

Remarks by H.E. Mr. Kanji Fujiki, Ambassador of Japan to the UAE
at the National Day Reception, 21 November, 2016

Your Excellency, Engineer Husain bin Ibrahim Al Hammadi, Ministry of Education,
Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,
Good evening and Assalamu aleikum wa rahmatullah wa barakaatoh.

Welcome to the Japanese National Day Reception tonight.

This year His Majesty the Emperor of Japan will turn 83 on the 23rd of coming
December.

It is my great honour to celebrate His Majesty's birthday together with all of you
tonight.

There has been a long history of friendship between the imperial and royal families of
Japan and the UAE since even prior to the foundation of this country, which has been a
fundamental bias for the cordial relationship between our two nations.

Japan is honoured to carry on this noble and precious relationship with the UAE for
many years to come.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

This year marks the 45th anniversary of the foundation of the UAE. Over the last 45
years, this country has achieved remarkable political stability and economic prosperity.

I cannot help but respect the UAE, a country that has become a place of peace,
dynamism, openness, tolerance, co-existence, generosity and safety under the great
foresight and leadership of past and current leaders of this country, in particular, His
Highness Sheikh Zayed Al Nahyan, the first president of the UAE.

Today Japan and the UAE share a number of common basic values and national goals
such as: creating a tolerant society, constructing a knowledge-based economy,
strengthening education for the next generation, promoting science, technology, and
innovation, expanding women participation, strengthening international cooperation to

cope with global climate change, and many others.

It is high time for us to further strengthen our cooperation to work on these important issues together for a better future of our world.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Now please allow me to touch upon several recent developments of bilateral ties between Japan and the UAE.

First, a significant expansion of economic ties.

Japan always appreciates the stable oil and gas supply from the UAE which has been and will continue to be of great importance for Japan's energy security.

Today Japan is the largest importer of oil from the UAE and the UAE is the second largest exporter of oil to Japan.

Although oil and gas issues remain important, our economic relationship has been rapidly diversifying into many other areas these days such as renewable energy, manufacturing, financing, transportation, infrastructure, healthcare and many others.

Reflecting this situation, the UAE's non-oil export to Japan has increased by 42% over the past 2 years. Similarly, the UAE's import from Japan has increased by 36% over the past 5 years.

Second, a progress of educational cooperation.

Japan and the UAE have been continuously strengthening educational cooperation.

One of the recent excellent results in educational cooperation is the increase of the number of Emirati student studying in Japan which has been more than doubled over the past 2 years.

Also in the Japanese School in Abu Dhabi, Emirati students are studying side by side with Japanese students, positively stimulating each other, and nurturing the feeling of

solidarity. Those Emirati students now comprise one third of all the students there, and will become excellent connecting bridges between our two countries in the future.

Third, a progress in space cooperation.

Japan and the UAE share the same recognition that space development is a powerful driving force for nurturing scientific, technological and industrial capabilities which are indispensable for our future prosperity as well as for fostering creative minds and science-spirits in young generations who will be responsible for the future of our nations.

Based on this recognition, our two Governments concluded several MoUs for space cooperation this year and some cooperative activities have already started. Japan is particularly pleased to be able to contribute to this country's very ambitious plan, "Emirates Mars Mission" which is to send an exploring spacecraft to the Planet Mars in the year of 2021.

Fourth, expansion of Judo cooperation.

Last week a new national Judo Tournament "Judo Japanese Ambassador's Cup" for young UAE Judokas was successfully held in Abu Dhabi.

And some of the Tournament winners are now expected to participate in Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020 and compete for Gold medals there.

These recent developments of our bilateral relationship, I think, really represent mutual trust, respect and solidarity existing between our two nations. Japan would like to cherish this trustful and mutually beneficial relationship with the UAE for many years to come.

Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Tonight, I hope that all of you will enjoy the Japanese cultural flavour.

Top-quality Japanese food including sushi, Japanese pears from Ichikawa city in Japan, and surprisingly sweet Japanese strawberries are served.

And shortly after this, Japanese and Emirati Judokas will demonstrate their excellent Judo skills and techniques. I hope you will enjoy the authentic Japanese Judo as well as authentic top-quality Japanese foods.

Thank you. Shukran jazeelan ala majjeikum wa isghaaikum, wassalaam alaikum.