

**Ambassador's remarks in Emperor's Birthday Reception 2024.2.27@Crowne Plaza**

**HE Abudlsalam bin Mohammed bin Abdullah Al Murshidi, President of Oman Investment Authority**, it is my great honor to have your presence as the guest of honour. I would also like to thank the distinguished members of the delegation for gracing this occasion.

Highnesses, Excellencies, Honorables, Distinguished Guests,

Assalamu alaikum, Good evening.

His Majesty the Emperor of Japan turned 64 years old on February 23, always keeping warm eyes upon people. I would like to thank His Majesty Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik for sending to HM Emperor a message of congratulations.

Thus it is all the more pleasing to host this reception here in Muscat and celebrate the birthday of HM the Emperor of Japan together with you all.

I would like to thank HM the Sultan for delivering a clear message of Oman's peace, stability, and prosperity to home and abroad at the opening speech for the Council of Oman last November.

I would like to thank, for my part, both the State Council and the Shura Council for their attention to bilateral parliamentary exchange as shown during the visit of Madam Yamada last September, who is the Secretary General of Japan-Oman Parliamentary Friendship Association.

I would like to thank the Foreign Ministry for extending continued support and advice to help us better understand the regional affairs. I would also like to thank relevant Ministries and authorities as well as Japanese and Omani companies for expanding the scope of economic collaborations beyond the traditional oil & gas to clean energy and much diversified business sectors. The port call to Muscat last August of Japanese liquefied hydrogen carrier, "Suiso Frontier" was a symbolic example.

I would like to thank the Defense authorities for enhancing our defense cooperation. The delegation of the National Defense College visited

Japan, and the first round of the defense authorities dialogue was held in Oman last year. Most recently, Chief of Staff, Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force, Admiral Sakai made an official visit to Muscat two weeks ago.

I would like to thank relevant Ministries, authorities, universities and other institutions of education, academic affairs, culture and sports, for enhancing steady networking and exchange. I am particularly grateful to Oman-Japan Friendship Association (OJFA) and Omani volunteers for supporting wide-ranging Japan-related programs and events.

I would like to thank His Highness Sayyid Theyazin, His Highness Sayyid Bilarab, committee members and staff for sharing passion and devotion for the success of Oman Pavilion at the upcoming 2025 Expo in Osaka, Kansai.

I would like to thank media and journalists in Oman for helping promote images of my country as an unwavering partner, and also thank the Japanese community in Oman for sustaining warm contacts with people.

I would like to thank the Dean and Excellencies, members of diplomatic corps in Muscat for cherishing our friendship based on mutual trust. One of the shared agenda among us is the imminent need not to stop humanitarian assistance to the people in Gaza. In this connection, Japan has today decided the additional emergency grant aid to Gaza of approximately 32 million US dollars, as was foreseen last week by Foreign Minister Madam Kamikawa.

I would like to thank the Crowne Plaza Muscat, my Embassy staff, and everybody for making this celebration possible. I also extend my heartfelt gratitude, on this occasion, to Mr. Biju Antony, our Embassy member, for his dedicating ten years of service.

My last but not the least thanks will go to you all for your kind attendance to celebrate together the birthday of HM the Emperor of Japan. While wishing for the health and continued prosperity of HM Sultan Haitham Bin Tarik, I wish you all a very good evening. Shukran Jazīlan.