

[Remarks by Ambassador Hayashi]

Distinguished Guests,

Good evening, and welcome you all to my residence.

On this occasion, I feel privileged to have the opportunity to honour Dr Clare Pollard for her outstanding contribution to cultural relations between Japan and the UK. During her outstanding career as an expert in Japanese art, Dr Pollard worked at the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin from 1996 to 2003 and at the Art Gallery of New South Wales in Sydney from 2004 to 2006, and since then has been based at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Throughout this time, Dr Pollard has won acclaim for her sterling accomplishments in research and education and for helping to make Japanese art and culture more accessible to British people.

Although you are all no doubt familiar with Dr Pollard's career, I would like to make particular mention of the following three major achievements:

Firstly, Dr Pollard played a central role in creating two splendid new galleries at the Ashmolean Museum dedicated to Japanese art and culture, which opened in 2009. These galleries and their magnificent collections comprise a major academic focal point for students at the University of Oxford engaged in Japanese Studies as well as an education centre where the general public, including children and young adults, can explore and enjoy the collections.

Secondly, Dr Pollard has organised various temporary exhibitions featuring works from the museum's Japanese collection. In fact, these exhibitions have been sufficiently numerous that I cannot list them all here, but it would be remiss of me not to refer to two especially wonderful exhibitions, *Landscape, Cityscape: Hiroshige Woodblock Prints*, on which she worked with Ms Mitsuko Ito Watanabe, and *Yoshida Hiroshi: A Japanese Artist in India*, involving collaboration with Dr Mallica Kumbera Landrus.

Last but not least, Dr Pollard organised the Ashmolean's most recent exhibition, *Tokyo: Art and Photography*, giving people a fascinating taste of that vibrant city while it was hosting the Olympic and Paralympic Games for the second time last year. The exhibition not surprisingly received excellent reviews and was enjoyed by as many

as 43,000 people in the UK, obviously including my wife and myself.

For what she has done and will no doubt continue to do in promoting Japanese art and culture in the UK, we must be pretty sure that Dr Pollard is a worthy recipient of The Foreign Minister's Commendation.

Congratulations, Dr Pollard!