

Address by Mr. Hiroshi AZUMA,
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Portugal,
at the opening part of a session of the conference series “A New Asia”
in the National Defense Institute (IDN), Ministry of National Defense,
Lisbon, Portugal, on April 20th , 2015

Major-General, Victor Rodrigues Viana, Director of the National Defense Institute,
Distinguished representatives of the Ministry of National Defense,
Portuguese Armed Forces and other institutions of the Government of Portugal,
Distinguished colleagues of the Diplomatic Corps,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Boa tarde.

It is a great honour for me to attend a session of the conference series “A New Asia” dedicated to Japan in the National Defense Institute. First of all I would like to express my sincere thanks to Major-General, Victor Rodrigues Viana, Director of the National Defense Institute, for arranging such a valuable occasion.

I regard today’s conference as very timely, because Japan and Portugal have just concluded the official visit by Portuguese Prime Minister to Japan with great success. At the summit meeting on March 27 in Tokyo, Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister Passos Coelho confirmed the achievements and future projects for bilateral cooperation in a wide variety of fields between the two countries.

Security and defense is one of the most conspicuous agenda items at the summit meeting. Just looking back at the last year, both Prime Ministers mentioned that in May Mr. Nuno Pinheiro Torres, Defense Policy Director, visited Japan and held meetings with his counterparts at the National Security Council, the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo. I may add that last December here in Lisbon we had Mr. Hajime HAYASHI, Director General for Europe of the Foreign Ministry, who visited the Ministry of National Defense to continue bilateral dialogues on security and defense issues.

And toward a near future, Mr. Abe and Mr. Passos Coelho referred to Japan’s high-level participation to the Blue Week that Portugal will host early June. Japan will take part

in this event upon the firm conviction that, for Japan and Portugal as Ocean States, the rule of law based upon sets of the international law, chief among them, the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Seas, makes up one of the most important common values.

In addition, the two Prime Ministers mentioned Japanese observers' participation in the NATO Exercise Trident Juncture 2015 hosted by Portugal from October to November this year.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Following the meeting between Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister Passos Coelho, I am glad to introduce to you Ambassador Masafumi ISHII, Representative of Japan to the NATO, as today's presenter from Japan. Mr. ISHII is based in Brussels as Ambassador of Japan to the Kingdom of Belgium, concurrently serving for Japan-NATO partnership. I know that his dream come true has been visiting on Lisbon and so he must be very happy today on this podium.

His 35 years' diplomatic career covers a broad range of areas, but security and Asia stand out among them. He has served at Foreign Policy Bureau, Asian Affairs Bureau and Foreign Minister's Cabinet Office etc. in Tokyo and at the Embassy of Japan in the United States and the Embassy of Japan in the United Kingdom. After his service as Director-General, International Legal Affairs Bureau, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo, he was appointed to the current position in autumn last year.

I am sure that his presentation will be of great use for helping all the audience to have clearer picture about today's Asia as well as Japan's viewpoint and her security policy toward the region.

Muito obrigado.