

Remarks by Ambassador Ishikane
National Day Reception, Dec. 12, 2017

C'est un grand plaisir pour moi de vous accueillir ce soir à la réception pour célébrer le 84^{ième} (84th) anniversaire de Sa Majesté l'Empereur du Japon.

I arrived in Ottawa November 3rd and presented the Letter of credence on November 20th to Her Excellency the Right Honourable Julie Payette, Governor General and Commander-in-Chief of Canada.

As Ambassador of Japan to Canada, I am here to strengthen Japan-Canada relations. When I think of the 90 years of friendship the two states have enjoyed, I would like to mention 3 Canadians that come to mind.

The first individual was a young adventurous world traveler who visited Japan right after WWII, seeing the devastation left by the war and realizing the importance of world peace. Thereafter he made a significant contribution to the international community, including Japan-Canada relations. His name is Pierre Elliot Trudeau.

The second Canadian is a female pioneer in science and space. She worked with Japanese astronaut Dr. Koichi Wakata in the International Space Station - both are Canadarm operators, setup the Japanese Experiment Module '*Kibou*' and travelled back to earth together on the space shuttle in 2009. She is, of course, Governor General Julie Payette.

The third person is the architect of the "New Era of Cooperation between Japan and Canada" together with Mr. Abe, Prime Minister of Japan. His name is Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada.

These are but three prominent figures in our relations, there are many more who laid the foundation for deeper bonds between our countries.

After the end of Shogun or Samurai Era, many Canadian missionaries came to Japan and founded schools from which many young Japanese, who contributed to shaping modern Japan, graduated. I personally spent 6 years at a school

founded by a French Canadian in 1950. And much more: Exchange programs such as the Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme (better known as the JET Programme) and the Kakehashi Project to name a few, are invisible bridges across the Pacific. Let us not forget the story of Hampton Grey, a Canadian Soldier who fought against Japan and died off the coast of Onagawa Village, Miyagi Prefecture on August 9th, 1945. His name is commemorated in Onagawa Village upon the request of a Canadian navy officer, together with Japanese who lost their lives in the war. This village was devastated by the earthquake and Tsunami in 2011. The Hampton Grey Vancouver Branch extended a precious donation to the village, which will be remembered forever by the people of Onagawa. These people to people exchanges are rendering the Pacific Ocean, an Ocean not dividing us but connecting us.

Based on this consolidated friendship, Japan and Canada can cooperate worldwide to address various global challenges and to enhance peace and stability in the world, especially through the multilateral fora such as G7, G20, APEC and the United Nations. Also, Comprehensive and Progressive Trans-Pacific Partnership known as CPTPP has strategic significance of rule-making in the Asia-Pacific region, in which Japan and Canada work together for growth and prosperity.

Next year, 2018, will bring the 90th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and Canada, as well as Canada's G7 presidency, where many exchanges and VIP visits will take place. About the 90th anniversary, I am happy to let you know that a logo has been selected for this anniversary, as you can see on this stage as well as on the screen in the left corner of this room. Japan will also be the G20 Chair in 2019 and also hosting the Tokyo Olympics in 2020. Let us seize these occasions to foster our relations in all fields. To best describe the potential of our relations, I am sure the Governor General will agree, not even the sky is the limit; let's aim for outer space and beyond!

Thank you.