

Tokyo Declaration of the Asia Volunteer Probation Officers Meeting

On 9th and 10th July 2014, the Asia Volunteer Probation Officers Meeting hosted by the Japan Rehabilitation Aid Association and the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI) was held in Tokyo. The meeting was attended by delegations from Korea, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Japan, as well as observers from Kenya and China. Each delegation included volunteer probation officers/aides (hereinafter collectively referred to as volunteer probation officers) and the officials responsible for community corrections. The participants of the meeting shared practices and challenges of their countries' volunteer probation officer programmes and recognized the importance of the role of volunteer probation officers in rehabilitation of offenders in the community. In order to further develop community-based treatment, especially volunteer probation officer programmes in their respective countries, the participants of the meeting further recognized the importance of the following principles.

1. Volunteer probation officers must be fair and honest and must continually strive for the enhancement of their character, insight and knowledge. In addition, they should dedicate themselves to the rehabilitation of offenders in the community so that offenders will be reintegrated in the community and they will contribute to the creation of a peaceful and orderly community in the future.
2. Crucial factors for the rehabilitation of offenders in the community are guidance and supervision; providing support for housing, employment, welfare and education, and providing consultation; and understanding and cooperation of the community. In order to implement the above-mentioned, volunteer probation officers should closely cooperate with the government's efforts, and collaborate with other organizations, such as NGOs, halfway houses, entrepreneurs, employers, schools and community residents.
3. Volunteer probation officers should be carefully screened and recruited in accordance with their individual aptitude and interests; and sufficient numbers to meet the demands of each country should be ensured. The relevant authorities supervising volunteer probation officers should provide appropriate training, support and advice. The welfare and safety of the volunteer probation officers should also be ensured to allow them to carry out their volunteer duties

efficiently and effectively. Measures to be considered include reducing financial and psychological burdens on volunteer probation officers, establishing centres for volunteer probation officers' activities, and introducing a compensation scheme for damages incurred when engaged in official duties. Furthermore, public recognition of volunteer probation officers should be enhanced for the services they render for the well-being of the community. Government efforts are strongly encouraged to address these issues.

Therefore, we, the participants of the Asia Volunteer Probation Officers Meeting, hereby declare that we aspire to these principles and resolve to continuously collaborate and create an international network in the Asian Region by implementing events such as joint seminars, holding international meetings or conferences, conducting mutual visits, sharing information, and so on.