

## **Report of the Internship at European Institute for Asian Studies**

**International Christian University Onishi Ayano**

From the end of June 2007 until the end of August, I had a wonderful opportunity to work at the European Institute for Asian Studies (EIAS) as an intern. I have been interested in the European Union since when I was in a high school. After I entered International Christian University, I had various opportunities to learn about the EU, including taking a course in another university and participating in public lectures about the EU held by the EUIJ. In this article, I would like to describe my experience at the EIAS.

The EIAS is a research think tank which aims to promote understanding and cooperation between the EU and Asia. The EIAS analyses political matters, economic activities, and security relations between the EU and Asia. In addition, through its publications and events, the EIAS provides information and analysis on current events in Asia and all major international developments that make impacts on EU-Asia relations. The EIAS sets up activities which include researches, briefings, seminars and conferences. (For further information on the EIAS, go to <http://www.eias.org/>)

My work was to research and report on two subjects. One was on the Parliamentary Democracy in Asia and the other was on EU-Japan Strategic Dialogue. For the first subject, I shared the task with another intern student who is from Bangladesh and is a university student in UK. He covered South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and I covered Association of Southeast Asian Nation (ASEAN). We mainly researched on what kind of parliamentary system each country has and its background, as well as the purpose and present situations of each association. Furthermore, we study on the background, present situation and perspectives of the organisations that have been discussed frequently in both associations, such as ASEAN Inter-Parliamentary Assembly (AIPA).

The second subject was an independent research. Since this dialogue is related to security, I needed to have interviews with officials of the European Commission, the Council Secretariat of the EU and the Mission to the EU of Japan.

Through these activities, I was able to learn how to carry out researches. I was also able to get a lot of information and technical advice.

On the first research, we found that many countries in Asia adopt parliamentary democracy, which some of them still need to improve conditions, and even in countries which do not adopt parliamentary democracy, there are some actions for the parliamentary democracy. In addition, on inter-parliamentary activities, we learned that

AIPA aims to have substantial function as a parliament like the European Parliament (EP). Moreover, these days, SAARC has been discussing on this as well.

On this subject, we examined under an advisor at the EIAS, who worked at the EP for a long time and researches on parliamentary democracy. Therefore, we were able to receive more than satisfactory amount of advice based on his experiences and knowledge.

On the latter subject I could directly see and talk to officials who were involved in making policies. Since I was able to find different opinions on the same questions, I could learn different viewpoints from the EU and Japanese side, and also different function of the European Commission and the Council of the EU. Moreover, through EU-Japan Strategic Dialogue, I found that the EU had much more understanding on East Asia.

During these two months, I had wonderful experiences, which include not only these researches but also daily activities at the EIAS, discussions with researchers, officials, intern students, and so forth. Furthermore, I was given the chance to re-acknowledge my understanding on the EU, which I had gained in Japan. I was able to recognise it much more deeply. Now, I reaffirmed the significance of learning the EU in the field.

I really appreciate this opportunity that I was given to work at the EIAS, as well as the cooperation of the interviewees and support by the EUIJ.