



EMBASSY OF THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

Speech of H. E. Dr. T. Suka Mangisi
On the Occasion of the Presentation of the Donation of
NPO Tonga Japan Community
By Mr. Latu Villiami SINALI, President of NPO Tonga Japan Community
and
the Presentation of 1000 Paper Cranes and Video Message by
Mr. KANEKO Masakazu, Mayor of Oura Town
Oura Town, Wednesday, 20th April 2022

His Worship Mr. Kaneko Masakazu, Mayor of Oura Town
Mr. Latu Viliami Sinali, President of the NPO Tonga Japan Friendship
Association
Distinguished Guests, Members of the Press,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Malo e lelei and Konnichiwa.

It is always a wonderful opportunity to escape Tokyo and retreat to the peaceful and tranquil surroundings of Japan. The beautiful town of Oura is just wonderful in this regard. And I have come today with 2 of my colleagues who also were wanting to experience this. Thank you for the kind words and welcoming me back to your town.

It is again my distinct honour to be meeting with you all again and on this occasion, to mark the heartfelt donation from very generous and committed supporters of the Kingdom of Tonga, to assist in what I call, Tonga's "5Rs", namely in Tonga's 1) recovery, 2) replenishment, and 3) rebuilding, with 4) resilience, and 5) respect, from the devastation of the 15th January volcanic eruption and ensuing tsunami – the first for Tonga in recent memory, and a date forever etched in our minds.

Oura Town is one of Tonga's best friends who responded to lend a hand to support Tonga immediately after the disaster by donating 1 million yen to the Embassy through NPO. I am deeply grateful for Oura Town's effort to set up donation boxes throughout town for fundraising and to develop "Keke" Tongan donut, together with the NPO and arranging part of the sales to be donated to Tonga. As it is said "A true friend is discerned during an uncertain matter", people-to-people connections, created at the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and

Paralympics Host Town, clearly shows a strong "KIZUNA" between Tonga and Oura Town. I look forward to strengthening our culture, sports as well as business relationship.

Tonga is still in its immediate recovery phase since the devastation caused by the volcanic eruption and tsunami, ensuring clean drinking water, food security, and shelter is available, despite also the extra challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic having to lockdown the country. A 3-year recovery plan has been established for short to medium - term recovery from 2022 - 2025 focusing on disaster resilient infrastructure and standards to build-back-better.

Mayor Kaneko, let me wholeheartedly and sincerely, on behalf of the Government and the People of the Kingdom of Tonga, thank all the people of Oura Town who have donated to our relief efforts through your fundraising initiative, as well as to you Mayor Kaneko, and your dedicated and committed staff, for supporting the ongoing humanitarian efforts in Tonga.

I also must recognize the untiring and committed effort of the NPO which has really stepped up and was tested, and passed, through its efforts in galvanizing support from the public in Japan as well. The NPO's work is a testament to an important partnership between the Embassy and the NPO towards strengthening Tonga – Japan bilateral relations at all levels. It is an honour to be working with the NPO in all respects. Mr. Latu, please convey also on behalf of the Government and the People of the Kingdom of Tonga to all those that supported us through the NPO, our heartfelt gratitude.

Let me conclude by saying that all the love shown has and will certainly continue to contribute towards returning Tonga better to its paradise in the South Pacific. We look forward to welcoming you Mayor Kaneko and the wonderful people of Oura-machi and all supporters of the NPO, to our island Heaven on Earth in time, to further celebrate your kindness and support for our people and country.

Malo 'aupito / 'Ofa atu

<日本語訳>

Malo e lelei and Konnichiwa.

皆様こんにちは。

東京の喧騒を離れ、平和で静かな日本の地を訪れることはいつも素晴らしい機会となります。邑楽はまさにこれにあたる美しい町です。本日、私は邑楽町への訪問を同じように楽しみにしていた2名の同僚とともに参りました。皆様からの温かいお言葉と、再度このように私を迎えて頂いたことに感謝をしたいと思います。

本日はトンガの五つの R となる、resilience 回復力、respect 尊敬、recovery 復興、replenishment 補充そして rebuilding 再建のために、皆様からの多大なるご支援を賜る式典において皆様とお会いでき、大変光栄です。1月15日の火山噴火とそれに続く津波はトンガにおいて未曾有の災害であり、この日は私たちの心に永遠に刻まれることとなりました。

邑楽町は被災直後に NPO を通じて大使館へ100万円の寄付をしてくださるなど、トンガへの支援に手を貸してくれた素晴らしい友人です。寄付箱を町中に設置し、NPO と共に、“KeKe”と呼ばれるトンガのドーナツを開発し、売り上げの一部をトンガへ寄付するよう尽力して下さった邑楽町の皆様に心から感謝いたします。「確実なる友は不確実な事において見分けられる」と言われるように、東京2020オリンピック・パラリンピックのホストタウンで生まれた人と人とのつながりは、トンガと邑楽町の強い「きずな」をはっきりと示しています。私たちの文化、スポーツそしてビジネスにおいて、今後も関係が深まっていくことを楽しみにしております。

トンガは、いまだ火山噴火と津波の被害から緊急復旧段階にあります。コロナ感染症の拡大によりロックダウンが行われておりますが、安全な水、食料、仮設住宅の確保はできております。災害に強いインフラとよりよい復興のための基準に焦点を当てた2022年から2025年の短期中期計画の3年の復興計画が作成されました

トンガ王国政府と国民を代表して、義援金をお寄せくださった邑楽町の皆様、そして金子町長と継続的な人道支援に尽力して下さっている職員の皆様に心から御礼申し上げます。

また、日本の方々からの支援を活性化する活動を通じて強化された NPO のたゆまぬ努力を認めざるをおえません。NPO の活動はあらゆるレベルにおいてトンガと日本の二国間関係の強化に向けた大使館と NPO における重要なパートナーシップの証です。様々な場面において NPO と協力できることを光栄に思います。ラトゥさん、トンガ王国政府と国民を代表して、NPO を通じて応援して下さった皆様にも感謝の気持ちを伝えて頂ければ幸いです。

皆様から頂いたすべての、そしてこれからも続く愛によりトンガは再び南太平洋の楽園に戻ることができると思っています。金子市長をはじめ邑楽町の皆様そしてNPOをご支援してくださっている皆様に、私たちの楽園にてお迎えすることを楽しみにしております。

Malo 'aupito / 'Ofa atu

心から感謝をこめて。