

The KIZUNA Project

An extraordinary student exchange program has taken shape in the wake of the **Great East Japan Earthquake** and tsunami, which struck northeastern Japan on **March 11, 2011**, taking the lives of approximately 16,000 people and devastating the infrastructure and economy of the region.

Japan has undergone a remarkably swift recovery since the disaster. While many challenges still remain, the resilience of the local people has resulted in the return of stability in many aspects of their lives. In order to promote understanding of Japan's revitalization among the international community, more than **10,000 youths from 41 countries and regions** will take part in exchanges with schools in regions affected by the earthquake through the **KIZUNA Project**.

Kizuna refers the ties that bind human relations, and the Project is also an opportunity for Japan to share its experiences in dealing with this unprecedented disaster, as well as to express its heartfelt appreciation to friends worldwide who extended invaluable support in its time of need.

One hundred students from Canada will participate in the project with representation from Toronto, Montreal, Winnipeg and Vancouver. At the same time, 100 Japanese students from the affected areas will visit the same Canadian cities. With respect to Toronto, 24 students of Seiwa Gakuen High School in Sendai, Japan, and 20 students from Malvern Collegiate Institute in Toronto will conduct an exchange in March 2013 of this project.

- I. **Targeted countries and regions -**
India, Thailand, Philippine, Cambodia, Australia, New Zealand, Singapore, the USA, Vietnam, Myanmar, Malaysia, East Timor, China, South Korea, Mongol, Chinese Taipei, Brunei, Canada, 14 Pacific island countries and regions such as ASEAN, SAARC, etc.
- II. **Types of programmes**
 - A. Inviting youths from overseas to Japan to visit the disaster area, make school visits, be billeted for home-stays, etc.
 - B. Dispatching youths in the disaster area to other countries to give presentations on the reconstruction, make school visits, be billeted for home-stays, etc.

Each implementation of the KIZUNA Project includes a visit to the area affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake by foreign students. They will take part in **information sessions as well as volunteer activities**. None of these activities will place the safety of the students in jeopardy. All of the exchanges will be complete by **the end of March 2013**.