

**Opening remarks by His Excellency Mr. KANO Takehiro
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary,
Permanent Delegate of Japan to UNESCO
at Japanese Tea Tasting Reception (Thursday, May 28, 2026)**

Excellencies, distinguished guests, dear colleagues,

It is a great pleasure to welcome all of you today for this Japanese tea tasting reception, and I extend my sincerest gratitude for joining us.

Today's event follows May 21st, a day designated by the UN General Assembly as "International Tea Day". We are especially grateful to Euro Japan Crossing for their invaluable collaboration in making this event possible. They are the organizers of the "Japanese Tea Selection Paris," the only Japanese tea competition held here in France, and it is through their expertise and dedication that we are able to present to you today six exquisite varieties of tea that have been awarded Grand Prix in their respective categories.

While various types of tea are enjoyed across the globe, each with its own distinctive charm, in Japan, "tea" predominantly refers

to green tea. Tonight, you will have the unique opportunity to explore the diverse facets of Japanese green tea. We are delighted to offer you a selection that includes Sencha, Gyokuro, Tamaryokucha, and of course, Matcha.

Matcha, in particular, has been experiencing a remarkable global surge in popularity, and we observe its growing presence and appreciation here in Paris as well. Beyond its rich taste and vibrant color, Matcha holds a special place in Japanese culture. To illustrate this, we will not only have a traditional demonstration of the Japanese tea ceremony, known as “Chado” or “The Way of Tea,” but you will also have an opportunity to whisk your own bowl of Matcha later on.

The Japanese tea ceremony is more than just preparing and drinking tea; it is a profound cultural practice that embodies principles of harmony, respect, and tranquility. While Chado is not yet inscribed on UNESCO’s list of Intangible Cultural Heritage, I deeply believe that its core spirit aligns beautifully with UNESCO’s overarching mission of fostering peace and mutual

understanding through culture.

I invite you all to savor the distinctive flavors of these exceptional teas, engage with the ancient art of the tea ceremony, and perhaps discover a new facet of Japanese culture.

We have a busy schedule ahead, with the General Assembly of States Parties to the 2003 Convention in June and the World Heritage Committee in July. As you all know, I would like to take this opportunity to remind you the candidature of Japan to the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage for the period 2026-2030. Also, at the World Heritage Committee, the new Japanese nomination “Ancient Capitals of Asuka and Fujiwara” is scheduled to be deliberated for inscription. We would appreciate your valuable support.

Thank you once again for your esteemed presence. Please enjoy.