

**Ambassador YAMAGAMI's Remarks on the Unveiling of a Memorial
Name Plaque to the Crew of the I-124
18 February 2022**

The Honourable Michael Gunner, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory,

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to begin my remarks by acknowledging the words spoken by Chief Minister Gunner, and offer my gratitude to the NT Heritage Council for organising today's ceremony, and for the efforts of the members of the Australian-Japanese Association of the Northern Territory (AJANT).

It is through their tireless work that a memorial to the former crew of the Imperial Japanese Navy Submarine I-124 was first established at this site in 2017.

The historical significance of the I-124 is forever etched into the plaque that adorns the original monument here.

For 75 years, the events of the 20th of January 1942 were mainly remembered by those who were there at the time.

This was the case until the combined efforts of Mr Tom Lewis and the AJANT led to the unveiling of the memorial here.

In all that time, the crew of the I-124 remained primarily just that – a group of men, as nameless as the collective noun used to describe them, lying in the depths of the Timor Sea.

Yet these men were individuals, with their own stories to tell.

In recognition of this, the Embassy of Japan, together with the Northern Territory Government and the AJANT, combined our efforts to create the new plaque unveiled today.

By doing so we give these men their names and thus their basic identities back.

Their sacrifice in the service of their country speaks to the tragedy of war.

Yet in remembering them here, at this place, we acknowledge them and offer prayers in their memory in the hope they may find solace in the embrace of the sea.

Rest in Peace.

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