

Ladies and gentlemen,

Assalam alaikum,

I am very pleased to be present at the 30<sup>th</sup> Haiku Mushaira. This event has been held every year since 1983 and has contributed to the enhancement of friendship and goodwill between our two countries.

I find it very heartwarming to see how our Pakistani friends have embraced this Japanese genre of poetry, Haiku and have kept it going for three decades. My sincere congratulations go to the Pakistan-Japan Cultural Association, Sindh, especially Mr. Shigeyuki Ataka, Senior vice-president of PJCA, for arranging this event and to the poets for participating in the event year after year, in the spirit of friendship with Japan. I truly appreciate your contribution towards strengthening of “Kizuna” (bonds of friendship) between our two countries, through Haiku.

Let me speak a little about Haiku. Haiku is an all time favorite form of poetry in Japan. In Haiku, we Japanese find an esthetically profound way of expressing our emotions. The beauty of nature and the depth of life and nature give an inspiration to this form of poetry. I believe that the essence of Haiku is to condense one’s impression into only a few words and move people with them. It takes years and years of practice to acquire profession in Haiku.

I would like to commend the very talented poets here for adopting this Japanese genre of poetry and giving it a unique expression in your national language “Urdu”. You have certainly contributed to the popularization of Haiku by not only translating Japanese Haiku works in Urdu but also composing your very own original Haiku masterpieces.

I wish you will enjoy the Pakistani adaptation of Haiku in Urdu and also deepen your understanding of the Japanese original of Haiku.

Thank you and Bahot Shukriya.