

**The Ambassador of Japan, H.E. Mr. Akio MIYAJIMA's Speech
at the Emperor's Birthday Reception**

Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to thank you for coming to the Emperor's Birthday Reception today.

I took the office as Ambassador of Japan last year in September. My work is busy and Turkish is not easy. I have visited 24 Turkish provinces including İstanbul, Izmir, Antalya, Gaziantep, Trabzon and Kırşehir. I have been welcomed by the warm hospitality, enjoyed delicious Turkish cuisines wherever I have been and have been very much moved. I feel really honored to work as Ambassador of Japan in Turkey in this great country.

The Emperor of Japan His Majesty Akihito will become 85 years old on coming December 23. This year also marks the 30th anniversary of His Majesty the Emperor's Accession to the throne. His Majesty the Emperor of Japan Akihito will abdicate on April 30th next year and His Imperial Highness of the Crown Prince of Japan Naruhito will be enthroned as the Emperor of Japan on May 1st. Today we are holding the last Birthday Reception of the Emperor of Japan His Majesty Akihito. Please join us to congratulate the 30th anniversary of the enthronement of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, and also to wish the continued good health of their Majesties Emperor and Empress of Japan.

This September, H.I.H. Princess Akiko of Mikasa visited Turkey and received a very warm welcome everywhere she went. H.E. Prime Minister Mr. Shinzo ABE and H.E. President Mr. Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN have maintained a strong trust and friendship. Foreign Ministers of Japan and Turkey, H.E. Mr. Taro Kono and H.E. Mr. Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu met 6 times. Minister Çavuşoğlu had a very productive working visit to Japan at the beginning of this month.

In the business world, the 24th Japan-Turkey Joint Economic Committee Meeting was held last September. 400 Japanese and Turkish business leaders actively participated and had useful exchanges. The joint declaration adopted calls for an early conclusion of a comprehensive and high-quality Japan-Turkey Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) in the near future.

This year, there have been positive developments in the field of culture and sports. We celebrated "Japan Festival 2018 Autumn", following "Japan Festival" in February. More than 10 thousand visitors enjoyed Japanese drum live performances, Origami demonstration, the first Japanese Ambassador Cup Judo Tournament and Japanese cuisine "Washoku" week.

This summer Japan suffered many natural disasters, such as flood, typhoon and earthquakes. I would like to express my sincere gratitude for your kind and warm sympathy toward us. The affected western and northern parts of Japan have now already fully recovered. **"dost kara günde belli olur"**

In 2019 and 2020 Japan will attract wide attention from all over the world. In June 2019, the G20 Summit will be held in Japan and in October, the state ceremony of the enthronement of His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince of Japan will be carried out. President ERDOĞAN is expected to visit Japan twice in 2019. We also expect many ministerial visits. “Year of Turkey in Japan” will be celebrated, and the charms of Turkey will be promoted through various events such as Topkapı Palace Treasures Exhibitions. In the summer of 2020 we have the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games. I am convinced we will see a much stronger Japan-Turkey friendship and partnership in the years to come.

Last Friday we had a very good news. The Japan’s second biggest city “Osaka” was chosen to host the 2025 World Expo. The theme is “Designing Future Society for Our Lives.” At the Osaka EXPO we aim at presenting a vision of a future society to achieve the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through world cutting-edge, innovative technologies such as IoT, AI, Robots, Big Data and life science. Let`s make our future society together.

Please enjoy the charm of the Japanese cuisine “Washoku”. We have prepared Japanese cuisines for you. My chef Mr. Miura has spent days for today`s reception. There are some booths of Japanese firms to present their activities in Turkey. Taking this opportunity, I would like to extend my gratitude to the supports by Nisshin Seifun, Ege-Tav, Sumitomo Rubber AKO, Örgen Food as well as the Turkish Judo Federation.

The next year, Japan will enter to a new era after 30 years of Heisei. Regardless of their geographical distance, Turkey and Japan are “Two Nations, One Heart.” Thank you very much.