

Statement by Ambassador Ishikawa Hiroshi at
The Japanese Association Clubhouse Renewal Event

22 November 2025

Her Excellency Ms. Sim Ann, Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Ministry of Home Affairs,

Mr. Murayama Takanobu, President, The Japanese Association, Singapore,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure and honour to extend my congratulations on the holding of this ceremony to commemorate the successful completion of the major renovation of the Japanese Association clubhouse, attended by Her Excellency Ms. Sim Ann as our Guest of Honour despite her busy schedule.

First and foremost, I would like to offer my warmest congratulations to Mr. Murayama, the past two Presidents of the Japanese Association in Singapore, Mr. Nishida and Mr. Hikita, as well as all those who have been involved in this project, for their tireless efforts in planning and completing this mission.

The Japanese Association in Singapore as we know was established in 1957. Initially, its main role was the management of the Japanese Cemetery. Over the years, however, the Association has proactively fostered exchanges with the Singapore community, including participation in the Chingay Parade, as well as organising a wide range of activities such as the Summer Festival, roughly around a half of participants are Singaporeans, and the Japanese Speech Contest for Singaporeans.

The Japanese Association clubhouse has served as the hub for these activities. It was built in 1998, which was celebrated by the then Deputy Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong's attendance exactly at this atrium. Since then, it has been used as a major platform for mutual support among Japanese residents in Singapore, as well as the venue for a number of exchange activities with local people.

Most remarkably, this building has been providing a place for collaborative activities with the Community Chest, led by the Women's Committee of the Japanese Association. Thanks to all these initiatives, in 2008, the Japanese Association, Singapore became the first foreign organisation to receive the Pinnacle Award, the highest honour bestowed by the Community Chest. As Ambassador of Japan, I am particularly proud of this achievement.

Today, the Association has approximately 12,000 ordinary members and about 1,200 associate members—many of whom are Singaporeans—and the number of associate members has been on the rise. I sincerely hope that the completion of renovation will encourage even more Singaporeans to join as associate members of the Association, and benefit from its facilities and activities, including newly reopened flagship restaurant, Akane.

The Japanese Association in Singapore will undoubtedly play a critical role to celebrate the 60th anniversary of friendship between Singapore and Japan next year. In this context, today's reopening ceremony is extremely timely, serving as a kickstart event to upgrade momentum towards next year's celebration. I kindly request the cooperation and participation of all Japanese residents in Singapore and all the Singaporeans who love Japan, hopefully including Minister Sim Ann, toward the successful commemoration of our enduring friendship next year.

In closing, I would like to reiterate my sincere hopes for the continued growth and success of the Japanese Association, Singapore as a bridge that foster ever closer relationship between Japan and Singapore.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.