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Vancouver Fukuoka Kenjinkai

Dear Mr. Masaru Kiyota

I hope this letter finds you in health and happiness.

I would like to wholeheartedly congratulate the Vancouver Fukuoka Kenjinkai on reaching the 35th anniversary of your kenjinkai's founding this year. I have a deep respect for the great efforts you and the other members have given in kenjinkai activities to date.

Throughout the pre- and post-war period, as many as 55,000 citizens of Fukuoka Prefecture emigrated overseas, mainly to Hawaii and other parts of North and South America. While overcoming numerous difficulties, these migrants shone in various fields including politics, economics, education, culture and medicine, and contributed greatly to the development of those countries.

These emigrants and their descendants hold a deep connection to their homeland and have now established 21 Fukuoka Kenjinkai in 9 different countries. They fulfill an important role as a bridge between the prefecture and those countries, while helping preserve local Japanese traditions and culture.

Held every three years since 1992, the Worldwide Kenjinkai Convention is an opportunity for these various kenjinkai to gather as one, share information about their activities and strengthen the relationship with their home in Fukuoka Prefecture. In October this year, the 8th Convention will be held in Fukuoka for the first time in 12 years. In order to provide a special local welcome for everyone from the kenjinkai, the "8th Worldwide Fukuoka Kenjinkai Convention Executive Committee" was established, bringing together prefectural and local governments, as well as organizations with close ties to kenjinkai and their respective countries.

As well as being an opportunity for kenjinkai members to see first-hand the state

of their hometown, we would also like this convention to spread knowledge of the kenjinkai to many people in Fukuoka. In addition, we are aiming to further develop the kenjinkai as a bridge between Fukuoka and the world by strengthening networks, expanding interaction with related businesses and promoting youth and other new exchanges.

As such, I hope to see many members of your kenjinkai, including yourself, join us for this year's convention.

8th Worldwide Fukuoka Kenjinkai Convention Executive Committee Chairman
Fukuoka Prefecture Governor Hiroshi Ogawa

小川 洋