

Assalaum aleykom

H.E. Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi

Minister of Climate Changes and Environment

Your Excellency, Ambassadors, Consul-Generals,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's indeed my great honor to extend you a warm welcome to the Japan's National Day Reception, to celebrate His Majesty the Emperor Akihito's 85th birthday.

The year 2018 is splendidly special in the United Arab Emirates, celebrating the 100th anniversary of the birth of H.H. Sheikh Zayed, a founding father of the nation. For Japan, 2018 marks the 150th anniversary of the Meiji Restoration; a peaceful transition from the samurai era of Tokugawa dynasty to the modernized ruling under the Emperor.

Both our histories reminds me the quote of Sheikh Zayed, who stated "A nation without a past is, a nation without a present or future". Today, both the UAE and Japan have enjoyed flourishing civilizations and blooming economies with glorious future.

Japan, as the world 3rd largest economy, is leading the high-tech powerhouse, and its economic growth remains broadly stable with highly diversified goods and services, while the 2020 Tokyo Olympics will bolster

investments. Here, the UAE's economic growth is also expected to strengthen over the years, while Dubai's economy is set for strong growth as accelerating the preparation for Expo 2020.

In the meantime, our two countries have steadily enhanced the cordial relations. January, Japanese Foreign Minister, Taro Kono, visited the UAE, and two months later, UAE's Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, H.H. Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, visited Japan reciprocally. In this early morning, when I escorted Japanese Foreign Minister at the Dubai Airport, he emphasized our strategic relation is crucially vital.

April, Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe visited the UAE, and committed with H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces, affirmed the formulation of joint vision under the "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Initiative".

Under the presence of Japanese Prime Minister, UAE Minister of Economy, H.E. Sultan Bin Saeed Al Mansouri emphasized the importance of partnership in more ambitious sectors such as space technology, artificial intelligence, blockchain, fintech, and SMEs. Later this year, the 2nd Japanese SMEs Caravan to the UAE will be organized by JETRO, to drive and diversify the economy in an innovative approach.

As Sheikh Zayed stated “we have to diversify the sources of our revenue and construct economic project”. Japan is more than happy to follow H.H’s words.

Sheikh Zayed also pointed out “the real asset of any nation is its people”. For Japan, Japanese community here is prime importance for the relationships with the UAE. Thankfully, the number of Japanese residents in Dubai and Northern Emirates becomes more than 3,000, hitting the largest in the history. The number of Japanese companies also recorded the historically highest. More than 90 thousand Japanese visitors to Dubai last year updated the highest record. Our trade volume between Dubai and Japan has also expanded robustly, where it reached 42 billion dirham last year.

In the meantime, Sheikh Zayed stated “a country is not measured by the size, and a country is truly measured by its heritage and culture”. So, we may say the real spirit behind the cordial relations must be mutual cultural exchanges.

Today, is the midst of the Japan Week which promotes Japanese culture extensively in the UAE. The day before yesterday, we inaugurated the first ever championship of the traditional Japanese sword-marshal-arts, Kendo. A Japanese cultural envoy visits here to perform a series of classic music concerts. A special dinner reception titled “Arts and Cultures of Japan” will be organized at the residence of Consul-General. Japan is also invited as the guest of honor country at the Sharjah International Book Fair. In this world 3rd largest book festival, Japan Pavilion presents massive traditional

and modern cultures. You can also experience the Japan Day at the occasion of the region's biggest maritime exhibition this week.

Tomorrow, is another special memorable day for Japan and the UAE. The first Emirati-made satellite, KhalifaSat, will be launched into space onboard a Japanese-built H-IIA rocket, from the Japanese rocket launching site. Earlier this month, when the UAE cabinet approved the budget for the next three years, H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE stated "the goal is to open up the space sector," "adapting a large budget for space." Japan has deepened the relation in the space sector which is one of the seven keys under the "UAE National Innovation Strategy" launched by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid al Maktoum. But, it's not only the space sector.

May this year, under the patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Haya Bint Al Hussein, Japanese-operated Sakura Medical and Dental Clinic was crowned with the Dubai Healthcare City's, Excellence Awards. Japan contributes the health sector as well, because this is one of the Japanese most strong sectors.

This year, the 2018 Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine is awarded to Japanese Professor, Tasuku Honjo. In this decade, Japanese scientists won the Nobel Prize in physiology or medicine almost every two years.

Another Japanese Nobel Prize laureate, Prof. Shuji Nakamura, received the Zayed Future Energy Prize from H.H. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al

Nahyan, earlier this year, for his invention of blue LED light. Japan has many innovative cooperation with the UAE in technology sector.

For example, two weeks ago, when Dubai hosted the region's biggest technology show, GITEX, a world first autonomous electric smart police station-vehicle was debuted by a Japanese engineering company, Mikasa, showcasing terrific artificial-intelligence technologies for Dubai police.

Energy sector is another cooperation area. Japan's company, Hitachi Zosen Inova signed January this year, with the Dubai Municipality to build a world largest waste-to-energy facility, having a capacity of treating tonnes of waste daily to generate hundreds of MW electricity.

Tonight, I came to this hotel by the world's cleanest car, a Fuel Cell Electric Vehicle, "Mirai" made by Toyota. It is powered by hydrogen, the cleanest source of energy in the world. The another leading Japanese car manufacture, Nissan, is appointed as the Official Automotive Partner of Expo 2020 Dubai, providing the world's best selling electric car, "Leaf".

As both are proud of the zero-emission state-of-art technologies, Japan always attaches prime importance on the sustainability, environmentally friendly, and adopting to the climate changes.

Today, it's great privileged to receive Minister of Climate Changes and Environment as a guest of honor. Last week, under the patronage of H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, the World Green Economy Summit was held in Dubai, where H.E. Dr. Thani bin Ahmed Al Zeyoudi,

today's guest of honor made a keynote speech. He was determined the UAE reinforces its status as an environment pioneer and becomes a leader in green economy initiative. I'm convinced the next core axis of bilateral cooperation must be in an area of environmentally sustainable future.

As for environment, H. H. Sheikh Zayed stated "the desert environment has taught us to be patient until the land blossoms". It inspires me to strive continuously to promote bilateral relations with tireless efforts. Towards this end, I wish to express my deepest gratitude for your every advice, guidances and supports kindly extended to us.

Finally, I'm deeply grateful to these supporting companies and organizations for showcasing Japanese foods, goods and service.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Tonight, we also offer a live cooking sushi bar, where two Japanese maestro chefs are serving you splendid dishes.

I hope you'll enjoy the Japan's National Day reception tonight.

Thank you very much.

Shokran Jezilan