in January 2018, the first Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV, young volunteer) was dispatched to Serbia in January 2019.

After attending intensive course in Serbian language for a month, Mr. Yuya Miyagi started working at the Sports Association for the Challenged in Serbia. His responsibilities include teaching swimming and table tennis to the challenged children and supporting PE classes for the challenged, among others.

Mr. Miyagi comes from Okinawa, the island in southwest Japan, where it never snows. He studied mental health for the

challenged children at the university and worked in the relevant field after his graduation. When he applied for the JOCV program, Serbia was ranked at the top of his wish list. We wondered why.

"I played tennis when I was at university, so I knew about Novak Djokovic and Ana Ivanovic. I had an impression that Serbia was a home to great athletes and I was interested in learning how the challenged people enjoy sports in such a country."

Mr. Miyagi, welcome to Serbia!



Mr. Miyagi (second from the right) with his counterpart

## NEW SENIOR VOLUNTEERS ARRIVED IN SERBIA



Ms. Hirata (third from the right) with students in the Japanese class

Last October, Ms. Noriko Hirata (Japanese language teacher) and Ms. Junko Nishinaka (supporting persons with disabilities: PWD) came to Belgrade as the successors of Ms. Setsuko Sato and Mr. Toshimitsu Tsukada respectively.

Ms. Hirata is working at the Institute for Foreign Language in Belgrade. She has worked as a Japanese language teacher for over 26 years and, as a Senior Volunteer (SV), she worked in Morocco from 2011 to 2013 and from 2014 to 2015. Ms. Hirata became interested in Serbia when she learned

that people studied Japanese in the country where only few Japanese lived.

"After I came to Belgrade, I learned that more and more schools are opening Japanese courses. As a native Japanese speaker, I would like to support as many students studying Japanese as possible," Ms. Hirata says.

Ms. Nishinaka is working for Nasa Kuca ("My Home" in Serbian), a leading non-governmental organization in Serbia that supports employment of the PWD. She has been the third SV there. Ms. Nishinaka used to work in a relevant field in Japan and worked

in a supporting center for PWD in Malaysia from 2015 to 2017 as a Senior Volunteer.

"I will do my best here by doing things step by step", Ms. Nishinaka says.

Both Ms. Hirata and Ms. Nishinaka are from Fukuoka, a major city located in the southwest island called Kyushu. They got along during the pre-departure training in Japan.

Dear Fukuoka women, welcome to Serbia!



Ms. Nishinaka (second from the left) at a seminar on PWD



# BEST MENTOR AWARD IN MONTENEGRO 2018



Award winners

**M**ENTOR AWARD in Montenegro 2018” was organized on 6 November 2018 in Podgorica, Montenegro by The Project for Establishment and promotion of mentoring services for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in the countries of the Western Balkans, Phase 2.

Four Montenegrin mentors, who were nominated for this award, presented their

experiences as mentors, main problems the companies were facing, key activities and their results and achievements. Following their presentation, Ms. Ljiljana Markovic, the Mentor Award winner from Serbia, shared her field experience in Serbia with the audience.

The best mentor was selected by the defined criteria which included the stand-

ardized mentoring process, tools and techniques used in the mentoring, as well as the achievements of the company after receiving mentoring services.

Mr. Sasa Jovanovic, from Business Start Center Bar, received the Best Mentor Award for his mentoring service provided to a company which produces fruit syrups.

## SME MENTOR PROJECT HELD A REGIONAL MEETING IN BELGRADE

**I**n November 2018, the Project for Establishment and Promotion of Mentoring Services for Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) in the countries of the Western Balkans, Phase 2 hold Overall Coordination Meeting which is a two-day workshop in Belgrade in which representatives of SME support agencies from Serbia, Montenegro, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Macedonia gathered and shared information on the progress of the mentor programs in each country.

On the first day, a representative from the Bulgarian Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion Agency participated. JICA has provided cooperation to Bulgaria in the past in the area of SMEs and the country is already a member of the European Union. Mr. Kobayashi, Chief Representative, the JICA Balkan Office hosted a panel discussion on SME support policies in Serbia and Bulgaria, and the

two countries shared their experiences and expertise.

This panel discussion was held to contribute to the Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative announced when Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe visited Serbia and Bulgaria in January 2018.

At a session for four Western Balkan countries to present their initiatives on the second day of the workshop, participants witnessed that mentor-based assistance was already underway among four countries to strengthen support for SMEs and confirmed continuous cooperation to achieve the Project purpose.



Representatives from 4 countries joined the meeting





Participants of the DRR workshop

## WORKSHOP ON DISASTER RISK REDUCTION IN BULGARIA

**G**overnment of Bulgaria successfully organized “Bulgaria-Japan-Western Balkans Workshop on Flood Risk Management 2019” in Sofia on 20th and 21st of February. The workshop was organized in collaboration with Government of Japan and JICA.

Representatives from West Balkans and International Organization, such as World Bank and Red Cross, got together in Sofia and shared their policy framework and chal-

lenges in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR).

Government of Japan sent high ranking official in charge of DRR policy and infrastructure development to the workshop to share their knowledge and experience in Japan.

Mr. Hideya Kobayashi, Chief representative of JICA Balkan Office also participated in the sessions together with Crisis Management Center (CMC), counterpart of JICA Eco-DRR

Project in North Macedonia, and explained the concept of Ecosystem based Disaster Risk reduction through Sustainable Forest Management that could be applicable to WBs.

Crisis Management center in North Macedonia and JICA Eco-DRR Project will also hold seminar for West Balkans on Ecosystem-Based DRR in autumn this year in order to facilitate regional cooperation in DRR in the region.

## JAPANESE JUDO MASTER HELD A SEMINAR IN BiH

**A**s a part of JICA’s “Project for Confidence Building Through Physical Education in Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH)” (Project) and in cooperation with the Sports Association of the City of Mostar and the BiH Judo Federation, a three-day Judo Seminar was held at the 4th Primary School’s sports hall in Mostar from February 15 to February 17, 2019.

In collaboration with the Japanese NPO “Solidarity of International Judo Education”, the Project has invited Prof. Kenji Mitsumoto (Kodokan 7 Dan), a judo master from Japan, to deliver both practical and theoretical lectures to 50 judo coaches from all over BiH.

The purpose of the seminar was to provide training on basic judo methods and



techniques needed to further improve existing coaching styles of local judo coaches, as well as, share and promote significant educational values of judo reflected in the combined virtues of Seiryoku zenyo (‘Maximum Efficiency’) and Jita kyoei (‘Mutual Welfare and Benefit’). The focus of the seminar was centered on the importance of instilling such moral virtues to children who practice judo, thus developing strong character traits that would help them to cooperate and function in harmony with others while striving to contribute to their local community and society in general.

*“Tachi waza” training methods*

# CELEBRATING 10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE COOPERATION BETWEEN KOSOVO AND JICA

On March 19, Ministry of European Integration and JICA Alumni Association of Kosovo (JAAK) jointly celebrated the 10th anniversary of the cooperation between Kosovo and JICA. Over 150 people, including Kosovar government officials, municipality representatives, ex-participants of JICA training programs and Japanese stakeholders participated the ceremony.

JICA has provided its Technical Cooperation and Grant Aid support mainly through the projects with cumulative total of 2.14 billion Japanese Yen (16.95 million euro) as of March 2019. Furthermore, over 360 Kosovars



*Participants listening to the orchestra*



*Music performance by Kosovo Philharmonic*

have gone to Japan for training programs.

The participants to the event enjoyed Japanese music performed by the music school “Tefta Tashko”, Kosovo Philharmonic whose

musical instruments was supported by JICA in the past, presentation of JAAK activities, and symposium on the achievements on 10 years JICA's technical cooperation.

## RTK PROJECT COMPLETED IN KOSOVO

As of March 2019, the Project for Capacity Development of Radio Television of Kosovo (RTK) was completed. By serving as a bridge between the ethnic Albanian and Serbian communities, and through transmitting the accumulated technological program production and Japan's newsgathering know-how, this project fulfilled the purposes of helping RTK broadcast accurate, neutral and fair programs.

The Project achieved building the relationship across different ethnic groups. On the technical level, harmonizing the core broadcasting station, namely Master Control Room, is serving both RTK 1 (Albanian channel) and RTK2 (Serbian channel) to share their broadcasting content and integration of sending facilities. The RTK 1 and 2 staff members are able to operate and manage the new system with their capacity.

Such efforts led RTK 1 and 2 to mutually produce TV programs for the first time in their broadcasting history. “In Focus”

was broadcast monthly (36 times by December 2018) and two long special documentary-style programs, “Umami 1” and “Umami 2” were produced. Further, with a view to ensure the quality and fairness, the Project supported establishing the Consultative Committee by Albanian and Serbian pundits.

The completion of the Project has indeed built a foundation to become a fairer and more trusted broadcaster in Kosovo.



*Albanian and Serbian staff working together on a TV program*



# THE SATOYAMA FOLLOW-UP PROJECT IN KOSOVO

Successful completion of the SATOYAMA Follow-up Project was marked in Suhareka/Suva Reka Municipality on 19 October 2018.

Mr. Ismail Hetemaj, the Head of the Nature Protection Division in Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning (MESP) initiated Satoyama Promotion Project in which he incorporated his vision and the experience gained during the training program in Japan.

Satoyama Initiative aims to develop and propose a model of sustainable management of natural resources by collecting and analyzing knowledge and cases in Japan and other parts of the world concerning natural resource management and sustainable human well-being development in rural communities. It is the co-existence between nature conservation and human activities concerning economic development.

In 2017 the Project implemented Analysis and Recommendation by the Japanese expert based on Japan's Satoyama Initiative with the main activities in Bio-organic Agriculture, Eco-tourism and Environmental Education, as well as the Analysis and Recommendation on Agro and Eco-tourism Development by the Israeli expert.

In 2018, construction works were performed for the preservation of resources and development of the area. The main construction works included the rehabilitation of water springs in Delloc and Gradac villages, installation of tourism information table and street signs, waste bins and solar street lights.



Mr. Takashi Hibino, Senior Representative of JICA Balkan Office, attended (second from the right)

# BOOKKEEPING SEMINAR IN ALBANIA

A series of workshops were held in September in Shkodra and Vlore in Albania, known for their rich agricultural products, as

a part of the Bookkeeping Follow up Project. This is initiated by Ms. Enida Shena, Executive Director of Albanian Council of Agribusi-

nesses and the ex-participant of JICA KCCP (Knowledge Co-Creation Program). More than 150 people from the agriculture sector participated in the workshops aimed at accurate accounting and bookkeeping. The transparent financial evidence of the farmers and other small entrepreneurs, is a precondition to reach benefits from the financial support of the National Subsidy schemes and EU Agriculture Grants.

The participants learned how to use a "Farmers Notebook", a bookkeeping tool that makes farmers financial operation easier. This notebook was made in Japan, but adjusted to the Albanian needs.

One important part of the Bookkeeping FU was the cooperation with FEDInvest, JICA counterpart on the Technical Cooperation Project. Actually, FEDInvest members had a chance to attend all workshops and expand their knowledge in bookkeeping expenses, profit, turn-over by using simple formats of balance sheets, basic methods of product price calculation, etc.



Lectures and study cases shared among the participants

# 10<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY RECEPTION OF JICA SERBIA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



*Guest speakers at the reception*

On 18 February 2019, JICA Alumni Association of Serbia organized a reception to celebrate its 10th anniversary. H.E. Mr. Junichi Maruyama, Ambassador of Japan

in Serbia, Mr. Hideya Kobayashi, Chief Representative of JICA Balkan Office, Professor Ivanka Popovic, Rector of the University of Belgrade and Ms. Biljana Filipovic, Assistant

Minister at the Ministry of Environment held their welcoming speeches at this event.

Since the establishment in 2008, more than 500 members of academic community, state administration, local government and industry had an opportunity to gain knowledge and experience through JICA training programs. During the past ten years, JICA Alumni Serbia has been dedicated to strengthening the cooperation between Serbia and Japan and the cooperation among its members, ex-participants of JICA training programs. In the meantime, the Association has organized many events, seminars and workshops covering numerous topics related to energy efficiency, environment protection, waste management, small and medium enterprise development, etc.

Their future plans include continuous engagement in development and exchange of experience among the domestic and foreign institutions related to Japan.

## THE FIRST PINK RIBBON DESIGN CONTEST HELD IN SERBIA

An award ceremony for "Pink Ribbon Design Contest in Serbia" was held in Belgrade on February 28 and is the first of its kind in Serbia.

This contest is a part of JICA's Project for Improvement of the National Program for Early Detection of Breast Cancer, which started in 2015 and aims to promote awareness of breast cancer and its early detection. Over 400 applications were received from all over Serbia.

In Serbia, breast cancer is the top cause of cancer-related deaths for women. The detection rate remains low, resulting in the higher percentage of patients dying in less than five years compared to the average in Europe.

At the awarding ceremony, the first and the second prize winners on the poster design and the slogan, both in the adult division and the student division, are awarded.



*Exhibition on the award-winning work at the National Bank of Serbia*



*Ms. Marija Tatić, the first prize winner for poster and slogan (student division)*



### COLD WEATHER AS AN ATTRACTIVE TOURISM ASSET



*Ms. Marija Cvorovic,  
Ministry of Economy,  
Government of Montenegro*

I participated in the training course “Regional economic and social vitalization through tourism development: Regional branding and marketing in Hokkaido” which took place in Sapporo, Hokkaido from 27th January to 26th February 2019.

During this training course I learned many new concepts and got many new ideas which can be implemented in my country, like transforming negative existence to positive tourism resources, community-based tourism, regional branding and establishment of Destination Marketing/Management Organizations DMOs. The most valuable and interesting was that I had an opportunity to experience in practice all that I have learned in the classroom (Sapporo snow festival, drift ice walk in Shiretoko, snow activities in Biei). Based on this, I realized how I can use snow and cold weather to create an interesting and attractive tourism product in the north of my country, engaging community in order to change perceptions of people about cold weather and snow and make them enjoy snow as much as I did in Hokkaido.



*Drift ice walk in Shiretoko*

### INTRODUCING NEW JAPANESE STAFF



*Rumiko Nomura,  
Assistant Resident  
Representative,  
JICA Balkan Office  
and her son*

**M**s. Rumiko Nomura joined JICA Balkan Office in mid-December, as a successor of Mr. Ryohei Anzai. Her responsibilities include office administration, security management, public relations and volunteer program in Serbia and alumni associations, among others.

She has been with JICA over 13 years. Her previous assignments include Office of Media and Public Relations, South Asia Department, Public Policy and Industrial Department, JICA Afghanistan Office and Secretariat of Japan Disaster Relief Team.

She came to Belgrade with her one-year old son. Her husband (also JICA official) is currently working in Kenya. Although she was daunted by the heavy snow on her arrival, she was heartfelt with the warm welcome to her son from Serbian people.

“I am surprised and relieved that Serbian people love babies and children so much. I hope to contribute to the development of Balkan region, while learning and enjoying the rich culture and history”, she says.

### MY EXPERIENCE IN SRI LANKA: LEARNING THE VOLUNTEER PROGRAM



*Bankovic Ksenija,  
JICA Balkan Office*

**I**n the end of February, I got an opportunity to visit JICA Sri Lanka Office to learn the operations of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) program from Sri Lankan colleagues. They office is known to have a long history of volunteer program (around 40 years with about 1000 volunteers) with a strong initiative by the national staff. As JICA Balkan Office has just started receiving new JOCV in this January, so I was sent there to learn more about how they manage the program.

Through this intensive and very informative training in Sri Lanka, I learned how to prepare a pre-dispatch training with the host organization, how to focus on the work plan of the volunteer and their counterpart, PR and the sustainability of the program. During my stay, I visited Amarasuiya National College in Galle, University of visual arts, Karadiyana Waste Management Facility and Asoka College, where I could see the benefits of the ef-

forts volunteers are making and the impact they have on the individuals and the communities.

Above all, I was mostly impressed by the strong and lasting relationships the volunteers have built with the local people. I will make the most of my experiences gained during the training to improve the quality and the management of the volunteer program in Serbia.



*Ksenija and Sriyantha (Srilankan staff in charge of the  
volunteer program)*

*Unfortunately, this lovely, and above all, friendly country has been hit by the terrorist attack on the Easter morning. The country has taken a 180 degree turn in just two months from my visit. I would like to express condolences to those affected by the attack.*