

Your Excellency,
Esteemed members of the diplomatic corps,
Distinguished guests,

Konbanwa (Good evening in Japanese)!

It is a great honour and pleasure to join you today to celebrate the Birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, the symbol of the Japanese State that embodies the unity and the heritage of the Japanese people. This year also marks the sixth anniversary of His Majesty's accession to the Chrysanthemum Throne as Japan's 126th Emperor.

Today we also celebrate the friendship and the dedication of the Japanese people. The values of diligence, respect, and perseverance that define the Japanese society have allowed the nation to rise to every challenge and contribute meaningfully to the global development.

From its deeply-rooted wonderful traditions to a leader in cutting-edge technological innovations, Japan continues to work with perseverance and resilience towards a more prosperous future, committed to peace and security.

Japan is an example for Romania and the world, to which we look up with admiration. By cultural exchanges, investments and common projects we succeed in bringing closer our values and aspirations, thus contributing to a more harmonious and prosper world.

Your Excellencies,

This year Japan will host Expo 2025, a very important event dedicated to finding solutions to pressing challenges of our times. Choosing Japan to host a World Expo for the third time, 55 years after Osaka's previously hosting in 1970 and 20 years after Aichi's

hosting, is the solid proof of the country's commitment to shaping a better future.

Expo 2025 is, at the same time, a very good opportunity for people around the world to visit your beautiful country, to enjoy art and culture on the ground and to see and enjoy the cherry blossom, the iconic flower of Japan.

Distinguished guests,

Romania and Japan are strategic partners that have long been pursuing common interests. Our bilateral relations are rooted in shared values of democracy, peace and security. I believe that in these challenging times, marked by various crisis in different parts of the world, strong bonds like the ones between our countries, based on trust and mutual respect, are an important benchmark.

We will continue to use the Strategic Partnership for a more pragmatic and result-oriented cooperation and to implement the objectives agreed in the Joint Statement. Japan's experience in the field of emergency situations is well known, therefore we are interested to continue cooperation aiming at increasing societal resilience and preparedness.

I am convinced, Dear Ambassador, that you will further contribute to the development of the partnership between Bucharest and Tokyo.

In recent days, the world has gravitated around discussions held at the Munich Security Conference, which seems to have set in motion the entire international policy.

Please rest assure that Romania will continue to build a solid and proactive stand. Internal stability is essential in order to be able to find the best ways to represent and defend our interests, while remaining anchored in our Euro-Atlantic partnerships as a member of EU and NATO.

In the same time, now more than ever, we need a collective international commitment to manage global challenges. There is a

need for collaboration, understanding each other, and the wise use of diplomacy to preserve the global balance.

There is a Japanese proverb that says "*Tomo ni ayumou*" - *let us walk together in harmony*, which, I believe embodies the spirit of unity, collaboration, and mutual support in achieving shared goals, prosperity and peace. This is what I would like to say, now, to all our Japanese friends, as a reflection of our continued collaboration in achieving shared prosperity and peace.

Please let me raise a toast to His Majesty, the Emperor of Japan, to the Japanese people and to the solid foundation between Romania and Japan! May the friendship between Japan and Romania blossom and bear fruit in the years to come!

Thank you!