



**40th ANNUAL JOINT MEETING OF
THE JAPAN/U.S. SOUTHEAST ASSOCIATION & THE SOUTHEAST U.S.-JAPAN ASSOCIATION
October 22-24, 2017
Hyatt Regency Hotel, Greenville, South Carolina U.S.A.**

JOINT STATEMENT

The Japan/U.S. Southeast Association and the Southeast U.S.-Japan Association held their 40th Annual Joint Meeting in Greenville, South Carolina on October 22 to 24, 2017, with the theme of "Success through Tradition, Innovation and Partnerships." The Chairmen presiding over the meeting were SEUS Chairman, Ms. Minor M. Shaw, and the Japan Chairman, Mr. Teruo Asada. 73 Japanese and 393 American delegates participated this year for a total of 466 delegates.

At the Welcome Reception and Gala Dinner On Sunday evening, the new U.S. Ambassador to Japan, Bill Hagerty, made remarks to the audience. He was introduced by Governor Bill Haslam of Tennessee who was traveling with Ambassador Hagerty. Commissioner Bob Rolfe served as delegation leader for Tennessee since Governor Haslam was only able to attend the Gala Dinner with Ambassador Hagerty.

The SEUS delegations were led by the Honorable Henry McMaster, Governor, State of South Carolina, this year's host state; the Honorable Phil Bryant, Governor, State of Mississippi; the Honorable Roy Cooper, Governor, State of North Carolina; Mr. Greg Canfield, Secretary of Commerce, State of Alabama; Mr. Ken Detzner, Secretary of State, State of Florida; Ms. Gretchen Corbin, Commissioner, Technical College System of Georgia; and Mr. Bob Rolfe, Commissioner, Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development.

His Excellency, Kenichiro Sasae, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the United States of America, served as the opening keynote speaker. Additional VIPs attending the conference included: the Honorable Takashi Shinozuka, Consul General of Japan in Atlanta, Georgia; the Honorable Masami Kinefuchi, Consul General of Japan in Nashville, Tennessee; and the Honorable Ken Okaniwa, Consul General of Japan in Miami, Florida.

In the Opening Ceremony, held in the Hyatt Regency Ballroom, Chairman Shaw began the Joint Meeting by recognizing the benefits of this conference that strengthen our opportunities for building on existing relationships and creating new ones.

Panel members in the second panel session that afternoon, "U.S.-Japan Bilateral Relations — Where Are We Headed?" provided insights into where Japan's and the United States' economic and political relationship is now, and where that relationship might go in the near future given the geopolitical environment in Asia, and a new U.S. Administration. Panel members included: moderator Mr. Barry Hager, President, Hager Associates; Mr. Tetsuo Ogawa, Managing Officer, Toyota Motor Corporation; Mr. Keisuke Yokoo, Vice Chairman and President, KEIZAI DOYUKAI; Dr. Mark Manyin, Ph.D., Congressional Research Service; Mr. Tetsuhide Mikamo, Counsellor, Marubeni Research Institute; and Dr. Douglas Trelfa, Ph.D., Director, Japan Center and Japan Linkages Institute, University of West Florida.

Tuesday, October 24th, began with a closing keynote address by Ambassador Jim Zumwalt, Chief Executive Officer of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, U.S.A., former U.S. Ambassador to Senegal and Guinea Bissau, and former Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo. Ambassador Zumwalt's remarks focused on the strong and important U.S.-Japan trade and investment relationship, while skillfully discussing the sensitive geopolitical issues that are occurring in Asia. After Ambassador Zumwalt's presentation, the audience heard remarks from the Honorable Masami Kinefuchi, Consul General of Japan in Nashville, Tennessee, and the Honorable Ken Okaniwa, Consul General of Japan in Miami, Florida.

Throughout the program, participants exchanged views and opinions with our guest experts and delegates, and deepened our understanding on the issues of mutual interest, ranging from the economy, trade and investment, to empowering partnerships both individually and collectively. Both Associations reaffirmed their commitment to work together in partnership for the further strengthening of the ties between Japan and the Southeast U.S. states and to continue the tradition of this partnership toward the innovative growth of the Japanese and U.S. economies, as well as that of the entire globe.

In the Closing Ceremony, it was announced that the 41st Annual Joint Meeting will be held in Tokyo, Japan, October 18 to 20, 2018.