

## **Greeting**

Thank you for joining us today at the Shizuoka Intercultural Symposium 2025.

Shizuoka Prefecture is home to a diverse community of approximately 128,000 foreign residents who have become indispensable members of our society and vital contributors to our local economy. To build communities where everyone can thrive, it is essential that we work together as partners in community-building, respect all cultures, and deepen mutual understanding.

In August 2025, Shizuoka became the first prefecture in Japan to join the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities (ICC) Programme, an international network dedicated to advancing interculturalism and transforming cultural diversity into social vitality and shared growth. Today's symposium commemorates this important milestone.

We are delighted to gather with participants from Japan and around the world, and to learn from experts and ICC member cities as we reflect on the future of intercultural cohesion in Shizuoka. Guided by the knowledge and initiatives of leading intercultural cities, we will continue striving to become Japan's foremost prefecture for intercultural harmony.

In closing, I extend my heartfelt appreciation to all who contributed to organizing this special symposium. I hope that today's program will be both enriching and inspiring for everyone in attendance.

December 17, 2025

**SUZUKI Yasutomo**

*Governor of Shizuoka Prefecture*