

【Appealing Okayama' s ESD in Mexico】

Hello. This is Omori, Mayor of Okayama.

I had visited Mexico to attend “the second learning city international conference” held by UNESCO and Mexico City government through 27th September to 1st October.

At this conference, there was a speech session of overseas mayors. Heads of Korea along with me from the Asia-Pacific region and Germany, Greece, Jamaica, and Brazil were participated in and appealed their own policy while I gave a speech about how Okayama has carried out ESD activities so far in particular “ESD Okayama Model” which base is in community center. I believe it was a fruitful speech to spread the name of Okayama which leads ESD activities of the world more, at where many acquaintances I made at last year' s world conference in Okayama attended.

When I attended another session, the director of OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) remarked that Japanese intellectual level is high, yet it hasn' t been made the most of it for work and that' s because environment where women can work actively hasn' t organized well yet. I am resolute for hastening further efforts toward realizing women' s social advancement.

At dinner which was held previous to the conference, we exchanged information regarding ESD in a harmonious atmosphere with a professor of University of Hamburg in Germany, an executive in charge of education of Mexico City and executives of Chinese government Ministry of Education at the same table during eating.

It took for nearly 20 hours to and from including transit but I only stayed 2 days which was quite tough schedule to attend the conference and I felt dizzy due to jet lag. However, I believe that I gave certain results under this condition and I' d like to provide information about Okayama' s ESD activities more actively in cooperate with the people involved within Okayama city.

This was my first visit to Mexico for me. What left a particular impression to me was a horrible traffic jam. I was surprised by this much congestion which it took 1 hour to move about 3km distance from the hotel to a dinner venue.

Its population is approximately 9 million and 20 million populations including surrounding areas. Mexico City is a megalopolis which many people live but because of large wealth disparity and dangerous places, those who earn certain incomes basically avoid using public transportation and use their own cars, which is the biggest reason of the terrible traffic jam. These conditions are very different from Japan and I felt to change the social structure is not easy to do.

By the way, during my stay I had Mexican foods which source was pretty spicy to eat. Those who are bad at spicy hot foods should be careful when you visit Mexico.

In conclusion, I' d like to take this opportunity to deeply thank Japanese Ambassador in Mexico and the embassy staff members for taking good care of me during my stay.