

**Address by H.E. Ambassador MURATA Takashi
at the 35th Anniversary Party
for the Finnish-Japanese Society of Oulu**

Ms. Saara Kauppinen, Chair of the Finnish-Japanese Society of Oulu,
Ms. Sanna Ruotsalainen, Vice Chair of the Society,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Hyvää päivää,

I would like to express my sincere congratulations on the 35th Anniversary of the Finnish-Japanese Society of Oulu. This anniversary party was postponed for a year due to the COVID-19 situation.

It gives me a great pleasure and honor to be able to celebrate such a milestone for your Society together with everyone here today.

Taking this opportunity, I would also like to extend my special congratulations to Dr. Olavi Fält, who is unfortunately not present today. Just 3 days ago, on the 3rd of November, the Government of Japan decided to confer the Decoration for Autumn 2021 on Dr. Fält in recognition of his outstanding achievements over many years in research and promotion of Japanese history and culture.

Dr. Fält established the Finnish-Japanese Society of Oulu with Mr. Juhani Pylkkänen and Mr. Erik Lindberg in 1985.

Since then the relationship between Japan and Oulu has developed remarkably as we witness now.

Oulu City has established cooperation with Sendai City to promote local industries, as well as the exchange programs with universities such as Hokkaido University, Tohoku University and Yokohama National University.

Your Society has contributed greatly to this expanded relationship between Japan and Oulu by promoting friendship between people in Japan and Oulu over the years.

Regardless of the COVID-19 situation, a Japanese teahouse “白い茶屋”

was opened last year, and Japanese speech contest was also organized in April this year.

I would like to extend my profound respect and appreciation for these endeavors to connect Japan and Oulu tightly.

I sincerely hope that your Society would develop its activities with your heartfelt spirit and passion to further enhance our solid mutual friendship in the future. Our Embassy is always willing to be with you.

Kiitos paljon. Onnea ja menestystä tulevaan!

(End)