

REMARKS FOR JAPAN AMERICA SOCIETY OF HIROSHIMA

December 2, 2025

皆さま、こんばんは。

在大阪・神戸米国総領事館の広報文化交流担当領事を務めさせていただいております、ワリド・ザファルでございます。

本日はお集まりいただき、誠にありがとうございます。

広島日米協会の皆さまの前でお話しできること、大変光栄に存じます。

日本各地の日米協会のような団体こそが、私たちの深い「絆」を支える礎となっております。

それでは、皆さまのために、ここからは英語で続けさせていただきます。

Good evening, everyone. On behalf of U.S. Consulate General in Osaka-Kobe, it is a true honor to join 広島日米協会's Christmas celebration.

I am deeply grateful for your warm welcome and for the opportunity to spend some time with folks are just as committed as I am to strengthening the bonds between our two nations.

Before going any further, let me express my sincere appreciation to President Yamamoto as well as all the members of the Japan-America Society of Hiroshima for organizing this annual event.

This is my second time in Hiroshima. Just a few weeks after beginning my new assignment, I was honored and humbled to join Ambassador Glass at the Peace Memorial Ceremony. I was deeply moved by the event and the powerful message of hope and reconciliation that Hiroshima offers to the world.

Each year, this December celebration allows us to reflect on the past year.

2025 has been a landmark for U.S.-Japan relations and President Trump's visit to Japan a few weeks ago was the perfect capstone to a year where the strength and strategic importance of our alliance grew to new levels.

In Osaka, we were delighted to be part of the success of Expo 2025. The USA Pavilion continued to be a major draw and we were delighted that so many of our friends from 日米協会's around Japan were able to come visit us.

While this year was full of history, next year will mark a truly historic milestone: the 250th birthday of the United States. Our nationwide and indeed worldwide celebration will be an opportunity not only for Americans to reflect on our history and values, but also to celebrate the friendships and partnerships that have shaped our nation's journey, including our deep and abiding friendship with the people of Japan.

I hope that many of you here tonight will join us in commemorating this special anniversary.

Hiroshima stands at the crossroads of tradition and innovation.

This city is not only a symbol of peace and resilience, but also a dynamic center of industry and technology.

As global supply chains evolve Hiroshima's skilled workforce will play a key role in shaping the future of our shared prosperity and security.

Hiroshima is rapidly emerging as a leader in the technologies that will define the future. The significant investment by Micron in its Hiroshima facility is a clear signal that this region is poised to play a central role in the global semiconductor industry.

These kinds of partnerships are more than economic milestones, they are a testament to the talent, vision, and potential that define Hiroshima's place in the world.

People-to-people ties are at the heart of our alliance. The sister-park relationship between Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park and Pearl Harbor National Memorial Park is a powerful example of how we can learn from the past and work together for a better future.

Recent exchanges between students and citizens from both sides of the Pacific have deepened mutual understanding and inspired new generations to become advocates for peace.

When I was here August, I was able to attend an event with Mayor MATSUI at the 市役所. The mayor heard from several students from Hawaii about their first experience visiting Japan. And it was a reminder that for many of us, including many here today, that first visit was the start of a life-long journey to forge deeper ties.

I encourage the Japan-America Society of Hiroshima to continue reaching out to young leaders and to provide them with opportunities to shape the future of our partnership.

In closing, I want to thank you once again for your warm welcome and for the opportunity to speak with you tonight. As we approach the end of this year and look forward to the 250th anniversary of the United States, let us renew our commitment to peace, friendship, and progress.

Together, we can build a brighter future for the people of Japan, the United States, and the world. Thank you very much. I wish you all a joyful holiday season and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

このクリスマス会にご招待いただきまして、誠にありがとうございました。