

**Address by Mr. Nobuo Kishi, State Minister for Foreign
Affairs of Japan**
**On the occasion of the ceremony for the 60th Anniversary
of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Nepal**
Kathmandu, Nepal, September 1, 2016

The Right Honourable Prime Minister Dahal,
The Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs Mahat,
The Honourable Minister for Information and Communications Karki,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning and Namaskar,

At the outset, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Nepal. I came to Nepal seven years ago, as Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Defence, and it is a great pleasure and honour to be able to make a return today, to attend this ceremony for our 60th anniversary hosted by the Government of Nepal.

Ever since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1956, Japan and Nepal have built an excellent cordial relationship through exchanges in every field, including economy, culture and tourism.

Nepal is well known to Japanese people for the beautiful and glorious Himalayas. Many Japanese tourists visit Nepal, and they are impressed by the magnificent nature, beautiful cities and villages as well as the warm hospitality of the people of Nepal. Likewise, Nepal has become so familiar to us that the “Nepal Festival 2016” held in Tokyo this August, led by resident Nepalese, turned out to be a great success with more than 200,000 participants. The friendship between the two countries has been nurtured in histories of the relations among people, and the tie is becoming more solid year by year.

Japan attaches great importance to the role Nepal can play in the stability and development in the region. We are committed to develop and broaden our bilateral relations. We will continue to support Nepal’s development of infrastructure, which provides the foundation for our future relationship, and we will also expand cooperation in the field of socio-economic development.

It is based on this policy that we exchanged the notes between the two Governments yesterday, concerning Japanese grant assistance on the “Project for Improvement of Aviation Safety Facilities in Major Airports” amounting to 1.45 billion yen (14 million USD) and on the “School Sector Development Program” amounting to 300 million yen (3 million USD). Japan will contribute to improve aviation safety and encourage high quality education in Nepal. Furthermore, the Government of Japan intends to provide ODA loan of around over 16 billion yen (157 million USD) for a Tunnel Construction Project as the first tunnel project in Nepal.

We have a history of helping each other, as we both live in counties with many earthquakes. On the Great East Japan Earthquake, Japan received 5,000 blankets from the people of Nepal, and resident Nepalese in Japan provided curry dishes in disaster-stricken areas.

Following the Nepal earthquake last year, Japan seamlessly provided assistance, extending from emergency and humanitarian assistance to that of recovery and reconstruction. We will continue to cooperate closely with the Government of Nepal to achieve as early reconstruction as possible, with an aim to “Build Back Better” from the earthquake disaster.

Yesterday, I personally visited the Kathmandu Durbar Square, and recognised the importance of the need for early restoration of the cultural heritage, as it rests at the heart and soul of the people of Nepal, while serving as valuable resource for tourism.

Based on the lessons from our experience as earthquake countries, we would like to work together to reach our common goal of becoming more resilient countries, which are well prepared against natural disasters.

In Japan, we celebrate the 60th birthday as “*kanreki*,” as the turning point in his or her life. This is to celebrate the end of the first cycle of life as well as the beginning of another chapter in his or her life. Today, I am delighted to be able to renew our determination towards the next 60 years of our bilateral relations.

In closing, I sincerely hope that our friendly ties between the people of the two countries would be further strengthened through by commemorative events scheduled to take place in our two countries this year.

Thank you and Dhanyavaad.