

STATEMENT BY H.E. MASANORI NAKANO
AMBASSADOR OF JAPAN TO JAMAICA
AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE REGARDING JAPAN-JAMAICA COFFEE RELATIONS
Monday, August 31, 2015
10:00 A.M. at the Coffee Industry Board

COURTESIES

1. Mr. Delano Franklyn - Chairman of the Coffee Industry Board (CIB)
 2. Mr. Steve Robinson - Acting Director General of the Coffee Industry Board (CIB)
 3. Other Board Members - CIB
 4. Representatives from the Media
 5. Other Distinguished Guests Ladies & Gentlemen,
- It is a great honour for me to be here at this press conference to briefly highlight some important points regarding the Japan- Jamaica Coffee trade relations.
 - As someone who loves coffee and starts my work in the morning with a cup of coffee, I am very happy to be assigned to the country which produces the world renowned coffee. Since my arrival here in early April this year, I have had several opportunities to visit coffee estates in the Blue Mountain Area, and at the UCC Blue Mountain Craighton Estate. I had a first-hand experience to process the cherries and roast them, thanks to their kind arrangement.
 - As is well-known to many Jamaicans, coffee has become an essential beverage in many Japanese households. In fact, coffee is something more than just a beverage.
 - According to recent data of the International Coffee Organization, (ICO), Japan's consumption of coffee between the period 2011 – 2013, was the 4th largest, following the USA, Brazil and Germany. On a yearly basis, the amount of Japan's consumption was around 400,000 tons in 2011 and 2012, and 460,000 tons in 2013. But when it comes to per-capita consumption of coffee, Japan

ranks 14th far behind many European countries. A Japanese drinks 350 cups of coffee annually, almost one cup of coffee every day, which is much fewer than a European and American.

- Japan consumes the largest quantity of coffee among Asian countries, but I think there is still more room for increase in the consumption of coffee, when you compare it with that of European countries.
- Since Japan cannot grow coffee domestically, entire coffee beans are imported from various foreign countries whose number amounts to about 40.
- Among those supplying countries, the amount of import from Jamaica is not so significant in terms of a share in the total amount of import for Japan. But the Blue Mountain coffee from Jamaica has special significance and status for Japanese which cannot be represented by that share. Blue Mountain coffee is one of the highest quality and sought-after coffee in the world, and often called “king of coffee” in Japan.
- A very famous Japanese wine sommelier, Mr. Shinya Tasaki said that Jamaica’s Blue Mountain Coffee had a “good balance of flavor accentuated with a fresh acidic taste, “just like wine, the coffee beans flavor changes based on the soil and climatic conditions in which they are grown.”
- These days it is often said that we are now in “third-wave coffee” revolution. The “first-wave coffee” revolution lasted until 1960’s when it became possible to massproduce and mass consume coffee because coffee became available to many people due to the rapid development of distribution system. The “second-wave” occurred in the 1980’s when coffee chains such as Starbucks first served espresso with milk.
- “Third-wave” is if I understand it correctly, a movement to produce a high-quality coffee, and consider coffee as an artisanal foodstuff, like wine, rather than a commodity. This involves improvement at all stages of production, from improving coffee plant growing, harvesting and processing to higher quality and fresh roasting.

- I am sure that in this ‘third-wave coffee’ movement, demand for Blue Mountain Coffee will further increase.
- In this regard, I note with deep concern how the drought and bush fires have affected Jamaica’s Coffee at large causing considerable amount of loss especially to property. It is my strong hope that the Industry at large will rise above the terrible setbacks and that the Coffee Industry will see marked improvements especially in their export achievement.
- Before I finish my remark, I would like to mention the contribution made by UCC. As you are well aware, through the tireless efforts of the founder of UCC, Mr. Tadao Ueshima, the UCC Blue Mountain Coffee Estate was opened in St. Andrew. Since then, UCC has been contributing immensely to further the relationship between Japan and Jamaica through their coffee partnership with the Jamaican Coffee Industry.
- I would also take this opportunity to mention that UCC launched its “First UCC Quality Cup Contest” in Jamaica in 2014 to encourage good coffee farm practices. This also coincided with the 50th Anniversary of the Jamaica-Japan Diplomatic Relations as well as UCC’s 80th anniversary. I was very happy to attend the second UCC Quality Cup Contest which was held this May.
- In closing my remarks, I would like to convey to the Chairman and the members of the Coffee Industry Board that the Government of Japan highly appreciate the tremendous contribution made by them.
- I wish the Coffee Industry Board every success in their endeavours in the future.