

**BJLA 20th Anniversary Reception, hosted by Ambassador Tsuruoka at the Embassy of Japan,
Thursday 8 March 2018**

Speech by Professor Chizu Nakajima, Co-Chair, British Japanese Law Association

Ambassador Tsuruoka, distinguished guests, members of the British Japanese Law Association,

I would like to add my sincere words of thanks to the Ambassador and the Embassy of Japan for their continued support and for generously hosting this evening's reception. I would also like to mention the support we have received and continue to enjoy from the successive legal attachés of the Embassy and to thank Mr Maeda, the current First Secretary for Legal Affairs, for his unstinting help and support.

My Co-Chair, Scott Hopkins, has highlighted the importance of friendship. I am another beneficiary, albeit an older one, of bilingual, multi-cultural education and experience, having come to the UK initially at the age of twelve, although I have been back and forth since. And I would not be here had it not been for the support of my family, friends and mentors.

Friendship is invaluable to us all and it is founded on mutual trust. Ties between the UK and Japan are very strong and this is thanks to our mutual trust and respect for each other. While Japan and the UK may not appear, to some, to be obvious partners in legal co-operation, because of the different legal and cultural traditions, it is, no doubt, clear to everyone gathered this evening, that there are strong ties between the two countries in legal co-operation, thanks to both countries' true commitment to the rule of law and justice.

Indeed, I have been very fortunate and privileged to experience firsthand the close co-operation between the two countries in the legal field not only through the BJLA but also through organising a week-long international symposium, which was set up now 36 years ago at Jesus College, University of Cambridge, to promote and facilitate international co-operation in fighting economic crime. Any trans-national legal matters require international co-operation and while there are official channels and arrangements in place, what often provides vital clues for solutions are through personal friendship and contacts founded on mutual trust.

And each year, I am struck by the commitment that the Japanese Government makes to international co-operation. Ambassador Tsuruoka and the successive past Ambassadors have spoken at the Symposium, and senior representatives of the Japanese Ministry of Justice and Public Prosecutors Office and other government representatives regularly contribute to our

discussion. We are delighted to have a delegation of Japanese prosecutors with us this evening. We sincerely hope that you will join us in our international gatherings in the future. I am also grateful to the English judiciary and legal profession and academe, which are very well represented here this evening, for warmly receiving visitors and scholars from Japan.

Many Japanese lawyers come to England to study. I am delighted to say that Ambassador Tsuruoka's own daughter is currently studying in London and is with us this evening. Perhaps not as many go from the UK to Japan to study. Nevertheless, many of the current and former members of the British Japanese Law Association have studied and worked or currently work in Japan, making a significant contribution to further strengthening the ties between the two countries.

We would be delighted if you felt able to join us at future events of the British Japanese Law Association. Our AGM will take place on 26 April, and we are currently planning a panel discussion on "The impact of Brexit on English law", to take place on 11 June. If you are not yet a member, please do pick up an application form which is available this evening and please do join us! Before I conclude, I would like to express my gratitude to the BJLA's Committee members, past and present, for voluntarily putting their time and effort. Without their help and friendship, the BJLA would not be here today.