

Umitaka-Maru Voyagers Reception

Thursday 24 January 2013; 4-5pm

Deputy Consul-General of Japan, Mr Hirohisa Chiba's Speech

Alderman Damon Thomas, The Right Honourable the Lord

Mayor of Hobart;

Alderman Peter Sexton, Hobart City Council;

Alderman Leo Foley, Hobart City Council;

Captain Noda, (Captain of the Umitaka Maru);

**Professor Tsuruta, (Vice President of Tokyo University of
Marine Science and Technology);**

**Mr Phil Cooper, President of Australia-Japan Society of
Tasmania;**

Mrs Fumiko Plaister, Former Lady Mayoress of Hobart;

Other dignitaries and friends whom I've failed to mention;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Very Good Afternoon.

**It is a great pleasure for me to say a few words on the
occasion of this afternoon's reception, which welcomes the**

‘Umitaka-Maru’ research and training vessel to this beautiful city of Hobart.

First of all, I would like to personally extend a heartfelt welcome to the crew of the ship and those affiliated with the Tokyo University of Marine Science and Technology to Australia.

At the same time, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the City of Hobart for your great hospitality in hosting this function.

But before I proceed any further, please let me express my sincere sympathy to the people in Tasmania affected by the recent bushfires.

I pray that those affected will be able to recover from the devastation as soon as possible.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted that the Umitaka-Maru is able to dock here again this year after extensive training and research in the Antarctic waters.

I would like to pay tribute to your efforts, determination and the results of your long voyage.

Furthermore, collaboration in research with Australian counterparts and other related organisations contributes a great deal to deepening mutual understanding between our two countries and people.

From this point of view, this is an excellent example of what can be achieved when bringing people from different nations and backgrounds together.

I also trust that the bonds of friendship and exchange can be further strengthened over the next few days through various activities that are planned such as the Shinnenkai and Welcome BBQ hosted by the Australia – Japan Society of Tasmania tomorrow.

I hope everyone will enjoy their time in Hobart and I personally am also looking forward to visiting the vessel tomorrow.

In conclusion, I sincerely hope that the robust relationship between Japan and Australia through endeavours such as this voyage of the Umitaka-Maru will further develop in the future.

Thank you.