

**Remarks by Mr. OTAKA Junichiro,
Minister of the Embassy of Japan to Austria,
for the regional fellow meeting of Canon Foundation in Europe
on 1. December 2023**

Chairman Prinsze,
Professors, Doctors, Distinguished Guests,

Thank you for inviting me to this wonderful regional fellow meeting of the Canon Foundation in Europe. I would like to take this opportunity to say a few words to you all.

The world around us and the international situation are changing rapidly and we see many new challenges that require action and solutions. The need for and importance of academic research is greater than ever before. In this age, the Canon Foundation in Europe has continuously provided the opportunity for overseas study for researchers in Japan and Europe for more than 35 years. I would like to express my appreciation for the Canon Foundation's long-term contribution in promoting academic and cultural exchanges between Japan and Europe.

Many of you here today have already completed the fellowship and are now working in various academic fields. I sincerely hope that your experience in Japan will not only be a beautiful memory of the past, but also something that will develop into the future. This alumni meeting is a very valuable opportunity where fellows across ages and borders gather in one place. I expect you to share experiences, build up networks and enhance international research collaboration.

For the future generation of fellows, I hope that through research and living in Japan, they will become deeply involved in Japan and have a unique experience. A famous Japanese author, Haruki Murakami, says in his popular novel "Norwegian Wood": "If you only read the books that everyone else reads, you can only think what everyone else thinks." A research term in Japan is a great opportunity for all of you to read the books that not everyone is reading.

I would like to mention the University of Vienna, which is providing this opportunity. I would like to see the University of Vienna strengthen its ties with institutes such as Canon Foundation and expand its academic relations with Japan.

In conclusion, I once again pay my highest respect to the contribution of the Canon Foundation and hope that the Canon Foundation will continue to provide opportunities for young researchers in Japan and Europe and invest in our future. I also sincerely hope that the networks fostered by each recipient of the Foundation's fellowship programme will serve as a bridge between Europe and Japan and contribute to further deepening mutual understanding, friendship and cooperation.

Thank you for your kind attention.