

Remarks by H.E. Mr Hiroshi Suzuki,
Ambassador of Japan to the UK,
at the CEO reception on 15th October

Chairman Hakkaku,
Mr Ainscough,
Mr Collins,
Mr Ando,
Representatives from sponsors
Distinguished guests,

It is a great pleasure for me to join you all this evening.

I am so thrilled to witness the return of Sumo to London after 34 years. For the Japan Sumo Association, it is the first official overseas tournament in 20 years. I cannot help but think how fortunate I am to be a part of such a historic occasion.

This evening, I would like to express my deep gratitude to a few people who have made this

historic event possible.

First and foremost, to Chairman Hakkaku of the Japan Sumo Association.

He competed in London in 1991 as Yokozuna Hokutoumi and won the tournament. He was such a fierce fighter that British fans dubbed him “*The Bulldog*”.

This time he has brought the Tournament here as Chairman of the Japan Sumo Association. Without his passion and commitment, this Sumo Tournament would not have been possible.

Second, my thanks go to Mr Ainscough, of the Royal Albert Hall. What an iconic venue! I cannot think of a better location for Sumo’s return to London. I was truly moved to witness the magnificent central stage. The dignified setting of the Royal Albert Hall befits the dignity Sumo embodies. Thank you for hosting Sumo again after 34 years.

Third, I wish to thank co-organisers, Mr Collins of Askonas Holt and Mr Ando of Evolia. I also would like to thank Mr Martin Campbell-White. With their expertise and dedication, this tour looks set to be just as successful as the 1991 championship.

I would also like to thank the sponsors: Mizuho, Kikkoman, XTX Markets, Suntory, Mitsubishi UFJ Bank, ANA, Sanrio. Thank you for your generous support, and that of the many more sponsors which made this event possible.

What is special about this event is that it will be broadcast live on the BBC Sport. I hope many Sumo wrestlers will charm the British people during the next 5 days and earn fabulous nicknames.

I also hope that the British people will be able to feel the essence of Sumo. It is the integration of 心(Shin), 技(Gi), 体(Tai). 体(Tai) represents power, stamina, physical capabilities. 技(Gi) represents technics and skills. 心(Shin) represents inner spirit, such as concentration, perseverance and dignity.

Yokozuna Ō nosato and Yokozuna Hoshoryu embody these qualities. 心技体 (Shin, Gi, Tai) all put together, Sumo represents the dignity, integrity, culture and history of Japan.

Through this Grand Sumo Tournament, I ardently hope that the charm of sumo and the depth of Japanese culture will leave a lasting impression on the British people, and further

strengthen the bonds of friendship between Japan and the UK.

I wish Sumo wrestlers every success, and most importantly a safe and injury-free performance.

Thank you very much.