

## Professor Chizu Nakajima, Co-Chair of BJLA

Japanese British Lawyers Networking Reception – 28<sup>th</sup> February 2019

Ambassador Tsuruoka, distinguished guests, members of the British Japanese Law association. On behalf of the British Japanese Law Association, my co-chair Scott Hopkins and I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Ambassador Tsuruoka and the Embassy of Japan for their continued support.

We are delighted to host the British Japanese Lawyers Networking Reception this evening. It follows a splendid celebration of the Association's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which Ambassador Tsuruoka generously hosted last year.

The British Japanese Law Association was founded in London in 1998, in order to promote cooperation between the United Kingdom and Japan in the legal field. The Association has been facilitating knowledge exchange between the two countries by assisting those who engage in administration of justice, practice, and study of law in the UK and Japan, and through organising events to promote cooperation and deeper understanding. Since its foundation, the Association has received and continues to enjoy strong support from the Japanese Embassy and its successive legal attaches.

Notwithstanding many uncertainties that prevail today, the relationship between the legal community in the UK and Japan goes from strength to strength, enhanced by a mutual trust and respect for each other. It is no doubt clear to everyone gathered here that there are strong ties between the two countries in legal cooperation, thanks to their true commitment to the Rule of Law and justice. Indeed we have been very fortunate and privileged to experience first-hand the close cooperation between the two countries through the British Japanese Law Association and at other international gatherings.

Any transnational legal matters require international cooperation, and while there are official channels and arrangements in place, what often provides vital clues for solutions is through personal friendships and contacts founded on mutual trust. We are struck by the commitment the Japanese government makes to international cooperation. We are delighted to have a delegation of Public Prosecutors from Japan with us this evening. We sincerely hope that their visit will assist them in dealing with cases which are becoming increasingly international.

We are also grateful to the English judiciary and government agencies and departments, legal profession and academia, which are very well represented here this evening, for warmly receiving visitors and scholars from Japan. Many Japanese scholars come England to study. In fact quite a few Japanese students go on to qualify and practice in England, while not so 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. If you are not yet a member, please do pick up an application form and information about the forthcoming event in March from the Reception desk, and please do join us. And also please enjoy networking in such a splendid setting. Thank you.