

Remarks by H.E. Mr. Masahisa Sato,
State Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan

150th Anniversary of the *Gannenmono*
The First Japanese Immigrants to Hawaii Commemoration Ceremony
June 7, 2018

Imperial highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning and aloha. I am Masahisa Sato, State Minister for Foreign Affairs.

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the 150th Anniversary of the *Gannenmono* Commemoration Ceremony with the kind attendance by their imperial highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino.

150 years ago, a group of Japanese emigrated and became the first Japanese to settle in Hawaii. The group of first Japanese immigrants, *Gannenmono*, built the foundation of friendship between Japan and Hawaii. In 19th century, they developed Nikkei community in Hawaii and many other places in the US. They were the pioneers of today's Nikkei communities across the US and the entire world. It gives me a profound sense of gratitude to be standing here today to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the *Gannenmono* with all Japanese Americans in Hawaii and other parts of the US and Nikkei in the world at large.

Ladies and gentlemen,

3 days ago I was very impressed to see the display at the front of the Nikkei Japanese American Hall Hilo in Hawaii Island. The display was the sign of the "simbou" spirit written by Japanese and English. "Simbou" or "gaman" meaning the quiet endurance or patience is the quality that describes the struggles and sacrifice of the "issei", the first generation of

the Japanese immigrant to Hawaii. I'm convinced "simbou" or "gaman" is the very important legacy of our Japanese spirits.

Japanese Americans in Hawaii overcame numerous hardships in the early days of their life and during World War II. Their tireless efforts and devotion to the country won the trust and respect in the US. Their dedication in these years fostered and advanced today's robust Japan-US relationship. On behalf of the Government of Japan, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude and respect to all Japanese Americans.

I must also express my sincere appreciation to the people of Hawaii, who received *Gannenmono* and other groups of immigrants with open arms. People of Hawaii warmly accepted Japanese immigrants and worked together for a better life. Through such interaction throughout these years, Hawaii became home to people with different backgrounds where they live in harmony with one another.

Today, Japan and the US enjoy a robust relationship based on strong trust. We will strive to further strengthen the close partnership with the US, in cooperation with all Japanese Americans.

In closing, I sincerely hope that this ceremony will help next generation to learn Japanese Americans' history, and open a new chapter in the partnership between Japan and Nikkei community.

Thank you for your kind attention.
