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**Exhibition *Exploring the Man-nen Dokei: Western Timekeeping and the Japanese Flow of Time***  
**Opening Remarks by Ambassador Keiichi Hayashi**  
**at the Embassy of Japan**  
**on Wednesday 29 October 2014**

It is a great honour to have with us this evening Mr Hisao Tanaka, President & CEO, Toshiba Corporation, and Mr Kazuyoshi Suzuki, Director, Centre of Japanese Industrial Technology, National Museum of Nature and Science of Japan.

We are here this evening for the Exhibition of the Myriad-year Clock, which was invented 150 years ago by Hisashige Tanaka, one of the founders of Toshiba, and the last of the five lectures given by Mr Suzuki on science and art in Japan of the Edo period. This event is held in commemoration of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Toshiba International Foundation.

When I saw the exhibition earlier, I was struck by three points in particular. First of all, I was naturally stunned by the originality of creating a clock which combines a western timekeeping device and a 'Japanese' part which measures time according to season, and still works by just winding a single mainspring.

Hisashige was both a prolific inventor and a great innovator. Among the exhibits, you may have seen his 'ever-lasting lamp' (*Mujin-to*). This lamp was produced and sold in large quantities, improving many people's quality of life by giving the bright light.

According to "The Theory of Economic Development" written by Josef Schumpeter in 1934, innovation does not mean just "new combinations of new or existing knowledge, resources, and equipment", but must also signify "a specific social activity carried out with a commercial purpose". Thus the 'ever-lasting lamp' is definitively an innovation.

The myriad-year clock, on the other hand, may not have had such an immediate impact on society. But I was simply amazed by the concept of this clock, which seeks not only to incorporate a western technology but to fuse a new technology brought from a different culture with the life-style of Japan.

Secondly, I was surprised at its ingenious design, which integrated a highly sophisticated and delicate appearance with elaborate mechanics. It is both practical and decorative. This is the ultimate expression of the art of manufacturing and the manufacturing of art.

Thirdly, I was impressed with the determination of Toshiba and its project staff to make this replica more than perfect, surely out of respect for the original creator.

This latter-day version was made mechanically perfect by a team of over 100 top artisans and engineers from Japan, who first had to dismantle the original clock in order to fully understand its mechanism.

Moreover, the replica has most likely surpassed the original in terms of the aesthetic values and the technical skills applied in its creation.

That said, the most crucial factor in making this exhibition here in London a reality was the strong corporate will of the Toshiba Corporation and the Toshiba International Foundation to fulfil Hisashige Tanaka's wish of 150 years ago by enabling people in Europe to see the clock.

Furthermore, Hisashige would be happy to know that Toshiba, which has embraced his vision by internationally "leading innovation", is putting down such solid roots in the UK through its investments in a wide range of fields and its establishment of two research laboratories here.

May I conclude by expressing my sincere gratitude to Toshiba Corporation and the Toshiba International Foundation, as well as to the National Museum of Nature and Science of Japan, for bringing this fascinating exhibition to London. Thank you.