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Shimpo Week

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Uchinanchu get together beyond



400 Uchinanchu participate in the first conference to be held in Honolulu

The Worldwide Uchinanchu Conference opened on September 1 at the East West Center at the University of Hawaii, Honolulu. It was the first time that the gathering had been held overseas for overseas Okinawans, for Okinawan Okinawans, and for Okinawans at heart.

The 7th Worldwide Uchinanchu Business As-

sociation also met that day in Honolulu.

During the two-day meeting about 400 people from ten countries including the US, and South American and Southeast Asian lands participated.

They reaffirmed ties with all Uchinanchu worldwide and discussed ways and means of building new Uchinanchu networks in various fields.

In the 22 sub-sessions, conference members debated wide ranges of topics such as Uchinanchu identity and international marriage.

The conference confirmed that the next meeting would be held in Brazil in 2008. It will mark the 100th anniversary of immigration from Okinawa.

At the opening ceremony, organizers' representatives George Tamaki, chairman of the Hawaii Okinawa Federation, and Wesley Sakamoto, chairman of the WUB Hawaii, welcomed the participants.

Okinawa Governor Keiichi Inamine responded by expressing his good wishes for the success of the conference.

Lecturers included Shinichi Maehara, Okinawa TV's chief of news and reporting, and Koji Omi, the former minister for Okinawan Affairs.

(Sep 2 pm ed)