

Good evening.

As we are all aware, the international situation is becoming increasingly precarious. There are economic challenges galore looming over our heads. In this challenging environment, peoples of Japan and Canada are awakening to the truth of the two countries being true, persistent friends. We share fundamental values such as pursuit of genuine democracy, respect for individual's right and allegiance to the rule of law both domestically and internationally. We are bound by mutual respect. At the same time, Japan and Canada share critical economic interests, and a design for the future.

Net zero carbon emissions by 2050 is one of them. A large number of Japanese companies are partnering with Canadian companies.

There are many good startups in Japan. Before this event I had the pleasure of speaking with representatives of Terra who are with us today. They have wonderful innovative vision of making agriculture and solar power generation compatible. They will leverage perovskite solar cell for housing. At the same time, it is still true that there are other prospective Japanese startups which require guidance for commercialization and scaling-up.

It is in this regard that I congratulate on the establishment of DMZ Japan. This is an important step towards supporting Japanese entrepreneurs and facilitating the growth of startups there.

DMZ's ecosystem strategy, dubbed as camel strategy, focuses on companies' resilience, thoughtfulness, adoptability to play a long-term game and people in lieu of products, has proven its unique effectiveness through its global reach and impact.

This initiative is in line with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government's goal of promoting startups. Through cooperation with DMZ Japan, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government will be able to move closer to achieving its goal of significantly increasing Tokyo-based unicorn companies, startups, and public-private collaboration, through the development of various startup support services and networking among supporters.

DMZ sees fostering a diversity and inclusive mindset as key to Japan's long-term success. DMZ's Basecamp, a hybrid entrepreneurship program for young professionals, is redesigned to solve unique problems Japanese people may face, with a view to providing Japanese entrepreneurs with a new perspective. DMZ's diverse ecosystem, which is made up of people from diverse ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, will prove to be an unparalleled launchpad for global expansion.

DMZ also has expertise in addressing the challenges women face, such as gender disparities, societal expectations, and difficulties in obtaining funding. DMZ's Launchpad for Women program will help increase the number of female entrepreneurs in Japan.

DMZ's experts-in-residence, a cohort of mentors with battle-hardened experiences will help startups growing and scaling their own businesses.

To conclude, I sincerely hope that DMZ Japan will go a long way fostering international collaboration between the Canadian and Japanese ecosystems, providing Japanese startups with the skills they need to scale in the global market, and expanding programs that support the success of female entrepreneurs.

Thank you.