



Dialogue
Creating the Next 60 Years

Project Report

October 22-24, 2012

The Aspen Institute

2012 Aspen Cultural Diplomacy Forum:
The Art of Peace-Building and Reconciliation



60th Anniversary Project
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY



The Aspen Institute

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To A Louse

O wad some Pow'r the giftie gie us

To see oursels as ithers see us!

It wad frae mony a blunder free us,

An' foolish notion:

What airs in dress an' gait wad lea'e us,

An' ev'n devotion!

Robert Burns, 1786

In October, 2012 the Aspen Cultural Diplomacy Forum was held on the International Christian University's (ICU) in Tokyo. The Aspen Forum is part of a series of events that form ICU's 60th Anniversary Project. The theme of the 60th Anniversary is "Dialogue", and ICU has been holding forums, conference, and talks by visitors and organizations from around the world, all of whom share ICU's core vision of working towards peace.

The Aspen Cultural Diplomacy Forum is an independent and international collaboration between the Aspen Institute's Global Initiative on Culture and Society and various partners around the globe who support its vision.

The 2012 Forum was co-hosted by the Aspen Institute, an education and policy organization with its headquarters in Washington, D.C., by the Japan ICU Foundation headquartered in New York City, and ICU itself.

The Aspen Institute's describes the Aspen Cultural Diplomacy Forum as follows:



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“The Forum examines cultural diplomacy as defined by the development and use of media, the arts, and cultural assets in international political, social, economic, and educational exchanges. The inaugural Forum was hosted in Paris in 2008 by the Aspen Institute and the Arts Arena of the American University of Paris under the dual themes of “Culture in Conflict” and “Culture on the Move.” The following year’s Forum took place in Aviles, Spain, and was organized in partnership with Centro Niemeyer to study “Culture and Security.” The 2010 Forum was held in Washington, DC, in collaboration with the Phillips Collection and New York University’s Center for the Study of Congress, and focused on how the US can use culture to communicate with and understand the rest of the world. The 2011 reiteration of the Forum—the Creative Arts World Summit—was co-hosted in Oman by the Aspen Institute and the Royal Opera House Muscat to probe artistic and cultural trends.”

Building on the issues and discussions of previous years, the theme of the 2012 forum at ICU was “The Art of Peace-building and Reconciliation.” The Forum was truly global, but also focused on issues that continue to define and mold the relationship between Japan and its neighbors. The Forum provided a neutral ground allowing participants to look at how various aspects of culture, from media and the arts to language and religion, play a role in peace-building and reconciliation processes.

Each Forum participant had an opportunity to contribute to the Forum. The over 90 participants from 22 countries had an incredibly diverse range of backgrounds, with artists, entrepreneurs and diplomats sharing information and experience with philanthropists, religious leaders, and academic researchers.

Although all participants are deserving of recognition, as are the organizers who worked hard to ensure the event would be a success, a complete summary would be difficult due to the sheer volume of



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information and because of the undeniable value of the contributions of every participant.

In addition to numerous daily panels held in the Kiyoshi Togasaki Memorial Dialogue House at ICU, each day also featured a panel session open to the public in the Diffendorfer Memorial Hall auditorium. In both the private and public sessions, participants brought their knowledge and wisdom to bear on the root causes of tension and conflict, on how to build bridges of peace during periods of conflict, and on how to bring groups together in reconciliation after a conflict is over.

The sessions essentially fell into the two general themes, which we describe in the following.

Part One, “Peace-building and Reconciliation: Efforts of Foundations, Educators, and other NGOs” deals with the discussions heard during the open panels on the first two days. These panels featured presenters from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) such as foundations, educational institutions and otherwise, who are all working towards more efficient communication between communities, ethnicities, religions and cultures using the tools of cultural diplomacy.

Part Two is titled “Peace-building and Reconciliation on the International Political Stage,” and it discusses the two sessions that took place on the third and final day. The first session featured an interview with Sadako Ogata, former Japanese representative to the United Nations, former United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and former president of the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The second session featured a talk with Olusegun Obasanjo, former president of Nigeria and former Special Envoy for the United Nations and African Union, and currently working with a number of institutions and organizations towards peace-building and reconciliation across Africa.

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Peace-building and Reconciliation: Efforts of Undertaken by Foundations, Educators, and other NGOs

The process of achieving peace and friendly relations in Asia is complicated not only by political and economic tensions, but are also aggravated by historical issues. Before the public panels began, the panelists, organizers and attendees all recognized that any discussion involving peace-building and reconciliation must deal with these underlying historical issues.

In his opening statement for the open panel titled, “Strengthening Peace-building: Search for Common Ground” William Leshar echoed an opinion that was made many times during the Forum when he said that not only must religion be addressed, but sometimes “it is the religious people themselves who are the problem when it comes to peace-making.”

According to a number of attendees, the problem lies both in interfaith, and intra-faith dialogue. Suchart Setthamalinee made this point in the “Images of Asia” panel when he described the difficulties he faces with developing a peace-building curriculum for Buddhists and Muslims in Thailand. Setthamalinee worries that it is more difficult to “criticize our own religions” and recognize how we ourselves may be slowing the peace process. “As Muslims,” he said. “We are taught to love other Muslims. But I think that as Muslims, we have to love other human beings.”

Setthamalinee – who also took part in a previous conference on peace-building at ICU sponsored by the United Board for Higher Christian Education in Asia – noted that education is one of the most important tools in peace-building, and this idea rose time and again over the three days of discussion.

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Education needs to address how people see each other, and John Marks believes that education and communication should include more than just the traditional modes of interaction. His organization is called Search for Common Ground (SCG), and operates in 30 countries with more than 600 staff members, conducting peace-making activities on both the large and small scale from a cultural perspective. He says that SCG is trying to change the world from being an “adversarial win-lose place, to a non-adversarial win-win place.” He and SCG essentially apply that same mentality we use in our everyday lives – in our interactions with family members and other personal relationships – on a larger scale.

SCG engages in traditional ways of conflict resolution, using everything from mediation to facilitation, but they also send out their message through television and radio programs, and through work with youth, women’s organizations and with child soldiers.

However, as Marks implored the audience to keep in mind that the key to achieving success in utilizing the power of mass media in peace-building efforts is in creating material that is culturally appropriate. He cautioned that cultural imperialism is ineffective in promoting peace, and can create further division and conflict. SCG focuses on hiring local people who know the customs and ways of life in the various places they work. At its core SCG seeks to “understanding difference and act on commonalities.” One of John Marks’ fellow panelists, Katsuhiko Seino of the Tsuchiura Megumi Church in Ibaraki Prefecture, is engaged in something similar, on a smaller though no less important scale.

The intercultural ties between the peoples of Korea and Japan are as deep as they are cluttered with obstacles, and the relationship is similar in many ways to the relationship between Japan and China. The history of the three countries could be easily compared to that of England, France and Germany, in that even before World War II there had been centuries of trilateral cultural and economic trade interspersed with periods of extreme

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violence. But where Western Europe and East Asia differ is in the fact that though Europe seems to have made peace with its violent history, East Asia is still coming to terms with its history on a daily basis.

Seino related a tale from his own work that may shed some light on why this is true. His church is engaged in a cultural exchange program with Daebang Church in South Korea. After two years of sending their youth to South Korea, and of welcoming South Koreans to their congregation in Japan, they invited Daebang's pastor, Hyun-Ju Kil, and 12 of the church's elders for a series of seminars designed to help all participants face the truth of the history between their nations.

According to Seino, after one of the elders of Daebang Church had presented a short history of Korea, one of the Megumi Church elders stood up. According to Seino, the Megumi elder looked around at their Korean guests and said, "We robbed your lands, fields, people, lives, language and names with violence. If I were you, I would never forgive such atrocities. I can do nothing but apologize to you from the bottom of my heart."

The response to the Megumi apology was an emotional one, and the Daebang elders wept. The Daebang and Megumi church elders were able to use their religion as common ground on which to build their efforts, and the audience at the Forum seemed deeply moved by this example of a truly successful, though small-scale, attempt at reconciliation. John Marks addressed the issue of scale when he asked Seino about what Japan as a country could do to offer such an apology and achieve true reconciliation on a national level, and Seino pointed that the atrocities committed by the occupation army may be too deep to forgive, particularly when the people of Korea see the Japanese government's apologies thus far to be insincere.

On the other side of the world, Archbishop of Galilee Elias Chacour is dealing with a situation that mirrors the experience of Korea under Japanese rule, though to Chacour, his concerns are more immediate.

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Chacour describes himself as “a walking contradiction,” a Palestinian Arab Christian Israeli living as a citizen of the nation that is treating his own people as “second class.” Though the situation seems dire at times, he still holds hope that one day Arabs and Jews will have peace. But that peace will require all parties to accept the fact that they must live together, and that they must rethink how they deal with each other.

Chacour’s school in I’billin, Israel, has 4500 students, 60% of whom are “beautiful, attractive, ambitious, Muslim boys and girls.” In founding the school, Elias attempted to bring his hopes to fruition by teaching the children to “write their common future together.” Chacour knows that it is not enough to have dialogue between only Christians and Muslims, however. The Jewish people of Israel must be engaged, in order to “create a bond of recognition and mutual respect for each other.”

Chacour, like Suchart Setthamalinee the previous day, believes that the bond must be created through education, though he also recognizes that as an adult who has lived through his own hardships, his “mentality was corrupted.” Before one event designed to bring Arab and Jewish children together, he worried that placing a few Jewish children into classrooms filled with Arab children would result in the Jewish boys and girls being “cut into pieces.” To avoid any such problems, Chacour put them all on buses and sent them on a day trip to nearby Mt. Carmel. According to Chacour, when they returned that afternoon, they had “forgotten they were Jewish and Palestinian; they discovered they were just kids.”

He then looked out over the audience, and exclaimed, “My Goodness. How beautiful is that?”

Obstacles, he says, remain. As long as the Jews, the Muslims, the Druze, and the Christians all continue to “each write his own future which is in total contradiction with the future of his neighbor” there will never be peace. As long as their own teachings refuse to acknowledge the existence



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of the other peoples of that land, and as long as the Israeli army continues to bring its guns to the negotiation table, a peaceful friendly solution may be impossible.

Chacour believes in his community continuing to welcome their neighbors into their homes. As long as they mutually refuse to allow their religions to be used against each other, they can work together to facilitate the coming of peace in Israel, a country with so many shared “values, so many memories, so much history.”

Chacour is a passionate speaker, but his final words were the most moving: “We had made enough martyrs, enough widows, enough orphans. We need to give hope to our people.”

After Chacour spoke, Seino reiterated the point that education among young people is particularly important and Chacour responded that one problem is that the educational programs of the three main religions in Israel are very different from each other. Particularly in Israeli schools, “Jewish education is too patriotic to accept the others” and that patriotism must be tempered with a focus on accepting the other peoples who live there.

A question from the audience returned the discussion to the importance of apologies in the reconciliation process, and John Marks admitted that other methods are probably necessary. However, the post-apartheid rebuilding of the South African government and re-forging of a new egalitarian society under Nelson Mandela’s “Ubuntu” policies could serve as a good example of apology and forgiveness making the entire process much easier.

While the first open session, “Images of Asia,” dealt with how the various peoples of the world look at each other, the idea of “image” continued to come up over the course of the conference, including in the keynote talks on the third day.

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Religion and culture guide how we respond and interact with each other, but a number of presenters pointed out that propaganda – which could be said to be responsible for the images people have of each other – can stop the peace-process in its tracks. An excellent example of this was presented by Jong Sun Noh of Yonsei University in South Korea.

Noh discussed how the world looks at North Korea, stating that “North Koreans are one of the most victimized groups” in the world, but not in the way most would think. The entire nation has been demonized in Western propaganda as “immoral and evil,” but he believes there is a way towards peace on the peninsula.

An economic community between South and North Korea, the USA, Japan, and other nations could do much to alleviate the tension, he said. Noh went on to describe an industrial park in North Korea funded and managed by companies from South Korea. The park employs 55,000 North Korean workers, and Noh thinks that if these economic efforts could be expanded to allow aid and investment from companies in China, the USA, South Korea and Japan, they could build 10 such industrial parks which could employ as many as one million North Korean workers, thereby making it “impossible to have a war anymore.” In more immediate terms, however, the USA “should lift the sanctions against North Korea” – sanctions that Noh believes may currently be the biggest obstacles to achieving peace in Korea.

A question from the audience touched on the issues that Katsuhiko Seino is facing with his inter-church program. The example given was the recent riots in China against Japanese business interests and political organizations, and how although the two nations share greater economic ties than ever before, those ties haven’t addressed what seems to be the root of the conflict: Japan’s occupation of parts of China in the first half of the 20th century.

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The questioner stated his belief that economic ties on their own may not solve the problem, but Noh disagreed with the assertion that history is the root of the issue. Noh suggested that instead the root lies in a lack of economic justice. Though China has now achieved superpower status in many ways, and although it has seen unprecedented growth over the last few decades, there is still a large economic disparity between the various peoples who live there. Perhaps history is being used in China – as religion is used between the Arabs and Jews in Israel – as a tool to perpetuate the conflict and to draw attention away from other domestic issues.

During one of the closed sessions, a panelist with deep knowledge of the political workings in China made a similar point. As information becomes more freely available, and as the public forum becomes less fraught with dangers for those who speak against domestic issues, Asia may see a drop in tension between China and Japan. It is hoped that the new leadership of China's Communist Party will attempt to address the issue more proactively.

In the "Images of Asia" panel, Kae Yanagisawa dealt in more detail with the issue of China when she said that though China is expanding, the Chinese government seems to be aware of the concerns of the world community in regards to China's potential domination of the region, and they seem to be trying to "modify their stance to pursue international peace."

Yanagisawa agreed with Noh's point about propaganda having a strong influence on reconciliation, and suggested that a more inclusive policy of growth could help. She defines inclusive growth as being about not only reducing poverty, "it is more about reducing disparity in terms of economy, education, information, finance, markets, and most importantly, job opportunities."

Official Development Assistance (ODA) can make good in-roads towards improving inclusive growth, and Yanagisawa used the example of Japanese

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ODA, the success of which is thought to have come from its three-pronged approach of dealing with trade, investment, and infrastructure development, rather than just offering monetary aid. One weakness in Japanese ODA, she believes, has been its tendency to be more unilateral than it needs to be, with investments being considered from the standpoint of which would most benefit Japanese interests. Yanagisawa wants ODA to take a more inclusive bilateral approach, in which both parties see more equitable profit, and that approach shouldn't be limited only to economic programs. From the point of view of regional integration, which has been fantastically successful from an economic point of view, cultural exchanges are also important.

The first line of the Robert Burns poem quoted at the beginning of this paper can be roughly translated into modern English to mean, "I wish that God would give us the power to see ourselves as others see us," and that statement could serve almost as a subtitle for the forum as a whole. Yanagisawa noted that while the "Cool Japan (brand) is well known throughout Asia...people in Japan don't know much about the rest of Asia." If a better intercultural balance could be found, the region would see a drop in tension as the Japanese people become better able to "understand how others look at Japan," or as Burns would put it, "to see ourselves as others see us."

Scottish entrepreneur and philanthropist Azeem Ibrahim made a comment along those same lines when he contrasted how as one of the world's nuclear powers, Pakistan is seen by the rest of the world as the biggest point of instability in Asia.

There is some truth in that image, Ibrahim explained, and the lack of communication between Pakistan's army and government makes things more difficult to analyze because the "army controls the weapons." However, he also pointed out that, except for India, outside nations have very little influence on Pakistan's internal policies. Every step in the

process of Pakistan developing its own nuclear weapons program was preceded by similar developments in India's program. To Ibrahim that reactive – rather than proactive – nuclear policy offers a glimmer of hope. In his opinion, India is no longer interested in fighting Pakistan anymore as they see themselves more on par with China on the world stage. As Pakistan's policies are reactionary and perhaps dependent upon India's stance, there is a good chance that "a rising India will see a peaceful coexistence with Pakistan as a resolution." If this happens, and if Pakistan's image of instability in the rest of the world is rooted in simple misinterpretation of the country's objectives, the soft cultural diplomacy and other initiatives that the two nations already engage in could help stabilize the region.

Ibrahim was asked later whether he believes that the misinterpretation goes both ways, whether the people of Pakistan have a similarly biased view of the people of the USA, and he responded emphatically in the negative.

"No," he said. "They and the rest of the Muslim world have great respect for the democracy and freedom of the US, (they just) hate the hypocrisy."

In Ibrahim's opinion, that hypocrisy stems from the US's vastly divergent domestic and international policies.

"The US says to the world, 'Democracy is great...but only for us,'" Ibrahim said. "We get democracy, but you get US-backed dictators like Musharraf, the house of Saud, and Mubarak."

If that perception of US hypocrisy can be alleviated, perhaps there would be gains made in other areas of the socio-political conflict as well.

In the first two days of open sessions, Ibrahim's presentation was one of the few that delved into the political issues faced by actors working on the



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intergovernmental level, and though he spoke on the first day, his words serve as an excellent introduction to the final two presenters of the forum: two people who have stood on the highest rung of politics on the international stage.

The first is Sadako Ogata, former United Nations representative of the Japanese government and former head of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, and former president of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and Olusegun Obasanjo, former president of Nigeria, and current advocate and campaigner for development and peace-building in Africa.



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Peace-building and Reconciliation on the Political Stage

Sadako Ogata

The third and last day of open sessions took a slightly different tack than the open and closed sessions of the first two days. All the presenters and panelists in those sessions had described how they each tackle the issues of peace-building and reconciliation in different ways – some through corporate collaboration and philanthropy, some through education and information exchange, some through examination and intermingling of art and culture. But what the previous presenters had in common was that they all work for either NGOs or local level government. (not really. Lots of artists, business people, etc)

The two guests who graced the stage on the third day represented the people who work towards peace and equality in the world on the inter-governmental stage, true leaders in the purest sense of the word. Those two guests, Sadako Ogata and Olusegun Obasanjo, each treated the audience to a frank discussion of their life's work, on current affairs regarding their respective specialties, and on the future of the world.

Ogata was joined on stage by Alice Young, a partner at New York law firm Kaye Scholer. Young acted as an interviewer for the discussion, drawing the audience's attention to Ogata's many accomplishments, and also asking some of the questions that brought the audience to the auditorium in the first place.

The auditorium was already full as Ogata and Young sat down side-by-side in the center of the stage, a setup which allowed the audience to feel almost as if they were being treated to a private conversation rather than a very public speech. The audience, made up mostly of undergraduate and

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graduate students at ICU, kept growing and by the time the doors were finally closed, they were standing in the aisles.

Young had presented Ogata with the Aspen Cultural Diplomacy award for Lifetime Achievement at the previous night's dinner, and when she opened the discussion, she mentioned how even when she was an undergraduate student in Japan, she had known who Ogata was. She was, as Young put it, "A leading light in Japan then and now, one of those rare people who was an internationalist. Most certainly, she was one of the very few women involved in that area."

For the benefit of those in the audience who might have been unfamiliar with Ogata's work, Young related a brief summary of her 47-year long career.

Sadako Ogata began her teaching career in International Relations at International Christian University after studying at the University of the Sacred Heart, Georgetown University, and the University of California, Berkeley. She mentored academics – a number of whom were in the audience – and government officials, and eventually became Japan's representative at the United Nations (UN). For ten years she served as the UN's High Commissioner for Refugees, and had to deal not only with the end of the Cold War, but also with the conflicts in the Balkans, Rwanda, Burundi, and Zaire. She helped create a new term called human security, a term that is now a concrete part of the international relations lexicon, and also served as president of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), the Japanese government's organization in charge of overseas development aid.

Young began by asking Ogata exactly what caused her to take the path of a diplomat, a path her own great-grandfather had followed when he became the 29th Prime Minister of Japan.

Ogata answered that a large part of what she had done had come about by accident. She had moved to the United States to continue her studies in



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international relations and Asian history at graduate school, and she had done research into the Japanese motivations for the Manchurian War. This war ultimately led to Japan's defeat to the Allies in World War II a dozen years later, and the rebuilding of a completely new society in Japan thereafter, and Ogata wanted to know why the war had been pursued. With that study experience, she returned to Japan to a part-time position at ICU, teaching both graduate and undergraduate students, and continued her research into exactly what had caused Japan to become much more aggressive towards its Asian neighbors, eventually concluding that it "all started from the Opium War" in China.

After working at ICU, she was eventually invited to represent the government of Japan at the UN. She initially was worried that leaving Japan would have a negative effect on her children, but with the support of her husband and the rest of her family, she was convinced to take up the challenge.

Young mentioned that Ogata was also made the UN independent expert on Myanmar, and Ogata pointed out that this was a later development. Japan was not active in the initial stages of the UN's human rights commission. The Japanese government – and perhaps other governments too – were concerned that after Japan's recent history of human rights violations, it may not be appropriate for them to take part. This kept Japan away from the commission for quite a while, but eventually, both Japan and China joined the commission at the same time.

Young's next question was about the state of the world in 2012, and how much it has changed since Ogata first stepped out onto the world stage during the Cold War. Ogata answered quite simply that, "the UN was the theater in which the cold war was fought." During the Cold War, though there was some interest in the way colonies were being managed, and what was going on within other countries, the Cold War itself held the attention of the General Assembly.

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With the end of the Cold War, with the dissolution of countries that were previously part of the Soviet Bloc and with the continued fallout from Africa's colonial period, a great number of changes began to take place in the UN in the 1990's. Various former colonies were demanding independence and membership in the UN, and this period was when Ogata served as the High Commissioner for Refugees. The change in the global structure – the changes in political, cultural, and economic boundaries – coupled with the growing desire within developing nations for self-determination, and the subsequent liberation movements and declarations of independence led inevitably to fighting, which in turn led to an enormous increase in refugees. It was from this that the idea of human security was born.

Previously, security was assumed to be the responsibility of the state. So – as the UN is an interstate body – taking away that responsibility of the state to provide security for its people could have had drastic consequences within the organization. The problem was that with the rise in independence movements, and with the rise in inter- and intra-factional fighting within those newly independent countries, it had become “a rather messy period” and something needed to be done.

Security, Ogata said, is what the state provides in terms of border protection, in keeping order within a society. With all the internal conflict in the world, the UN had to start thinking about who would secure the people. As she noted, “There's the Red Cross, but their responsibility is protecting people in wartime,” so as the conflicts were internal rather than external, the Red Cross's role was limited. This limitation is where the human security idea came from, that they needed to keep “the security of the people aside from the security of the state.”

Human security is not limited to simple physical safety; it also includes economic concerns, and is defined using two concepts: “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want.” It initially began in a discussion with former Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi, in which he noted that

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despite the fact that the countries of Asia were all improving economically, during the recession in the 1990's he noticed that the people themselves weren't as secure as they could be. At that point in time it was already obvious that the world was becoming increasingly interdependent, a situation in which poverty in one region can affect other regions. So, in collaboration between former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and the Japanese government, a commission was formed to examine the concept of human security, and Ogata was appointed chair.

Ogata continued her work with developing countries when she was made the President of JICA, a position she held for eight and a half years, with the goal of ensuring that all people in the world be free from both fear and want. She continued JICA's mission of providing cooperative aid to other nations, but also introduced the philosophy of human security, connecting together the economic, political, and social issues that had historically been kept separate. On one trip to Africa to speak with the African Union after the events of 9/11, they held hearings with leaders during which they learned that those leaders felt, "the greatest threat wasn't war, as such, it was not being able to take a child to hospital because the hospital was too far. Then once you get there, there's not enough medication." The sheer extent of the poverty, the lack of access to life-saving health care, is what was thought to be driving the conflicts, which in turn led to increased poverty in a feedback loop of international proportions.

Human security was thus defined to help governments see how best to ensure security of the world's people not only in a physical sense, but in economic, cultural and social senses as well.

Young asked Ogata about her opinion on what Japan, and specifically JICA, could do to improve its recent track record. Until the 1990's, Japan had been the world's top aid-giving nation, but after years of unrelenting recession, and particularly after the tsunami, earthquake, and nuclear disasters in Northeast Japan in 2011, Japan has since dropped to number five or six.

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Ogata believes that Japan can do much to improve its performance in all spheres, but that we should be careful not to equate higher amounts of monetary aid with being somehow better overall. JICA's assistance programs involve much more complex initiatives than simply giving material or monetary assistance, she said. With developing countries, starting with China and other Asian nations, then moving onto the newly liberated countries of Africa, Japan has offered technical assistance, infrastructure support and new construction, on top of the economic assistance they also provide.

However, while aid is important, when she was asked "how do we fix the issues?" in certain countries with currently difficult political atmospheres, Ogata stated that the aid-receiving countries must "...fix them themselves. Outside power can help them, and there are various ways, (but) it's a collaborative effort rather than a charitable one."

This type of aid has helped Japan create close relationships with countries like Afghanistan and Myanmar, and Ogata believes that their assistance is something that "most people remember," a fact which serves to build people's global trust in Japan.

In Young's last question before opening the floor, she asked Ogata about the role of women in diplomacy. Ogata responded that she believes there are a great number of able, skilled women "who are not on the forefront (right now), and it would help if they were."

Japan suffers from two demographic challenges, a low birth rate and a high longevity. This is going to cause a great shortage of labor in the future, Ogata said, and as Japan tends to allow only a relatively low number of immigrants each year, the work has to be done by people already in the country: the Japanese.

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“Inevitably women have to be brought in much, much more,” Ogata said. “But there are times when a woman has to be at home, when she has children, so there has to be an adjustment to the kind of needs women and families have. More women should not only be brought in, but kept in, even if they do have to stay at home at some points.”

One of the presenters of the closed sessions that morning had said something similar when asked what could be done to encourage female entrepreneurs in Japan. He said that if the women were “treated at the OECD average, the GDP of Japan would rise 15%, or equivalent to the GDP of Canada. If anyone is going to save Japan, it’s probably going to be the women.”

During the question period a number of members of the audience came forth, some asking for advice for future study and on how to become involved in the UN, and one person - who in 1991 was a refugee in Kurdistan - even thanked Ogata, saying, “I really owe you my life.”

In both the questions she was asked and in the applause she received, the sheer depth of respect the audience had for Ogata was palpable. When she spoke, the whispering stopped. When she paused to gather her thoughts, the audience collectively held its breath in anticipation of what she would say next. Young’s final comment, to wrap up the session, served as a perfect summary to what everyone seemed to be thinking:

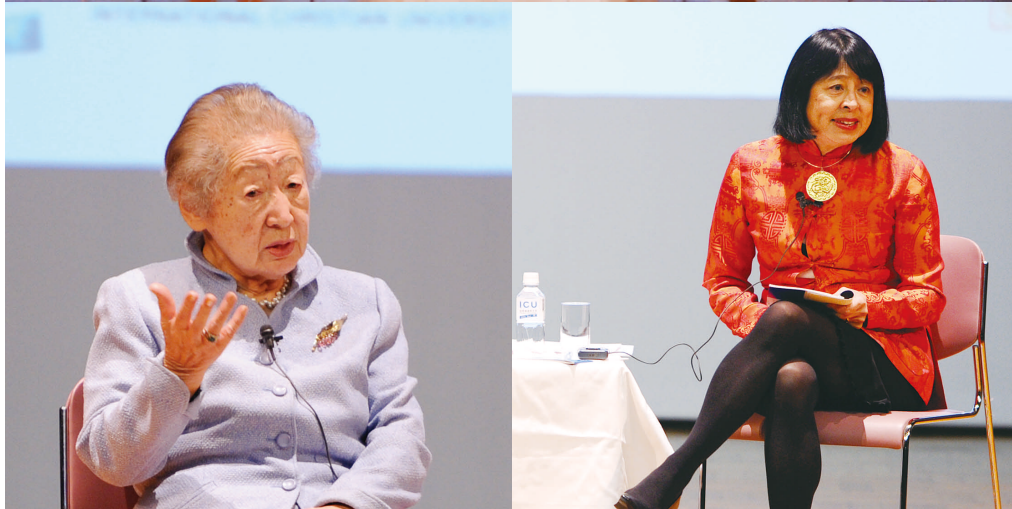
“Your intellectual firepower, your vast amount of knowledge, your very practical approach, and your humanistic passion are ...exemplary. At Aspen we have a phrase ‘Thought leading to action’ as a motto, and I think that you really personify exactly that. ...we and the rest of the world are truly lucky to have you.”



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Olusegun Obasanjo

The next talk was moderated by Kazuo Takahashi, former professor at ICU. He gave a thoroughly detailed introduction of Olusegun Obasanjo, the former President of Nigeria, one of Africa's most diverse countries, and also one of the figures continuing to work towards peace and equality on the continent as a whole.

Before he was President of Nigeria, Obasanjo had served as an officer in the Nigerian military, and served with the United Nation's peacekeeping operations in the Congo. His long military career culminated with him serving as the head of the Federal Military Government of Nigeria and commander-in-chief of the Nigerian Armed Forces from 1976 to 1979. He was the first military leader to voluntarily hand over power to elected democratic rulers in 1979, and he continued to follow that democratic philosophy when he founded the African Leadership Forum in 1988. He is presently a member of the African Progress Panel, launched in 2007 to help focus the attention of world leaders on their commitments to the continent. As an advocate for peace and reconciliation, he has worked as a special envoy of the UN and of the African Union, and has established a number of foundations and organizations dedicated to achieving peace and understanding between the vastly diverse communities of Africa.

Obasanjo began his talk by describing the issues he faced as President of Nigeria, issues that the country still faces today. One of the largest sources of conflict in the country is thought to be the divide that stands between the predominantly Muslim population in the north – a result of Arab influence coming from the land – and the predominantly Christian population of the south – which was due to the European colonial influence which came from the sea. Obasanjo believes his opinion differs from that of many others in that he believes "the portrayal of the situation between Muslims and Christians is too simple (to use) to understand the complexities" of the actual situation.

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Though it is true that Nigeria is unique in the way it "exemplifies...the dichotomy between these religions," the problems are not the religions themselves, he says. The problems lie in how the adherents of the religions see events as being either in their favor or in the favor of people who follow the other religion. The religions are separated geographically and each comes with its own cultures and traditions, but, "as time goes on, we find ourselves not so much divided by religion, but by social economic conditions." The north is, in general, poorer than the south, and Obasanjo believes (as Sadako Ogata does) that this is the source of the tension.

The example he gave laid out the basic societal differences between the religions. The Muslims of the north tend to be nomadic, and when they drive their herds across the croplands of the more settled Christian and Animist farmers, they leave destruction in their wake.

"Violence ensues," Obasanjo says, and though that is "based purely in social and economic factors," because the herds belong to Muslims and the land belongs to Christians and Animists, the conflict is "seen through the prism of inter-religious conflict." That local conflict leads to larger national conflict, so to understand those larger conflicts, we must look at the local, national, regional and global levels, and work to "ensure one level of equity both between communities, and between the identities within the community."

According to Obasanjo, what is necessary is a better grasp of "Fairness and justice. Equality of opportunity. Education across the board, and then of course, understanding of one another."

It is possible that the lack of understanding of one another is what leads to the conflation of economic conflict with religious conflict. Obasanjo pointed out that though there are some extremist Muslims who believe in a violent form of jihad, not all Muslims do. In the same way, there are Christians who believe that they shouldn't affiliate themselves with non-

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believers, but Obasanjo pointed out that the Bible tells Christians to “love thy neighbor as thyself.” The Bible puts no requirements on the neighbor being of one religion or another. In fact, The Parable of the Good Samaritan does exactly the opposite. Obasanjo believes that this is why we have to find a “new understanding of ourselves. A new way of showing...compassion and moral standards that does not know any difference between religious adherents of one religion or another.”

Obasanjo stressed this point throughout his talk in different ways. “We are all human beings,” he said. To him, it doesn't matter what religion a person adheres to as we all share a common identity: we belong to the human race. If people can use this idea to look upon their neighbors, to see them as a part of a greater extended family, Obasanjo believes people can find a new way to engage in dialogue that doesn't involve violence. After all, people see no difference between members of their own family who may be of a different religion. As he says, “My sister is a Muslim...if there is a war between Muslims and Christians, what do I do with my sister? What does she do with me?”

Obasanjo believes that the issues of “poverty, inequality and inequity” are much greater threats to peace, and can potentially cause much more destruction than religion can.

“If we can take care of poverty, inequity, and inequality, and really show the very good human characteristics of love, compassion and understanding,” he said. “I believe we will have a new world where religion is a private way of worshiping your God and me worshiping my God in the way we each understand it, and not a hindrance to us living together.”

Obasanjo also discussed some of the cultural issues that are particular to countries in Africa, and how he tried to overcome those obstacles.

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Historically, someone running for office in Africa would look to their own tribe to support their election campaign. “The ethnic group” serves as one’s electoral base, in a way that isn’t so obvious in elections in Western countries. However, Obasanjo didn’t receive the support of his own tribe, the Yoruba. His support came from the other tribes, particularly the predominantly Muslim groups in the north and the Christian groups in the east. As he put it, “My launching pad came from the nation.”

The issues of tribal loyalties and historical grievances tend to still affect dialogue in many ways. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) today, there are rumors that the fighting is being funded by the Rwandan and Ugandan governments, an issue which Obasanjo was asked about by a member of the audience originally from the DRC. Obasanjo responded that with the situation in Africa as it is, with tribes and ethnic groups cut in two by national borders, or “caught by the boundary,” such accusations will be inevitable. It is easy to believe when in countries like the DRC, groups in the east of the country feel a greater affinity to people on the other side of the border than they do to their own central government. But it can’t be said one way or another whether those rumors and accusations are true, as the leaders of Rwanda and Uganda would deny it. The issue at the heart of these rumors can be resolved in a small part through better communication between leaders, a point which he illustrated with his own experience as UN Special Envoy to the DRC.

Obasanjo had served as a member of the UN PKO in the Congo in the 1960's, and in 2009 he was asked by the UN Secretary General to return to the DRC to continue the work he had begun more than 40 years before.

When he arrived, President Joseph Kabila of the DRC and Rwandan president Paul Kagame, “...wouldn’t talk. They wouldn’t even say good morning, let alone negotiate.”

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He began to tell his own story of his previous work in the Congo in 1960, when he suddenly stopped and turned to the gathered dignitaries and said, “President Kagame was only two years old when I was here. How can anyone accuse him of fomenting trouble in the Congo?”

Kabila then stood and said, “Kagame was only two years old, but I wasn't even born.”

“We all looked at ourselves,” Obasanjo said. What was the problem, they asked. And how had the international community allowed the problem to fester for 50 years? How had the international community gone “this far, but not far enough to be able to deal with the situation?”

The UN conducted its most expensive election to date in the DRC, an initiative that according to Obasanjo was a step in the right direction. But, the international community didn't realize what was necessary, or didn't take the necessary steps, to provide the DRC with the “human capacity on which good governance is based. With (the) security on which good governance can be based. With the institutions that can really support good governance.”

The military forces of the DRC are, as he put it, “nothing to write home about” and the country is lacking in a strong civil service. This situation, in Obasanjo's opinion, should not have continued for such a long time. As it was, after his stint as envoy, he returned to the UN in New York and predicted that unless the commission's recommendations were implemented in the DRC, the peace would “not last more than three years” – a prediction that turned out to be prophetic.

The heart of the issue lies in the fact that outside institutions are “dealing with the symptoms” of violence, rather than treating the disease which causes it. More can be done to prevent violent confrontations before they happen, he believes. If organizations can help countries deal with the

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different identities at the table, with the issues of poverty and inequality that lie at the heart of “so-called religious conflict,” then the people of those countries will be better able to address the issues of good governance and create the sustainable institutions capable of weathering difficult times.

There are limits, which Ogata also touched on in the previous session. The international community “cannot take over... the governance or the affairs of any country.” The leaders and people of those countries must realize that they are “the architects of their own fortune or misfortune.” It is the international community's responsibility to help countries realize this, and to be able to say, “we have helped you to the extent we can...you must take over.”

Once a society has been stabilized with the help of the international community, the work has only just begun. One of the particularly noticeable differences between developed and developing societies is in the strength of their conventions and in the sustainability of their institutions. Developed societies have “order and institutions that can keep things going no matter how weak or strong the government may be.” Changes in leadership take place, but within the civil services, they take place, “as if nothing had happened.”

In fledgling democracies, those institutions and conventions are just as young as the democracies themselves. This led to the “spate of coups in Africa,” which according to Obasanjo, were based on a naive view on the part of the military that their discipline and respect for order could be applied to running the affairs of a nation. But, “it wasn't too long before they realized that it couldn't and wouldn't work that way.”

If democracy itself is allowed to continue, the people of a nation will gain experience and “improve with practice.” Then, when the democracy becomes more embedded in the very culture of a nation, the more people will learn and the more efficiently that democracy will run.

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Obasanjo believes that political skills are skills like any other, in that “you would not take your shoe for repair by someone who hasn't learned to be a good shoemaker.” Since politics is seen as an occupation “for all and sundry,” this causes issues when someone with little experience in governance must take control of every aspect of a society.

“Politics is the science or art on which all other things hang, economy, social position, culture, everything,” and it should not be left to just anyone. Something that compounds this problem in Africa is that most politicians feel uncomfortable dealing with people outside their own tribe, and this is “unacceptable in a country as pluralistic as Nigeria.” The people of a country will find it very difficult to trust that a politician will defend their interests equally if the politician himself is unable to deal equally with people of other ethnicities.

In regards to Nigerian politics, regardless of how closely his successors follow his example, Obasanjo believes that as long as they perform “up to a certain standard,” this will “strengthen the fabric of society.” The government learns as it goes, so while “the first set (of leaders) wasn't as good as the second set, the third set will be better.”

In another question from the student from the DRC, Obasanjo was asked about the tendency of outsiders to look upon the leaders of Africa in a negative way, and he wondered what those leaders could do to improve their image. Obasanjo replied by stressing that the day of the “sit-tight leader” was almost over. Although in the past that type of leader – the ones who refused to give up power – made up “half of Africa,” people need not worry about them anymore. The number of such leaders “can be counted on the fingertips,” so what we should now concern ourselves with is whether or not the new generation of leaders is “giving us good governance.”



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Obasanjo finished his talk for the day by responding to questions from the audience with wisdom and his deep knowledge of the situation in Africa, expressing hope for both his homeland of Nigeria, and for the rest of the continent. Before he left the stage, he stressed that the leaders of those nations must keep one thing in mind above all else:

“Any leader (needs) certain basic characteristics. He must be somebody who can be trusted, whatever else he does. If you are a leader who can't be trusted, you won't be a leader for long.”



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It is difficult to conclude a paper written about such an incredible group of people, all working so hard towards such a noble goal, so instead it will be concluded with a paraphrase of something William Leshar said when describing the panelists in the session he was moderating.

We're going to explore core values, the fundamental values that are part of our religious, cultural, and humanitarian traditions, and how they are expressed in the work of the participants who all come from very different, very concrete backgrounds.

The Aspen Cultural Diplomacy Forum is not a theoretical forum. It is supported, run, promoted, and attended by people who are working on the ground in conflict situations to build bridges of peace.

We should thank them.

Special Guests, Keynote Speakers, Open Forum Moderators and Presenters (In alphabetical order)

Abuna Elias Chacour, Archbishop of Akko, Haifa, Nazareth and Galilee

Elias Chacour was born in British Palestine to a Palestinian Christian family. With the establishment of Israel, he and his family took citizenship, and he studied at schools in Haifa and Nazareth, and studied theology at a seminary in Paris. After being ordained into the priesthood in Israel, Chacour attended the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, and was eventually appointed Archbishop, with his main diocese in Haifa. He also runs a Christian school with 4500 students, 60% of whom belong to the Muslim faith.



Elliot Gerson, Executive Vice President, Policy and Public Programs, International Partners, The Aspen Institute

Elliot Gerson has worked as a clerk at the Supreme Court of the United States, in state and federal government, and acted as president of two companies in the health care and insurance industries. He has served as a board member for a number of NPOs, particularly those focused on the arts and humanities. In addition to his work with the Aspen Institute, he currently manages the Rhodes scholarship program for the Rhodes Trust.



Junko Hibiya, President, International Christian University

Junko Hibiya has served as President of the International Christian University since April, 2012. She attended Sophia University in Tokyo, where she received her



bachelor's and master's degrees, and received her doctorate in linguistics from the University of Pennsylvania. After joining the faculty in 2002, she was made a full professor at ICU in 2004, and served as the vice president for academic affairs and director of academic reform.

Azeem Ibrahim, Founder Ibrahim Foundation

Azeem Ibrahim completed his graduate studies at the University of Cambridge, and has worked as a researcher at a number of American universities. He serves as an advisor to a number of world leaders and governments, on issues related to economic policy, security, and methods of dealing with Islamic extremism. He was made an Aspen Ideas Festival scholar in 2010, and is considered to be a “top 100” global thinker by the LSDP European Social Think Tank. He chairs a private foundation and numerous charities around the world.



Yotaro Kobayashi, Former Chairman of Fuji Xerox, Trustee, The Aspen Institute

Yotaro Kobayashi is the former Chairman of the board of Fuji Xerox Co., Ltd., and is a member of the boards at Callaway Golf Company, and serves as chairman of the Aspen Institute Japan and of the International University of Japan. Kobayashi graduated from Keio University in 1956, and earned his MBA from the Wharton School of Finance and Commerce at the University of Pennsylvania. He has received honorary doctorates from a number of universities around the world, and was awarded the Japanese government's Medal with Blue Ribbon in 1991.



William Lesher, President Emeritus, Lutheran School of Theology

William Lesher is a member of the board at the Japan International Christian University Foundation (JICUF), and has served as a board member and chair on a number of other theological organizations. He has worked as a pastor in St. Louis and Chicago in the USA, is chair emeritus of the board of the Council for a Parliament of the World's Religions, and continues to act as a consultant to the Council.



John Marks, President & Founder, Search for Common Ground

John Marks graduated from Cornell University and received an honorary doctorate from the UN's University for Peace. He is president and founder of the non-profit organization "Search for Common Ground," an organization which engages in peace-building and conflict prevention efforts all over the world. Marks has written and produced a great number of programs for both television and radio, has worked in the US foreign service, and as an executive assistant to a US senator.



Jong Sun Noh, Professor Emeritus, Yonsei University

Jong Sun Noh completed his master's degree at Harvard University in 1974, and went to work at Yale University as a research fellow and instructor. He received his Ph.D. from The Union Theological Seminary, and taught at Yonsei University from 1974-2012 where he now serves as professor emeritus. He has worked with a number of media organizations, and has visited North Korea a number of times for both research and coordination efforts. He is now a unification consultant with the National Council of Churches in Korea.



Olusegun Obasanjo, President, Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999-2007)

Olusegun Obasanjo's long and varied career began when he joined the army in the 1950's. He deployed with the UN's peacekeeping force in the Congo, commanded a division during the Biafran war, and acted as commander-in-chief of the Nigerian armed forces. As military leader, he oversaw the transition from military to civilian democratic rule in 1979, and afterwards founded the African Leadership Forum, and helped launch the African Progress Panel. He is an advocate for peace, reconciliation, conflict resolution and development in Africa.



Sadako Ogata Special Advisor to the President, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

Sadako Ogata's career has spanned five decades, having worked as a scholar and lecturer of International Relations at ICU, as an envoy and minister at Japan's mission to the United Nations, and as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees from 1991 to 2000. She served the Prime Minister's office as special representative on assistance to Afghanistan in 2001, acted as president of JICA from 2003 to 2012, and still maintains a presence at the organization as an advisor to the current president.



Damien Pwono, Executive Director, Global Initiative on Culture and Society, the Aspen Institute

Damien Pwono is the founder of the Aspen Institute's Global Initiative on Culture and Society. He has worked for the Ford Foundation, designing and managing a funding portfolio aimed at transforming arts and cultural institutions in the US and Europe, and at strengthening cultural institutions in the developing world. Pwono was a Warren Weaver fellow and senior



program advisor at the Rockefeller Foundation, and secretary-general of UNESCO's International Music Council. He is a true global citizen, speaking many languages and having lived all over the world.

Temario Rivera, Professor, International Christian University

Temario Rivera is a professor of politics and international relations at ICU, and a former departmental chair in political science at the University of the Philippines. His research focuses on democratization in Southeast Asia, on political economy of industrialization, on the politics of the middle class, and on peace negotiations. He has previously served as Associate Director at ICU's Rotary Peace Center.



Katsuhiko Seino

Katsuhiko Seino attended Meiji Gakuin University and Tokyo Christian Institute, and served as a pastor at a local church from 1970-1975. He has done missionary work in Java, and now acts as pastor for Tsuchiura Megumi Church in Ibaraki Prefecture, where he is engaged in a collaborative reconciliatory program in conjunction with Daebang Church in South Korea.



Suchart Setthamalinee, Director, Institute of Religion, Culture, and Peace, Payap University

Suchart Setthamalinee is director of the Institute of Religion, Culture and Peace at Payap University in Thailand. He completed his graduate degrees in sociology at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa, and completed a graduate certificate at the East-West Center in Honolulu. He works on projects



related to the religious issues that arise during the peace-building process, and studies Muslim communities in northern Thailand.

Kazuo Takahashi, Former Professor, International Christian University

Kazuo Takahashi earned his B.A. and M.A. from ICU in 1965 and 1967 respectively, and received his Ph.D. from Columbia University in 1975. His work involves studying methods to foster the leaders of the future, and how to manage the shift from a “three-generation society” to a “four-generation society”. He works to combine disciplines in order to get to the core of issues; a skill he believes may have been forged in his liberal arts education at ICU.



David Vikner, President, Japan ICU Foundation

Prior to serving as the president of the Japan ICU foundation in New York City, David Vikner acted as both vice-president and president of the United Board for Christian Higher Education in Asia (UBCHEA). He grew up in China and Japan, and received his master’s degree from Yale University and doctorate from Columbia University. He has taught secondary school and university courses throughout China, and has served as the China consultant for the Lutheran World Federation headquartered in Geneva.



Kano Yamamoto, Managing Trustee & Alternate Chairman of the Board of Trustees, International Christian University

Kano Yamamoto has worked as professor of international finance and economy at ICU, and also served as chair of ICU’s international studies division. He has done work with the Bank of



involved in programs in inter-religious understanding and peace-building. He also aids the development of ICU's service-learning program and in the building of service-learning networks with other institutes of higher learning throughout Asia.

Kae Yanagisawa, Director General of East, Central Asia and Caucasus Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency

Kae Yanagisawa studied the Chinese language at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, and received her M.A. in international relations from Johns Hopkins University. She has worked for the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for many years, helping formulate plan, monitor, and evaluate programs and projects. She served JICA as its resident representative in Uzbekistan, and worked with the United Nations Development Program promoting south-south cooperation between developing nations. Her research focuses on regional studies in China and Central Asia, and international response to natural disasters.



Alice Young Partner and Chair, Asia Pacific Practice, Kaye Scholer LLP

Alice Young studied at Yale College, and received her law degree from Harvard Law School. She has advised corporations and entrepreneurs on doing business in the US and Asia for over 35 years, and helps clients identify potential partners and resources in Asia. She has received a number of accolades and awards for her work, presently sits on the boards of various organizations, including Mizuho Trust & Banking (USA), and is a trustee of the Aspen Institute and other foundations.

