

Remarks by Mr. Akira Ouchi, Consul General of Japan
At the Emperor's Birthday Reception
On Tuesday, 1st December, 2015

Honorable Mr. Nisar Ahmed Khuhro, Senior Minister for Education and Literacy,
Excellencies, Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Assalam Alaikum!

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to extend my heartfelt welcome to you all for joining us tonight in celebrating the 82nd birthday of His Majesty the Emperor Akihito of Japan. On the 23rd of December, His Majesty will be 82 years old. The Imperial House of Japan is one of the world's oldest monarchies with the long history of about 2,700 years. And His Majesty the Emperor Akihito is the 125th Emperor of Japan, the latest in the oldest continuing line of hereditary monarchy in the world. Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress have traveled many countries promoting friendship and goodwill among the people in the world. Their Majesties visited Pakistan in 1962 as then Crown Prince and Princess.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The friendly relationship between the two countries is mainly centered on economic cooperation. At present, 77 Japanese companies are operating in Pakistan and 52 are operating in Karachi. The areas of Japanese investment in Karachi range from automobile and motorcycle industries, steel mills, chemical industries, pharmaceutical industries to zippers. In January and July this year, Pakistani business missions in the areas of textiles, pharmacy, surgical instruments and sports goods visited Japan. In February this year, a business mission comprising of 29 Japanese-related companies visited Karachi on the occasion of Expo Pakistan. And on November 10 this year, a joint mission of Japanese Government and business communities comprising of 24 Japanese companies visited Islamabad. These endeavors have been made by the governments and business circles of the two countries to enhance economic relations between Japan and Pakistan.

In Zaver Hall, some Japanese-related companies in Karachi display their products such as motor cars, motor bikes, a bus and a truck, etc. and panels of some Japanese companies and products. I hope you will appreciate the display of these Japanese products. I would like to emphasize that the Japanese companies in Pakistan are

greatly contributing to the economic development of Pakistan. I believe that the key to the promotion of economic relationship is the active interaction in the business sector.

Now let me touch upon Japan's economic assistance to Pakistan. Japan has been extending its ODA to Pakistan since 1954. The schemes of cooperation range from technical cooperation to grant aid and ODA loans in various sectors. The cumulative amount of ODA from Japan to Pakistan till 2013 is about 6.85 billion US dollars. Japan has a scheme called "Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Project" (GGP) to support small-scale development projects to meet the basic human needs of the local people. Japan has funded more than 300 projects in Pakistan through this scheme to date and the Consulate-General of Japan in Karachi has so far implemented 14 projects in the areas of health, sanitation, water supply and education since 2009. This fiscal year the Consulate-General of Japan plans to implement 3 projects.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The relationship between Japan and Pakistan is not limited to economic cooperation. Cultural and people-to-people exchanges have also been strengthened. As for people-to-people exchange, the Government of Japan has been extending various invitation programs and scholarships to Pakistani people and students. This year our Consulate organized such cultural events as Calendar Exhibition, Bonseki Demonstration, Japanese Dolls Exhibition, Koto and Shamisen Concert and Japanese Film Festival. This evening, the four Ikebana groups showcase beautiful flower arrangements and Pakistan Bonsai Society exhibits bonsai works. At Zaver Hall, we display cultural goods such as Japanese dolls and toys and we are also showing some DVDs on Japan. The Pakistani youth groups promoting Japanese pop-culture wear Yukata (Japanese casual Kimono) and display their works. So please appreciate them. And of course, we will serve Japanese cuisine such as Sushi and Tempura later. Japanese cuisine or WASHOKU was inscribed as UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage two years ago.

I wish the economic relations, cultural and people-to-people exchange between Japan and Pakistan will be further promoted and I, as the Consul-General of Japan in Karachi, will make every effort to achieve these goals.

Thank you very much, Arigato, Bahot Shukria!