

Remarks by HE Mr HAYASHI Hajime,
Ambassador of Japan to the UK
Friday 29 September 2023

Distinguished Guests,

My wife and I would like to thank you all for coming all the way from Oxford this evening, during your busy schedule before the start of the Michaelmas term. We are particularly grateful for the presence of Professor Goodman, who will travel to Japan on sabbatical leave the day after tomorrow. We are so delighted to be with such a magnificent group of people – Oxford's best and brightest professors and fellows involved in Japanese Studies: I feel as if I am watching an all-star game in the world of academia.

We are gathered here this evening to present the Foreign Minister's Commendations to Professor Roger Goodman, Nissan Professor of Modern Japanese Studies and the Warden of St Antony's College, Oxford, and to the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies at the University of Oxford, respectively.

Though you may be much more knowledgeable than I am in this regard, now let me try to introduce some of the outstanding achievements of Professor Goodman and the Nissan Institute.

Over 40 years, Professor Goodman has made a major contribution to the development of Japanese Studies and the promotion of understanding of Japan in the UK and the world over, while holding a number of very important positions. These have included Director of the Nissan Institute, Head of the Department of Social Sciences, Head of the School of Interdisciplinary Area Studies at the University of Oxford and President of the UK Academy of Social Sciences.

As an anthropologist specialising in Japanese education and social policy, Professor Goodman has conducted some of the world's best research and teaching on Japan at the University of Oxford, where he has trained many researchers and students. I should also like to touch upon his major monographs: Japan's International Youth, or *kikokushijo*, published in 1990; Children of the Japanese State in 2000; and Family-Run Universities in Japan in 2020. I believe some more brilliant books may be in store for us as he will be conducting research on Japanese health policy in Tokyo for a year. We will all miss you but I sincerely wish you every success in your endeavours.

Next, I would like to mention the great achievements of the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies. Since its launch in 1981, the Nissan Institute has been at the forefront among British universities in building a world-leading concentration of Japan-related expertise outside Japan. Indeed, the Nissan Institute has played a leading role in promoting Japanese Studies in the UK, with its distinguished professors and fellows, its provision of first-class education, and the research conducted there in the social sciences, humanities and area studies.

Its convening power is also outstanding – the Nissan Seminar Series attracts such speakers as top academics, business leaders, politicians and public servants not only from inside the UK or Japan but from around the world. In February this year, I was invited to a highly successful conference entitled "Reforming Capitalism, going digital and going green: Does Japan hold answers?" organised by the Nissan Institute under the leadership of the current Director, Professor Hugh Whittaker. The cut and thrust of the discussion on a number of weighty topics, including the “new form of capitalism” being promoted by the Kishida Administration and climate change, was both enjoyable and stimulating.

In addition, since 1986, more than 100 volumes have been published in the Nissan Institute/Routledge Japanese Studies Series, which reaches and attracts a worldwide audience. The Nissan Institute also boasts the world's largest number of doctoral dissertations on Japan. Thus it has made a significant contribution to the promotion of understanding of Japan. Not surprisingly, every time I have visited the Nissan Institute, I have always been impressed by the depth of knowledge and keen insight displayed by everyone associated with it.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate Professor Takehiko Kariya, one of the key figures in education in Japan, on receiving *Shijuhosho*, the Medal with Purple Ribbon, this spring. It is no exaggeration to say that he is the authority on Japanese pedagogy – a fact aptly illustrated by the 'Kariya Sensei loss' that the University of Tokyo suffered after his departure as he was simply irreplaceable.

All of you here today are important friends of Japan. You have served as a bridge between the UK and Japan by promoting Japanese Studies. Indeed, quite a few graduates have gone on to academic posts around the world, seeding and growing Japanese Studies, while others have worked in diverse arenas, including with governments, global corporations and the media. I am sure that you will continue to play an active role as a driving force in promoting Japanese Studies in the UK. We are truly grateful for your outstanding contributions.

Once again, congratulations to Professor Goodman and the Nissan Institute, and thank you all for coming today.