

# Embassy of Japan

## Tonga

### **PRESS RELEASE**

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#### **Soroban Competition: A cultural and educational bond of friendship between Tonga and Japan**

The 9<sup>th</sup> National Soroban Competition in the Kingdom of Tonga was held on Thursday, 7 March 2019 at the Queen Salote Memorial Hall in Nuku'alofa. His Excellency Mr. Tetsuya Ishii, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Kingdom of Tonga, attended the competition along with Dr. Raelyn 'Esau, Acting Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Education and Training. Present also at the competition were Mr. Masao Fujii, Director General of the International Soroban Diffusion Foundation (ISDF) from Japan, Mr. Shinji Yoshiura, Resident Representative of JICA-Tonga, soroban teachers, parents and supporters of the competitors.

His Excellency Mr. Tetsuya Ishii welcomed the young soroban competitors partially in Tongan language and reiterated the significance of soroban being expressed in the "Three C's." "Soroban is not only good for improving your Calculation Skills, but also for boosting your Concentration and for enhancing your Confidence," he said. He was pleased that through soroban, Japan and Tonga share a cultural and educational bond of friendship held together by their commitment to provide children with a good education. The Ambassador hopes that this bond of friendship will also be further strengthened through the upcoming events such as enthronement ceremony of the Emperor of Japan in October, the Rugby World Cup from September to November this year, the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics Summer Games as well as the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Japan and Tonga, next year.

Dr. Raelyn 'Esau, Acting CEO of the Ministry of Education and Training conveyed, on behalf of His Majesty's Government, heartfelt gratitude for Japan's continuing generous support for education in Tonga. She acknowledged the joint commitment towards the advancement of soroban education and said "I believe that the soroban program provides our children with unique pathways for their future academic endeavours. I wish to recommit our support for soroban education in Tonga and I hope that we will continue to foster our warm working relations between the peoples of Japan and Tonga."

The National Soroban Competition engages over hundred class 4 and class 5 primary students from all over the Kingdom to compete each other in an eight minutes written examination, as well as in an oral and a flash calculation. Malia Siena Pe'ei from St. Falakiko 'Asisi Primary School won the written category for class 5 and wins herself the annual trip to the soroban camp in Oze, Gunma Prefecture, Japan. The camp is fully funded by the International Soroban Diffusion Foundation, ISDF and will be held in August this year. (*complete result of the competition is attached herewith*)

In acknowledging the successful competition H.E Tetsuya Ishii hosted a reception in the evening and thanked the commitments from soroban educators in Tonga. The Ministry of Education and Training and the Embassy of Japan have co-hosted the competition with the support from JICA-Tonga and ISDF.

END

Photos:



The National Soroban Competition held at the Queen Salote Memorial Hall on Thursday, 7 March 2019.





Young soroban students and teachers who represented 'Eua islands at the National Soroban Competition.



Class 4 and 5 soroban students in the National Soroban Competition during the written category competition.





The address by H.E Mr. Tetsuya Ishii.



HE Mr. Tetsuya Ishii and Dr. Raelyn 'Esau, Acting CEO of Tonga's Ministry of Education and Training, and Mr. Masao Fujii, Director General of the International Soroban Diffusion Foundation together with the winner of the



class 5 written category Malia Siena Pe'ei from St. Falakiko 'Asisi Primary School, and distinguished guests of the National Soroban Competition on Thursday, 7 March 2019 in Nuku'alofa.



H.E Mr. Tetsuya Ishii with his invited guests at the reception hosted for Soroban Officials and Teachers in Tonga.

## RESULT – Tonga National Competition (March 07, 2019)

### Written/Class 4

Prize	School/ District	Name
1	'Eua / GPS Angaha	Lupe Fungalei
2	Tongatapu Vahe Hahake / GPS Talafo'ou	Laiseni Latu
3	Tongatapu Vahe Hahake/ GPS Hoi	Natasha Kaho

### Written/Class 5

Prize	District	Name
1	Tongatapu Vahe Kolo/ Falakiko 'Asisi	Malia Siena Pe'ei
2	Vava'u / GPS Neiafu	Moana Tokolahi
3	Tongatapu Vahe Kolo/Falakiko 'Asisi	'Alipate Tausinga

### Oral/Class 4

Prize	District	Name
1	Tongatapu Vahe Kolo / Falakiko 'Asisi	Pita Tahitu'a

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2	Tongatapu Vahe Hahake/ GPS Mu'a	Karen Latu
3	Tongatapu Vahe Hahake/ GPS Talafo'ou	Laiseni Latu

#### Oral/Class5

Prize	District	Name
1	Tongatapu Vahe Hahake / GPS Mu'a	Tevita Kolo
2	Tongatapu Vahe Hahake/ GPS Kolonga	Lavelua Pulu
3	Tongatapu Vahe Hahake/ Hillard Memorial School	Kealohi 'Ala

#### Flash/Class 4

Prize	District	Name
1	Tongatapu Vahe Hahake / Hoi GPS	Natasha Kaho
2	'Eua / GPS Angaha	Lupe Fungalei
3	Vava'u / GPS Neiafu	Carter Tatafu

#### Flash/Class 5

Prize	District	Name
1	Tongatapu Vahe Kolo / Falakiko Asisi	'Alipate Tausinga
2	'Eua / GPS Angaha	Kalolaine Havea
3	Vava'u / GPS Neiafu	Siueti Longani

#### Teachers

Prize	District	Name
1	Tongatapu Vahe Kolo / Falakiko Asisi	Taina Faupula
2	Tongatapu Vahe Hahake / GPS Mu'a	Fakaofilani Mafi
3	'Eua	'Asela Veamatahau

#### Schools

Prize	District
1	Vahe Hahake (Eastern Tongatapu)
2	Vava'u
3	Vahe Kolo (Central Tongatapu)