

Speech by Ambassador Kawamura
“Ramen Heads” Online film screening
May 29-31, 2020

Hello. I am KAWAMURA Yasuhisa, Ambassador of Japan to Canada. The Embassy of Japan and the Japan Foundation are pleased to welcome you today to our online Japanese film screening. The title of today's film is "Ramen Heads".

This film is a documentary that traces famous ramen chefs' challenge to create an ultimate ramen and highlights their passions. Ramen is one of the many styles of Japanese noodles, which attracts people around the world, along with "Washoku", traditional Japanese cuisine.

However, COVID-19 is inflicting heavy damage on the food service industry – and ramen shops, not only in Japan but also those in Canada, are facing difficulties. Food-related supply chains have also been affected and there are people who cannot even afford to put enough food on their table.

During such a crisis, the importance of food has come to be recognized again. This film, which depicts the chefs' devotion to the creation of the ultimate ramen, had me thinking about the food that I enjoy every day, which is available thanks to people's hard work and passion for delivering food to us. It allowed me to renew my great appreciation for the many people involved.

Japan and Canada have been making strong efforts to contain COVID-19 and are now on a phase that will gradually lead to the resumption of social and economic activity. In Japan, the nationwide state of emergency was lifted on May 25, and we have started adapting “a new normal” to our lives as Prime Minister Abe mentioned. The food service

industry is also gradually resuming their business by following the regional guidelines.

Japan and Canada share common values and spirits, and fight together against COVID-19. Both countries have been cooperating by sharing each other's knowledge and maintaining supply chains. Furthermore, we are providing international support towards the development of vaccines and therapeutic medicine for COVID-19. As for Japanese companies in Canada, they are developing the medicine and supplying and manufacturing personal protective equipment to help health care workers.

I firmly believe that we will be able to combat the current unprecedented crisis by continuing to persevere in our efforts together. Please enjoy the film. I very much look forward to meeting you in person after we overcome this crisis.