

Excellencies,
Members of the Royal Thai Military, the Royal Thai
police, the Thai Government
attachés in Thailand,
Distinguished Guests and Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to express my deepest
gratitude to all our guests attending tonight's Reception
commemorating the 70th Anniversary of the Japan Self
Defense Force.

Japan's Self Defense Force was formally established on
the 1st of July in 1954. The world has gone through
turbulent times since then, but these forces have been
dedicated to maintain peace and security in Japan as
well as the region.

Our close cooperation between the Self Defense Forces
and the Royal Thai Armed Forces have developed
steadily in line with the times. This has been
supported, in particular, by our intense personnel
exchanges between the two military forces.

To illustrate the level of our exchanges, over the last
seven decades, Japan has received more than 500
officers from the Royal Thai Armed Forces, with about
200 of them graduating from the National Defense
Academy of Japan.

This makes it the largest graduating community among all foreign forces who have studied at the National Defense Academy of Japan.

Indeed, Thai alumni now play an indispensable role in bridging our collaboration with the Thai military.

I sincerely appreciate and respect all of your dedicated efforts.

Today, I also wanted to highlight that, last year, Prime Minister Kishida Fumio visited Thailand to conclude the Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology. This marks a new chapter in our bilateral cooperation in defense.

I hope today you can take a moment to check some of Japan's state-of-the-art defense technologies at the exhibition space near the entrance.

Finally, I would like to announce that our Defense Attache, Colonel Maruta Yuichiro, has successfully completed his 3-year mission, through which he contributed to many outcomes including the agreement on defense technologies and equipment.

Using this occasion, I would also like to introduce his successor, Colonel Umetani Eiji. I hope you can continue to provide Colonel Umetani with the same level of support as you did.

Now, I would like you all to join us in acknowledging our excellent bilateral relationship, with the rendering of our national anthems.

(National Anthem of Thailand)

Now, I would like to propose a toast twice.

To His Majesty the King (Toast)

(National Anthem of Japan)

To all of our servicemen and women (Toast)

I hope you will enjoy the rest of the evening.

Thank you very much.