

**Speech by Ambassador Hidehisa Horinouchi  
at the opening ceremony of the Japan-Cambodia  
Kizuna Festival 2017**

- H.E. Dr. Hang Chuon Naron, Minister of Education, Youth and Sport
- H.E. Mr. Hing Thoraxy, Secretary of State and the High Representative of H.E. Dr. Sok An, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister in Charge of the Council of Ministers
- Royal Highnesses, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Firstly, I would like to extend my warmest welcome to you all and thank you for attending this opening ceremony for the Japan-Cambodia KIZUNA Festival 2017.

The Japanese word “Kizuna” means ‘bonds with important people’, for example family members or friends. For the 2017 festival, we selected the theme of “Fly to Japan” to commemorate the start of the long-awaited, direct flights between Japan and Cambodia. The flights were launched by All Nippon Airways (ANA) last September.

During this 4-day festival, various cultural events will be organized. The Japan Foundation has invited TEMPURA KIDZ, an internationally-acclaimed modern dance group to take part. They are going to perform some of their own unique dance routines this evening, as well as treating us to a joint performance with some Cambodian traditional dancers and modern singers.

There will be many other exciting events taking place during the festival, including a variety of music concerts; a contest showcasing traditional Japanese costumes and various martial arts demonstrations.

As a sideline to the cultural events, and in response to the growing interest Cambodian people are showing in visiting Japan,

we are holding a tourism exhibition in the lobby.

I would like to invite everyone here tonight to participate in these special events. They provide the perfect opportunity for you to sample and enjoy a wide variety of Japanese cultural and artistic performances, and they will definitely deepen your understanding of Japan.

Finally, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all the staff at the CJCC and the Japan Foundation Asia Center, who are our co-organizers of this festival. I would also like to thank all the dancers and singers performing today; the sponsors and all the other people who have been involved, for their generous support and contributions. Without you all this festival could not take place.

Please, everyone, enjoy the festival!