

# Embassy of Japan Tonga

## **PRESS RELEASE**

*EOJ/2020/01  
February 21, 2020*

### **His Majesty the Emperor of Japan's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday celebrated in Tonga Together with Their Majesties the King and Queen**

Their Majesties, King Tupou VI and Queen Nanasipau'u of the Kingdom of Tonga graced the reception in Nuku'alofa to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday of His Majesty, Emperor Naruhito of Japan. His Excellency Mr. ISHII Tetsuya, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan hosted the reception at his residence in 'Anana in the evening of Thursday, 20 February 2020.

The Prime Minister of Tonga, Honourable Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa attended the reception besides six other Cabinet Ministers, Lord Ma'afu, Hon. Tevita Lavemaau, Hon. Poasi Tei, Hon. Siaso Sovaleni, Hon Akosita Lavulavu, Hon. Vatau Hui, along with Lord Fakafanua, Speaker of Tonga's Legislative Assembly and Lady Fakafanua, Lord Dalgety and Heads of Diplomatic Mission. Also present were Chief Justice, Police Commissioner, Attorney General, Church Leaders, People's Representatives to the Legislative Assembly, Honorary Consuls, International Organizations Resident Representatives, Government Executive Officials, Public and Private Business General Managers, Japan related alumni representatives and more than 230 guests.

In addressing the occasion H.E Mr. ISHII Tetsuya expressed gratitude to Their Majesties for gracing the event. "This is the first Emperor's Birthday Reception in Japan's new era, "Reiwa," which means beautiful harmony and its significance can be symbolized by Tonga and Japan celebrating historic occasions," said the Ambassador. "His Majesty, The Emperor Naruhito is turning 60 years old on February 23, and it is a joyous occasion for the people of Japan." The enthronement ceremony for Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako was held last year in October and Their Majesties King Tupou VI and Queen Nanasipau'u graced the ceremony with their presence.

"This year 2020 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> year anniversary of the establishment of Japan and Tonga's diplomatic relations and I wish to celebrate this significant milestone with both our peoples," said the Ambassador. He also added that this year will be the second time for Tokyo to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games, and he believes that sports is not only a symbol of competition but also of union, peace and health. "I greatly aspire and stay committed to further strengthening our relations into the future, especially as we are now in the Golden Jubilee of our diplomatic ties. We celebrate our 50 years of close cooperation and warm friendship and look forward to opening another new half – century of our golden bond," he said.

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Prime Minister Tu‘i‘onetoa in his keynote address extended best wishes from His Majesty King Tupou VI and Queen Nanasipau‘u, his Government and people of Tonga to His Imperial Majesty Emperor Naruhito on the occasion of his 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday. “His Majesty’s Government congratulates Japan on embarking into the Reiwa Era and is assured it shall be an era filled with beautiful harmony and longevity,” he said.

Tonga and Japan’s diplomatic relations date back to July 1970, “Your Excellency, for fifty years, our countries have demonstrated profound engagements in areas of mutual interest which Tonga is deeply appreciative. We offer gratitude for the ongoing bilateral assistance programs, notably laudable for its size and outreach, and its key objective of supporting Tonga’s National Development priorities,” stated the Prime Minister.

The addresses were followed by the toasts, to honour His Majesty, Emperor Naruhito, and for the prosperity of both the Kingdom of Tonga and Japan.

The reception served its many invited guests with five new selection of Japanese sake.

END.

Attached: Photos

Photos:



Their Majesties, King Tupou VI and Queen Nanasipau‘u of the Kingdom of Tonga graced the reception to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, at H.E Mr. ISHII Tetsuya residence at ‘Anana on Thursday, 20 February 2020.

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Welcoming Their Majesties King Tupou VI and Queen Nanasipau'u by H.E ISHII and wife Mrs. Akiko Ishii.



The royal toast to commemorate His Majesty Emperor Naruhito's 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday.

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H.E Mr. Tetsuya Ishii address the reception in celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday of His Majesty, Emperor Naruhito of Japan.



Prime Minister Hon. Pohiva Tu'i'onetoa address the occasion on behalf of His Majesty King Tupou VI, the Government and people of Tonga.

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Their Majesties viewed an exhibition that featured photos at the Enthronement Ceremony of Their Majesties Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako.



The reception to commemorate the Emperor's Birthday on Thursday, 20 February 2020.

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