

Remarks by Ambassador Motohide Yoshikawa
Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations
On the Occasion of the Peace Bell Ceremony
6 May 2015

Secretary-General, H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Mrs. Ban
President of the General Assembly, H.E. Mr. Sam Kutesa,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning and thank you for joining us to celebrate the return of the Peace Bell to the Japanese Garden.

The idea to donate a bell to the United Nations was first proposed by the late Mr. Chiyoji Nakagawa, an executive member of the United Nations Association of Japan, in 1951, when Japan submitted its application to join the United Nations.

Mr. Nakagawa set out to make a bell that would stand as a symbol of peace.

The bell was cast from coins and medals donated by citizens not only from Japan but also from more than 60 countries.

Three years after his initial proposal, Mr. Nakagawa's hard work materialized and in 1954 this Peace Bell was officially donated to the United Nations by the UN Association of Japan.

Two years later in 1956, Japan became the 80th member of the United Nations.

In 2000, the location of the Peace Bell was transformed into a Japanese Garden, using funds donated by Japanese people living both in Japan and New York.

Symbolically, the Garden and the layout of its components represent the universe, the earth, and the United Nation's flag.

As this year marks the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations, it is a timely moment to remember and renew Mr. Nakagawa's wish for peace.

On this occasion, I would like to extend my personal gratitude to the son and daughter of Mr. Nakagawa (Mr. Shikataro Nakagawa and Ms. Seiko Takase) who came from Japan to attend today's ceremony.

I would also like to express my appreciation to Mr. Teruo Morita and Mr. Osamu Ikeda of the World Peace Association for their continued support.

My appreciation also goes to the United Nations International School Choir, the Tarumi Violin Children's Foundation and all the UN staff who have contributed enormously to today's ceremony.

I am also very pleased to see Mr. Shinichiro Abe who designed the Japanese Garden, as well as many representatives of Japanese community in New York who raised funds for the garden.

Finally, I conclude my greetings by expressing my wish that, for years to come, the Peace Bell shall continue to be rung on International Day of Peace, every September the 21st, to renew our commitment to the world Peace.

I thank you very much.