

**Speech by Mr. Shionomiya, Ambassador of Japan to Portugal,  
At the opening ceremony of The Japan Foundation Traveling  
Exhibitions,  
“Winter Garden Contemporary Art”,  
held in the Modern Arts Museum of Sintra  
on March 1st, 2013, City of Sintra**

**Mr. Fernando Seara, President of Sintra Municipality,  
Excellencies, dear colleagues of the Diplomatic corps,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentleman,**

**I am delighted to be here with you at the opening ceremony of the  
“Winter Garden Contemporary Art” organized by Sintra city, The  
Japan Foundation and the Embassy of Japan.**

**At the same time, I am glad that Japanese dancer Ms. Chieko Kojima  
and fado singer Katia Guerreiro could perform together tonight.  
Ms. Kojima creates new styles of Japanese dances and performs around  
the world. She was also named as a “cultural envoy” from Japan's  
Cultural Agency.**

**I would like to inform you that this year marks Japan and Portugal's  
470<sup>th</sup> anniversary since we first met. That is when the Portuguese came  
to a small island in the south west of Japan called Tanegashima in 1543.  
It is also recorded that in 1584, a group of young Japanese delegation**

stayed in Sintra on their way to have an audience with the Pope at the Holy See. Therefore, it is quite significant that a modern arts exchange shall begin tonight in Sintra, adding a new page of historical exchange. I also believe it is the first time to have a collaboration of Portuguese fado and modern dance that incorporates Japan's traditional taste. This connects today with yesterday, and west with east. A perfect event to celebrate our 470 years of friendship.

In the exhibition, there will be 35 different types of modern art works such as paintings, drawings, illustrations and videos, created by 14 young Japanese artists. I hope you'll like them.

Sintra has been sister cities with the city of Ohmura in Japan for more than 10 years. A young boy from Ohmura was part of the missionary group in the 16<sup>th</sup> century I mentioned earlier. In addition to our historical exchanges between the two cities, new history is in the making among the modern people.

Last October, a group of people from Ohmura led by Mayor Matsumoto visited Sintra. And this April, Mayor Seara of Sintra will take a group to Ohmura. There is more. This summer, young students from Ohmura will come to visit here, just like 430 years ago. I am looking forward to their visits and wishing such close relationship among the two sister cities to forever continue.

In closing, I would like to thank all of you who made this exhibition possible. Thank you very much.