

HIS MAJESTY THE KING'S SPEECH AT THE STATE BANQUET:

First of all, may I convey my deep respects to His Majesty the Emperor and Her Majesty the Empress.

Your Imperial Highness the Crown Prince,
Your Imperial Highnesses,
Members of the Imperial Family,
Your Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

My wife, Jetsun and I are deeply grateful for the kindness and warmth Their Majesties have accorded to us. We are deeply humbled. As a young man, I must say, that the only way I can accept such generosity, is to do so on behalf of the people of Bhutan, whose love and affection for Japan is unique. I have always believed that the Japanese and Bhutanese people share something that is unexplainable yet deep and profound, something that transcends our day-to-day interactions, and even our histories. I have always seen this in the way my people speak so affectionately of Japan without ever having been to Japan. And then I saw it in the outpouring of support for Japan in March, with people from all over Bhutan visiting temples and monasteries to pray for those affected by the earthquake

and tsunami. Your Imperial Highness, our people share a special bond.

Therefore, I respectfully accept the kindness and generosity of Their Majesties and the People of Japan towards me, as a tribute to the spirit of solidarity and goodwill with which the People of Bhutan embrace Japan and her People.

I would like to convey the prayers and good wishes of my father for Their Majesties and the Imperial Family. In doing so, I take the opportunity to acknowledge the pivotal role played by the personal bond between Their Majesties, Your Imperial Highness the Crown Prince and my father, in furthering the warm friendship between our two countries.

If I may address you in Dzongkha, (this paragraph was also addressed in Dzongkha by His Majesty the King) – I wish His Majesty the Emperor and Her Majesty the Empress the blessings of good health, happiness and long life. And I pray that this beautiful nation of Japan and her people will be blessed with peace and happiness for all time to come.

Personally, I would like to say that it is a special honour and happiness being here upon the invitation of Their Majesties so soon after our wedding. For, it is to Their Majesties that Jetsun my wife and I will always look for inspiration and guidance during the course of our life together, and as we serve our nation.

I would like to raise a toast to the good health and happiness of Their Majesties and to the peace, progress and prosperity of the People of Japan.

Tashi Delek!