

**Speech by H.E. Mr. Kazuya OGAWA, Ambassador of Japan,
on the Occasion of the Evening of Japanese Wine Tasting
on 5th March, 2015**

Honorable Ministers and Members of Parliament;
Your Excellencies Ambassadors and High Commissioners;
Distinguished Representatives of International Organizations;
Distinguished Guests; Ladies and Gentlemen,

Murakaza neza.

Welcome and good evening.

First of all, I would like to thank all of you for joining our Evening of Japanese Wine Tasting here.

As you may know, Japanese traditional cuisine “Washoku” was designated by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage in December 2013. We organized a cultural event called Japanese Evening last June and promoted “Washoku” and “Sake (rice wine)”. This time, we would like to introduce to you Japanese wine.

When people think about “alcohol made in Japan”, they think about Sake and beer. Compared with them, Japanese wine has a relatively short history, and the amount of production and consumption has been still low; however, wine have become established in the daily life in Japan, and responding to this change, domestic wineries has grown and increased in number.

Japan has a mild climate; therefore, grapes are producible across the country from Hokkaido in the north to Kyushu in the south. There are grapes indigenous to Japan as well as to Europe, and both of them are produced in Japan. Recently, Japanese wines achieved excellent result at some famous international competitions like International Wine Challenge in London, that means that the improvement of quality is significant.

Tonight, we have prepared two kinds of white wine and four kinds of red wine for you. Details of those wines will be explained later, but I think each of them is quite tasty.

One problem is that those Japanese wine productions are still small-scale, so productions are low. Hence, the export is still in small quantity, and distribution networks have not been established yet like those of France and Italy. Therefore, even if the wines we offer tonight meet your expectations, unfortunately you cannot find them here. We will give you the information of some useful sites of Japanese Wine Industry. Contact addresses of producers are on its web site, and we would appreciate it if you could contact them directly.

Now, I would like to propose a toast with white wine. Following a brief explanation about Japanese wine, we will offer you red wines, too.

Cheers! Kanpai!