

Message from Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio  
On the Occasion of the 30<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the Japan-U.S. Conference on  
Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON)

I would like to extend my most sincere congratulations on the occasion of the 30th Plenary Session of the Japan-U.S. Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange, which is being held today in Atlanta, Georgia, where the Peace Bell from my hometown, Hiroshima, rings.

Japan and the United States are now bound by the strongest and deepest partnership we have ever seen in our history. We share a vision of strengthening a free and open Indo-Pacific and bringing peace and prosperity to the international community. The foundation of our relationship is unwavering thanks to the rule of law and common values. At the same time, the Japan-U.S. alliance plays an important role as a center of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

As I enter my third year as Prime Minister, I am further convinced that the deep ties between our people remain the foundation of this strong bilateral relationship and are the pillar of our alliance. I concurred with President Biden that we will continue to promote multi-layered people-to-people exchange that will support the firm bond between our two countries.

In this context, CULCON has played a crucial role. Since its inception more than 60 years ago, CULCON has made policy recommendations from a broad perspective so that our two countries can further develop our relationship and continue to play a leading role in the international community. CULCON has also worked tirelessly to promote exchange in the fields of education, culture, and the arts in both countries, contributing to the robust Japan-U.S. relations we have today.

I expect that today's conference will have meaningful and constructive discussions on topics such as subnational exchanges, including those of local governments, and new roles for our two countries in expanding access to and sharing of digital resources.

I am confident that the active discussions and exchanges between representatives of our two countries will lead to a stronger alliance, as well as to the development of wisdom in the Indo-Pacific region and the international community as a whole. I wish you all the success in today's meeting and in your future endeavors.

October 6, 2023

Prime Minister of Japan, KISHIDA Fumio