

Your Excellency, Ambassador Fumio Iwai, Ambassador of Japan

Your Excellencies Ministers, Ambassadors,

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure that I join you today to commemorate the birthday of His Majesty Emperor Naruhito, the 126th Emperor of Japan.

As we commemorate Japan's National Day, we also pay tribute to Egypt and Japan's long-standing and dynamic friendship and partnership, forged over **70 years** of mutual respect, shared vision, and transformative cooperation.

Since the first visit in **1864**, when the samurai visited Egypt, the **Ikeda Mission**; marking one of the earliest interactions between the two countries. Together, our nations have created a legacy of progress across healthcare, education, infrastructure, and culture, serving as an inspiration to the world.

Our bilateral relations continue to develop through increased political, economic and cultural exchanges, and in April 2023, Prime Minister KISHIDA visited Egypt and held a summit meeting with President El-Sisi. The two leaders agreed to elevate the Egypt Japan relations to a "**Strategic Partnership**".

There is nothing which is more sacred than saving a life, and the Abu El Reesh Japanese Children's Hospital is a testament to the compassion and collaboration between our two countries. Since its establishment in 1979, the hospital has treated over 25,000 children per month.

To further this mission, Japan contributed an additional \$19 million in 2021 to expand outpatient services, ensuring that generations of Egyptian and non-Egyptian children continue to receive world-class medical care.

We cannot mention progress without acknowledging the engine that fuels it: **JICA**, The Japan International Cooperation Agency.

From metro lines to renewable energy projects, JICA has invested in 18 initiatives worth \$3 billion, enhancing connectivity and sustainability.

With a \$9 billion portfolio spanning healthcare, education, and cultural preservation, JICA's impact is profound to Egypt's development.

Japan's commitment to strengthening Egypt's healthcare sector is exemplified through projects such as the Project for Quality Improvement of Hospitals in Egypt. Launched in 2019, the initiative aims to enhance patient safety and hospital quality management based on Japan's renowned 5S-KAIZEN methodology.

With the participation of 50 public hospitals across 26 governorates, the project has provided extensive training for hospital managers, trainers, and staff to ensure sustained improvements in healthcare delivery.

Furthermore, Japan is actively supporting Egypt's Universal Health Insurance (UHI) reform through Capacity Development, drawing on Japan's expertise in social health insurance.

With similar compassion for the advancement of our children's futures, the Egypt-Japan Education Partnership (EJEP) has facilitated the introduction of the **KOSEN** model in Egypt.

By implementing the **KOSEN model**, Egypt and Japan are working together to develop a highly skilled workforce, enhance industrial productivity, and support Egypt's economic growth through technical excellence and innovation-driven development.

These schools emphasize "learning by doing", combining advanced technology training with real-world industry collaboration, preparing students for employment.

The curriculum also integrates Japanese educational principles, such as **Tokkatsu** (holistic education), through discipline and teamwork.

The **EJEP-Human Resource Development Project** has trained **1,425** individuals in diverse programs.

Another milestone in the education sector is the **Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST)**. It focuses on **STEM fields**, promoting innovation and technological advancement in Egypt and the region.

E-JUST has contributed significantly to **capacity building and human resource development**, aligning with Egypt's vision for scientific progress and sustainable development.

It is with the mutual understanding that education creates a sustainable and prosperous future for nations, that Egypt and Japan continue to focus on this important area of cooperation.

Cultural collaboration between Egypt and Japan extends to both heritage preservation and modern development projects, from restoration of priceless artifacts, including the 4,600-year-old Second Khufu Solar Boat, to the Cairo Opera House, and the Grand Egyptian Museum.

The Opera House, a symbol of artistic excellence, a gift from Japan in 1988, exemplifying our shared appreciation for the arts. This institution has since become a hub for cultural exchange, hosting performances that blend Egyptian and Japanese traditions, enriching both nations' artistic landscapes.

The GEM is a long anticipated historical monument, on track to become the biggest museum devoted to a single civilization in the world.

As a global center for Egyptology, it is set to display more than 50,000 artifacts, including all of King Tutankhamun's treasures and his famous golden mask.

More than just a museum, it is a tribute to EGYPTIAN-JAPANESE friendship.

Reflecting that it is not just a great history we share, but a prosperous and promising future we are working towards.

Egypt and Japan's collaboration extends beyond healthcare, education and culture, to transformative infrastructure projects.

Looking at the Suez Canal Bridge, the Peace bridge finished in 2001, also known as the Egyptian Japanese Friendship Bridge. Constructed using

Japanese **Kajima** expertise. The 3.9-kilometer bridge symbolizes bilateral collaboration between Asia and Africa.

Japan's legacy in Egypt's infrastructure is also visible in the **Shinzo Abe Axis**, named in honor of Japan's late Prime Minister for his role in strengthening our bilateral relations.

This project underscores Japan's support for Egypt's urban development goals, integrating sustainable design and prompting economic growth through commercial hubs like Shinzo Town, cementing its legacy as a cornerstone of Cairo's transport network and strong diplomatic ties.

By enhancing connectivity and reducing congestion, the **Cairo Metro**, is a critical component of Egypt's urban mobility, currently being expanded with Japan's cutting-edge technology through **Metro Line 4**.

Esteemed guests,

These efforts reflect our shared commitment to building a future where progress and heritage coexist.

On the multilateral front, Egypt and Japan continue to champion global peace and humanitarian causes. Through multiple frameworks, Japan supports stability in the Middle East.

Today, I must commend Japan for its humanitarian support amid the ongoing crisis in Gaza. In partnership with Egypt, Japan has provided crucial assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Palestinian people.

Egypt, as a gateway for humanitarian aid, has facilitated the entry of critical medical supplies and relief efforts, with Japan standing as a key international partner in this mission.

This cooperation underscores our shared commitment to humanitarian values and regional stability.

Ladies and gentlemen, finally, I would like to reiterate that the relationship between EGYPT and JAPAN is based on mutual trust, friendship and goes beyond simple diplomacy.