

**Remarks of Ambassador ENDO Kazuya at the 2025 JET Programme Fellowship  
Reception  
26 July 2025**

Magandang hapon po sa inyong lahat.

Maligayang pagdating sa aming tahanan.

Lubos ako na nasisiyahang tanggapin kayo ngayon sa JET Program Fellowship Reception.

皆さんこんにちは。本日は日本大使公邸によろこそ。

I feel so fresh and active today to see many young new faces after recent long depressing rainy days. I hope that you and your families have been safe and dry.

I would like to start by thanking the Department of Migrant Workers, the Commission of Higher Education, and members of the Screening Committee as well as J. CLAIR Singapore. Their support has been vital in bringing more Japanese and Filipinos closer to a shared understanding of one another.

To our incoming JET participants, I salute how far your determination and commitment have taken you on this path. In overcoming a careful selection process, you are right where you deserve to be in this very moment. Please allow yourselves to take pride in that fact.

For over a decade, our Filipino JET participants have served as bright snapshots of our growing exchanges. Each community they've touched with their warmth, dedication and energy continues to tell the story of our deepening bond. You have much to offer to the community around you in terms of language education and cross-cultural experience.

As JET participants, you each embody exciting possibilities in our partnerships. To give you an example, let me introduce a story of one of your senpais, Neil Nicerio. As an assistant English teacher in Rumoi City, Hokkaido, Neil was determined to make the most of his short stay, wanting to take in all the region's sights. Accompanied by his family, he embarked on a journey, successfully visiting every distinctive shrine, natural wonder, and unique Pokemon manhole cover in Hokkaido. Despite facing some challenges and language difficulties, they became the first Filipino family to visit all 179 municipalities of Hokkaido.

His endeavors, along with the photographs he captured, garnered attention from Philippine media, allowing him to showcase many lesser-known facets of Hokkaido to the Filipino people. Driven by an unwavering passion for Japan, he left a lasting impact on our ever closer ties, serving as a grassroots ambassador.

While I won't stop any of you from exploring a whole prefecture or finding every vending machine in Japan, your JET experience will be shaped by the expectations you set for your stay in Japan. It doesn't necessarily have to be many travels in Japan; you can also dive very deep into your own local community.

But please try to fully engage with the community around you. Japan is never short on life-defining experiences; you only need an open mind and a receptive heart. Of course, don't forget to bring your diligence to your schools or offices.

On that note, I now turn to our JET Programme returnees. I take this time to greet you all a “*Maligayang pagbabalik po! おかえりなさい!*”

Though your time with the program ends, your cherished experiences never truly separate you from this exchange. With the unique insights you've gained on your trip, I believe you still have much to offer in enriching our countries' budding friendship.

Now this batch's senpais, we count on you all to be a source of guiding encouragement for your eager juniors. Who knows? You may even rediscover your love for Japan through their fresh eyes.

Today, we also invited representatives of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Philippines and some Japanese companies. They have expressed their interests in individuals like yourselves, who possess valuable experience and familiarity with Japanese culture. It is our sincere hope that today's reception will provide an opportunity to further strengthen your connections with Japan and the Japanese businesses. It can be an option for new JET participants to work for Japanese companies operating in the Philippines after the completion of the program, utilizing unique skillsets as JET professionals.

Whether you are with us today as an eager kouhai or a reliable senpai, know that you each carry the promise of our vibrant friendship. I am confident the bonds you both will make and have made in Japan, with the support from those around you, are ones that can last lifetimes.

I end here by wishing all new participants a safe trip as you take your first step in Japan. The only *pasalubong* (souvenirs) I ask of you after this trip are lasting memories and friendships with the people of Japan.

From one *kaibigan* to another, 皆さん頑張って下さい。

Mabuhay ang JET Programme.

Mabuhay ang ating pagkakaibigan.

Maraming salamat sa inyong lahat.