

**Remarks**  
**Presented by NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth**  
**On the occasion of the UON Celebration Dinner**  
**On Tuesday April 30, 2024**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to join you in celebrating this Strategy Partnership with Itochu Cooperation becoming UON's newest shareholder. It was on the day of the Itochu Australia's annual Christmas Party last year that the signing of this partnership was publicly announced on the 12<sup>th</sup> of December and I also joined in celebrating the great news with the other participants.

It is encouraging to see the firm advancement made already with Mr Harunobu Omae, seconded to UON from Itochu as Manager for Energy Transition Development. I have also noticed that this partnership is mentioned as one of the most important Japanese investments in 2023 in the decarbonization field in the Japan-Australia Investment Report of 2023 published just this month.

As you know, Itochu is one of the founders of iron ore joint ventures in Western Australia. Just 12 years after World War II, forward-thinking politicians from Western Australia such as Sir Charles Court, father of Ambassador Richard Court, and business people here forged new relations with Japan. It has unlocked the potential of our two economies and led to the remarkable success of both Japan and Australia, first with iron ore, and later with LNG. Thereby, the huge resource output from WA contributed to the world economy on a massive scale, which economists describe as a rare model of successful partnership in the world, based on mutual trust.

Nevertheless, we should not take the relationship for granted but should always make continuous efforts to evolve the partnership. We are now taking the partnership further to tackle the common challenge of the energy transition. We are doing this in collaboration with various Australian partners.

The Itochu/UON partnership is precisely the type of partnership needed at this critical juncture. For the people of UON, as Itochu is the top Japanese company that university graduates in Japan wish to join last year, you could not have a better partner.

I wish to thank UON for organizing this wonderful celebration dinner. I sincerely wish your practical solutions make impacts in mining and other industries, and bear fruits as a symbolic endeavour bridging Japan and Australia, Japan and Western Australia.

Thank you for your attention.

End.