

Statement by Ambassador Ishikawa Hiroshi at
the Japanese Film Festival (JFF) Opening Ceremony 2026

01 October 2026

Mr Au Chun Long, Deputy Director-General, Northeast Asia Directorate,
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Singapore,

Fellow Ambassadors, Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

A very good evening. It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the opening ceremony of the Japanese Film Festival.

This is the fourth time for me to attend the opening ceremony of the Japanese Film Festival, and this year I am especially excited, because we are celebrating the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between our two countries, known as SJ60.

Actually, we have conducted or will conduct more than 300 commemorative events in Singapore, and this festival remains a highlight of our bilateral cultural exchanges, which are getting even closer and more diversified in line with continuously increasing people-to-people communications between us.

We are delighted to open this year's Festival with "The Keeper of the Camphor Tree", which beautifully brings to life a bestselling novel by Higashino Keigo, a very popular Japanese author who sadly passed away in July this year. Tonight's screening may serve as a tribute to Mr Higashino.

This is the first time in the history of this Festival to be opened with an animated film. We are privileged to have the director of the film, Mr Ito Tomohiko, with us this evening. Thank you, Mr Ito, for travelling from Japan to be with us today.

My appreciation also goes to our long-time co-organisers, The Singapore Film Society, under the leadership of Mr Kenneth Tan, and the Japan Foundation, as well as all our sponsors and partners for their continued support.

And, of course, I would like to thank all of you, our audience. Your enthusiasm for Japanese cinema is what has sustained this Festival. Thank you very much again, and please enjoy tonight's screening and the rest of our Festival.