

Opening Remarks by His Excellency Mr. Hiroshi AZUMA,
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan
to the Portuguese Republic
on the occasion of JAPAN TOURISM SEMINAR
Lisbon, 24 February 2015

H.E. Dr. Adolfo Mesquita NUNES, Secretary of State for Tourism,
Excellencies, Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you very much for attending today's JAPAN TOURSIM
SEMINAR. I am very honored to deliver an opening statement not
only for today's seminar but also as a kick-off towards our continued
good relationship with you.

In 2014, the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo ABE visited Portugal in
May. It was the first visit by a Japanese Prime Minister to this country.
During his stay in Lisbon, Prime Minister ABE held a summit meeting
with Prime Minister Passos Coelho and both leader released the

“Joint Communiqué” which highlights the importance of promoting tourism between two countries. Today’s seminar is an event to implement this commitment. And as a next follow-up step, I would like to inform you that we are now working for attending next year’s BTL, which unfortunately we don’t participate this year. I greatly appreciate if you could extend your valuable support for our Project.

After the Prime Minister ABE’s visit to Portugal, mutual visits have been more active than ever between the two Governments. I hope that a forthcoming Prime Minister Passos Coelho’s visit to Japan brings good momentum to enhancing our relationships in all aspects including tourism.

In today’s world, Portugal is the most popular tourism destination for its rich variety of attractiveness. As far as the Portuguese charm is concerned, I can easily mention the mild weather, harmonious scenery with history and modernity, people with hospitality, good quality of wine and food and... I should stop here because it will take a few hours to name everything.

Here, I would like to emphasize that these fascinations can also be experienced in Japan. We also have a lots of charms and we have recorded 10 million foreign tourists in 2013. We, both the government and the private sector together, are now working for attracting foreign visitors to Japan in order to achieve our target, 20 million foreign visitors by 2020, the year of Tokyo Olympic and Paralympics Games.

Today we will have two wonderful presentations by Japanese specialists. Mr. Koji TAKAHASHI, Executive Director of JNTO, Japan National Tourism Organization, will present you Japan's endless charm, and Ms. Emi ONO, Lisbon liaison office of JETRO, Japan External Trade Organization, will introduce you the Japanese industrial tourism. I am sure that you will find new aspects of Japanese tourism in their presentations.

Last but not least, I have one important announcement. I will host a small reception after this seminar in order to promote Japanese food, wine and sake. I am sure that this reception would also offer a

chance to the attendants to get to know each other. I am very glad if you could join the reception, even for a short while. I can promise that you will enjoy Washoku, Japanese food which was registered as an UNESCO's intangible world heritage in 2013.

Thank you again for your presence today.