

**Speech at the OLS, the ABPI and the JPMA Annual Reception
by Ambassador Keiichi Hayashi
at the Institute of Civil Engineers, 1 George Street, Westminster
on Monday 24 November 2014**

Good evening, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to join you here at this annual event, together with the OLS, the ABPI and the JPMA. It gives me great pleasure to see the cooperation between the pharmaceutical industries in the UK and Japan continue to grow each year.

I would like to thank the OLS for hosting today's event. It gives us Japanese an opportunity to appreciate just how 'Great' Britain's efforts are in the field of life science.

The Nobel Prize in 2012 awarded to Professor Shinya Yamanaka of Kyoto University for his work on 'ips cells' highlighted the significant efforts Japan has been making in the field of regenerative medicine.

In terms of Government policy, too, which often lags behind academic and business activities, Japan is making progress. In fact, as part of Prime Minister Abe's regulatory reforms, the Japanese Government is about to introduce a system which would allow the swift approval of regenerative medicines at an early stage. It should come into force in Japan tomorrow, on the 25th November Japan time, which means that the change is actually taking place right now, as I speak.

I am speaking, therefore, at a historical juncture in the field of life science for Japan and possibly for the UK, because such a reform will surely provide our two countries with an even greater opportunity for cooperation.

One critical area of such cooperation is dementia.

Japan is already facing the growing challenges posed by a fast-ageing society, which makes the issue of dementia desperately pressing. Meanwhile, the United Kingdom is also acutely aware of the same issue and is taking the lead in the international efforts by, for instance, convening the Dementia Summit last year. Japan not only participated in it but has just hosted a follow-up event this month.

While it poses a formidable challenge for the medical/pharmaceutical world to swiftly discover effective drugs for the disease, I genuinely believe that the cooperation between Japan and the UK, the two countries most capable and most willing in the field, will definitely facilitate the process. In fact as our two countries are blessed with the Universal Healthcare System which gives us such excellent access to medicine and treatment, one might regard it as our joint duty to lead the world in such an endeavour.

Japan will soon hold a general election, whose timing has surprised us all. In my position, I cannot and should not make any prediction in public about the outcome. In

private, well, I can speak with you later. But I can express my hope that it will not hamper the process of Japan's economic revitalisation, which should provide a solid basis for the maintenance and upgrading of Japan's medical care and the necessary R&D.

What I can definitely predict, however, is that the close partnership between Japan and the UK in every field including medicine and pharmaceuticals will continue to grow beyond this election.

Finally, let me briefly mention the Ebola crisis. Both Japan and the UK are swiftly responding by making a significant international contribution, as well as strengthening their own domestic health systems.

The Japanese Government has already committed to providing, and is quickly disbursing, 150 million dollars of financial assistance, while delivering 500,000 protective suits. This infectious disease has shown anew that the level of globalisation we have achieved can instantly transform a regional or even a local danger into a major health threat to the entire world.

It makes us even more determined not to fail in our efforts to develop new medicines and vaccines fast for the fight against future infectious diseases, and I hope that today's meeting will prove to be an important step to this end.

May I conclude by wishing all involved in the pharmaceutical industries of Japan and the UK continued, and hopefully prompt success. Thank you.