

Speech
Presented by NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth
On the occasion of the Opening of the WA Kendo Renmei
State Championship
Tuesday March 7, 2023

Mr Brian Brestovac, President of the Western Australian Kendo Renmei,
Hayashi Sensei,
Fukumoto Sensei,
Executive Committee and members of Western Australian Kendo Renmei,
Good Morning.

Thank you for the introduction. I am NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth. It is my honour and pleasure to make remarks at the opening of the Western Australian Kendo Remmei State Championship 2023.

Soon after I arrived here in last October, we received Prime Minister of Japan, Mr KISHDA Fumio here in Perth. Bilateral relations between Japan and Australia was strengthened further. Prime Minister visited Perth this time because all the important elements of Japan Australia relations was showcased here in Western Australia, namely partnership on energy, mineral resources and security cooperation. Profile of Western Australia was lifted further and Premier Mark McGowan visited Japan a month ago with coinciding announcement of resumption of Perth-Tokyo direct flights later this year.

We are keenly aware that these developments are supported by people to people ties build over the years including cultural and sport exchanges. We have so many good will ambassadors both as individuals and organizations in WA, bridging Japan and Australia. Western Australian Kendo Remmei is certainly one of them. We thank your contribution in forging friendship between Japan and Australia through kendo since 1986. We look forward to your demonstration at the Perth Japan Festival later this month. So, I am pleased with this opportunity to greet you all.

In Japan, Kendo is taught from 5th grade elementary school and is a compulsory training at police agency together with Judo. My understanding of Kendo is that it is a way of advancing oneself as human being through disciplined practice. Molding of mind and body and cultivating of healthy and strong spirit, learning of esteem courtesy and honor,

advancing of self improvement at all time while associating with others with faithfulness and integrity, and love your society and contribute to peace and prosperity of humanity.

It is philosophy of Budo at large that because you have only three things in the life, your mind, your body and everything else, Budo is a way of better connect you mind, you body and the environment surround you including sustainable interaction with nature with deep appreciation.

In the context of Sport, it has great potential to connect people. Sport has power to inspire people, power to unite differences and encourage people in adversity in a way that little else does. Australia is renoun for sports loving nation of which 15 million out of 25 million population is active in sports. Sport can change the world and so you can.

Lastly, I thank Mr Conner Clark, the development officer of WA Kendo Renmei who is also an active member of Australia Japan Society WA for offering me the opportunity.

In closing, I wish all the best to everyone participating the competition today, and wish you further success and development of Kendo in Western Australia and in Australia.

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