

Remarks by H.E. Mr. HAYASHI Hajime,  
Ambassador of Japan to the UK,  
for Bestowal of the Foreign Minister's Commendation,  
upon Dr Mike William Weightman,  
on April 8th, 2022

Good afternoon, everyone, and welcome to my residence.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all here today, so that we can pay tribute to Dr Mike William Weightman for his significant contribution over many years to the promotion of relations between Japan and the United Kingdom in the field of nuclear safety.

While I am sure everyone here is very familiar with Dr Weightman's numerous achievements, I would like to mention just a few examples of his valuable endeavours in the cause of Japan-UK relations.

Firstly, the magnitude 9 Great East Japan Earthquake on 11th March 2011 did considerable damage in the region, and following the earthquake, a 15-metre tsunami disabled the power supply and cooling mechanism of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, causing a significant nuclear accident.

In May 2011, not long after the accident, and despite the unstable situation at the Fukushima nuclear plant, Dr Weightman visited Japan

and played an important role as head of the IAEA Fukushima Accident Investigation Expert Team, organised at the request of the Government of Japan. Under Dr Weightman's leadership, the expert team compiled an extensive report, which it submitted to the Government of Japan and the IAEA. This report included many important findings and identified the lessons learned, which were then shared with nuclear organisations around the world and contributed greatly to improving their emergency measures and nuclear safety regulations.

In addition to Dr Weightman's crucial role in Japan's recovery through this mission, his outstanding knowledge of nuclear safety subsequently proved invaluable to the Government of Japan. He provided his expertise as an External Advisor to the Nuclear Regulation Authority in Japan from 2012 to 2017, and has also served as an International Special Advisor to the Nuclear Damage Compensation and Decommissioning Facilitation Corporation in Japan since 2014. His advice and assistance during this most challenging period have been indispensable as Japan tackled a number of significant nuclear safety issues.

Finally, Dr Weightman continues to contribute to Japan's efforts in the nuclear field to this day. He was a key author of the report produced 10 years after the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident, which was published by the OECD in March last year. Looking ahead, I sincerely hope that Japan can continue to count on his support and wisdom.

These are just a few examples of Dr Weightman's vital work, and it would be difficult for me to fully cover all of his contributions and achievements in my short remarks. However, in view of his sterling work in this most important field, Dr Weightman is clearly a most worthy recipient of the Foreign Minister's Commendation. Today, here at my residence in London, I have great pleasure in celebrating this award together with his family, who I am sure have also played an important part in his momentous accomplishments.

Congratulations, Dr Weightman!