

Very good morning,

Excellencies, Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen,

It's my great pleasure to celebrate the successful opening of the 2nd UAE Kendo Championships. On this opportunity, I'd like to congratulate the organiser, staff and every person involved, on this marvellous organisation of the Japan's most authentic sports culture in Dubai. Especially, my special respects are due to the UAE Kendo Federation headed by Mr. Shiba, and the Taimeikan UAE. I also have a great privilege to observe this Japanese spiritual culture expanded in the UAE and the Middle East.

Kendo is a kind of the Japanese heart and soul. It aims at building the human character and mind discipline through the hard practice of sword martial-arts. According to the principles of All Japanese Kendo Federation, a man should serve and devote his highest efforts for training faithfully with politeness, decorum and courtesy, consequently contributing the peaceful nature of every community and the prosperity of all human kind. This clearly represents the virtue of Japanese culture.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last month, His Highness Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai, urged every Dubai people to take on the Dubai Fitness Challenge, starting from last month.

Today is eventually the midst of the Dubai Fitness Challenge weeks. So, this Championship gears up for the Fitness Challenge emphasised by Sheikh Hamdan. And, Kendo is not only to achieve and maintain active lifestyles, but also to afford excellent mind discipline.

Kendo is often depicted that it begins with paying courtesy, and ends by paying courtesy. Kendo master says, when a man practices a technique for thousand times, it becomes a great skill. And, he practices hundreds more, it becomes the art of discipline. Kendo also requires us to be a model citizen before becoming an expert of swordsman. Kendo is really the Japanese spiritual culture which prioritises what human should be.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I can see many UAE people including Emirati youngsters, residents in the UAE, and, of course, Japanese boys, who are participating today. I'm very happy that a Japanese spiritual culture, Kendo, has extended its popularity into the UAE society. I'm also glad our Japan and the UAE relations are getting deeper and deeper, and wider and wider in terms of cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

Finally, I wish you good luck on the today's Championship, and I also hope all the people here in this hall enjoy the this exciting Championships.

Thank you very much.