

Research Papers: Muslims in Japan No.26

Local Communities and the Future of Masjids

**-Record of the 6th National Masjid(Mosque)
Representatives Meeting -
February 2014**

(English Version)

**Institute for Multi-ethnic and Multi-generational Societies
Tokyo, Japan**

December 2023

Institute for Multi-Ethnic and Multi-Generational Societies
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Order

This report is the proceedings of the 6th National Masjid (Mosque) Representatives Meeting '**Local Communities and the Future of Masjids**' held on 9 February 2014 at Waseda University (Waseda Campus). This conference started in 2009 as the 'National Conference of Representatives of Mosques' and changed its name to the 'National Conference of Representatives of Masjids (Mosques)' in 2012 and has been held continuously. The sixth conference was held almost on the same scale as in previous years with nearly 70 participants, including the organisers, although not a few were absent due to heavy snowfall on the previous day, and substantial reports and lively discussions were held.

This conference unfolded in the form of a consideration of the future of the Muslim community in Japan. The Muslim community in Japan has rapidly increased its presence since the early 1990s, when newcomers started building mosques, and has now grown to a size where the Muslim population in Japan is approximately 110,000 and there are more than 80 mosques in the country. In the future, the succession of the community and the replacement of the generation that bears it and the fostering of the next generation are considered to be major issues. It is hoped that these proceedings will contribute to the achievement of these tasks.

As is the case every year, the conference was organised by the representatives of the mosques in the various regions, as well as other representatives of the mosques, We received a great deal of cooperation from many people, including Muslims living in Japan and from the general public.

The following is a summary of the results of the survey. We would like to thank you all and ask for your cooperation again in the future.

Dec 2015.

Hirofumi Okai
Hirofumi Tanada
Hiroshi Kojima

Compiler

(Affiliations as of March 2014)

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List of related research funded projects

This conference and this report are part of the results of research funded by

- 2011-2013 Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (B), Issue No. 23330170, "Coexistence between Muslims and non-Muslims in East Asian countries: a comparative study of lifestyle change" PI: Hiroshi Kojima
- Research on "National Institute for the Humanities (NIHU) Programme in Islamic Area Studies" (based at Waseda University). Representative: Keiko Sakurai
- 2012-2014 Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research (C), Issue No. 24530669, "Three-region comparative research on resident awareness of Muslims in Japan and reconsideration of multicultural policy" PI: Hirofumi Tanada

Programme.

Date 9th February (Sun.) 2014, 13:30-17:10

Venue : Waseda University, Waseda Campus, No. 3 Conference Room, Bldg. 18

(Complex of Central Library and International Conference Centre)

Map <http://www.waseda.jp/eng/campus/map.html>

Organizer: Institute for Asian Muslim Studies, Waseda University

Institute of Multi-ethnic and Multi-generational Societies, Waseda University

NIHU Program Islamic Area Studies, IAS Central Office at Waseda University

Organization for Islamic Area Studies, Waseda University

Tentative Programme: General Chair: Hiroshi Kojima, WU Institute for Asian Muslim Studies

13:30-13:40 Opening Remarks

Hirofumi Tanada, WU Institute of Multi-ethnic and Multi-generational Societies

13:45-14:15 Presentation by Otsuka Masjid (Mr Qureshi Haroon and Mr Aquil Ahmed Siddiqui)

14:15-14:45 Presentation by Kumamoto Masjid (Mr Masahiro Kojima)

14:45-15:15 Break/Salat (ASR 14:54)

15:15-16:15 Panel Discussion

Chair: Hirofumi Tanada

Panelists: Representatives of Mosques in Japan

Mr Naoki Maeno (Gyotoku Masjid).

Mr Aquil Ahmed Siddiqui (Otsuka Masjid).

Mr Qureshi Haroon (Otsuka Masjid).

Mr Makoto Kojo (Fukuoka Masjid)

Mr Hiroyuki Nakamura (Fukuoka Masjid)

Dr Emil Omurzak (Kumamoto Masjid).

Mr Masahiro Kojima (Kumamoto Masjid)

16:15-17:00 General Discussion

17:00-17:10 Closing Remarks Hiroshi Kojima, WU Institute for Asian Muslim Studies

: MAGHRIB 17:17 ISHA 18:38

ROOM for Salat : Meeting Room No. 1 and No. 2, 4F of Bldg. 18 (separated for each gender)

In preparing the minutes, words were added or amended, superfluous words were deleted or explanations added, to the extent that they did not detract from what was said. Some parts that were difficult to hear have been deleted. Parts added by the editors as explanations are indicated in parentheses.

Opening remarks and keynote speeches

<Kojima> My name is Kojima, Director of the Institute for Asian and Muslim Studies at Waseda University. In a manner of speaking, I am the general chairperson. The actual moderator of the panel discussion will be Dr Tanada here, and I would like to ask Dr Tanada, who originally initiated this Masjid Representatives Meeting, to make an opening address.

<Tanada>

My name is Tanada from Waseda University. As an opening address, I would like to talk a little bit about today's issues and so on. The theme of today's 6th Masjid Representatives' Meeting is "Local Communities and Future Vision of Masjids". It was in the early 1990s that the masjid was established in its new form. More than 20 years have passed since then. In the course of these 20 years, the people of the masjid and the masjid itself have changed in many ways, and today I would like to think about what changes have taken place. We would also like to discuss the future vision.

One of the first changes that we have noticed is that Muslims have increased their contact with the non-Muslim community in Japan, which is a non-Muslim society. Masjids do not exist in isolation from society. We have seen and heard about the efforts of some masjids to have various relations with the local community. On the other hand, we would like to talk about what we, non-Muslims who have been approached, think about and how we respond to these issues. Even if there are no differences in language or culture, or even if there is no relationship between individuals, contact occurs in various ways, and I would like to think about the various efforts that have been made in this context, on the part of Muslims and non-Muslims, and the changes that have occurred over the past 20 years. I would like to consider the changes that have taken place over the past 20 years.

That is the first thing, but secondly, another major change that the passage of 20 years has brought about is that there will probably be an increasing number of Muslims who will live in Japan for the rest of their lives, or who think that way. Issues such as food, burial, education and other difficulties in life have been discussed in this conference. However, I think it is only now that we really need to discuss these issues more seriously. In the past, there may have been people who spent their youth outside of Japan, but who thought that in the future they would go to their home country or even to another country. Some may have had such an option or had the ability to do so. However, there are more than 100,000 Muslims living in Japan and there are many

different people. Not all of them have different abilities or options. In this context, when we think about the difficulties and barriers in living in Japan, the important thing is that issues such as food, burial and education are becoming problems that cannot be solved solely within the Muslim community.

I think there are many things that we have to consider in our contact with Japanese society. Not only Muslims but any other people cannot live alone and cannot grow up without relations with other outside societies. Especially with regard to the issue of education, as the second or third generation of Muslims grows up, it will become necessary to think not only about education but also about issues such as finding employment and employment. At this conference, we are looking to the future and hope to discuss education and the steps that lie ahead for working people. In any case, I am sure that many trials and errors will be made in the future, but I would like to use the increase in the number of Muslims who are thinking of living in Japan, or who will live in Japan for a long time in the future, as an opportunity to discuss education and work or employment. I would like to discuss education and employment.

The third and final issue I would like to consider is the issue of education and employment, which, as I have said, is an issue for the second and third generation, but from a different perspective, the issue of how to pass on the Muslim community to the next generation, from those who are currently active in the community to the next generation in Japan. The question is how to pass on the Muslim community to the next generation, from those who are active now to the next generation of Muslim communities in Japan. As we have seen and heard, people who had enthusiasm and high awareness at the time of the establishment of the Masjid have achieved various results using the Masjid as a stage. However, the time will come when these current leaders will eventually retire or eventually pass on to the next generation. We are also interested in whether the Muslim community, which is currently very active, can be successfully passed on to the next generation, and we hope that you will take up such issues in your discussions. In other words, we would like you to think about whether the existing masjids and the activities of the existing masjids are sustainable in the future, or what we call sustainable.

I am sure that you and the Muslims themselves are thinking of ways to ensure that the absence of future leaders does not lead to the collapse, for lack of a better word, of the currently very well-functioning Muslim communities, but I hope we can discuss such matters. I would like to have a discussion about this as well. The theme of this year's conference is "The Future of Local Communities and Masjids", and I hope that all the participants here today will bear in mind what I have said above and listen to the

two keynote speeches. With that, I would like to conclude my opening remarks. Thank you very much.

<Kojima> Then let me move on to the reports. I would like to ask Otsuka Masjid and Kumamoto Masjid to each give a 30-minute report on the two sub-themes, "The Future of Local Communities and Masjids". First of all, the first report from Otsuka Masjid, Mr Haroon is here, but I don't know Mr Aquil at the moment, so I would like Mr Haroon to speak first. Best regards.

<Haroon> Hello, everyone. Bismillah (recitation of the Koran, abbreviated) In the name of Allah, the Most Merciful, the Most Compassionate. The general meaning of the Nisaa (Ladies or Women) chapter of the Holy Qura'n, chapter 4, verse 36, as mentioned earlier, is to serve Allah and not to line up with anything else, polytheism, and to take care of your parents, be mindful of your neighbours, relatives, orphans, the poor, neighbours by blood and those not by blood, companions, people travelling and those owned by your right hands (i.e. slaves). And that Allah does not like the proud. The Japan Islamic Cultural Centre Masjid Otsuka started its activities roughly in 1993, but at that time there was no Tokyo Jamii' and it had been destroyed, so there was no masjid in the Kanto region. The only masjid mosque that existed was the Kobe Mosque. At that time, many Muslims came from abroad and it was difficult to hold Eid prayers, so we started activities to build a central mosque.

First we created a company called Hitex, then we became an organisation called Japan Islamic Trust, then we became a religious corporation, the Japan Islamic Cultural Centre, and in 1995 we rented a mosque in Ikebukuro, and in 1999 we bought the Otsuka mosque, and we have been active. Japanese society is closed, not all of it, but of course I went to the countryside and was very much indebted to everyone. Then when I bought the mosque in Otsuka, I felt that Japanese society was closed, not necessarily because of that, but I started various activities. It is our duty to be very open (to society), as well as the ayahs (verses) of the Qura'n that we have just recited. We have to take care of our neighbours, our neighbours who are related to us by blood, our neighbours who are not, our friends, etc., as a duty. That's why we started those activities. We recited the ayah of the Nisaa chapter of the Qura'n earlier, but there are also various hadiths. For example, there is a hadith that if a person eats and sleeps with a full stomach and his neighbour sleeps without eating, that person is not a believer, and the angel Jibreel came to the Prophet (peace be upon him) many times and taught him many times to take care of his neighbour, and the Prophet (peace be upon him) said

There are also hadiths that say that a person who annoys his neighbour is not a believer and that a person who annoys a believer will not enter Paradise, and there are hadiths that say who is a neighbour and to what extent in Islam. According to the hadith, the neighbours are about 40 households from the front, 40 households from the back, 40 households from the right and 40 households from the left. For example, if we do not look after those who are in need, those who have no food, that is not Islam. If we cause trouble for our neighbours, that too is not Islam.

That is why the Otsuka Mosque has started various activities. For example, the Otsuka Mosque participates in the Awa Odori dance, which is a major event. We have also had Muslim children singing in the Awa Odori dance for several years. We also participate in the Cherry Blossom Festival. We have Eid festivals twice a year, and we get permission from the police to hold festivals on the road in front of the mosque, where we set up various shops. Recently, neighbours also come to buy Turkish kebabs and biryani, and the latest trend among women is henna. The general public from the neighbourhood are also coming to have henna painted. Then there is the support for the homeless. We have been doing this for several hundred people since last year, but even before that we started supporting the homeless in a nearby park. Since the year before last, these homeless people have been coming to the mosque every Saturday to get food, although they don't go inside, because we cook rice at the mosque. After the morning Fajr prayer, we clean the streets together. We do those activities.

Unfortunately, there was not much good news about Islam in the Japanese media to begin with, especially after 9/11, but there was a lot of prejudice. It is true that some people understood our activities, but many people did not understand us that well. Take, for example, the "Open House". Even if we called out to people in the neighbourhood and said, for example, "The masjid is open on what day, please come and visit", or when a famous scholar from Saudi Arabia came, "Please join us when we recite the Holy Quran", at most one person would come, the deceased reporter from the neighbourhood, Mr Endo, he used to come a lot because he used to go to Pakistan and other Islamic countries for reporting and he was a very understanding person, but other than him, honestly no one else came.

It wasn't that I didn't get on well with everyone, but if there was any trouble, it was about parking. We were very careful about that and tried as much as possible not to park in front of everyone's house, but it is true that sometimes there was such a problem. Another problem is on Saturdays. On Saturdays, children get together. That is very necessary. There is no place to gather, no Islamic environment. So the only place to do that is the masjid. I think it is the same in other mosques, but a lot of people come.

Even women, because there is a lot of women's activities in the Otsuka mosque, so sometimes it becomes quite impossible to get in. Then the children play outside. I think that is a nuisance to the neighbours, but that is something we cannot do anything about at the moment. I often warn the children, but there is such trouble because the place is so small.

I think the reason why I became friends with the Japanese people was because of the activities after the earthquake and tsunami, because the earthquake and tsunami happened on 11 March and thanks to that we went there the next day, from 12 March, and the first time we brought cup noodles and things like that, but the second time we brought *Onigiri*. The first time we brought cup noodles, but the second time we brought *onigiri* (rice balls), which were made by the women in the masjid, but that was not enough. Then we asked neighbours, people from the shopping street and the town council to help us, and they came to the masjid right away and made *onigiri* together. But the masjid is also a small place, so in separate places, we cook the rice in the masjid, and then they make onigiri at the town council's facilities. I think that's how a lot of the town council people and ordinary people first entered the masjid. Some of them came and found that it was a normal building, normal people. I was told later that there were actually two women, one woman, who warned the women not to pass here, not to pass in front of the mosque, and that her grandmother often avoided the road in front of the masjid. But I think the earthquake activities have helped to clear up most of these misunderstandings.

I am speaking here today, but actually the chairman of the Otsuka Town Council was supposed to speak. At the last minute, he had some business to attend to, so I asked our chairman, Mr Aquil, to speak rather than me, and this morning Mr Aquil said, "I'm not feeling well, so you go", so I'm here today. In that sense, I think we live very close to the town council. The Muslim population has increased, I mean, we have a kindergarten next to the masjid, so there are Muslim families who move in for that, and there are more and more women who often wear the scarf, hijab. So I have the impression that they are getting used to it. Sometimes ordinary Japanese people also come to buy scarves. When asked why, they say they often see women wearing scarves and think they look nice, so they come to buy them. I think that they have generally become familiar with it by now.

Nearby, diagonally opposite, is Nishi-Sugamo Junior High School, where a number of Muslims study. The school understands us and, for example, when it is time for Zuhur prayers, the school has given the students permission from the start that they can go there because the masjid is close by. At first we wondered if we would get permission,

but the headmaster said that we are allowed to go at all. Now those students come to the masjid at lunchtime for Zuhur prayers, and then they go right home and eat their lunch. In that sense, the school is very understanding. For example, during Ramadan, when we asked them if they wanted to go up to the school building to see the moon, they said that they could understand our wish, but they couldn't do it because there are people from various religions, and during the Eid festival, it is very crowded. When there are a lot of people, 700 or 800 people come. The roads are narrow, so my hope is to use the school grounds even when they are not available, but of course, it still takes time to understand that much.

Then the other thing we do, or hope to do, is that we give out Halal certification. We are also a certifying body for the market of Middle East, especially in Dubai. The reason why we are doing this is because we want people to eat Japanese food abroad. Thailand is a very good example, because although Thailand is not an Islamic country, the government has put a lot of effort into Halal certification, and a lot of Halal food is exported from Thailand. We also have this feeling that we want people around the world to eat good food from Japan as well, so we are also putting a lot of effort in these areas and we would like to increase this more and more.

I mentioned earlier about supporting the homeless, but my hope is that we don't just feed them, because many of them are involved in social and mental health problems. So we are gradually providing such support, for example, introducing them to welfare and taking them to the welfare department at the ward office, but I think it will take more time. Of course it is one thing to give them food, but I think it is also very important to take care of their mental health.

Then there are the old people's homes. Actually, we have not succeeded there yet, although we are trying. Of course we don't talk about Islam in all our activities, and we don't talk about proselytising at all, but still, as a Muslim organisation, it is very difficult at the moment to carry out such activities at nursing homes. Another activity that has been successful is visiting people in small hospitals nearby, such as Yamakawa Hospital. Often, in such hospitals, there are patients who come from Osaka, from Nagoya, from far away. They, too, have relatives who come to see them once a year or so. They are very happy when we go to see them. They are very happy.

Of course, there, I repeat, I don't mean to say anything about Islam or proselytising or anything like that, but from the hospital side, when people from the mosque come, they are not very welcoming. Well, they might be imagining that kind of image, that kind of general religion, and that's the image they have, so that's the difficult part at the moment. So our hope is to support the homeless, of course, with food, but also to support

their mental health, and also to support those people in the hospital, those people whose relatives don't come to see them. One more thing, we talked about scarves earlier, but sometimes we get people who are addicted to alcohol. They want to quit but they can't. Then there are people who are in need of money. Sometimes, once or twice a year, people who are not believers come to us for advice. We would like to continue such activities. That is all. Thank you very much.

<Kojima> So, we are proceeding a bit fast, but, well, we can have enough time for prayers. Continuing with the report on the Kumamoto Masjid, I would like to ask Mr Masahiro Kojima, Director of the Kumamoto Muslim Association, to give us a report on the Kumamoto Masjid.

<Kojima,M> Nice to meet you all. Assalamu aleikum, Bismillah Hillahmani Raheem. My name is Ahmad Masahiro Kojima and I am from Kumamoto Masjid. Now I am going to give a talk on the subject of introducing Kumamoto Masjid and the challenges of Japanese Masjids in terms of facilities and functions. Thank you very much for your kind attention. First of all, I would like to thank Dr Tanada, Dr Kojima and everyone involved at Waseda University for giving me this opportunity. My name is Masahiro Kojima and I originally became a Muslim six years ago, just in February, when I did a shahada at the Otsuka Masjid. One of the witnesses at that time was Mr Aquil. Let me briefly introduce myself. I dropped out of medical school, and after that I worked for a manufacturer of medical equipment, etc. I was a qualified clinical engineer, and I did operations of interest, pacemaker implantation and lectured on ECG to nurses for about 17 years.

Secondly, I will introduce the Kumamoto Islamic Centre and the Kumamoto Muslim Association. Thirdly, I will introduce the activities of the Kumamoto Masjid and its initiatives, and fourthly, the future challenges from the perspective of the Masjid's facilities and functions, and then I will conclude. Kumamoto, as you know, is located in the centre of Kyushu. Fukuoka Masjid, Beppu Masjid in Oita and Kumamoto Masjid is the third masjid. In addition, there are now plans for masjids in Kagoshima and Okinawa. Kumamoto is also a famous sightseeing spot, with Kumamoto Castle, Kikuchi Valley, Suizenji Park, Aso mountain and the Tsujunkyo Bridge in Yabe.

Here is a brief history of the Muslim Society in Kumamoto. MSAK(Muslim Society at Kumamoto) was established in 2000. In April 2007, the Kumamoto Masjid Project was initiated by Muslim students at Kumamoto University. In May 2008, MSAK was renamed as Kumamoto Islamic Centre (KIC). In May 2008, KIC applied for registration

as a religious organisation with the Kumamoto Prefectural Government. After that, in April 2012, we won a property called *Ryujinkan* at an auction and registered as a General Incorporated Association, Kumamoto Muslim Association (KMA). Then, in March 2013, we held the opening ceremony of the Kumamoto Masjid.

The relationship between KIC and KMA is that there is a Kumamoto Masjid and KIC is now a religious organisation. This one is working towards becoming a religious organisation in the future, but it will take about three years. And the general incorporated association is the Kumamoto Muslim Association. KIC has a President, Vice President, General Secretary, Social Affairs and Culture Secretary, Finance Secretary, Islamic Affairs and Masjid Secretary, KIC is the Kumamoto Islamic Centre, Advisor, President, Vice President, Tenure Secretary, Organising Secretary, Finance Secretary, Finance Secretary, General Secretary, Social Affairs and Culture Secretary, Finance Secretary, Chief of Masjid Committee, and we all share the work of these various Masjids. Secretary, Members, Shura Members, and at the end we have Shura Members in each group, such as Indonesia, Bangladesh, Egypt, Pakistan, Japan, Turkey and Malaysia. This next one, which we have divided into working groups, is called Masjid Information System, Masjid Management, Social Affairs and Da'awa Group, Regular Islamic Activities, Legal Tasks and Waqf. Matters, Finance and Purchase, Culture and Sport. These are divided into seven working groups. The number of members is tentative and the system is such that whenever an event occurs, the staff chooses and calls on other members to take part.

One of the activities of the Kumamoto Mosque is that the people of the Kumamoto Masjid, in the neighbourhood association, have a park in front of the Masjid, where they weed together. Everyone is aware of the importance of building a relationship with the local residents, and they actively participate in weeding. As for education in the masjid, there is a full day of educational programmes on Saturdays, including a kids' programme, lessons in Arabic, tafsir (Qur'anic hermeneutics), fiqh (Islamic jurisprudence) and tajweed (audio knowledge for reciting the Qur'an).

We hold public seminars two or three times a year, and the recent one was held on 5 February 2011 in the Exchange Lounge of the International House in Kumamoto City. We had a seminar on world movements from the standpoint of pluralistic religions, and we had a Catholic priest, a Buddhist priest, Father Franco for Christianity, our own Kudi Yasser for Islam, Mr Yasser, who is now at the Kyushu Institute of Technology, and Mr Nakayama from Jokokuji Temple of the Soto sect of Buddhism, who is my junior high and senior high school student. He is my senior in junior and senior high school. I invited these people and held a seminar. The seminar was held in the lounge on the

second floor as part of the International House's multicultural events in February, which is Multicultural Month. The seminar is called Seminar of Our Retreat from Multi-Religious Standpoints. They are Father Franco, Jokokuji temple abbot Nakayama, Mr Yagi from the International House and the interpreter.

I was also invited to give a lecture at a workshop organised by the Catholic Diocese of Kagoshima, with myself and Mr Higuchi of Japan Muslim Association. Mr Higuchi gave an introduction to the Qur'an, in which he spoke about Qur'anic alternatives, the history of the publication of the Bilingual Holy Qur'an for Japan and Asia published by the Japan Muslim Association, and Moses, Christ and Muhammad in the Qur'an. Together with Mr Higuchi, I gave a presentation on my motivation for joining the faith and my experiences, and an outline of the Hajj and my experiences of it. On 23 October 2010, at the same International House, The Hajj of Islam, a Bangladeshi named Musharrab, the three previous presidents, and Abu Hakim Maeno to give a lecture. In addition, Mujahid from Egypt and I shared some of our personal experiences as Muslims with Mr Yasser. Before and after, on 20 July 2008, a doctoral student at Kumamoto University, who is now at Taifa University in Medina. Also, with Mr Omar Deski from Egypt, I talked for an hour about my motivation for converting. This is also held in the same exchange lounge. We also invited Reem Ahmad to give a talk on Islamic life, which was held in the second-floor lounge of the International House. This was the most well attended event, with a capacity of around 80 people, and there was even standing room only. As part of the dialogue on various religions, we had a three-hour dialogue with Father Franco and other Christians at the community centre in the Kurokami area, together with the former president, Mujahid from Egypt, and members of the KIC. In July last year, we organised a workshop on Arabic calligraphy and calligraphy by Mr Sagawa.

This time it is about the establishment of a masjid. We visited various places to say hello. We paid a courtesy visit to the Kumamoto City Hall. We visited and spoke with Mr Osman Bilkia from the Saudi Arabian Embassy. At this time, we spoke with Mr Harada, Vice-Chancellor of Kumamoto University. We have been organising biannual refreshment trips to Kikuchi Valley and Kikuchi Walking, and this year we rented a bus and took about 60 people to Aso together.

We will now get down to business. Kumamoto Masjid is located in Kurokami 5-chome, Kumamoto City, about 150 metres from Kumamoto University's Kurokami campus. The highest priority for us in building the masjid was that it had to be near the university so that we could pray at the masjid five times a day anyway. We found a really good place, Alhamdulillah, a place called the Dragon Hall(*Ryujinkan*). We were able to buy it at

auction. It is a steel-framed, flat-roofed, three-storey building of about 100 *tsubo*, or over 352 square metres. The total floor area is 533 square metres. I think a lot of existing buildings are converted into masjids, but it is financially burdensome to buy and build a new one, so we came up with the idea of buying it at auction and turning it into a masjid. As we bought an existing building, there was an unavoidable conflict with our budget and physical limitations. Thanks to all of you, donations were collected and Alhamdulillah, the masjid was built. The members of the Kumamoto Masjid also flew to all the masjids in the country and visited each one for about two months to ask for donations.

Before construction, we had a design competition and presentations from four architectural firms, and then we made the best choice within our budget. We wanted two entrances to the building and two staircases, but we were only able to build one. Shoe boxes were placed upstairs in front of the women's prayer room, with children's and women's shoe boxes on the second floor. As we were renovating an existing building, there were various restrictions, such as the need to reinforce the columns on the ground floor to make the second floor a men's place of worship, in accordance with the fire code and building code. As a preliminary appeal to the neighbouring residents, a residents' briefing was held after the masjid was bought at auction. The issues we discussed were the need for a dome minaret above the ground floor landing, the extension of the second floor and the passage to the bicycle parking area. Alhamdulillah, the place where it is now is just being rezoned, or the road is being extended, so that our masjid will be just on the corner of the road. I had various issues to consider, such as the colour of the dome minaret to be green, the exterior to be painted in a colour that matches the surrounding townscape, an arabesque decoration around the mihrab, a minbal, a multipurpose room and carpets for the prayer room. We also put up a collective antenna for the residents on the south side of the building to improve the television reception. Then, as it was an old building, we had an asbestos inspection. The results showed that the asbestos was negative, so the construction costs were not very high. We also obtained a certificate from an official authority that there was no asbestos. We removed the part of the building that had been added because of the illegal building at the time of the Dragon Hall(*Ryujinkan*).

We held an information session for residents at the community centre. About 20 local residents attended the meeting with myself and Dr Emil Omurzak, who is now the chairman of the Kumamoto Muslim Association, and we handed out questionnaires for them to answer. The most common questions at this time were negative ones about stereotypical Muslims, such as whether they are not terrorists, and whether, for

example, when proselytising, they go door to door to proselytise. I answered these questions in detail and I think I was able to gain some understanding.

When designing the building, the facilities and functions included, firstly, a multipurpose room, which could be used for holding seminars at the masjid, accommodating large numbers of people such as those from the Tablighi Jama'at (Islamic Revival and Reform Movement and its missionary organisation), or as an Iftar venue. The women's toilet is equipped with a retractable diaper stand, an intercom in front of the women's prayer room, a curtain in front of the entrance so that the door is not immediately visible when opened, a children's room behind the women's prayer room and facilities for mothers and children. The third floor is a residential space, and private rooms can be rented out to raise the running costs of the masjid. There is also a room for an Imam. As the Imam has not yet been appointed, we are renting it out to an Egyptian. The private room is used for guests and stay.

Here are some pictures to show you. This is Kumamoto Masjid. This is a picture from last year's Eid. This is us and Dr Emil Ummullah. During the Masjid meeting, the Kumanichi Shimbun, Mainichi Shimbun, Asahi Shimbun and local TV stations came to cover the meeting. During this time, there was a local TV station called KKT, where we visited Dr Emil's house for a couple of half hours to introduce a foreigner's cooking, and after that he came to the Kumamoto Masjid to cover the event. This is the Kumamoto Masjid seen from the left. This is the Uduh location. This place has a particular focus, especially with a Pakistani man called Mr Isaan from ICOJ. This slope has been designed to prevent water from bouncing back. There are three toilets, including a clothes hanger, three washlet toilets, three Japanese toilets and a proper shower. This is the office.

This is the upstairs women's prayer room, which is entered from this side. The entrance to the women's prayer room has an intercom so that people can talk to each other without having to look at each other. This is the front of the women's worship room on the second floor and the women's worship room on the second floor. This television is designed to show the Imam on the ground floor. At the back of the women's prayer room is a children's room, which is high up, but the mothers can see the children. The children can play in here. The windows are fenced. This is the women's Uduh place. Both entrance areas have curtains. The women's toilets are equipped with a foldable diaper stand. This is the mihrab place on the ground floor, and there is a minbal over here that can be moved over here. This is the Imam's room on the ground floor. The azaan's voice and other sounds can reach the second floor. This is projected on the second floor. There are three channels, two at the entrance of the entrance, where

security checks can be done. This is the Wi-Fi upstairs and the cable for the projector.

This is the upstairs cooking area. It is set up for iftar especially, with a strong commercial fire. Every day during Ramadan, everyone, including Pakistani and Indonesian people, came together to prepare iftar. This is the Imam's room on the third floor. It has been equipped with a fridge and other equipment so that the family can live in it. This is the living room of the Imam's room. There are two more rooms at the back. This is one of the private rooms, with an induction cooker, sink, toilet with washlet and shower, and a mastaba (bench) could not be placed, but the shower and toilet are installed like this. Each room is individually metered. This is a prayer room on the ground floor. This is the men's prayer room. This is the office storeroom. This is the office. When we were designing, we had to face the direction of the qiblah, so this is how the carpet lines up for the worship service. I think it holds about 140 people. Right now, during the Friday service, we have about 70 to 80 men alone, and about 10 women also come. This is where the bodies are cleansed. This is the multipurpose room upstairs. This is the space for women's worship. At the back is the children's room. Uduh place. Kitchen. Dome and minaret. A swell dome and minaret could be installed in the existing place.

In conclusion, what we wanted to say is that the key words are disclosure and transparency. We really do have an Excel sheet that we put out on the mailing list of all our money coming in and out, donation relationships and so on, and everyone can refer to it for everyone else. Everything is decided at the Shura meetings and is properly followed accordingly. I would like to conclude my presentation by saying that each one of us should share our thoughts and wishes and move in the same direction with passion, and that we must be proactive in our efforts to make the Masjid a place of encounter between Islamic culture and values in Japanese society. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

<Kojima> Mr Haroon finished more than five minutes early, so I apologise for rushing you a bit, but I hope you will understand that I have asked for the original 30 minutes. Now, even though it is still about two minutes early, we would like to have a break and prayer and Salat time. Salat will be held on the fourth floor, in Communal Study Rooms 1 and 2, separated for men and women, so please come to those rooms. We will resume at 3:15, so please come back a little earlier than that.

<Tanada> Mr Nakamura from the Fukuoka Mosque gave us some of Fukuoka City's famous confectionery, 'Chicken egg somen', as a souvenir for all participants. It is

available in the break room. It is Halal, so please try it.

Panel discussion

<Tanada> I will introduce the panellists later. First, I would like to start by playing only the relevant parts of the TV programme provided by the Fukuoka Masjid. After watching this, we would like to start the actual panel discussion. Please begin.

<VTR>This word 'Omotenashi' quickly became a buzzword last year. However, it is not widely known that hospitality to Muslims is now attracting attention in Japan, triggered by one thing. A first-class hotel near Hakata Station. At this hotel, where many of the guests are foreigners, this is what is prepared for breakfast. 'At our hotel, we make it easy to understand dishes made with pork by putting an illustration of a pig on them.' This is a service for Muslim guests, who are prohibited from eating pork. In particular, the breakfast buffet is marked with illustrations to prevent inadvertence, as they take their own food.

In fact, this kind of service for Muslims is now spreading in Japan. I came to Hotel Europe in Huis Ten Bosch, Nagasaki Prefecture. Here, they are preparing certain things for Muslim guests. Huis Ten Bosch is focusing on attracting visitors from abroad. In the Kyushu-Yamaguchi area, they were the first to start this kind of service. Excuse me. Well, first of all, there are prayer mats. And here is the qibla compass, which is a compass that shows the direction of Mecca. The other one is a jar, as it is the custom of the people over there to always flush the area with water after doing their business."

Islam has an image of being difficult to deal with due to its strict precepts. Why is the tourism industry now beginning to focus more on hospitality for Muslims? It is estimated that there are approximately 1.6 billion Muslims in the world, and surprisingly, 60% of them live in South and South-East Asia. And in five countries in that area (Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia and Indonesia), conditions for issuing visas to visit Japan were relaxed last July, so the number of people travelling to Japan is now increasing rapidly. Of these, Malaysia and Indonesia have particularly large Muslim populations. 'Even from an international perspective, the movement of people from South East Asia is increasing. Huis Ten Bosch needs to accommodate more and more of these visitors, and we need to respond to Islam. That is why we have started this project.'" When did you start this? On the 23rd of October, we actually had Muslims come and give us a brief seminar, and they said that they would be most happy if we started by saying that we understand Muslim culture and would start from where

we can. Well, we will start from where we can."

Thus, Islamic culture is still not very familiar to the Japanese. However, when I asked this Muslim about it, he replied, "For Muslims, most things are forbidden and only a few things are allowed, but actually it's the opposite, most things are allowed and the rest are not. I want people to understand that and that it is not that difficult to live with Muslims."

This is Fukuoka Masjid, the first full-fledged Islamic mosque in Kyushu, located in Higashi Ward, Fukuoka City. Mr Kojo is one of the Muslims who attends here. In an effort to disseminate proper information, he holds Muslim Friend Seminars not only for the general public, but also for the tourism industry and local authorities. The contents. For example, in the case of hot springs, which are common in Kyushu and Yamaguchi... "Muslims do not show their skin to anyone except family members. But in family baths they are fine, because they like hot springs." Ah, I see." Other things such as vegetables and fish are not a problem, and fruit is also preferred, says Mr Kojo, adding that hospitality can be provided with what is available in Japan, rather than special Islamicised items. But, as we are all human beings, the first thing we need to do is build a relationship of trust. I don't want to ask people to do special things, but I want to tell them that if they have knowledge about Islam and work together, they can live together happily and easily.

Muslims make up more than 20% of the world's population. This will no doubt be a huge market for the hospitality business in the future. However, we must acknowledge that it is normal to be different and deepen mutual understanding. That is what will lead to true hospitality. (End of VTR)

<Tanada> Now then, panellists, please come to the front. I would like to start by briefly introducing the names of the panellists. The first one is Maeno-san from Gyotoku Masjid. Please give my best regards. Then there is Mr Abdussamad from ICOJ, Islamic Circle of Japan. Please give me your best regards. Then there is Mr Qureshi Haroon from Otsuka Masjid. I would like to thank you for your kind attention. I have Mr. Aquil Siddiqui in the programme, but he is not here today due to his health condition. Then there is Mr Kojo from the Fukuoka Masjid, who you have just seen in the video. Please give my best regards to him. The other one is Mr Nakamura from Fukuoka Masjid. Please give my best regards. And Emil Omurzak from Kumamoto Masjid. Please give my best regards to him. And Mr Masahiro Kojima, also from Kumamoto Masjid, who gave the keynote speech earlier. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

This time we are going to have a panel discussion, and I am sure that there will be a

lot of discussion on the themes that I have just mentioned in my opening remarks. First of all, what you have just seen is mainly about Halal, but as Mr Kojima of the Kumamoto Masjid mentioned in his keynote speech, when we think about how the Kumamoto Masjid will operate in the future, there was a reference to it being a religious organisation. This is related to the future vision of the Masjid, but Mr Kojo played a central role in the Fukuoka Masjid in terms of the conversion to a religious corporation, so he knows a lot of things about it. I would like to start off by asking you to speak for about 10 minutes on Halal, including that and a little bit about Halal as mentioned in the video. Please do so.

<Kojo> Thank you very much. First of all, there are two forms of religious corporations: one is that each prefecture grants permission, and the other is a comprehensive religious corporation across prefectures, which is exempt from property tax on real estate. There are various preferential treatment. So we are often asked by masjids in other prefectures if we can set up a comprehensive religious corporation and get tax exemptions for buildings or land when we build new ones in other prefectures. However, when Mr Nakamura and I went to ask the government officials, they told us that even if a comprehensive religious corporation is established, it is very difficult to get them to decide whether the land and buildings can really be used effectively as the property of the organisation for religious purposes. Furthermore, it is a very difficult procedure to get permission to establish a comprehensive religious corporation, so I think it would be better to have it approved by each prefecture. In addition, as is the case with any masjid, there are running costs, and it is often difficult to find ways to raise these costs through donation alone. I think this is something that every masjid faces.

Earlier, the Otsuka Masjid mentioned visiting nursing homes, and last Sunday, the representative of the Beppu Masjid, Mr Tahir from Pakistan, came to me for consultation. I myself am also involved in the care industry. As I mentioned at the beginning of this article, Mr Tahir and myself are involved in the nursing care industry, but if there are people who are going to live permanently in Japan or who are going to continue to live in Japan, Muslims will naturally grow old. And then they will need nursing care. I think it is only natural that they will need nursing homes at such times. In my opinion, existing care facilities are used by Japanese, Korean and Korean residents in Japan, but there are no cases of other foreigners using them. Or rather, I have not heard of any at present. In such a situation, when it comes to accepting Muslims, of course there is the issue of Halal food, prayer, etc. I myself dislike nursing

homes very much. I myself think that it is a good lifestyle to live in the community, not to be confined there, but to live in the community, to go nursing homes during the day and go back to your own home at night. I want to create something like that. It is not something that is limited to Muslims, I want to create an international, not a nursing home, day service. So my hope is to have a building, a day service on the lower floor, a kind of nursery on the second floor, a cafeteria, a kitchen, where we can cook together in the kitchen the food for the day and the Halal food that we serve to the nursery. Doing it. It will also be covered by long-term care insurance, and if you join the long-term care insurance, the burden is not that big. I think we can think of a way to earn running costs through that kind of thing.

The issue of burial that came up at the beginning of this meeting. Regarding the issue of burial, Mr Nakamura and I go to Hitoyoshi City in Kumamoto Prefecture quite often. The reason is that Hitoyoshi has started a project to create a Muslim-friendly town and is working on it. Such a project team has also been formed within the city hall. They are trying to attract Muslim-friendly companies to the special economic zone, Halal companies to the special economic zone, and they are trying to build a complete Halal industrial park. The mayor said that if the people of the town can deepen their understanding through such a process, perhaps they will have a very relaxed attitude towards burials.

<Tanada> Thank you very much. Now, in relation to the ageing of the population, the issue of day services and Halal in these services has become an issue. Another example is Hitoyoshi, which is a Muslim-friendly town, where burials and Halal are involved...

<Kojo> Sorry. One more time. The DVD that you have just seen, I think Huis Ten Bosch was mentioned first, but we also held a Muslim Friendly Seminar in Huis Ten Bosch. There, we gave them advice on things such as the *jouro* (watering can) that we proposed, and that was taken up by them. We want people to have knowledge of Islam and to understand that it is not so difficult to live together, and we don't want people to have the misconception that Halal is something that is very difficult to follow. We have Muslim Friendly Seminars. Thank you very much.

<Tanada> Thank you very much. Halal was mentioned at the end. Before we move on to the future vision, Halal was mentioned in the video and in Mr. Kojo's speech just now, and Mr. Haroon mentioned earlier that Otsuka masjid is also involved in various Halal activities. If you have any additional information, could you please share it with us as

well?

<Haroon> Yes, we often hear Halal, Halal on TV and in the media now. In a way, we are thinking about Halal very much in Japan. Even if it is a business idea. In a way that is a very good thing, but as was mentioned earlier in the video, the image is not that all Muslim food is strict. Rather, it means that most things are okay but a few things are not. Yesterday, a woman came to Otsuka Masjid. She told me that her neighbour had brought her some soap. She said, 'Please use this soap if you like. But it doesn't have the Halal mark on it. Can I use it?' So they said. When I heard that story, I became a bit worried too. I think it's not good if Japanese society starts to think that everything has to have a Halal label. Recently, hotels, restaurants, exporters and domestic suppliers are gradually becoming more and more aware of Halal. I am grateful for this, but I am also a little worried.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much. I am sure you have a lot more to say about Halal, but as our time is limited, I would like to ask you to speak on each of several themes. Mr Haroon, one more thing, Mr Kojo spoke earlier about burials. I have heard that the Otsuka Masjid has already acquired an Islamic cemetery. Can you tell us about that?

<Haroon> Yes, that's right. As you all know, the Japan Muslim Association has had a grave in Enzan, Yamanashi, for a long time, and next to it we had a temple called Monjuin for a long time. However, this was not enough, so various Muslim organisations had been working together to find a grave, but when we tried to build a new grave, it was difficult to get permission. Last year, we decided that there was nothing we could do, so we built a wall in a partially unused cemetery in Yawara, Ibaraki, and have been constructing graves there since last year. We have set up a wall there and have been operating a cemetery since last year. We have a policy of not charging any money. However, to dig a hole and put a plaque on it costs about 120,000 yen. The actual money spent is taken from the deceased person's side. Ibaraki is the closer one, about 53 km from Otsuka. So the people in Kanto area are relieved. Not only that, there are other places in Ibaraki; ICOJ also operates in Tochigi. It is not built as a Muslim grave, though. We also use them in Mie Prefecture and Hokkaido. We have asked temples here and there to take care of them and use some of them, which has been increasing recently. Also, plans are underway in Fukuoka.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much, I heard that the ICOJ also has some activities related to burials and cemeteries, as I mentioned during our discussion, so I would like to hear from Mr Abdussamad if he could make a statement.

<Abdusamad> My companion was Amanuki, and there was a cemetery in Tochigi prefecture where he lived. What surprised me was that, first of all, a person had passed away and we went there to bury him, but there was an Islamic cemetery there from the beginning. The people who managed it were Japanese, of course, but there was a proper Muslim Qabul (qabr Arabic for 'grave'). We spoke to the family and Amanuki, who was managing it. In fact, we are also very troubled about the graves. I asked them if they were interested in buying a grave here. And they said, okay, go ahead and use it. Then we bought about ten grave sites there. Now, maybe two or three people are in there. So we are selling them there. I think there will be a few more cemeteries when there is mutual understanding between the residents and the Muslims. The neighbours have not complained or complained, so I think they will promptly let us in.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much. In the case of Tochigi, you mentioned that such things become possible in the context of the relationship with the local community. I would like to move on to the connection with the local community and the non-Muslim community, not only in terms of burials and cemeteries... Now, Mr Haroon, I would like to talk about the relationship between the local community and the Muslim community.

<Haroon> (Asking a fellow member of the audience) What cemetery was the Muslim grave found near Waseda called? The grave was found the other day. --Zoshigaya Cemetery. It was 100 years ago. So even 100 years ago, a Muslim was properly buried in Tokyo. The Tokyo Metropolitan Government was going to dispose of it if there was no one else involved, but we have decided that we will continue to use it and pay for its management, so it will continue to be used for a long time to come. On an unrelated note, we found out that there have been Muslims in Tokyo for a long time.

<Tanada> Yes. Zoshigaya Cemetery. Of course, there are Muslims buried in a place called Tama Cemetery. We don't know the specifics of the Zoshigaya Cemetery, so we would like to ask you about it another time. Now I would like to move on a little bit to the local community. In terms of connections with the non-Muslim community, can you tell us about the relationship with the local community from the other side, Mr Nakamura from the Fukuoka Masjid?

<Nakamura> Yes. My name is Nakamura and I am the secretary-general, secretary and also legal advisor at the Fukuoka Masjid. I would like to give you a brief sketch of the future of the region and the Islamic community, including incorporation. When the Fukuoka Masjid was incorporated, I heard that the demands from the prefecture were very strict. One of the demands was that there must be a Japanese member on the board of directors. In particular, the representative officer must not be changed from one position to another. The reason for this is that once you have the status of a religious organisation, you have to take some responsibility in society. Also, they have to be involved with the local community. The question is whether the corporation can fulfil the social role that it has, and it was required that there be Japanese people. How about this, there are various dormant corporations now. There are a lot of situations where the buildings and communities are isolated, and where it is not possible to maintain a balance with the local hygiene and environment. It seems that the aim of the prefectural government's guidance was to see if the Japanese could somehow help in these areas.

I think the same applies to the fact that you are going to build various mosques and that you are aiming to incorporate them after they are built, but I feel that the situation is such that it is very, very difficult to coexist with the local community or to do so without including the Japanese people. Otsuka Masjid seems to be doing well and has a long history. It seems that Japanese people are inevitably needed because of the values that Japanese people have and the way they communicate with the local community. Also, there are initiatives with the neighbourhood associations and local schools. The first person to stand at the front there is, in our case, a Japanese person. We are now trying to coordinate the values of the two sides and bring them together in the right direction.

We are also in a situation where we have to bring up the next generation, because we are old. In this respect, it is also related to education. In terms of education, I honestly believe that it is difficult to be Islam-only. If you graduate in Japanese society and go out into Japanese society, you have to be educated in accordance with the Japanese School Education Law, and you have to be brought up with Islamic values and religious hearts. It is a situation that is not going to be easy in the next 10 or 20 years. What we are thinking about now is, first of all, education from kindergarten onwards. And we are also trying to do Islamic education in a Sunday school kind of way. Basically, we are trying to avoid isolation from the community as much as possible, and we are trying to co-exist and co-exist and co-exist and co-exist and co-exist. Briefly.

<Tanada> Yes. According to data from the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, there are three umbrella organisations, including Otsuka Masjid, and about 11 independent organisations. I think there will be many more religious corporations in the future, including in Kumamoto masjid. In addition, Mr Nakamura mentioned the issue of education and schools. Of course the Masjid is working on education, but what is being done by the Fukuoka Masjid in terms of encouraging schools in Japan?

<Nakamura> Fortunately, the majority of our Muslims are international students, and the school where their children are sent has been providing support for more than 15 or 6 years now. They have set up a kind of world room in the school, and first of all, they follow up on linguistic and daily life issues. And as for prayer times, they can come to the masjid, or they can borrow the school headmaster's room for prayer. Besides that, we also have school teachers who are transferred to those schools. For those teachers, we have them come to the masjid as part of the summer training and we give them lectures on the basics of Islam, so that they can get to know each other.

<Kojo> Sorry. This is not directly related to education, but there are quite a few foreigners I am involved with who have difficulty in Japanese [communicating in Japanese]. Those people, the interpreter who speaks the language of the person's country and also speaks Japanese, and I are working with them on the transfer procedures. Also, for schools near the masjid, they come to the masjid to talk to us, but some schools are far away and some schools are not in the city, so I go to those schools and go through the transfer procedures and tell them about school lunches and Halal issues, and how the schools in Fukuoka City are dealing with these issues. We explain to them that the schools in Fukuoka City are taking care of school lunches and Halal issues in this way, and that they are taking care of Japanese language education for these students in this way. If we don't do that, the schools will feel very uneasy, and I would like to do that as a masjid, and I think it would be very good if we can establish a system that can do more.

<Nakamura> Also, the Board of Education does not work on these matters. The education administration alone is not able to deal with such special, and I know it sounds strange to say special, but they do not work on an individual basis, so we have to make strong connections with teachers. Then, the teachers in turn spread the word by

word of mouth. We can change a lot of things. So, information about the Masjid spreads little by little, and teachers of social studies in junior high and high schools come to the Masjid to study about Islam, or if the children have studied about Islam in social studies, they may be interested in the Masjid. If children learn about Islam in society, they may be interested in coming to the masjid through their teacher's introduction, and so on.

<Kojo> So you are saying that the situation is becoming more and more widespread, with schools being encouraged to ask the Fukuoka Masjid if they have any questions about Islam or dealing with their Islamic children.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much. As you mentioned earlier, one of the future goals of the Kumamoto Masjid is to become a religious organisation. There were also reports of various activities already being undertaken in relation to education and community relations, and I would like to ask for comments from Kumamoto Masjid, following the reports from Fukuoka Masjid and Otsuka. First of all, Emil Omurzak, how about you?

<Omurzak> Bismillahi Rahmani Rahim. My name is Emil Omurzak. I am the chairman of the Kumamoto Muslim Association and I do this on a volunteer basis, and I am a specially appointed assistant professor in the Faculty of Engineering at Kumamoto University. It is a little difficult to express my opinion in Japanese, so I would like to express mine in English. At the first time, thank you for the organisers that this is a very useful and helpful event and it's my I try to - before coming to try to learn something about this meeting and I was a little bit confused in the beginning whether this is a meeting rather than it's Waseda University and then in the other side is the masjid and what is the connection and that was when I heard this meeting is going on to be held and it seems it's already begun and I try to read some of the previous reports.

I think it's very useful and I hope it's going to contribute to both of us, so in that sense I would really like to see the representative of the scholars of Islam and from the viewpoint of Japanese universities to give us the real advices. I think now you know the situation of Muslims in Japan, more than us maybe, because we have the rights meeting like this and many representatives come here and give their reports on what they are doing about getting the things to be done.

In that sense, I think, of course you know that we have quite a lot of problems to overcome. It's not easy and mainly I think most of the masjid now is running on a

voluntary basis and there's no such a big organisation behind the masjid or there is no such a big support behind that. And mainly the force is there are the students coming to study in Japan, like from the Muslim countries.

It's just like me. I am from Kyrgyzstan and we have Muslims. So I wanted to - how to say - as a representative of the Muslims, we wanted to make the life of the - to meet the needs of the Muslim society there and, of course, we have the lot of problems to solve and we didn't know how to solve it and in that case maybe if we can have some meetings like this, it would be very helpful, we can learn the experience from each other and we can learn from the opinion of the local society. It's very important for us, especially for me.

I was - really point the - stressing on this because we have to take concern about the local community, the local societies in order to communicate, in order to know each other. If we don't know what is their opinion about us and what's our opinion about them, then it's really difficult to go in one - to come into one point or to understand each other.

So, from the beginning we started like to learn from those who had already experienced from the masjid - started the masjid - how did they started, how did they open or registered their organisation, what was their situation and how was the problem solved, and then I think we didn't do the very complicated - complete research but we needed this to know and we had kind of a questionnaire or we had - get help - get support from the already established masjids in terms of the legal representation and first we had called Raza Habib (?), including him, and to get the advice what is the best, what is the - the law is saying, what is our need, so that's the place where we had already a problem.

And we had also the - they asked as well to Mr. Masahiro Kojima, who told you in the presentation, we tried to get the information from the first sources, like City Hall or like the community leaders there where we want to build this masjid and before building we wanted to make sure that it 's not going to make any problem and sometimes we had a very good success, sometimes they supported us, sometimes we didn't - we get confused what is the best solution, but you know, if - how to say - our efforts made some good results.

I think also they are concerned that the - the common sense concerns of the people, it's not a big problem to find out what is the common sense of their concerns, where we want to make our masjid like - I'll be also concerned if some foreigners come near my I'll also be concerned if some foreigners come near my location and build their building and do their gathering there without telling to the authorities or without

telling to their neighbours and we started to approach the community leaders there and I think that was the beginning of our communication and they also understand. There is no big problem in our living.

If we tell our feelings, our plans or what's our concern, they will also tell us what is their - how to say - what they want to see from us. So, then we can make our general solution and I think regarding the legal representation or other things, I don't have the knowledge about that and actually we asked Kojima-san and Kojo-san to help us in these things and we want to make it in a professional way and we don't want to make any mistake in these things. So, in that sense it's better to ask the professionals.

Of course, there are some problems and there are something that we can easily get or sometimes it's very difficult but there is a way and we are always trying to solve the issues in an acceptable way and I think that's my opinion if it is like it's very general but mainly our point is we should always concern the local community's opinions or we should always consult with those who have already experienced and those who are – we are living with. In that time it's very easy to stay with other humans.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much. I am not going to translate everything, but I would like to say that there were various expectations and evaluations of this conference, learning from the preceding masjids and thinking about the future, and the experience of discussions with the leaders of the town councils and local town councils, and in that context, there were successes and failures and many different situations. There were successes and failures, but the masjid was actually established, and they think they have achieved a certain amount of success. As for the realistic religious incorporation, the experiences of Otsuka and Fukuoka are very valuable, so I think that they will be used as they work on the project. I would like to ask Mr Kojima from the Kumamoto Masjid to make some additional comments.

<Kojima> Yes. We are really working on education as something we need to think about in the future. In the area of Kurokami, where our masjid is located, there are about 150 international students living in dormitories and other places nearby. The teachers there take very good care of the children, for example, to prevent them from being bullied, and they also take good care of their meals. There is also Mr Yagi, the secretary-general of the International House, who is also making efforts to create a Muslim-friendly environment, although not necessarily Halal. That is all.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much. There are many issues that have been discussed, and I know that there are some panellists who have not yet spoken, but I would like to move on to other topics. There has been a lot of talk about hardware, or religious organisations, but now I would like to move on to the software part, which is related to the issues of schools and education, which have already been discussed, and also to the issues of the second and third generation, as I mentioned in my opening remarks. Mr Maeno from Gyotoku Masjid will talk about the initiatives in Gyotoku, with a focus on education. Or, based on the comments of the other masjid members who have already spoken, I would like to ask you if you have anything to say.

<Maeno >Assalamu aleykum. Hello everyone, I am Maeno, visiting from Gyotoku Masjid. The activities of Gyotoku Masjid used to be in the form of an evening school, which was very difficult for the children, because there was a regular Imam, the leader of the Masjid, who would conduct educational activities after the children had finished their regular school work. The educational activities were held on weekdays from after 6pm to after 8pm, after the children had finished their regular school work. For a while, I participated as one of the lecturers for one term. Unfortunately, the teacher who was the main teacher of the evening school is no longer in Gyotoku due to his own circumstances, so unfortunately, the evening school is not continuing.

On the other hand, as a Muslim father of four children, I am aware of the challenges I face as a Muslim father. The reason I say I am aware of the challenges is that when I look at the expressions on the faces of the children who come to the evening school, it seems that it is inevitable, but most of them are brought back by their parents after studying at the junior high school. They look very tired, which may be a misnomer, but they don't seem to have a lively face or feel the atmosphere. We were concerned that the children might start to dislike the masjid, so we started the weekend school as a way of creating memories for the children that coming to the masjid and learning together is fun, rather than cramming.

At weekend school, we start with Nasheed, which is an Islamic religious song, a religious song. I think all Muslims would probably say, why don't you start with the Qur'an? We used to start with the Qur'an, but many of the students were late, so we wanted everyone to practise the Qur'an if possible, so we started with the Nasheed until everyone arrived. Then we have the Qur'an, then short hadiths, then storytelling time, then practical Islamic studies, jurisprudence, how to pray, how to purify, and so on. We also have a teacher from Aleppo, Syria, who is here today. Mr Tarif, who teaches us

Arabic. As part of the practical learning, we give the children the opportunity to learn the Arabic language, which is very important for Muslims.

<Tanada> Yes. Let's end for now and if you would like to make any remarks to the other masjids about your activities.

<Maeno> I was impressed by the approach to school teachers in Fukuoka, especially those presented by Mr. Kojo and Mr. Nakamura, and I thought it was wonderful. I was impressed by and admired the efforts of the Japanese and Japanese-born Muslims in Fukuoka. On the other hand, in Gytoku, there are only a limited number of such people, and it is my fault, but I have not been able to do everything I can to help them, so I would like to devote as much time and energy as possible to this approach from now on.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much. In the context of the weekend school, you first mentioned that you are doing a religious song called Nasheed. I have also just shown you some specifics on YouTube. There are Muslims here who understand it, but non-Muslims hardly understand it, and I think this is the first time for them. Would you mind?

<Maeno> I am sorry to be a burden on your ears, but... Basically, it is a mixture of Arabic and Japanese, so please understand. This is in the hope that children will come into contact with the good qualities of Arabic, or the Arabic language, even if only a little. Now, if you'll excuse me.

(Maeno, singing)

Husby Rabbie.

Lyrics, edited and translated by Abu Hakim Maeno

ḥasbī rabbī jallu Allāh.

Mā fī qalbī ghayru Allāh.

‘alā al-ḥaḍī ʃallā Allāh.

Lā ilāha illā Allāhi.

With Allah, we need nothing.

In my heart, there is only Allah.

Bless our Imam.

I have no recourse but Allah.

Knowing Allah, changes everything.

The mind and body are clear.

We'll tell everyone in the world.

Lā ilāha illā Allāhi.

ḥasbī rabbī jallu Allāhu.

Mā fī qalbī ghayru Allāhu.

‘alā al-ḥādī ṣallā Allāhu.

Ra ilaha illallah (three times, recited).

<Tanada> Thank you very much. I think non-Muslims do not understand the meaning of the Arabic part, so could you please tell us briefly about that?

<Maeno> The first part of the Japanese lyrics is the translation. The second Japanese lyrics are the original Japanese lyrics, but the translation comes first.

<Tanada> Yes, when I saw it on YouTube I saw a situation where children were doing it together, how do you think the children actually reacted?

<Maeno> I think it's rather good. Especially the song you have just heard, Husby Rabbi, If Allah is with me, I don't need anything, is the most popular song for children among the 10 or so Japanese Nasheeds that have been written so far.

<Tanada>The best children's reception. By the way, I heard that you also do some kind of theatre, or play-acting.

<Maeno> We have been performing skits. We started performing them at weekend schools to show the stories of our Islamic forefathers to children in an easy-to-understand way, and we also perform them at the annual camp of the Japan Muslim Association, which is one of the few opportunities for the Gyotoku Masjid to directly interact with the local community. We also perform on stage at public iftar parties during Ramadan, which are one of the few opportunities for the Gyotoku Masjid to come into direct contact with the local community. The scripts are written by Mr Tarif,

but it was difficult for us to perform the plays we performed at the Iftar because it was difficult to see all the Muslims, young and old, children and senior citizens, and people of different nationalities, performing the same play together. I think we have been able to show what is uniquely Muslim in our performances.

<Tanada> Yes. From what you said about that weekend school, about the next generation, which I mentioned earlier in my opening remarks. Mr Maeno, you have talked a lot about the next generation in this conference before, but could you give us some comments in relation to sustainability?

<Maeno> I myself converted from Buddhism to Islam when I was 18 years old, and it has already been 20 years. At the beginning, MashaAllah, Mr Abdulwahab Qureshi from Nagoya, who came here with his family, witnessed my formal initiation ceremony, and then he helped me again. After that, I have been more or less involved in what is called Islamic study activities, and I have always felt, quite strongly, that the players have not changed in 20 years, I would imagine, 30, 40 years or so. I have the strong impression that, at least in the 20 years I've been here, the players have hardly changed. It is possible for one person to stay at the forefront for 10 to 15 years, but after 20 years or so, I began to feel uneasy about the future and wondered if I could continue like this. In Otsuka Masjid, which has been very active in the community and as a contact point, I think that Mr. Aquil and Mr. Haroon have been working hard for more than 20 years, but ideally, there should be a second Mr. Haroon and a second Mr. Aquil. In that sense, one of my major concerns is what kind of activities are being undertaken in each masjid in terms of efforts, securing the next generation of leaders and approaches.

<Tanada> Yes. Since Mr Maeno has just mentioned Mr Haroon's name as being for other masjids, I would like to ask Mr Haroon to answer Mr Maeno's question now.

<Haroon> It is a fact, yes, that the second and third generation, at least in Otsuka Masjid, have not yet emerged as such people. Of course, the women, especially Japanese women, are doing very well. In fact, although it is not visible, 90% of the activities of Otsuka Masjid are carried out by women, so in that sense it is true that the number of women members is increasing overwhelmingly. But men who are leaders, unfortunately, at the moment, this is also a big challenge, as we were talking about this at our recent board meeting.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much. Now, I would like one of you from Fukuoka, either Mr Nakamura or Mr Kojo, to comment on Mr Maeno's question.

<Kojo> Yes. To be honest, Fukuoka Masjid has only been established for five years, so we were still in the early stages of our development and we did not have the second or third generation in mind. Fortunately, the main members of the Fukuoka Masjid are students of Kyushu University, so we have the Kyushu University Muslim Students Association, which is also here today, and the foreign students are constantly changing. In that sense, I think that generational change is easier than in other masjids. The advisor of KUMSA, Mr Takamatsu, is very understanding of this, and he also organises the outreach to the local community. As I said earlier, I think that the second and third generation will do well in Fukuoka Masjid by replacing the foreign students, but as for the Japanese, I think that the current Japanese members who are working hard need to work harder for a while longer.

<Tanada> Yes, Mr Haroon. Good day to you.

<Haroon> Yes. Actually, Mr Amin, the son of Mr Qureshi, the representative of Nagoya Mosque, is behind me. Amin *-san* is a student at Waseda University. When he joined Waseda University last year, I am asking Mr Amin to do his best for Da'awa this time. I hope the second generation will do their best, right? Yes, I am sure they will. I would like to ask you to do your best.

<Tanada> Yes. I will ask Mr Amin to make a few remarks later, but first, Mr Abdussamad.

<Abdusamad> Time is moving very fast. I was part of this meeting when it was first held, and today it's the sixth one, it's been five years. At the beginning, the purpose of this meeting was to bring together representatives of the different mosques and report on their problems, or how to cooperate with each other, or something like that. It's been two hours since this meeting started, but it's more of a report from each mosque. We are now managing five mosques, including Tokyo, Chiba, Ibaragi and Gunma, and the main real problem is the issue of education, among others. Then there is the issue of the mosque's religious corporation. These problems are so big that about 90 per cent of our energy is already used up here.

You mentioned the second generation, and the Islamic Circle of Japan has been

thinking about this for a long time, and now we have formed a small group called Young Muslims. Probably more in Tokyo, Chiba and Ibaragi than in the rural areas, where foreigners are marrying Japanese and there are a lot of children, and the issue of education is coming up, but those children who are educated in Japan are mostly around Tokyo, so the number of second generation Muslims will probably increase there. That's what we are concerned about, and right now there are about five or six young people, male, in ICOJ, who are working together with each other. In conclusion, what I am very troubled about is this issue of education. Many Pakistanis, or people from other countries, are living in Japan, and many people who have more money are having their children educated abroad. I have to think about that, too, in the future, because our own children cannot be educated in Japan. We should really let them be educated in Japan, but there is no longer a specification. Many people already let them study abroad. That is all.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much. I will get a lot of comments from the floor later. For now, I would like to ask Mr. Omurzak or Mr. Kojima from Kumamoto Masjid if they can comment on Mr. Maeno's question. It is about the second generation, etc.

<Omurzak> I will do my best in Japanese. You know, what Maeno-*san* is talking about is probably a bit more permanent. The reason why is that there are a lot of people here who are international students. For example, in our mosque, as in the Fukuoka Mosque, we have a separate student association. And I think it is separate from things like maintenance of the mosque, religious things. We are. So we change the student association representatives every year or two. So that's what has been accepted so far. As for the rest, if you are talking about mosques, there are few mosques that have been around for a long time. For example, I know the Kobe Mosque, it was built in the 1930s, so of course we can talk about that. I think it is good to talk about it because of its history. I know how it was done and what the problems were. I think that will probably come naturally. I think the next representative or generation will naturally continue with Islam as their responsibility. More than half of the mosques in Japan are still young, so I think it is a bit early to ask such questions.

<Tanada> Yes. Now, Mr Maeno, a few comments.

<Maeno> This leads to the next question, but I certainly understand what you are saying. The people who gather in different masjids are different. The people who gather

there have different interests because some masjids have a lot of foreign students, in other words short-term residents. Probably all the masjids in Japan are similar or the same. Whether there are many labourers or foreign students, there are rather few people who intend to live permanently in Japan from the beginning. However, when we think about Islam in Japan, we need to think about how we can make a living here, with the intention of burying our bones.

It has been six or seven years since I started living near Gyotoku Masjid, and fortunately the number of worshippers has increased. It is also increasing during the Fajr prayer time. Masha'Allah, I am very happy about it, but we gather at the time of worship and yes it is over and that is it. That's all there is to it. I think the number of Muslims is increasing all over Japan. But, as you all know, in each area, the theme of this year's conference is the future of the masjid, so let me relate this to that, the masjid is essentially a community centre in the true sense of the word for Muslims, a centre for all activities and events. It should be the centre of all activities and events. If this is the case, then the people who come to the masjid should become true brothers and sisters, and become the bearers of activities, not just so-called propagation or educational activities or ostentatious activities, but also personal ties as brothers and sisters and family ties that become closer, and from there, community building in the true sense of the word can take place. Ideally, I believe that community building in the true sense of the word can take place, and that the circle will continue to expand.

I can't see or feel anything beyond that at the moment, which makes me feel very sad. Everyone comes to the masjid, but that's the end of it. One of the main reasons for that is the feeling of 'it's too early to tell' that you just said. I'm sorry, I don't mean to criticise, but I think that everyone is looking in different directions because everyone has different interests. What do you think? I think that because everyone is looking in different directions, in the end, there is no momentum, no momentum to work together in alignment towards the same goal, no momentum to develop. So I always ask myself what I should do to get on board in that way, but I can't find the answer, so I would like to know.

<Tanada> Yes. Well, I'd like to open it up now, but I just want to say, well, the panellists have raised their hands, so I'll start briefly, first of all, then, Mr Haroon.

<Haroon> It is just as you said, Maeno-san. Actually, when I came to Japan as an international student in 1991, well, at first I was homesick, I was thinking that I would go back, I would go back in a year, and then, well, I would go back after graduation in

1995, and that's what I kept thinking. I think a lot of people do. When you come to work, that's certainly the feeling. But then you realise that 10 or 20 years have already passed. Of course, this symposium at Waseda University is one thing, but I also think that Muslims should get together and hold such workshops. I also think that Muslims should get together and have a workshop like this. I think it would make a big difference if you all worked hard with that feeling of experience from the very beginning.

<Tanada> Yes. Mr Omurzak. A little shorter, please.

<Omurzak> Yes. Of course I understand what you are saying, Mr Maeno. The reason why is because I am one of them. I know from inside, so I know at least what kind of problems there are. As I said before, this is the value of these meetings. So we, too, not unilaterally, but both. We don't just report here, but we all, like, well, please give us some advice. In my opinion, why don't we do that? And what about the question that Mr Maeno asked? Of course, it is lonely as it is. I think it looks lonely. It is quite difficult. The image of Islam is not good. New people don't come easily. But please take a moment and look back at the situation before today. Maybe there is something worth remembering with that. For example, wasn't the situation lonelier ten or twenty years ago than it is today? At that time, there was a situation where you could say that there was no representation of Islam at all. So how do we do our work in that situation, but if you look at what we have done so far, we have experienced that it starts, it starts naturally. As we are doing what we want to do, when we reach the limit of what we want to do, I think we will naturally go in the direction of consulting with them.

<Tanada> Yes. The discussion will of course still continue among the panellists, but as this is a general discussion, I would like to open it up to the floor. It can be about what we are talking about at the end now or about anything else, so if anyone from the floor would like to speak, please raise your hand, say your name and then speak, would you? Then please do so.

<Miki> My name is Miki and I am from Osaka International University. I am a researcher in the sociology of religion, and my research focuses on the relationship between religion and Japanese society for foreigners living in Japan. So, of course, I have visited Islamic mosques, Thai Buddhist temple, and yesterday, a Vietnamese Buddhist temple. There are also evangelical churches where only Peruvians gather, and many other places in Japan, but when I look at these so-called religious institutions,

temples and churches, there are almost no points of contact with Japanese society. I feel that Islam should be no different. The Fukuoka Masjid said that they want to avoid isolation from the local community, but the word isolation has a somewhat negative nuance, so in other words, I think it is better to have a parallel relationship, a parallel relationship. Japanese people do not go in and out of other Vietnamese Buddhist temples, and even if Japanese people go to Brazilian Evangelical churches, some of them go there because of their marital status. So there is no inconvenience.

The people of the masjid are living a respectable life in accordance with the teachings of Islam, without actively trying to build a relationship with Japanese society, so they can be seen as good people. I think that people around them will see them as nice people. In fact, there are many churches of new religions in Japanese towns, but they are not involved in the local community. I felt that it would be better if they were parallel to the local community and had a certain presence there. This is more of an opinion than a question, so you may not need to reply, but thank you for your time. Thank you very much.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much. I understand that you don't have to reply to you, but someone would like to reply... Well, let's start with you, Mr. Kojo.

<Kojo> From me, the slightly gentler one. I am sure Mr Nakamura will say more later. Could you explain the purpose of the establishment of the Fukuoka Masjid?

<Nakamura> Essentially, after all, it is a facility for Muslims. So, as you have just said, I think isolation is OK. However, Islam itself is something that does not have such values. It is a religion for all mankind. Our existence is in relation to others, isn't it? So it's not about ourselves alone, but about working together with others for the better. That is why it is worldwide and the word Islam itself is attached to the religion of teaching. As you probably already know, it is not a special, so-called *Hare*, but Islam in a way that is neither *Hare* nor *Ke*. So, fundamentally, value-wise, apparently we don't think of it as such a separate thing.

<Kojo>The founding purpose of the Fukuoka Masjid itself was to make the people of Japan more aware of Islam, so there cannot be a parallel, or at least not in that way. I am replying to you because this is the initial argument.

<Tanada> Then, Maeno-san, please.

<Maeno> First of all, thank you very much for your very interesting perspective. I would like to reply to that, but I think that things like Vietnamese Buddhism and the Peruvian church, which are related, will probably not expand that much in the future, although they have a certain level of presence, although it is only my imagination. I think that the presence of the Church of Perum Perhutani is not so widespread. However, I believe that the number of Muslims in Japan will continue to increase in the future. Even from the point of view of a Japanese citizen, not a Muslim, the way masjids have spread so far has been in a situation where there is not much contact with the local community, so in other words, it is a 'different space'. I think the situation was such that we even had the impression that a 'foreign country' within Japan was spreading more and more.

However, in the future, there is no doubt that the number of Muslims who have grown up in Japan and whose mother tongue is Japanese, although their origins may vary, or 'Japanese-speaking' Muslims, as I call them, will certainly increase. I am sorry to say this on a personal note, but even I have had four or five children, and Abdul Wahab's family, MashaAllah, Amin, whom I played with when he was very young, has grown up to be a very strong man, and he has four children. He has four children, and since Muslims have many children, the number of children will definitely increase.

In considering the career paths of these people, the next generation and the third generation, there is a concern that our children and the next generation, as well as the children of the third generation, will be misunderstood by Japanese society if we, as Muslims, do not seek understanding and try to build mutual understanding, as was mentioned in the Kumamoto Masjid's announcement about the disclosure of information, I think there is a concern that our children, and the children of the next generation, and the children of the next three generations, may be subjected to misunderstandings in Japanese society. After all, I don't think we can just say that we are not involved at all.

<Tanada> Yes. May I start with the panellists, yes? I would like to stop here for now on this topic, because I am sure that if we continue with this topic, we will have many, many more opinions. Any others? Okay, let's start from the back. Please give us your name.

<Muhammad> My name is Muhammad Nouruddin. I am currently working on modern Japanese literature at Osaka University as a visiting foreign researcher. I

received my degree last year. I am here today, actually not as a representative of a mosque, but as a representative of a student organisation. When I looked at the reports of the panellists earlier, the main themes today were, firstly, education, and secondly, the next generation. I didn't think much about the next generation because it was my first time today, but one thing I have been thinking about is that, first of all, we, especially foreign Muslims, have a problem. Why is it that we try not to let Japanese Muslims in too much? I am sorry to be a bit critical. So the idea is that, as much as possible, we should try to bring Japanese Muslims into the fold and get them involved.

The second example is related to education, and I was wondering if it might be possible to work in this way with foreigners who have been here for a long time, such as foreign students or researchers. I have had the opportunity to go to several elementary schools, junior high schools and high schools in Osaka Prefecture as an interpreter, so I can say from that experience that education is still a big problem. One businessman in Osaka Prefecture wants to send his daughter to an all-girls school for her education. However, the Board of Education says that unfortunately there is no such system in Osaka Prefecture yet. Not all think that their religion comes first, but in the end they could not send her. He want to educate his own daughter, but he can't. So he invite one female teacher to his house, pay her money and let her educate her that way. Within the school, especially in the primary school, the first thing is the food and the place of worship after the meal. These problems arise all the time for the parents who come here. We can solve some of the problems with school lunches, but the biggest problem is changing for swimming. It's a bit hard to ignore the fact that boys and girls have to change in front of everyone. Well, there are many problems in this area, but representatives from mosques all over Japan are here, so I think we have to think about education and educational opportunities properly. Excuse me. I would appreciate your kind attention.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much. Time is running out, so those who still have a statement to make, please go ahead and make your statement. Please go ahead.

<Ali> I am Ali Chaudry, the head of Niigata An-Nur Mosque. First of all, I would like to say a few words about the registration of a religious corporation from my own experience. Thanks to your support, we, Niigata Mosque, have registered as a religious corporation. First of all, our aim was to see how we would not have to pay taxes. I have a job, so when I came back from abroad, the international students spent about 45 million yen to buy the land, build the building and build a magnificent mosque. So the mosque

was completed in 2008 and I received my tax documents in 2009. The total for the land and the building is about 1 million yen. This is not enough for the students to do.

When we went to the prefecture and consulted with them, they said that first of all we needed three years' experience, so to speak, in the field of activities. Of course, I had that, so there was no problem, but it was impossible for a student alone to be a representative. So what I did was, I took the lead and became a representative of the mosque for the first time, because I really wanted to get over this problem. I made the documents myself. Then they told me that it would take three years because there are various inspections to be carried out. I still had to pay taxes for three years. This time the tax was reduced, but I cannot continue to pay 200,000, 300,000 yen a year.

I don't want to exaggerate too much, but after 13 months of working and consulting with the head office and the prefecture officials, we were able to register as a religious organisation and we haven't paid any more taxes since 2011. I think there are a lot of rules and regulations depending on the prefecture. Secondly, as far as questions or consultations are concerned, of course the mosque is mainly run by students, so in April and October, new students come in. I would like to give advice to them on how to live in a non-Muslim society, including the purchase of Halal food, and to a certain extent, how to observe Shariah. In previous years, we have invited the Islamic Centre or Japanese Muslims to make presentations on various topics, but the Halal rules are very strict, to put it strictly. There are no limits. Even if you buy a single loaf of bread, there are different factories in each region, and even if you make the same list, there are differences from region to region.

So I would like to ask Mr Haroon, to what extent do you have such a list? In my experience, nobody wants to take responsibility. If I say I am the representative here and something happens, the responsibility comes to me. Nobody wants to take responsibility. If I had a list, I could say, all over Japan, Yamazaki Bread, this is OK. The list or about shortening, sorbitol, etc. For example, 90% of shortening in Japan is made in Malaysia and is said to be vegetable-based. I would like to get some advice on these things.

<Tanada> Mr Qureshi, could you wait a moment? We are almost out of time, so I would like to ask Mr Qureshi from Nagoya, whose name was mentioned earlier, to speak first, if that is all right. It can be about the next generation or anything else.

<Qureshi> Earlier, Mr Maeno asked me about the fact that the players have not changed, but as for me, I created the Islamic Association of Nagoya in 1988, and after

that I have been active for a long time, and finally in 1998 I created the Nagoya Mosque. After that, there were a lot of changes, and for me, I really wanted to build a school if possible. The problem of education was still growing from that point on, so no matter where we approached, the parents would say let's do it, but when we decided to do it, there would be a first meeting, then they would run away the second time, and the third time no one would come. So these things have been going on for a long time in between. Finally our wife said she would build a school for our children. After that, we did our best for seven or eight years, but after that, when we thought Muslim children would come in, they didn't come in. So why are they not coming in? They run away because Mr Qureshi is doing it or something, saying some unintelligible words. When I go to the people who have personally fled and ask them, then why don't we do it ourselves, they end up saying that their own children have money, as was mentioned earlier, so they have money to send to Dubai or Pakistan or the UK or wherever, and that's the end of the conversation already.

So who is going to support it in Japan, the second generation, we say, but where is it going to come from? If we don't do it, who will? Even though we say so, we have really called out to them many times, but there is no more scene, no more voices coming out from anywhere. This is difficult. We can't do it. Then, from what we can't do, then, going back to what Maeno-san said earlier, well, regarding the fact that the players haven't changed, I want to get off myself too. I don't want to continue doing it. I'm not doing it because anyone is leaving, really. I want to do it when someone else comes out, that's it. There are three Japanese people in my organisation now. It's not just me, there are three Japanese people. So, if someone really comes up, I'd really like you to do it.

The other thing I'm going to talk about now, which is important, is about Halal. There's a lot of talk going on, but what I think is that if you get an enquiry about this Halal, I would like you to put together a list of questions to ask if you can. Every organisation, various organisations are saying a lot of things that they like to say. As a result, they make the issue very difficult. So I think it would be better to bring this Halal issue together in Tokyo, Nagoya, Kyushu, wherever it may be, because we are gathered here now, and let's talk about it there.

The other thing is about the neighbours. It has already come up in this meeting, but of course you have to get on well with the people around you. As Japanese, for example, during the fasting period of Ramadan, we always go around the neighbourhood with rice and give it to everyone's house. When they ask me where the rice is from today, it makes me very happy, you know. So I think that everyone is doing their best to get in touch with everyone in their own place, in their own community, but if you don't put it

all together somewhere and do something, then, as I have been saying, it is a lonely word: everyone comes to the mosque to pray, and that is the end. That's really true. Then will people do it, no one will do it.

I created the Tokai conference, only in Nagoya, five years ago. Now, there are six mosques. When I said I would get representatives from everyone, I couldn't get them. Even if these places call out to them, they don't respond. Because there is no one to do it. Everyone is thinking in their minds about what will happen after they have suffered, and they all build mosques with the feeling that if they go there, they will be able to make a place for themselves. A mosque is fine, but can we really do what we are going to do in the future? How can we do that when this issue is left behind? I really sincerely ask everyone where they are thinking about it, but if possible, I want them to try to put it all together in one place. I would like you to get a leader out there, wherever you can. I know that various education, halal and neighbourhood issues will come up with that, but if you can manage to do that, I would be grateful if you could do that.

<Tanada> Yes. Thank you very much. You talked about a lot of big issues, but there was a question from Niigata earlier about Halal, so I would like to talk just a little bit about Halal.

<Haroon> Yes. There are several Muslim organisations of Halal institutions that are now giving out certificates, and in response to the previous question, we have an online consultation at the Ebina Mosque. They want to bring everyone in Japan on board, but they get together once a month and have meetings. One of their activities is a Halal list. The policy is not to print it, but there is a list on the internet that says this is Halal and this is Haram. If you search for Halal Japan, you will find it. The reason why we don't print it is that Nagoya Mosque worked hard and printed it some years ago. That list is still in various mosques. So when new international students come, they see that list and there is a possibility that they could make a mistake, so we don't want to print it now. There is that list on the internet.

<Tanada> Yes. Now then, Mr Kojo.

<Kojo> The main contents of the Muslim Friendly Seminars are that they ask companies, manufacturers, shops and restaurants to label the ingredients and cooking methods in a way that is easy for foreigners to understand. The main content of the regulation is that all companies, manufacturers, shops and restaurants are required to

display ingredient labels and cooking methods in a way that is easy for foreigners to understand. In addition to this, we are not saying that this is Halal, but that the user should be able to judge whether the food is Halal or not. We are not saying that this is Halal, but we are asking the users to prepare the materials so that they can judge whether the food is Halal or not, and we are asking for your cooperation in this regard.

<Tanada> Yes. The time for Maghrib is almost up, but last but not least to Mr Maeno.

<Maeno> I would like to make a comment and a suggestion that I am sure will make Muslims happy, and I would like to support Mr Qureshi's comment earlier, but the reality is that everyone has different interests, and there are many different things to talk about, such as life and after returning to their own country. But for Muslims, there are certain stories about Islam and Muslims, such as." Izer Ma'ata al-Insaan, Inqataa anhu Ammaruf illa Salasatin, Illah min Sadakati Jaliya, Au'ilmi Yantafiu Bihi, Ausarihin Yadu'u Rauf." These are the words handed down as said by the Prophet Muhammad, alaihis-salaam, salaam-salaam. 'When a person dies, all his deeds cease except for three things. Alms that last forever. Or useful knowledge. Knowledge that is useful. Or children who pray for the deceased, for the deceased. They are offspring", which is a task that should be shared by all, as there is no mistake.

As a proposal, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the members of the Waseda University Institute of Asian and Muslim Studies for arranging, organising and holding this kind of meeting, and I do not mean to say that we should not continue it in the future, but we would like you to continue it in this way. We hope that we can build a relationship that will benefit both sides, and we hope that we can contribute to the research of both sides, I propose that we should have such a meeting. As Qureshi-san mentioned earlier, there have been cases where people did not come to the conference even though we proposed such a thing, so I would like to take your comments here and propose that we should organise a meeting of the Muslim Initiative for Japanese Language People, which was initiated by one of my relatives, Mustafa Tsunooka-san, who is a Japanese Muslim, to discuss the Muslim Initiative for Japanese Language People. I have a proposal to organise a conference of Muslims living in Japan in Japanese, and I would like to invite you all to participate in it.

<Tanada> Thank you very much. The scheduled time for the panel discussion has passed. Also, the time for Maghrib prayers is approaching, so I would like to end the discussion here, but is there anyone from the panellists who really needs to say a few

words? Is there anyone from the panellists who would like to say something? Is there anyone from the audience who would like to say something? Yes, I would like to say something. Finally, Mr Maeno said that if you receive such an invitation, you must attend, but he said InshaAllah, so it is InshaAllah, yes. Mr Amin, would you like to say something last as a representative of the next generation?

<Amin> My name is Qureshi Amin, a first-year student at Waseda University. I was born and raised in Japan, and I was brought up in an environment where I was raised completely with Japanese values, and I am also the son of the head of the Nagoya Mosque. I went to primary school, junior high school and high school in Japan, but I was surrounded by prejudice against Muslims, and because I was the only Muslim at school, I lived in an incredibly suffocating environment, and it was very difficult to live. That's pretty much how I really feel. I am the second generation, but now we have many people from Pakistan and many other countries, and I think it was the most difficult stage, but they planted many roots in me, so I grew up in Japan and know Japanese values and Islamic values. I would like to create a country or organisation where Japan and Islam can coexist in harmony. I'm sorry. Thank you very much.

<Tanada> Thank you very much (applause). All the elderly Muslims are looking forward to seeing you, so thank you very much. This concludes the panel discussion session, my part. Thank you very much. Lastly, Dr Kojima will give his closing remarks.

<Kojima> I don't have much time, so I won't talk about much, but thank you very much for coming all the way here today, some of you from very far away, in spite of the bad weather and the transport chaos. Mr Maeno mentioned that this meeting was organised by the Institute for Asian Muslim Studies, but up to the third meeting, it was organised by the Institute for Multi-Ethnic and Multi-Generational Society, which is run by Dr Tanada. Finally, as a bit of propaganda, in Japan the Muslim population is small, but in Europe, depending on the country, between 5 and 10 per cent of the population is Muslim, and in some countries the Halal market has been established and the state has even started to certify Halal products. Next time, on 4 March, at Waseda University, in this same building, there will be a talk on Western Europe, and on 6 March at Doshisha University in Kyoto, so if you are interested, please come there. So, that's all I have to say now. Thank you very much for today.

(End)