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PRESS RELEASE

Announcement of the Preliminary Results:
**Overseas Learners of Japanese-language
amounting to 2.98 Million!**

The Japan Foundation has held a press conference on 31st October, 2007, to announce the preliminary results of “Survey on Japanese-Language Education abroad 2006”.

The results revealed through the survey were the following:

The Japanese language is being taught in 133 countries and/or districts with following figures: 13,639 institutions, 44,321 teachers, 2,979,820 learners.

Korea has the largest number of learners; about 910,000 people of the world’s Japanese-language learners. China is in second place with about 680,000 learners, followed by Australia with about 370,000 learners.

A little less than 60% (about 1,700,000 people) of the Japanese-language learners abroad belong to primary and secondary educational institutions, that correspond to primary, junior high and high schools in Japanese education system.

Three major reasons for learning Japanese are: “To gain knowledge about Japanese culture,” “to become able to communicate in Japanese” and “interest in the Japanese language itself.”

A panel discussion was also held during the conference; the four panelists were Ms.Kaori Sasaki, President and CEO, eWoman, Inc., and President, UNICUL International, Inc.; Professor Suzuko Nishihara, College of Culture and Communication, Tokyo Woman’s Christian University, and Former Chair, Society for Teaching Japanese as a Foreign Language; Mr. Arthur Binard, Poet; and Mr. Kazuo Ogoura, President, The Japan Foundation. The discussion included items such as: trends in business where interests on China and India are increasingly growing and on Japan relatively lowering, the benefit of learning a foreign language as a gateway to enrich one’s worldview, observations on school curriculum-based learning and learning driven by the individual’s motivation, how the Japanese perceive their language, etc.

For more information, please see: http://www.jpf.go.jp/e/japan/news/0711/11_01.html

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