

Speech by Ignace-san

Konnichiwa, gengideska. My name is Ignace and I am from Belgium. Thank you very much for inviting me. Last year in September I started cycling from Belgium towards Tokyo and last week I finally arrived! I cycled more than 23,000km, first over land from Belgium to Hanoi in Vietnam and then took a plane to Osaka from where I cycled to Tokyo.

During my trip I have been raising money for the ALS association of Belgium by sharing my stories. I did this because a good friend of mine is a promising researcher in the field of ALS and moved to America to continue his research at Stanford University. On the way I met some ALS patients and other ALS supporting associations in Italy and Turkey and now in Japan, for which I am really thankful. Until now my trip raised about 4000 Euro (about 500,000 yen) for supporting research on ALS.

Last week I met an ALS patient, Mr. Masuda, who told me how important it is that people help other people. And this is what I experienced during my world cycling trip: I was always helped by wonderful people and I also recognize this in Japan. I hope my story can inspire you to continue helping other people.

Thank you very much for inviting me!

ha zi myei ma shi tye