

**Message Nicolae Ciucă / National Day of Japan / event 26
February 2024**

Your Excellency, Ambassador Takashi Katae,

Dear Members of the Embassy of Japan,

Dear guests,

I am honoured to participate in the ceremony for His Majesty Naruhito's birthday, which is also Japan's National Day. I offer my congratulations to the Japanese people, whose outstanding efforts in Japan's development deserve all appreciation.

For Romania, Japan represents a formidable economy, an ancient and impressive culture and a country we are happy to call a friend. We are now at a very good moment in our mutual ties and I am sure that we will gain together from these extended relations.

I would like to remind you that almost a year ago, on 7 March 2023, the Strategic Partnership between our countries was established during the visit of President Klaus Iohannis to Japan.

This created the conditions for deepening Romanian-Japanese cooperation and I am glad to have contributed, as head of the Romanian Government at that time, to this progress. Our country is ready, in the years to come, to give substance to this Strategic Partnership, considering our bilateral relationship extremely valuable.

Ladies and gentlemen, Romania greatly appreciated Japan's position and Japan's actions following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Japan has demonstrated that it is a committed partner in the rules-based international system and is determined to continue to contribute to global peace and security. Your country, along with many other countries of the world, has reaffirmed the universality of principles such as national sovereignty and the non-use of force in relations between states.

At the same time, I am happy to note the increase in Romanian-Japanese trade over the last 5 years, in the context of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, signed in 2019, but also in the context of the development of our bilateral relations with Japan. The potential for economic collaboration between our countries is high and we are interested, for example, in collaboration in the automotive industry, in renewable energy production, in the field of communications, but also in the defence industry.

An excellent symbol of the Romanian-Japanese collaboration so far is the construction of the suspension bridge in Braila, realized with the involvement of Japanese builders. I would like to highlight here the interest of Japanese companies in other infrastructure projects in Romania and I believe that we can further develop our cooperation in this field on the basis of our positive joint experience.

Dear Ambassador, although you have just started your diplomatic mission in Bucharest, I hope you have already had the opportunity to get to know part of Romania and the Romanians. You should know that we are a warm and open ~~people~~ nation who greatly respect Japan's extraordinary achievements. As our country develops within the European Union, we understand more and more clearly the need for close cooperation with advanced democracies and economies around the world, and we are also creating the means for this cooperation.

I wish peace and well-being to Japan, good health to His Majesty and increasingly strong ties between our nations!