



THE MAUREEN AND MIKE MANSFIELD FOUNDATION  
*Advancing Understanding and Cooperation in U.S.-Asia Relations*

have

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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### **Prominent Japanese Women Policymakers to Visit Washington, D.C., to Examine Social Issues with U.S. Counterparts**

The looming problem of aging populations and shrinking workforces threatens to sap the economic growth of many of the world's leading nations, with Japan facing this quagmire first and the United States close behind. A group of seven prominent Japanese women policymakers will join their U.S. counterparts to examine public policies that respond to this problem during a weeklong exchange in the Twin Cities, July 9-12, and in Washington, D.C., July 12-16. The National Association of Japan-America Societies and the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation are the program organizers, with major funding from Citigroup and in-kind support from All Nippon Airways.

Entitled "From the Capitals to the Community: Women and Public Policy in the United States and Japan," the exchange will focus on such topics as healthcare and pension reform, immigration and human trafficking, and policies that support women in the workforce.

Members of the Japanese delegation include:

**Fujii, Kiyoko** Chairman, Yokohama Women's Association for Communication and Networking (YWACN) and former Deputy Mayor of the city of Yokohama

**Higuchi, Keiko** President, Women's Association for a Better Aging Society, Osaka

**Mizushima, Hiroko** Member, House of Representatives (Democratic Party of Japan)

**Nakamura, Tsuyako** Professor, Doshisha University

**Otani, Mikiko** Attorney, Otani Law Offices, Tokyo

**Shikano, Sachie** CEO, YWCA of Osaka

**Tamai, Keiko** Senior Program Officer, Asia Foundation

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During the D.C. portion of the visit, **Karen Fraser** Senator (D), District 22, Washington State Legislature, will join the delegation. Ms. Fraser traveled to Japan in December 2004 with a delegation of seven U.S. women officials as part of the first phase of the exchange. In Washington, D.C., the group of U.S. and Japanese leaders will participate in briefings at the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation, visit Capitol Hill and congressional offices, attend a briefing at AARP on social security issues, visit National Women's Law Center, meet with Wade Horn, assistant secretary for children and families at the Department of Health and Human Services, and speak at a public forum at the Japan Information and Culture Center.

The following event is open to the media:

Thursday, July 14, 2005, 3:00 pm – 5:30 pm

**Public forum at the Japan Information and Culture Center**

1155 21<sup>st</sup> Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036 Tel: 202-238-6949

**All media must contact Mary-Jane Atwater (Tel: 202-347-1994) prior to attending.**

“With Japan and the United States facing many of the same social policy challenges, there is much women policymakers in both countries can learn from one another,” said Paige Cottingham-Streater, deputy director of the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation. “This exchange program is designed to open channels of communication between our two nations to benefit the policymaking process on such critical issues as healthcare, immigration reform, policies that support women in the workplace, and the impact of our aging societies.”

The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation is a 501(c)3 organization that promotes understanding and cooperation among the nations and peoples of Asia and the United States. The Foundation honors the late Mike Mansfield and his wife Maureen. Mansfield served as U.S. congressman from Montana, senate majority leader and U.S. ambassador to Japan. Maureen and Mike Mansfield's values, ideals and vision for U.S.-Asia relations continue through the Foundation's exchanges, dialogues, research and educational programs, which create networks among U.S. and Asian leaders, explore the underlying issues influencing public policies, and increase awareness about the nations and peoples of Asia. The Foundation has offices in Washington, D.C.; Tokyo, Japan; and Missoula, Montana.

The National Association of Japan-America Societies, Inc. (NAJAS) is a private, non-profit, non-partisan organization that offers educational, cultural and business programs about Japan and

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U.S.-Japan relations to the general public through its member Japan and Japan-America Societies. NAJAS is the only national non-profit network in the United States dedicated to public education about Japan. NAJAS consists of 40 independent Japan-related organizations located in 32 cities around the country. Its membership cuts across usual group boundaries (business, political, academic, American, Japanese, etc.) and affords a variety of perspectives on U.S.-Japan relations.

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