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Remarks by H.E. Mr Hiroshi Suzuki,
Ambassador of Japan to the UK,
at the Japanese British Lawyers Reception 2025
on 3rd February 2025

Lord Reed,
My Lords,
My Ladies,
and Distinguished Guests,

It is my great pleasure to welcome you all to the Japanese Embassy. In particular, I am honoured and privileged to welcome Lord Reed, President of the Supreme Court, as the guest of honor for tonight's reception.

Exchanges between Japan and the UK in the legal field have been deepening year by year since the appointment of Lord Reed. For example, Japanese and UK Supreme Courts held their online meeting for the first time in 2021, and the second time in 2023.

Furthermore, Lord Reed visited Japan in 2023 at the invitation of Japanese Supreme Court. This was the first time the President of UK Supreme Court visited Japan, which marked a milestone in the history of exchanges between the courts of our two countries.

Lord Reed also met with His Majesty the Emperor on that occasion. Incidentally, the father of Her Majesty the Empress, Prof. Hisashi Owada, served as President of the ICJ. Another senior Japanese diplomat, Amb. Shunji Yanai, served as President of the International Tribunal for the UNCLOS. It is encouraging to see Japan's steady contributions in the field of international law.

Japan and the UK are critically important partners who share common strategic interests and fundamental values, such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Today, as Russia's aggression against Ukraine continues, the rule of law, the foundation of the international order, is being challenged. As champions of the fundamental values, it is critical for Japan and the UK, to join hands in defending the rule of law, and the free and open international order based on it.

In this context, I am glad to note that the first Japan-UK Strategic Dialogue on Law and Justice was held last month in London. This is a concrete progress based on the Memorandum of Cooperation signed on the occasion of the G7 Justice Ministers' Meeting in Hiroshima.

It was a fruitful meeting with much lessons learnt by both sides, and I look forward to the second meeting to be held in Japan next time.

In closing, I would like to express my appreciation for all those who have contributed in strengthening our ties in the field of law and justice, and look forward to your continued cooperation in the months and years ahead.

Thank you very much.