

# Embassy of Japan

## Tonga

CE/2020/07

October 5, 2020

### **“Taking the next step with Soroban into another new chapter”**

#### **Handover of 500 Sorobans from Ono-city Japan**

On October 5, His Excellency Mr. ISHII Tetsuya, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Kingdom of Tonga, handed over a donation of 500 soroban abacus donated by Ono-city, Hyogo Prefecture, Japan, to Hon. Siaosi Sovaleni, Minister for Education and Training. Mr. MATSUI Nobuaki, Resident Representative of JICA Tonga and Dr. Tangikina Moimoi Steen, CEO of the Ministry of Education attended the handover ceremony along with Soroban Education Officers, Soroban Teachers and soroban students from some of the primary schools in Nuku'alofa.

The donation arrived from Ono-city, with the assistance of JICA volunteers and JICA Tonga office. Ono-city produces about 70% of soroban in Japan, and through their “re-use of used soroban” project, they have donated soroban to countries all around the world.

His Excellency, Mr. ISHII stated in his remarks that this donation will contribute to the further development of Soroban Education in Tonga, as soroban encourages and improves calculation skills, concentration and confidence of young primary students. “Education is one of the fields that Japan highly prioritizes in its cooperation with Tonga, and since soroban education started here about 40 years ago, a lot of support for the development of soroban education has been provided through well-coordinated by Japan’s International Soroban Diffusion Foundation, JICA and JICA volunteers.” He also highlighted that since 2010 Ono-city has distributed soroban to countries around the world with over 7000 soroban sent to Tonga.

Hon. Siaosi Sovaleni, Tonga’s Minister for Education and Training, conveyed the Government of Tonga’s appreciation for the donation saying “this donation is a blessing to the children and students of Tonga.”

The Embassy of Japan and Tonga’s Ministry of Education and training look forward to utilizing the new donated soroban in the National Soroban Competition, which will be held later this year in November.

END.

Attached: Photos

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Photos;



Soroban students with the new donated soroban, on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October.



From left, Mr. MATSUI Nobuaki , His Excellency Mr. ISHII Tetsuya, Minister of Education Hon. Siaosi Sovaleni and Dr. Tangikina Moimoi Steen.

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The donated 500 soroban arrived from Ono-city, Japan.



The handover of soroban at the ECE Hall, Ministry of Education Pahu.

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