

Opening Remarks by H.E. AIKAWA Kazutoshi
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
at the Mission of Japan to the European Union
at the RIKEN Europe Symposium

February 14th, 2024 (around 09:30AM about 3-4 mins)

Dear Dr. Makiko NAKA, Executive Director of RIKEN,
Distinguished Guests and Colleagues,

First and foremost, I offer my heartfelt congratulations to all the people of RIKEN, as this year marks the fifth anniversary of its office in Brussels. RIKEN is Japan's leading global center of scientific excellence, and well-known not only in Japan but also in Europe for its world leading exascale supercomputer "FUGAKU" and Japan's first superconducting quantum computer.

About 10 years ago, I served as the Director-General of the Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Science Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Tokyo. Under the leadership of then Foreign Minister Kishida, I was fortunate enough to be a part of the team in creating the post of science and technology advisor to foreign minister, whose portfolio is to help promote the scientific diplomacy. Dr. Teruo Kishi, a renowned professor in the field of

material, was the first advisor, and Dr. Yoichiro Matsumoto, the former RIKEN executive director, has succeeded his since 2020.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Japan-EU science, technology and innovation cooperation has become increasingly important. Europe's scientific and technological excellence has been respected in every part of the world, backed by its history and the values they espouse.

For its part, Japan prides itself on being at the forefront of science and technology in the world. To give a recent example, as you are well aware, the successful precision pinpoint landing of Japan's moon probe was widely welcomed and highly positive development last month.

It is indisputable that scientific and technological innovation is essential for solving global challenges in our common endeavor to achieve a sustainable and resilient society. I believe that

cooperation between Japan and the EU, both of which have excellent human resources and knowledge in science and technology, can play an important role in fostering and advancing global innovation.

The value of the partnership between Japan and the EU has never been greater in today's world. Based on our shared fundamental values such as democracy, the rule of law and human rights, it is critically important that Japan and the EU work closely together in addressing the various ongoing and emerging challenges and crises.

As Japan-EU EPA celebrates its fifth anniversary of entry into force this month. Japan and the EU will continue to lead the world as the staunch supporters of the free and open trading system.

It would be remiss of me if I did not mention the Expo 2025 Osaka Kansai. It will be held next year in Japan, and the EU, along with its member states, will showcase their vision in their pavilions there.

We do hope that you will take the opportunity of the Expo to visit Japan and experience our cutting-edge science and technology and rich culture.

Last but not least, I trust that RIKEN will remain at the heart of Japan-EU science, technology and innovation cooperation, and RIKEN Europe Office in Brussels will continue to serve as a hub for the intellectual network bridging Japan and Europe. Let me conclude by wishing all the success for the symposium, and thanking all the people involved for their dedication and contribution. Thank you so much.

Thank you very much for your attention.

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