

**Kanagawa Ken Certified NPO  
Solidarity of Judo Education**

**19<sup>th</sup> Lecture  
Somewhere Between War and Sport  
Mr. Yasushi Akashi**

**Former UN Secretary General  
Chairman of International House of Japan**

Chairperson Ladies and gentlemen I'd like to begin our lecture today which will be given by Mr Yasushi Akashi.

On a personal note I'm very happy to be able to see Mr Akashi today as he is someone I have always wanted to meet.

Mr Akashi is presently Chairman at the International House of Japan. He has held a great number of positions involving World Peace and is possibly the most qualified person to give a talk on world peace. Mr Akashi formerly worked as the Secretary General of the UN. We have witnessed his activities on the news and in the media.

Today being our NPO's final lecture it is a great honour to welcome Mr. Yasushi Akashi. We only have a short hour but please enjoy his speech. Ladies and Gentlemen please give a warm welcome to Mr Yasushi Akashi.

### **Somewhere Between War and Sport.**

#### **Mr Yasushi Akashi**



Hello everyone. Thank you very much for the

very kind introduction. My name is Yasushi Akashi. It is a great honour to speak here today at Solidarity of Judo Education's final lecture.

My usual sphere of work has nothing to do with sport. It makes me a little nervous to stand here before so many people involved in judo and other sports.

I invited Mr Yamashita, our country's most celebrated and famous judo athlete to give a small talk at the International House of Japan's annual end of year member's dinner in Toriisaka Roppongi. Mr Yamashita very graciously agreed however on the condition that I also come to Solidarity of Judo Education and give a talk based on my experiences. Unable to refuse such an offer here I am before you today.

### **International Olympic Truce Foundation**

#### **as a Director**

I am acquainted with Mr Chiharu Igaya. Mr Igaya is an active member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). I was asked to become chairman of the International Olympic Truce Foundation when this institution was set up by the IOC.

You may not have heard of the Olympic Truce or Truce Foundation. In the 8th Century BC when the Olympics began in Greece, an agreement was made spanning one week prior to the games, during the games and for one week after the end of the games. It was an agreement whereby participating athletes were able to travel safely to and from the games. There are records which state that surprisingly the truce agreement was upheld not only for the duration of the games but for hundreds of years after in some areas.

In light of all the war and conflict in the world and also bearing in mind what occurred in the ancient Olympics the IOC set up the Olympic Truce

foundation with the great hope and expectation of bringing about a permanent truce and true peace.

The UN's General Meeting begins every autumn in September. The summer Olympics are held once every four years, if you include the Winter Olympics, games are held every 2 years. Accordingly, every other year at the UN General Meeting a resolution is adopted requesting a truce. Up until now it has been largely adhered to.

At the request of Mr Igaya, for whom I have great respect, I accepted a position as one of the directors. I have been working now for 10 years and am the only representative from Asia. On the board there are various members who have been active as Olympic athletes, a Polish lady who has won many medals and various people who have been involved with the Olympics, Egypt's Boutros Boutros-Ghali who was Secretary General of the UN and Pérez de Cuélla of Peru.

Ever since I was born I've had a sharp tongue, when I made a sarcastic comment about it being a cemetery for former UN staff I was met with wry smiles. The Olympic Truce Foundation launched by the IOC is still operating today. The President of the IOC is also the President of the Truce Foundation,

(The Olympics being originally from Greece) , the position of Vice- President is held by George Papandreou, former Foreign Minister and Prime Minister of Greece. Papandreou is a very gifted man able to articulate his thoughts very clearly. In addition other people with UN experience gathered and a small meeting of 15/16 members was and is still held annually to this day.

The momentum for the foundation is the idea behind the Olympic Truce. Through our activities every two years when the Olympics are held we hope to promote a truce and an end to war not only in Greece but all over the world. We also hope for a stable continuation of the truce.

## **The Olympic Truce and the 2018 Winter Olympics**

The IOC worked together with the Korean Government to implement the Olympic Truce at the 2018 Winter Olympics held in Korea at the beginning of the year. In particular they worked on putting together a consolidated team of athletes from both North and South rather than two separate teams. South Korea made a proposition to North Korea for joint participation in the 2018 Winter Olympics.

The current President of South Korea is considered progressive compared to previous conservative administrations. He is also willing to take measured risks in the name of peace. His proposal was accepted enthusiastically by the North and they took part in the 2018 Winter Olympics. In order to prepare we dispatched a powerful political delegation to Korea. It eventually resulted in a South-North Korea summit.

I happened to be in Seoul when the South-North Korea summit was held. Scholars from 3 nations, Japan, China and Korea, people with detailed knowledge of international politics and military matters gathered early and meetings were held in the morning and in the afternoon there was even a meeting in the evening which was initially unplanned. I watched on television with bated breath as leaders from Korea Japan and China met for the South-North Korea summit brought about by the Olympic truce.

## **Is Sport able to Contribute to a Truce in War and Conflict?**

Japan has already begun a signature campaign for an Olympic Truce ahead of the Tokyo Olympics. I'm sure you all know that, however, the magazine Sports Godzilla, a slightly offbeat...I may be in trouble with the editor Ms Osada for saying that, an

extremely interesting magazine that contains a lot of worthwhile articles, beginning with Nagisa Osada from Spots Godzilla, a large number of people have added their names to the list including a number of very eminent people. After sending it to the Undersecretary General at the UN headquarters I kindly received a reply, detailing how grateful and happy he was that such a movement was unfolding in Japan.

In the 20th edition of Sports Godzilla several years ago there was a feature entitled “War and Sport.” In the article Ms Osada clearly states that without peace we cannot have sport. In her article about peace and the Olympics Ms Osada tells the story of a group of American major league baseball players who come to Japan to play in a match with a professional Japanese team. Pitcher Eiji Sawamura who was only 17 at the time showed some amazing play in the game putting the major League players to shame. As you know Sawamura was then enlisted and went off to war where his life came to a tragic end at a time when he should have been a shining sports star. Indeed Mr Yamashita the President of Solidarity of Judo Education experienced the disappointment of not being able to take part in the Moscow Olympics due to a Boycott by Japan and other Western Nations. Luckily for Mr Yamashita he was able to take part in the 1980 Los Angeles Olympics coming up against Rashwan in the finals and taking a very impressive gold medal for Japan. I’m sure you all remember that.

As you can see, in this way sports can become mixed up in war and dispute. Sporting events can be boycotted for political reasons. Such situations are not uncommon. How can we make it so that sport is not affected by war and conflict? In addition for the sake of peace and for the world what kind of contribution if any can sport make? Many people are deliberating about how to tackle these issues.

The act of kindness by Japan’s speed skater Kodaira at the 2018 Winter Olympics to her Korean counterpart was witnessed by people all over the world, not only in Japan and Korea.

I too have had many experiences of war and peace over my long career at the UN. Today I am happy to be able to share a few of those stories with you from my old memories.

### **Secretary-General Former Yugoslavia Problems Special Representative**

This story is a little dated but from the beginning of January 1994 I was in the former Yugoslavia in the Balkan Peninsula. At the time it was one country but following that it was split into 6 republics, the split causing a civil war. Up until 10 years before a truly great President, Josip Broz Tito had reigned over the six countries bringing them together to cooperate and form the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

However after his death the economic situation worsened terribly in Yugoslavia and a civil war broke out between the three ethnic groups. Notably in Bosnia Herzegovina where Muslims accounted for 44% of the population; the second largest group being Serbian Orthodox accounting for 31% and the third largest group being the Croats who accounted for 17% of the total population in Bosnia. Not one of the ethnic groups could hold the 50% necessary for a majority. The Islamic population came closest with 44% however it was no easy task.

At the time, western European Foreign Ministers and in particular Germany’s Hans-Dietrich Genscher, a very assertive man and also a Catholic Christian were obviously inciting the Croats. That caused a further small conflict. Other former Yugoslavian countries, in particular, Croatia, Bosnia, Serbia and parts of Macedonia also ended up getting involved. Luckily Macedonia had a very level headed

intelligent President. I have met him on a number of occasions and been impressed by his presidential skills. In comparison the other presidents were more hot blooded and incited conflict and nationalism.

Under these circumstances European nations turned to the UN to provide PKO or Peacekeeping Operations. The Secretary General of the UN at the time was Perez de Cuellar a name I mentioned earlier. He hailed from Peru and was a very accomplished Secretary General. In reality He and his special advisor Cyrus Roberts Vance, former US Secretary of State, did not want to send a peacekeeping force, because essentially the PKO is not meant to go in to an area during a war but after a truce, or at after the fighting has ceased. Its role is to offer assistance to maintain a truce. When the PKO is sent into a warring situation they don't go in heavily armed. The UN doesn't foresee dispatching military or diplomatic forces. The general way of thinking is that the UN goes in to maintain and establish permanent peace in an area which is already stable.

However in this corner of Europe, the former Yugoslavia war was still raging. The three ethnic groups were involved in a bloody feud the PKO had been asked to go in so reluctantly they did. Under pressure from other European countries the PKO were sent into Croatia first. Subsequently the mission extended to Bosnia.

Before Yugoslavia I worked for a year with the UN peacekeeping operations in Cambodia.

The UN operated an interim government based on the 4 party pact in Cambodia. In the end they were able to hold a free democratic election. We met with resistance from Pol Pot but the other three parties were cooperative and 90% of the electorate took part in what was a landmark election.

## The Sarajevo Market Tragedy

Unfortunately things did not go quite so well in Yugoslavia. Not long after I got there on February 5th 1994 something happened which I will never forget. In the open-air market in Sarajevo, the Bosnian capital, a tragedy occurred. A single mortar shell exploded mercilessly killing 68 people. Around two hundred people were injured.

The headquarters of the United Nations Protection Force were in the capital of Croatia, Zagreb. The following morning along with the supreme commander for military affairs, Frenchman Mr. Cot, we quickly flew to Sarajevo. We were to-ing and fro-ing between the President of the Bosnian government and the influential Serbian leader Radovan Karadzic trying to arrange a cease fire. Our proposal was that all dangerous weapons were to be withdrawn to 20kms outside of Sarajevo. We also met with the Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic who appealed to us to stop such atrocities.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO offered their cooperation. It was agreed that if the conditions of a cease-fire agreement and military withdrawal were not reached by February 11th the UN would take up arms and bomb whichever side did not withdraw. The possibility of airstrikes was the weapon I feel which had the greatest impact on those involved particularly for the Muslim side of the Bosnian government as well as the Serbian Forces.

Just before the deadline of 1:30 on February 11th I returned to my hotel and rushed to face a group of journalists from all over the world. I explained that airstrikes would not be necessary as a truce had been reached and weapons withdrawn.

Some people looked happy and relieved, however others looked disappointed realizing there would be no revenge airstrikes against the detestable Serbian forces. I thought about the faces of people on both sides as I went back to room made a whisky and

water and fell asleep. I remember feeling relieved that the NATO deadline had safely passed without any bloodshed.

The UN Security Council takes various types of action on peace matters. When I was in Cambodia the UN Security Council was made up of 5 permanent members, America, Russia, China, the UK and France who all got along very well. If even one of the 5 members vetoes a decision the Security Council cannot act but in Cambodia that did not happen.

However the right to veto was exercised many times in Yugoslavia and therefore the UN could not function. The UN devised 6 safe zones in Bosnia including Sarajevo however they were safe zones by name only, unfortunately we could not bring about true peace or safety.

## **Remain in the War**

### **The Mark left by the Sarajevo Olympics**

I spent a lot of time going between the Bosnian capital Sarajevo and Pale where the Serbian forces had made their headquarters at the top of a hill. Sarajevo is in a valley, if you climb the hill outside Sarajevo you pass beautiful cottages which were used for accommodation during the Winter Olympics in Sarajevo 10 years previously (1984). However if you squinted you could see the Serbian forces at the top of the hill with over a hundred tanks and artillery guns looking down on the city of Sarajevo. If you looked very closely you could see that many of the Serbian troops were elderly. The war had started suddenly and the army had been thrown together to fight.

The Sarajevo Olympics were undoubtedly held in a calm and peaceful atmosphere however just ten years later in the same place people were involved in a bloody war. What's more the masterminds behind the fighting were not even real politicians, they were

simply improvising as politicians. The supreme leader of the Serbian forces Karadzic was actually a professor of Psychology at a local university. I had heard that he enjoyed the novels of Yukio Mishima, so when I met him I asked him about it and he said yes. I had read Yukio Mishima's novel *Kinkakuji* and when I recalled it I had an uneasy feeling that he might be the type of scholar who is fascinated by the beauty of destruction.

Under him an impromptu vice president Koljevic a scholarly looking man with thick rimmed glasses who was a lecturer on Shakespeare at Sarajevo University then there was the Foreign Minister, Buha, apparently he was a teacher of philosophy. None of them had a clue about international politics. It was only when they were speaking of Kant that their faces lit up. I was extremely worried about the danger posed by these verbose, daydreaming politicians who were out of touch with reality.

Of course the UN has experienced many different scenarios. At the end of the 70's when the UN was established the Cold War was going on. America and Russia as it was known at the time reigned as leaders of their Capitalist and Communist federations respectively. There was animosity between the two but basically they were split into two camps with established regulations and international relations were stable. However even during that time war broke out in the Middle East between India and Pakistan. I believe the UN was useful in being able to bring about some sort of cease-fire and peace in Kashmir.

The end of the cold war was declared in 1989 when the Berlin Wall fell uniting East and West Germany. A sense of relief came over the world which had been living in fear of a possible nuclear war between America and Russia. We were hopeful that at last we could bring about real peace under the UN.

Unfortunately, however from 1989 and into 1991 and 1992 a war began not between nations but within one country between people of different races, ethnic groups and religions. Wars continued to rage between groups speaking different languages.

### **Period of Internal Conflict**

It is difficult to get a grasp of what civil war really looks like, it is far more brutal than a war between two countries. Some people describe it as a kind of animosity between relatives. And in that way war after war has broken out keeping the UN extremely busy.

As I mentioned earlier, in the early nineties Cambodia had four opposing parties that situation continued for about 20 years but a Peace Agreement was signed.

Following Cambodia war broke out in parts of Africa, Namibia and then in Mozambique. The conflict in Cambodia was the largest in scale and complexity but right after the cold war ended the atmosphere at the UN was quite good, the Security Council was making decisions and fortunately there was nothing that could lead to a breakdown.

Sadly it wasn't long before dark clouds started to brew in a place called Somalia in a corner of South Africa, more a merciless tribal war caused conflict between ethnic groups. The UN as a multinational force intervened and the lives of many troops were sacrificed. 19 American naval officers were killed 20 Pakistani troops also lost their lives. Somalia fell into a state of anarchy. The situation there even now is not good.

Also in the middle of Africa there is a small country called Rwanda. It is only a very small country but it is inhabited by two tribes, the Hutus and the Tutsis. 70,000 of Hutus, the minority group were massacred. In order to deal with the situation a

small PKO involving around 100-200 troops was sent in but they were outnumbered and unable to do anything.

The commander of Peace Keeping Operations, a Canadian, Romeo Dallaire fell into a state of despair and sadly became an alcoholic in the latter part of his life. It was a real tragedy and all the UN could do was to observe dumbfounded.

Thirdly the former Yugoslavia which I was involved with. In around four years about 200,000 people lost their lives. In the end a NATO force was sent in mainly made up of American troops who used force to stop the fighting between ethnic groups.

### **The UN a Gathering of Sovereign States**

In that way, even though the UN is working very hard if our expectations are unreasonable then in the end we are left with a feeling of disillusionment and hopelessness.

The UN is neither a world government nor a world federation. The real rulers of the UN are the governments of its member states. The UN cannot adopt a budget without contributions from member states nor can it take part in peace keeping missions without the military support of its members.

The UN is sometimes successful. For example in 1956 when the UK, France and Israel opposed Egypt over its nationalization of the Suez Canal and sent in armed forces to invade. Fortunately many members of the UN were angered by this. Due to the UK and France's right to veto the Security Council could not adopt a resolution however a special emergency session was called and a drastic recommendation to set up the United Nations Emergency Force was implemented.

The two men behind this decision, Canada's Foreign Minister Lester Bowles Pearson and The UN General Secretary at the time Dag Hjalmar Agne Carl Hammarskjöld from Sweden were

awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Following this different types of PKO have shown to be effective in various places however as I mentioned earlier it was unable to properly function in an area like Yugoslavia.

You would be wrong to think that is all the UN does. Recently the UN has set up a 15 year development plan with very specific targets for sustainable development working to a 2030 agenda. The UN is making great efforts to call out the world to achieve substantial progress in dealing with the problems of development and the problems associated with it. The UN is also working perpetually on the problems of human rights and the environment.

In the third year after its inauguration the UN adopted The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was not setup as a mere declaration for 20 years in the future but as a treaty with binding authority. Currently the UN's High Commissioner for Human Rights is a watchdog on the lookout rigorously observing the situation of Human Rights around the world and reporting to Human Rights Council held regularly in Geneva.

In many ways the world is improving however I also feel, unfortunately, that there are many ways in which we are not making any advances. Nationalism is on the rise in many countries. However the world community is prospering due to the movement of goods and people, finance and information which knows no borders. There is a movement away from nationalism towards globalism, seeing the world as one to solve problems.

In some countries the democratic movement is advancing. However this type of democracy is a kind of populism, in other words public opinion falling into an agitated state, there is no place for level-headed debate which could lead to flamboyant acts simply playing to the gallery.

We can see the results of this phenomenon all over the world now. Populism prevails where the government should be operating the judicial and parliamentary systems.

To put it simply, we have entered into an era where there are no clear answers. You could even say that not only are there no clear answers but we see in front of us a huge number of wrong and contradictory answers.

### **US North Korea Summit**

The US- North Korea Summit took place in Singapore 2 or 3 days ago. A meeting was held between America's President Trump and North Korea's leader Kim Jong-un. People's opinions are divided on whether it was a success or not. President Trump played the role of dealmaker, bluffing and playing to the crowd.

Over the day five hours of meetings were held however very little agreement was actually reached on any of the issues. For instance nuclear weapons, if North Korea is to end its production of nuclear weapons and destroy them there is no indication as to the timescale or who will supervise the process. In the face of deception and other such behavior we do not have the answers as to whether a rigorous system of inspection can really be implemented and attained or not.

A number of newspapers, even the New York Times are seen to be pinning hopes on the outcome. President Trump is a bit of a charlatan but nothing like Kim Jong-un who in the past has committed atrocities and since 1994 has broken a number of agreements in his dealings with the international community without and remorse while the people in his own country North Korea face terrible hardship. Satellite pictures show that only over North Korea is it dark, many places don't have electricity at night.

Under such terrible conditions we needed to find

a new strategy to reach a solution. The meeting of heads of state between Trump and Kim Jong-un was only one day long but there was a sort of mutual feeling between them which planted the seeds of trust. A trust that could be built upon. However it also involved the grave dangers associated with that risk. It wasn't the standard diplomatic formula, however there is a chance that something essentially very important could result from Trump's act. Worldwide, mass media and scholars are divided in their opinions about it.

Trump is playing the role of dealmaker and taking a gamble and bluffing but it remains to be seen what will happen. So long as there is a glimmer of hope I believe we need to offer our support.

### **Peoples of all Nations Acting as an Interested Party**

Bearing in mind the failure of proposals and breakdown of negotiations in the past and in order to avoid repeating them, it's important to foster an atmosphere which is both practical and prudent so people of the world can talk about their dreams.

Our country, Japan is not merely a spectator either. It is hoped that Japan will foot some if not most of the bill for the initial budget for a nuclear weapon verification and inspection system if it is set up by the International Atomic Energy Agency. President Trump has already expressed his hopes to Japan and Korea about this. We can be hopeful for a world without nuclear arms, a goal of the Japanese government, and at last a bringing into the open the issue of abduction.

As far as Japan is concerned we need the help of America, Korea and China as well as other countries to bring peace to this corner of Asia where North Korea resides and have it return to the international community as a responsible member. I don't believe it is acceptable to merely be a bystander.

### **Peace Through Sport Making a Connection**

I completely agree with Ms Osada concerning the problems of peace and of sport when she said that "There is no way for people to freely enjoy sport around the world without peace." Nevertheless Ms. Odaira showed us at Pyeongchang, that sportsmen and women can go beyond borders, exceed ideology and take a standpoint which exceeds politics and is simply the attitude of two individuals rivalling each other. I believe this can influence people engaged in politics and diplomacy. We need to get rid of the idea that the Olympics is all about competing for the highest number of medals though people may say I'm foolish to be so optimistic. In a worst case scenario though the Olympics could also fall into the trap of Nationalism.

Sports beginning with judo and indeed Mr Yamashita, a hachidan for whom I have the greatest respect, are headed by outstanding sports men and women. We must never forget that we are a nation but more importantly we are individuals and we must use our skills to compete from the point of view of an individual. It is that which makes it a worldwide sports festival.

In Asia we had the Tokyo Olympics in 1964, then the Seoul Olympics and Beijing games. It was the coming of age for the rising Olympics and it was a coming of age ceremony to be proud of.

However I feel we are in a more mature age now and people's sense of what the Olympics stands for has changed.

The world of sport can also be raw and bloody which means it relates closely with the world of war and conflict. I feel the mission to limit such dark and destructive things is something which going through the heads of the people involved in the Olympics

Sport and Peace, Sport and War are not completely unrelated. Starting from nothing if things go well we can build a peaceful world if things go



wrong we end up with racialism and nationalism. I feel that sport also holds an element of that and on that note I'd like to end my speech here today.

It appears we have a little time left over for questions, if you have any opinions you'd like to offer or questions I'd be grateful if you'd please raise your hand. Thank you for your kind attention.

Chairperson Thank you very much Mr Akashi. As Mr Akashi has just mentioned he is happy to answer one or two questions if anyone would like?

Questioner Thank you very much for your wonderful speech today. There is something I would like to ask. At the end of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics the runner Yoshinori Sakai was chosen to be the flame-bearer. The reason he was chosen is because he was born on August 6th 1945 the same day the Atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima in the Pacific War.

Personally I think that was a wonderful decision by the Olympic Committee. I would like to know how you feel about it.

Mr Akashi On August 6th 1945 an atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. In the same year on August 8th another bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Many people all over the world, not only in Japan feel this is something which should never be repeated. Former US President Obama paid a visit to Hiroshima and expressed this sentiment that it is something which should never be repeated. It was only a brief address but those words like gems were very precious.

Not long after he became President he gave a wonderful speech about nuclear issues in Prague, Czech Republic which led to him receiving the Nobel Peace Prize. When he gave his speech in Oslo, Norway it was totally different to his speech in

Prague he seemed to have lost hope on the issue of the abolition of nuclear arms.

I will admit that he made great advances in abolishing strategic nuclear weapons between the US and Russia and that is something to be proud of. However as the atomic bomb has already been made there is no way to erase the knowledge of how to make it. It would only take for one terrorist to get hold of a bomb to cause mass destruction. Looking back through the history of man, I ask myself if it is possible to erase the want to make war and the lust for power.

I have brought up this issue at the World Conference of Religions for Peace. But how do we go about creating a world where nuclear weapons are never used again? They are used because they are made so we need to make a world where they cannot be made. Right in front of us is the problem of North Korea's nuclear armament. However in fact every permanent member country of the UN Security Council owns nuclear weapons. Three other countries have been able to develop nuclear weapons, India, Pakistan and Israel, not even counting North Korea.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is a very important agreement. There are countries who adhere strictly to the treaty like Japan and Germany however some countries do not. There is a big movement on how to deal with this problem and make an agreement not to use nuclear weapons. At present the Japanese government is not taking part in this. The reason being Japan still feels the need for the safety of the nuclear umbrella. As you can see it is an extremely difficult issue. I hope that common sense prevails and we can make a push towards a world without not only nuclear weapons but also chemical and biological weapons, all atrocious weapons.

Chairperson Thank you very much. Today we have heard a very valuable speech. In order to live in a world where war and conflict are not brought about by politics and religion we need strong fortitude and to be inquiring. After listening I really feel we need to take our extraordinary knowledge and create a vision. I'd like to pay tribute to Mr Akashi for all his efforts.

Over the past 12 years our NPO has continued its exchange programme bringing together coaches from areas of conflict like Palestine, Israel and Bosnia Herzegovina. Exchanges between these countries have taken place on tatami mats through judo. Continuity was necessary for this approach to succeed. I got a feeling of the power that judo has watching the mutual understanding which occurs on the mat. Chairman Yamashita, often says "Your opponent on the mat is not your enemy he/she is someone who will enhance your play." That is the spirit that we need to spread around the world. Something I felt while listening to Mr Akashi's speech is that if there was even a little understanding of the spirit of judo and other sports between warring countries then that would go long way towards building a better society and a better world.

It goes without saying that the whole nation needs to come together to make a success of the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. We must not forget that it's a sports festival for peace which is being held here in Japan which we need to face together. I'd like you all to give a round of applause again to Mr Akashi for coming today and giving such an important and poignant speech .Thank you very much.

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