

**Remarks by Ambassador Makoto Yamanaka
on the Occasion of the Reception to celebrate
the 80th Birthday of HM the Emperor of Japan**

4 December, 2013

(Check against Delivery)

Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for coming to our National Day reception to celebrate the 80th Birthday of HM the Emperor of Japan. It is a great honor to have so many distinguished guests and friends with us this afternoon.

I can safely sum up this year as being a truly landmark year for Japan-Polish relations. Prime Minister ABE's visit to Warsaw this June was the first time in 10 years for a Japanese Prime Minister to visit Poland. There was also the first ever visit by the Japan Maritime Self Defense Forces training squadron to

Gdynia in August. In addition, the Japanese festival “Matsuri” was held for the first time in Agrykola Park in June, attracting more than ten thousand local Poles and Japanese residents.

The Japan-Poland relations were blessed by the equally active Polish high-level visitors to Japan including Minister of Defence, Mr. Siemoniak in March, Minister of Culture, Mr. Zdrojewski, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Economy, Mr. Piechoczinski in October.

Naturally, as Ambassador, I am very pleased with such developments between our two countries. Much of these developments took place against the background of the economic recoveries of our two countries. Poland is clearly on a path to economic recovery. Japan on its part is making enormous strides in its economic reconstruction under the bold

leadership of Prime Minister Abe. “Abenomics” has become a trademark. It all started just one year ago when he became the Prime Minister of Japan. Since then, the stock market has soared, with the Nikkei index rising 80% in half a year. Major industrial indices are picking up including consumer confidence. We are also very much encouraged by the selection of Tokyo as a host of the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Next year will be another important year for our two countries. Poland celebrates the 25th anniversary of its transformation, the 15th and 10th anniversaries of joining NATO and the European Union. Poland and Japan will celebrate the 95th anniversary of their diplomatic relations and, together with the vesegrad group partners, organize a number of events of cultural exchange throughout the next year. The year 2014 also marks the 20th anniversary of the Manggha Museum in

Krakow for Japanese Culture and Technology.

We continue to treasure our relations with Poland as we share together democratic and human rights values. Cooperation between our two countries with shared values is becoming more and more important as we face changing environment in Europe and Asia. I am confident that Poland and Japan will further their cooperation in the years to come.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Let me conclude my remarks by thanking you all for your continued cooperation in the past year. And I look forward to working closely with you in the next year. Once again, thank you very much for coming. Please enjoy the rest of the afternoon.

Dziękuję bardzo.