

**Remarks by His Excellency Ambassador SUZUKI Kazuhiro at the Conferral
Ceremony of the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon, on Ms. Debra
Hazelton
30 June 2026**

Today is a particularly auspicious day. This evening, up at Parliament House, many of you will join in the celebration dinner to mark the 50th anniversary of the signing of the Basic Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Australia and Japan.

The treaty brought together extraordinary people from various walks of life, each sharing a strong desire to see closer bonds of friendship between us.

One of those exemplary Australians stands before me this afternoon, and it is a great honour for me to be able to convey upon Ms. Debra Hazelton the prestigious Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon.

The importance of the contribution that Debra has made to forging closer business and trade ties between Japan and Australia is well known to many in this room.

And it is a reflection of the esteem Debra is held in, that we have been joined this afternoon by State Minister for Foreign Affairs HORII Sensei, a representative of Japan who is very familiar with this Great Southern Land.

Secretary Jan Adams also joins us this afternoon, and I thank her for taking time out of her no doubt very busy schedule to be here with us.

It is also an honour to welcome Ms. Melanie Brock, who as a resident of Japan received her Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon in May in Tokyo this year.

This award recognizes the extraordinary contribution that Debra has made to furthering the economic relationship and overall friendship between Japan and Australia.

Debra, through her experience living and working in Japan and here in Australia, has brought together the Japanese and Australian business worlds in pursuit of new projects, new agreements, and has promoted women's advancement in our bilateral business environments.

She has, in other words, played a key role in forging our shared prosperity.

The proof of her efforts is manifest in both word and deed all across Japan and Australia.
And so for this, Japan expresses its profound, sincere and ever-lasting gratitude to her.

Congratulations, Debra. おめでとうございます.

[Ends]