

Remarks by H.E. Mr. HAYASHI Hajime,
Ambassador of Japan to the UK,
for the Dinner celebrating the 35th Anniversary of the Establishment of the
Canon Foundation in Europe
on 24 June, 2022

Chairman Bateson, Professors, Doctors, Distinguished Guests,

Thank you for inviting my wife and me to this wonderful occasion this evening to celebrate the 35th anniversary of the Canon Foundation in Europe.

Living in today's world, it is more and more important to note that the creation of new knowledge is exactly what is needed as we contemplate the momentous issues facing us. As various challenges emerge in society, such as pandemics, falling birth rates, ageing populations and climate change, the expectations placed on science, technology and innovation to find solutions and realise a more prosperous society are growing higher. More than ever before, there is a need for scientists and researchers to apply their ingenuity in taking charge of the creation of new knowledge and to open up a new future.

I would like to underline a significant figure in that more than 500 researchers have received fellowships from the Canon Foundation in Europe since its foundation 35 years ago, with European researchers having travelled to Japan and Japanese researchers to Europe. I have come to learn that many of the participants involved in these exchanges are at the forefront of their academic disciplines, particularly in the natural and social sciences as well as the humanities. I would like to express my sincere respect and appreciation to the Foundation, which has been investing in the future through the exchange of young researchers in both Europe and Japan for many years.

In the Japanese Garden at UCL, where the reception was just held, there is a monument to commemorate the 'Choshu Five', five young men from the

Choshu clan, today's Yamaguchi Prefecture, who risked their lives to come all the way from Japan, which at the time had just started opening up to the world. Here in London, they immersed themselves in Britain's economy, technology and culture, which were flourishing at the height of the Victorian age. They eventually brought back home what they had learned here, which literally paved the way for the modernisation of Japan in the late 19th century. As a matter of fact, one of them later became Japan's first Prime Minister. This is probably a well-known success story but, I believe, it nonetheless provides us with a meaningful lesson on the significance of international exchanges of talented young people.

Thirty-five years is certainly a long time. Indeed, it was 35 years ago in 1987, when Apple first introduced its Macintosh 2, which was bigger than a television set. At that time the world was at the height of the Cold War between the US and the Soviet Union. Since then, obviously the international community has changed dramatically. The coming decades will also bring many changes. But whatever the era, people will always create the future. I hope that the Canon Foundation in Europe will continue to give opportunities to young researchers in European countries and Japan and continue to invest in the future. We look forward to seeing the researchers supported by the Foundation changing the world. I also sincerely hope that the networks fostered by each of the recipients of the Foundation's scholarship programme will serve as a bridge between Europe and Japan and contribute to further deepening mutual understanding, friendship and cooperation.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.