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Remarks by H.E. Mr. SUZUKI Hiroshi,
Ambassador of Japan to the UK,
at the Evening Reception with Local Delegates
On 8th April 2025

Mayor Paul Dennett,
Ms Jo Ahmed,
Distinguished Guests,

On my first visit to Manchester as Ambassador, it is brilliant to speak with a group that is committed to furthering Japan-UK and Japan-Manchester relations.

It is a great pleasure to join you all here today. First, I would like to thank Ms Jo Ahmed, Honorary Consul of Japan in Manchester and the Greater Manchester and Japan Steering Group for their tireless work in strengthening the relations between Japan and Manchester and hosting this wonderful evening with Deloitte.

Of course, it goes without saying that I am also thankful for the efforts of the Japanese and UK companies, academic institutions, and government officials represented here today, all of whom are vital in furthering the partnership between Japan and Manchester.

Japan-Manchester relations date back to 1865, when Satsuma student Godai Tomoatsu visited Oldham and purchased a spinning machine. Godai brought this newfound technology back to Japan, where he helped establish the Kagoshima Mill in 1867 and kickstart Japan's industrial revolution.

He also later founded the Osaka Chamber of Commerce and Stock Exchange. These events cemented the economic and historical links between Osaka and Manchester.

Over 150 years later, the relationship between the two cities is still going from strength to strength. In 2023, Mayor Andy Burnham led a mission to Osaka where he and Osaka mayor Hideyuki Yokoyama signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the Partnership of Friendship and Cooperation.

This June, Mayor Andy Burnham will lead a delegation from Manchester to the World Expo in Osaka, providing an opportunity for both cities to strengthen collaboration in areas like green energy and sustainability.

Japanese companies have also been expanding their operations in Manchester. Tomorrow, I plan to visit Mizkan's site here in the city. I'm sure all of you here today are very familiar with Sarson's Vinegar, a national favourite for pairing with fish and chips. Sarson's Vinegar is actually produced here in Manchester by Mizkan, a

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company specialising in the craft of traditional Japanese vinegar. Chemical reactions like fermentation are the basis of making vinegar, and as Ambassador I am happy to see that good chemistry is brewing between Japan and the UK, too!

Research collaborations between universities in Manchester and Japan have also been progressing in the field of green energy, alongside Japanese studies. I hope Manchester's academic institutions will continue to foster future leaders to serve as bridges between Japan and the UK.

I'm also thrilled to see several Japanese players signed with Manchester City and Manchester United women's football clubs. In September, 'Japan Week 2025' will take place in Manchester, signifying the close cultural connections between the city and Japan.

I hope that Japan and Manchester continue to strengthen this vital and historical relationship.

Thank you.