

**Remarks by H.E Hajime Hayashi,
Ambassador of Japan to the UK,
at the awarding the Ambassador's Commendation
to Professor Dr. Alessio Patalano
on Thursday 15th June 2023**

Professor Patalano, Distinguished Guests,

Good evening. My wife and I would like to extend our heartfelt welcome to you all.

It is my great pleasure to have an opportunity to honour Prof. Alessio Patalano for his outstanding contribution in enhancing the security and defence ties between Japan and the UK.

Prof. Patalano has been at the forefront of advancing European countries' understanding of the Indo-Pacific region. His academic influence played a significant role in the UK Government's launch of the "Indo Pacific tilt" as part of the Integrated Review in 2021, and its subsequent reinforcement in the IR Refresh this March, solidifying the region as a permanent pillar of the UK's international policy.

Also, it is important to note that Prof. Patalano has long served as a bridge between these regions, even before European nations turned their attention to the concept of the Indo-Pacific. What particularly delights me is his enduring passion for Japan throughout his career. His doctoral dissertation in 2015 focused on "Post-war Japan as a Sea Power: Imperial Legacy, Wartime Experience, and the Making of a Navy." This research undoubtedly provided valuable insights into the longstanding Navy-to-Navy cooperation that has underpinned the security and defence bond between Japan and the UK.

Furthermore, Prof. Patalano's commitment to nurturing young professionals is commendable. This was evident during the port call of the JMSDF training ship "Kashima" alongside HMS "Belfast" in London in June last year. He organised a roundtable by Rear Admiral Komuta, Commander of the Training Squadron, with officials from the UK Government, including the Royal Navy, MOD, FCDO, and Cabinet Office. In addition, he guided young cadets from the JMSDF and RN on a cultural tour of the Imperial War Museum. These personnel exchanges obviously hold significance for the future of bilateral partnership.

Prof. Patalano has also played an invaluable role in effectively disseminating Japan's policies and views. His active presence online has provided readers with a deeper understanding of the latest updates in Japan's security and defence landscape, such as Japan's National Security Strategy, and the Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) and its significance. His research agenda has also extended to major defence equipment programs, such as the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP), showcasing his breadth of knowledge and engagement.

We gather here this evening to express our utmost appreciation to Prof. Patalano for his contributions in enhancing the security and defence ties, as well as the friendship, between Japan and the UK, as I just described partially. With his profound insights, unwavering dedication, and commitment to fostering bilateral relations, I am pretty sure that he is truly a worthy recipient of the Ambassador's Commendation. Let us celebrate his achievements and look forward to his continued efforts for a bright future between our countries.

Congratulations, Prof. Patalano.