

天皇陛下御在位三十年記念式典



On February 24, His Majesty attended the Commemoration Ceremony of the thirtieth Anniversary of His Majesty the Emperor's Accession to the Throne, held by the government.

Celebrating the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Enthronement of His Majesty the Emperor



His Majesty the Emperor making his address

This year marks the thirtieth anniversary of the enthronement of His Majesty the Emperor. On February 24, Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress attended the Commemoration Ceremony of the Thirtieth Anniversary of His Majesty the Emperor's Accession to the Throne held by the government at the National Theatre in Chiyoda Ward, Tokyo. Approximately 1,100 people, including heads of the three powers, ministers, National Diet members, foreign ambassadors to Japan, local government heads, and representatives of various fields also attended this event.

During the ceremony Prime Minister Shinzo Abe delivered an address, in which he stated,



Their Majesties listening to the heartfelt speeches and performances

“Over the last 30 years, Your Majesty has devoted all your heart to each and every public function Your Majesty has attended as the symbol of the unity of Japan and the Japanese people, and has always stood in solidarity with the people of this nation. We have proceeded alongside Your Majesty for the past 30 years of the Heisei period with an aspiration that is described as ‘Internal soundness yields external peace.’”

As a representative of the people, Governor of Fukushima Prefecture Masao Uchibori gave an address expressing his gratitude to Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress for repeatedly visiting Fukushima after the Great East Japan Earthquake. “Your Majesties have provided the people of Fukushima Prefecture with words of consolation and encouragement. Those words gave us the courage to step up our efforts and to make progress in overcoming an unprecedented, multiple tragedy of earthquake, tsunami and nuclear accident,” he noted. Also on behalf of the people, former member of the House of Councillors, Foreign Minister, and Minister for the Environment Yoriko Kawaguchi stated in her address, “Your Majesties held to the principles of selflessness, interacting wholeheartedly with the people at every opportunity. The commitment to the people that Your Majesties demonstrated overwhelmed me with happiness and pride in being a Japanese national,” referring to the occasion of accompanying them on their visit to Southeast Asia in 2006.

In the memorial performance, Okinawan singer Daichi Miura sang *Utage-no-hibiki* (Resonance of Singing Voices), a song written by His Majesty the Emperor and composed by Her Majesty the Empress, and soprano Yumiko Samejima sang *Omoigo*

(Endearing Child), a lullaby composed by Her Majesty the Empress.

In his address, His Majesty the Emperor stated “During the three decades of the Heisei era, Japan has been free of war for the first time in modern current history, supported by the strong desire of the people for peace. However, the thirty years was by no means an uneventful time as our country encountered many unanticipated challenges.”

He expressed his gratitude to the people of Japan by saying “I consider myself most fortunate to have always been able to perform my duties as the Emperor with the help of the people. The work that I have carried out was only made possible with the approval and support of various government organizations. I have been able to fulfill my duties thanks to the people of Japan, whose symbol of unity I take pride and joy in being, and the cultural level of this country which has been nurtured by the people of Japan over many years, from the past to the present.” Also, he said, “I would like to take this opportunity today also express my gratitude to the people of other countries who showed great concern when Japan was in the midst of suffering and sorrow. Countless countries, international organizations and regions gave us their gracious and kind assistance. To those people I offer my deepest heartfelt gratitude.”

His Majesty acknowledged that soon after the Heisei era began people all across Japan expressed their wish to build a peaceful Japan together with the Imperial family. “To this day, we remember and hold precious the messages that we received from across the country at the time, filled with the quiet but firm determination,” he continued, praying for peace and happiness of all the people in Japan and around the world.



Their Majesties waving to applauding attendees before leaving the venue