Japanese Ambassador Assures Japan’s Support for Sri Lanka’s Economic Development Efforts

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Mizukoshi Hideaki, Japanese Ambassador to Sri Lanka.

The Japanese Ambassador to Sri Lanka, Mizukoshi Hideaki, expressed Japan’s support for the current program to rebuild the Sri Lankan economy. Drawing parallels between Japan’s historical journey and Sri Lanka’s current economic challenges, the Ambassador highlighted Japan’s resilience and economic resurgence as a model for Sri Lanka. These remarks were made during his keynote address at a panel discussion on “Economic Development and Modernization with Lessons from

Japan," chaired by President Ranil Wickremesinghe and organized by the "Geopolitical Cartographer".

During his keynote speech titled "Japan's Modernization and Lessons for Sri Lanka's Economic Recovery and Governance," the Ambassador shared insights into Japan's historical challenges, adaptation to modern changes, and journey toward rapid development.

The "Geopolitical Cartographer" is an international research foundation established by President Ranil Wickremesinghe, primarily focusing on the Indian Ocean region. Its objective is to conduct research, promote analysis, and study geopolitical, geo-economics, and maritime developments occurring in the Indian Ocean, Pacific Ocean, and the connected landmass.

During his address, the Ambassador reflected on the problematic circumstances Japan encountered globally in the aftermath of World War II. He highlighted the pivotal role played by the late former President J.R. Jayawardene, who represented Sri Lanka at the San Francisco Peace Conference. Despite the international community's widespread condemnation of Japan then, President Jayawardene's statement paved the way for Japan's eventual reintegration into the international community. The Ambassador expressed gratitude for this significant contribution, facilitating Japan's return to the global stage. The Ambassador highlighted Japan's strategic utilization of this opportunity for reconstruction and economic advancement within its borders. Moreover, he underscored the enduring close relationship between Japan and Sri Lanka, emphasizing the ongoing efforts of leaders from both nations to strengthen and enhance bilateral ties. Additionally, he pointed out that Sri Lanka, currently engaged in economic reforms under an International Monetary Fund program, could draw inspiration from Japan's experience in overcoming challenges to foster positive transformation within the country. This aligns with Japan's example of leveraging adversity to drive progress and development.

The Ambassador stressed the significance of nurturing competitive industries akin to Japan's to propel Sri Lanka's economic advancement. He underscored the necessity for Sri Lanka to develop comprehensive industrial policies to foster competitive export sectors while striving to attain sustainable development objectives. Ambassador Mizukoshi Hideaki commended the proactive measures undertaken by the Sri Lankan government in its ongoing anti-corruption initiatives. He expressed Japan's commitment to steadfastly supporting these efforts,

acknowledging the importance of combating corruption and fostering a conducive economic growth and investment environment. The Ambassador highlighted Japan’s commitment to aiding Sri Lanka’s anti-corruption endeavors by disclosing that

Japan has extended financial aid through the United Nations Development Program to bolster the Commission to Investigate Allegations of Bribery or Corruption in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, he underscored Japan’s readiness to provide support via institutions like the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for diverse development initiatives in Sri Lanka. Additionally, he expressed hope for future investment opportunities in Japan to facilitate Sri Lanka’s economic growth, emphasizing the potential benefits of fostering bilateral economic ties between the two nations. Following the keynote address, Ambassador Mizukoshi Hideaki of Japan, along with Azusa Kubota, the Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Program in Sri Lanka, and Senior Professor H. D. Karunaratne, Vice Chancellor of Colombo University, gathered in a panel discussion. The discussion “Economic Development and Modernization with Lessons from Japan” was moderated by Dr. Ganeshan Wignaraja.

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President Ranil Wickremesinghe, and other delegates.