

**CONSUL-GENERAL NAKAYAMA'S SPEECH AT HIS FAREWELL
RECEPTION, SEPT. 15, 2017:**

Ladies and gentlemen, my dear friends,

Thank you all very much for coming. It is with mixed feelings that I welcome you to my official residence today. On the one hand, I am saddened that my wife and I will soon be leaving Toronto after three wonderful years here. On the other, I am extremely thankful that we were able to befriend all of you. The Japanese believe that some people are fated to meet, and that they are connected by what is called *en*. We are very grateful that there was *en* among us.

During my time here, I witnessed numerous ties that bind Ontario with Japan. The strength of such ties is reflected in part by the recent official visits to Japan by: Ontario Premier Kathleen Wynne; Toronto Mayor John Tory along with Councillors Michael Thompson, Shelley Carroll and Mary-Margaret McMahon; as well as Mississauga's Mayor Bonnie Crombie. Mayor Frank Scarpitti of Markham and Mayor Trevor Birch of Woodstock will also be visiting in November. The fact that so many elected leaders of Ontario are visiting Japan is certainly a very positive indication of our future relationship.

On the economic side, Japan and Ontario enjoy a truly productive relationship. In my three years here, I have come to be convinced that the central pillar of this relationship is Japanese direct investment to Ontario. Currently, there are 260 Japanese companies operating here, centering on the auto and auto parts sector, and together they employ a remarkable 50,000 people.

These Japanese companies are also ideal corporate citizens which make social contributions to their local communities, and The Toronto Japanese Association of Commerce & Industry, or Shokokai, does not only service its corporate members, but actively pursues many charitable activities. It was an honour for me to be able to serve as the Shokokai's Honorary Chairman during my time here alongside its Board of Directors, many of whom are with us this evening.

Tonight, I am particularly pleased to have with us Mr. Ray Tanguay, the former Chair of Toyota Motor Manufacturing Canada and currently Automotive Advisor to the Governments of Ontario and Canada. He is truly a symbol of the Japan-Ontario's economic partnership, and I am honoured to have been acquainted with such an outstanding individual. I am confident he will continue to dedicate himself to further strengthening economic relations between Japan and Ontario, and Japan and Canada.

Ladies and gentlemen, I was also delighted to see on many occasions the affection Canadians hold for Japanese culture. It became a happy annual tradition for me to attend Anime North, one of North America's largest Japanese anime conventions.

Japan Festival CANADA, Canada's largest Japanese festival, was also established in Mississauga during my time here, thanks to the strong support of Mayor Crombie and local Japanese businesses, as well as to the hard work of Japan Festival CANADA Chair, Mr. Terry Wakasa. Following the success of last year's Japan Festival Mississauga, this year's festival drew an astonishing 80,000 attendants.

Everyone knows Toronto is a city that loves film, and Japanese films are no exception. Japanese cinema has become a constant feature of the Toronto International

Film Festival, with regular attendance by many directors and actors. There is also the tremendously successful Toronto Japanese Film Festival, which grows bigger each year due to the efforts of Mr. James Heron, the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre's Executive Director. My conversations with many renowned filmmakers and actors are among my fondest memories of Toronto.

In the field of academics, Japan-Canada relations received a significant boost with the establishment of the Centre for the Study of Global Japan at the University of Toronto, made possible with a \$5 million US endowment from the Government of Japan. This was the first time such an endowment was given to a Canadian university, and I sincerely hope the Centre will serve as a vital hub for Japan studies in this country.

I have also witnessed the fruitful collaborations between Japanese and Ontario researchers in fields of advanced technology such as ICT, AI and Medical Science. We have with us tonight several talented Japanese researchers and practitioners working in Toronto institutions in the Medical Science sector, whom I've come to know personally. Partnerships and exchanges in these fields are constantly producing positive results, so I also hope to see them further advance in the future.

Despite such promising developments, there is still work to be done. For example, I have tried in my position here to support the efforts by the Royal Ontario Museum to establish a curatorship position for its Japanese Art Collection. The collection contains more than 10,000 items, which should be properly catalogued and displayed by a qualified curator. I hope those of you in attendance will be supportive of the continuing efforts by the ROM and the Bishop White Committee, Chaired by Ms. Liz Mitchell who has devoted great effort toward funding this very important position.

There are many notable individuals whose work have strengthened Japan-Canada relations. I was privileged to confer the Order of the Rising Sun to Professors Michael Donnelly and David Waterhouse of the University of Toronto, both of whom contributed greatly to Japan studies in Canada, as well as to the former President of the Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, Mr. Marty Kobayashi. I was also able to present the Foreign Minister's Commendation to: the celebrated woodblock print artist, Ms. Naoko Matsubara; Mr. Ben Ciprietti, the President of the Japan Society; York University's Professor Norio Ota; and Ms. Teruko Shin, a respected teacher of the Tea Ceremony.

It was also my immense pleasure to have worked with my colleagues in the Consular Corps, many of whom are here tonight. Through mutual support and cooperation, we were able to organize successful joint programs, and I thank you for your comradeship.

I also would like to take this opportunity to thank every one of the Japan-related organizations that support many of our activities, including: the JCCC, the Japan Society of Canada and Japanese Social Services. My heartfelt appreciation also goes to the Japan Foundation, JETRO and the Asia Pacific Foundation for always working closely with our office to further develop ties between Japan and Ontario and Canada.

Speaking of the APF, I would like to close my remarks on a couple of very personal notes. First, my wife and I shall always carry with us our memories of meeting the mother of Ms. Christine Nakamura, Executive Director of APF's Toronto Office. Ms. Masako Nakamura is truly a remarkable person who suffered extraordinary hardship during and after the Second World War. Despite her harsh experiences, however, she still embodies all that is good in both Japan and Canada. After all, she is the mother of

Christine, who works tirelessly for Japan-Canada friendship. We will always fondly remember them both.

The other personal experience I want to mention is making the acquaintance of Ms. Kelly Peterson. I am a big fan of the musical legacy left behind by her late husband, Mr. Oscar Peterson, so I could not believe I would have the pleasure of meeting Kelly. It was a huge thrill, and a fond memory I shall always treasure.

My friends, it was truly an honour to work with you, and to have the pleasure of your friendship. I hope the *en* which brought us together will one day allow us to meet again. Until then, my wife and I wish you nothing but good health and happiness. Thank you, and please enjoy the rest of the evening.