



TIAS reborn TIAS2.0



August 2nd, 2021: Visit by the Minister of Sports in Ecuador and the Ambassador, Embassy of Ecuador in Tokyo to TIAS 2.0, Tsukuba



Tsukuba International Academy for Sport Studies-TIAS 2.0, Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences (<https://www.taiiku.tsukuba.ac.jp/en/>), University of Tsukuba (UT) welcomed the honorable **Minister of Sports of Ecuador : Mr. Sebastian Palacios** (<https://lalp.georgetown.edu/news/sebastian-palacios-ilg-2019-named-new-minister-of-sports-in-ecuador>) and **H.E. Mr. Jaime Barberis Martínez, the Ambassador of the Embassy of Ecuador in Tokyo** on August 2nd, at the Global Sport Innovation (GSI) building (TAIKU area).

Welcoming the distinguished guests, **Prof. Randeep RAKWAL** escorted them through the **GSI building to the GSI 414 meeting room** where they were welcomed by the **Dean of the Faculty of Health and Sport Sciences, Prof. Takeshi NISHIYASU**. **TIAS 2.0** (<http://tias.tsukuba.ac.jp/tias2/>), **Chair Prof. Koyo FUKASAWA**, and the **previous TIAS program (which is the academic LEGACY of the Tokyo 2020 Games) Chair Prof. Hisashi SANADA** (now specially appointed Professor, UT) also joined to welcome the Sports Minister and the Ecuadorian Ambassador. **Prof. Satoshi SHIMIZU**, Director of OPOP and Advisor to the President **also joined the meeting**. The **Area Commons Staff Ms. Mina Onuma** was also present **at the meeting**.

Following the introductions to all, **Prof. Nishiyasu** gave a welcome speech and the highlight of the **SPORT and HEALTH Faculty** at Tsukuba campus and welcomed the Minister of Sports to Tsukuba, and **Prof. Shimizu** gave an overview of the University of Tsukuba role and position as a **premier educational and research institute in Tsukuba Science City**. The next agenda was a background on the TIAS program with **Prof. Sanada** providing a summary of **TIAS creation as part of SFT, its 7-year history, achievements and future vision** (for details see the **General Project Report ~ Support for Formation of International Sport Academies ~**

<http://tias.tsukuba.ac.jp/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/7d37343dba9279f0c2487e0371434a29.pdf>). Prof. Sanada also showed and explained about the Torch Relay for the Tokyo 2020 which passed through Tsukuba where he had the honor of being a relay runner. This was followed by **Prof. Fukasawa giving a brief overview of the newly started TIAS 2.0 program (October 2020)**, and its modules (**Olympic & Paralympic Education, Sport Management (SM)** (Sport Business, Policy & Governance), **Sport Science & Medicine (SSM)**, and **Teaching, Coaching & Japanese Culture**), current **1st batch students from across the globe**, and the 2nd batch (where 3 students from Ecuador have qualified and hope to join the program in fall of 2021), teaching and research areas, and challenges ahead.



The **Minister of Sports Mr. Palacios** was deeply interested in the **holistic nature of the sports program** and enquired about the program including showing a great interest in **sport science and medicine**, to be a key future area of development in Ecuador. **The Minister further mentioned about the uniqueness of the tropical climate of Ecuador which varies with altitude and region, and this provides differences in the population characteristics due to differences in elevation.** In other words, variations in elevation can be used to train sportspersons/athletes, and which is an important research area in sport science and medicine (Rakwal). How to **cooperate with TIAS2.0 was a key comment** and the Minister mentioned about initiating a program where **TIAS 2.0 expertise can be shared with sport administrators, manager, scientists back in Ecuador**, through lectures (online for now) and seminars, etc.

Following the initial meeting and knowing the program and meeting the Faculty, the **Minister was taken on a Facility tour** touching some key points of the SPORTS facilities in the campus starting by walking to the

TIAS 2.0 STUDENTS RESEARCH ROOM on the 3rd floor (GSI), and meeting 2 students (Eric (SSM) from USA and Christian (SM) from Nigeria); other students



were away working/supporting at various levels for the Tokyo 2020 Games). Impressed by the research room and facilities for graduate students, the Minister enquired about their topics and interests and wished them well for their journey. **Both the students accompanied us on the facility tour and talking about their experiences, research and reasons for being at TIAS 2.0 with the Minister and the Ambassador.**



The MARTIAL ARTS Gymnasium was one of the highlights of the facilities visited, stopping by at the **KENDO Hall (seeing a Kendo class session being recorded)** and the **BUDO Hall (observing the JUDO practice of the University Students)**. The second highlight was the **Wind Tunnel Laboratory, where Dr. Sungchan HONG (Assistant Prof.) showed the state-of-the-art wind tunnel-bases experiments in sports, such as cycling, football, etc.** The Minister was impressed by the high-level of experiments and took a great interest in the wind tunnel operations and its use of aerodynamics and new materials, utilized in various sports.





Finally, we made our way back to the **GSI 414 meeting room**, and sat down for an exchange of views and discussions on topics **of mutual interest; agreements with each other institution's starting with preliminary exchanges leading to the MoU, identifying joint areas of cooperation, exchange of faculty and students, exchange programs and the role of SCIENCE in the sport as a whole.** Academic investment is a key area for sharing and developing sport knowledge, and TIAS 2.0 has the expertise to cooperate with Ecuador was the general idea of the Faculty and we discussed taking the visit forward by exchanging **'point of contact' person in the Embassy under the Ambassador and supported by the Ministry of Sports.** In all, a well-timed **2-hour visit** was concluded and we bid farewell to the **Minister of Sports of Ecuador Mr. Sebastian Palacios and H.E. Ambassador Jaime Barberis Martínez.** The distinguished guests were escorted to the outside of the GSI building by Prof. Rakwal and seen off by Profs. Fukasawa and Sanada, and Staffs.





The support of TIAS 2.0 Office Staffs (Mr. Sugaya and Ms. Tateda) and various other Staff members of the Sports and Arts area Administrative Office are greatly appreciated. Thank you,

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LINKS:

1. <https://embassies.info/EcuadorianEmbassyinTokyoJapan>
2. <https://www.tsukuba.ac.jp/en/>
3. <http://www.taiiku.tsukuba.ac.jp/en/>
4. <https://english.kyodonews.net/news/2021/08/2e461e8cfc57-pandemic-hit-olympics-significant-in-uniting-world-ecuador-minister.html>
5. <https://www.sport4tomorrow.jpnsport.go.jp/>