

Remarks by H.E. Mr. HAYASHI Hajime,
Ambassador of Japan to the UK,
at the 25th Anniversary Ceremony between Derbyshire & Toyota City
on 24th Oct 2023

Cllr Barry Lewis, Cllr Baggy Shanker, Cllr Robert Pearson, Mayor
Toshihiko Ota, Distinguished Guests,

It is a great pleasure to celebrate with all of you here today the 25th anniversary of the international partnership between Toyota City and Derbyshire.

It was in 1989 that Toyota Motor Corporation, headquartered in Toyota City, established a manufacturing subsidiary in the Burnaston area of South Derbyshire. Its active engagement with the local community also led to the start of exchanges between Toyota City and Derbyshire, and the partnership became official in 1998. I am pleased to note that the bonds between the two regions have steadily deepened since then, including through cultural activities and student exchange.

However, as Japan's Ambassador to the UK, I must also mention that Japan and Derbyshire's historical relationship dates back more than 150 years to when a delegation led by Tomomi Iwakura, who had been almost the same importance as the Prime Minister of Japan, visited Chatsworth House. My wife and I had the privilege of attending its Country Fair to mark the 150th anniversary of this visit last year. And we were profoundly impressed by the iconic house with its delightful location and rich heritage as well as the warm hospitality of the people there. We have been convinced that Toyota's choice of Derbyshire as its home in the UK was truly an excellent one.

Having been working in Derbyshire for more than 30 years, now the company is certainly a member of the regional community. It produces over

100,000 vehicles annually and employs 2,000 skilled individuals. This is a shining example of how Japanese businesses have acted as good corporate citizens in the UK, building supply chains, providing employment and contributing to the local community.

Today, Japan and the UK are increasingly important global strategic partners, as illustrated by the Japan-UK Hiroshima Accord signed by Prime Ministers Fumio Kishida and Rishi Sunak on the occasion of the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May this year. The accord envisions increasing investment through the ever closer economic partnership between our two countries.

In spite of the complicated environment surrounding the automobile industry undergoing major change, I am sure that this mutually beneficial relationship will continue to flourish. As we celebrate this momentous 25th anniversary, it is my fervent hope that we will continue to nurture and fortify the cordial ties which bridge the distance and connect Derbyshire and Toyota City together.

I would like to conclude by paying tribute to the efforts of everyone who has strengthened human and cultural exchange between Toyota City and Derbyshire over the years and to thank everyone who has organised this wonderful celebration today.

Thank you very much indeed.