

**Speech by Mr. Nobutaka Shionomiya,
Ambassador of Japan to Portugal
on the occasion of the third "Japan Fest"
June 15th 2013, Lisbon**

Ms. Catarina Vaz Pinto, Vereadora of Culture of Lisbon City Hall,
Ambassador António Santana Carlos, Diplomatic Advisor to the
Mayor,

Ms. Luísa Lino, President of the Portugal-Japan Friendship
Association,

Excellencies, dear colleagues of the Diplomatic Corps,
Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to the "Festa do Japão" on such a beautiful day in Lisbon!

It is a great pleasure to be here with you at the opening ceremony of
the third "Festa do Japão", held in the "Garden of Japan" in Belem.
This is organized as part of the "Festas do Lisboa" and to
commemorate our 470 year-long friendship between Japan and
Portugal.

Just like in the past two years, the Lisbon City Hall, the
Portugal-Japan Friendship Association and EGEAC (Empresa Gestão
de Equipamentos Animação Cultural, E.E.M.) worked together with
the Embassy of Japan to make this event happen. This time, we have
around 50 groups and organizations of participants, including the
members of the "Japan NET", cities of Aveiro and Fundão.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed to realize
today's Festa.

At the third "Festa do Japão", there are varieties of events organized
for you to know more about Japan, such as Ikebana, Origami,

Shodo=calligraphy, martial arts performances. And Japanese food stands and a cosplay show as well.

This year, two student groups: "Chiyo" and "Gaku" of "Asian Pacific University" have come from Japan to join us to show the regional Japanese dances. Members include Japanese students as well as exchange students from Indonesia and Korea.

Also a Japanese folk music band has come from Tokyo: "Kiwi & the Papaya Mangoes". And from Portugal, students from "Escola do Alto do Moinho" and "Japanese Weekend School of Lisbon" will show us their dances.

With a larger number of participating groups and organizations, I hope you will enjoy the taste of the Japanese summer festival, "natsu- matsu" in a joyous atmosphere.

Aside from the cultural events, 5 Japanese car companies are showing their new models. If you would like to try it out, there are spaces for test driving.

To celebrate our 470th anniversary of our first encounter in the 16th century, the Embassy of Japan is organizing a series of events all the year around. By the end of June, we are planning to organize sister city exchange programmes for participants in the "International Conference of Rotary Club" held in Lisbon. Then in the beginning of July, we will hold together with the "Portugal-Japan Friendship Parliamentary Group", a "Sake Tasting Fair" at the Assembly of the Republic, to name a few.

I am glad that following cities are making exchange activities with Japanese cities individually: Porto, Aveiro, Leiria, Abrantes, Sintra, Cascais, Vila do Bispo, and Evora.

Though the season of sakura flowers is over, I hope that sakura and the "Festa do Japão" shall bloom every year in this "Garden of Japan", in order to maintain and strengthen our existing friendship

between Japan and Portugal.

So please enjoy the events!

Muito obrigado!