

Speech of Ambassador HIROSHI AZUMA
Ambassador of Japan to Portugal
On the occasion of 1st Portugal/Japan Business Session
(7 October 2014)

His Excellency Vieira e Brito, Secretary of State,
Mr. Bessa, President of Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCILJ),
Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests,

I am very glad to be here today to join the First Portugal Japan Business Session. I would like to extend my cordial appreciation to President Bessa who took an initiative for today's seminar. I also would like to extend my gratitude to H.E. Vieira e Brito and all attendants who share this important moment.

It is very timely to hold the seminar because the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo ABE visited Portugal last May as an incumbent Prime Minister of Japan for the first time in our 470 year history. This visit was historic and epoch-making for promoting our bilateral relationship in every aspects. Joint communiqué released after the summit meeting points out the importance of promotion of agricultural trade, which reads "promote the cooperation in the field of food, agricultural and livestock products". The communiqué also welcomes the lifting of import ban of Portuguese pork and its products. Japanese market is now open to the Portuguese Pork.

As a kind of follow-up of the communiqué, H.E. Cristas, Minister Agriculture and Sea, visited Japan last June and had a seminar for promoting Portuguese agricultural products. I heard directly from Minister Cristas that it was very successful. In addition to the Minister Cristas' visit, Prime Minister Passos Coelho is going to visit Japan early next year by an invitation of Japanese government. Prior to the H.E. Passos Coelho's visit, there is a possibility that Vice Prime Minister Paulo Portas is also going to travel to Japan in November.

I arrived here last October and I have noticed that Portuguese

agricultural products such as wine, cheese, pork and olive oil, are quite high quality and reasonable so I believe that they are highly competitive internationally. I also have realized through the conversation with Portuguese companies whom I met at SISAB that they have strong interest on expanding or starting export to Japan. Sales effort of Portuguese agricultural products has been starting. For example, the Mayor of Abrantes visited Japan last year to promote its products, such as wine, cheese, olive oil, honey and so on. It is no wonder that the sales effort is the most important and effective factor for expanding export to Japan.

On July 23, Japan has been granted the observer status of CPLP at the CPLP-Summit which was held at Dili, East Timor. This comes from Prime Minister ABE's initiative. Now we can say that Japan and Portugal get the platform which will expand our business at growing CPLP countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. We should take our cooperation into account when we export our agricultural products to the CPLP countries.

I expect that the seminar will expand the export of Portuguese agricultural products to Japan. Our embassy is going to closely cooperate with related authorities including CCIPJ.

I would like to take this opportunity to inform you that business mission of Japan External Trade Organization(JETRO) is going to come to Lisbon to join the Japan-EU colloquium titled "Japan Portugal and EU Cooperation" which is organized by Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Portugal and Embassy of Japan on 28 October.

Last but not least, I would like to thank CCILJ staff and all of you to make this seminar possible.

Thank you very much.