

**Address by H.E. Ambassador FUJIMURA Kazuhiro
On the Occasion of Sakura-Kielo Alumni Gathering for MEXT
Returnees from Japan on 16 June 2022**

Tervetuloa Sakura-Kielo alumni-tapaamiseen.

Sakura, kirsikankukka, on Japanin kansalliskukka.

Ja kielo, japaniksi suzuran, on Suomen kansalliskukka.

Olen iloinen, että tapaan tänään teidät kaikki, koska
te tunnette hyvin molemmat kukat.

In May, Prime Minister Sanna Marin visited Japan.

I accompanied her during her stay in Tokyo.

She stressed that Finland and Japan are trusted
partners.

I am all for it.

People-to-people exchange is the base of trust
between one country and another.

Japan and Finland celebrated the centenary of the
establishment of diplomatic relations in 2019.

But our stories of trust date even further back, 230 years ago.

This is why now we are in the middle of “Finnish Japanese Friendship Year 2022”.

And so I am very pleased that we are having this gathering as a people-to-people exchange occasion today.

All of you here used to live a life in Japan.

Not always easy, I suppose.

Must have been tough, from time to time.

And I know that some of you are working in jobs related to Japan while others are not.

It does not matter.

I am simply proud that each of you have made contribution to our relationship of trust up to today.

From today and beyond, I hope such ties will become stronger.

And I wish to see something new will pop up to foster trust between us.

It may be a challenge.

However, by sharing the common experience of having spent some time of your life in Japan, I believe that you can work it out.

Then I will be happy if you share your ideas with the Embassy of Japan.

The Embassy is always open to you for lifting our trusted partnership.

Kiitos paljon for your attention.

Enjoy Japanese food and sake with sweet and bitter memories of your days in Japan !

(End)