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Remarks by H.E. Mr Hiroshi Suzuki,
Ambassador of Japan to the UK,
on the occasion of the opening of the exhibition
The Craft of Carpentry: Drawing Life from Japan's Forests
on 11th March 2025

Ambassador Longbottom,

Mr Thorne, Director General of Japan House
London,

Mr Takenaka, Honorary Chairman of the
Board of Takenaka Corporation,

Mr Nishiyama, from the Takenaka Carpentry
Tools Museum,

Distinguished guests,

It gives me great pleasure to be here today for the opening of *The Craft of Carpentry*.

I am glad that my good friend Julia, the British Ambassador to Japan, has kindly joined me to celebrate this auspicious occasion.

The long history of Japanese carpentry and wooden architecture showcases the skilful and refined use of natural materials.

It reflects the Japanese philosophy of living in harmony with nature, while honouring the artistry of human craftsmanship.

Japan has a long-cherished wood culture. A notable architectural achievement is Horyu-ji Temple, built in the 7th century and the oldest wooden building in the world.

Ise Jingu Shrine, the most important shrine in Japan, is renowned for its tradition of renewing the main buildings of the shrine every 20 years, thereby passing down artisan techniques from generation to generation for 1300 years.

These remarkable examples stand as a testament to the enduring craftsmanship of Japanese wooden architecture and carpentry.

I am glad to be joined by Mr Toichi Takenaka, Honorary Chairman of Takenaka Cooperation, and the 17th head of the founding family. This exhibition is curated by Mr Marcelo Nishiyama of the Takenaka Carpentry Tools Museum.

Takenaka Corporation, founded in 1610 by Hanbei Takenaka, has specialised in construction over four centuries, with special dedication and commitment to preserving and carrying forward the skills and traditions of Japanese architecture.

Last but not least, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all of you for being here today. I hope this exhibition offers many the opportunity to experience the unique qualities of Japanese carpentry firsthand.

Thank you very much.