

**Remarks of Ambassador ENDO Kazuya at the Send-off  
Reception for 2025 Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholars**

6 September 2025

Magandang araw sa inyong lahat!

Maligayang pagdating sa aming tahanan.

Ako ay nagagalak na makita at makasama kayong lahat sa araw na ito.

Today, I see bright faces full of excitement, and perhaps a little bit of nervousness. Don't worry – Japan is waiting for you with open arms, and with plenty of ramen.

Allow me first to express my sincere appreciation to PHILAJAMES for your invaluable cooperation and assistance for today, and most specially as part of the screening committee. Your commitment ensures that only the best and the brightest are chosen. Likewise, I extend my gratitude to the representatives of each recommending authority for the Young Leaders' Program (YLP). Your support allows us to continue cultivating future leaders who will build strong bridges between our two nations.

To our new scholars, binabati ko kayo sa inyong tagumpay!  
Welcome to the MEXT level!

To be a MEXT scholar takes a certain brilliance, conviction, and character. You are all here today because you each possess these qualities. Rest assured, your presence here was in no way thanks to luck. Regardless of what brought you here, your perseverance to reach this goal has now come to a reality.

For decades, MEXT's success has drawn the brightest minds from around the world. Curious minds that can only come from Japan's partners. Simply put, minds like yours.

In this program, what awaits you is nothing short of a life-changing leap. Japan itself transformed through centuries of profound study. Through MEXT, you can embrace this same spirit of innovation. You too can make Japan's journey to success your own.

With the right effort, MEXT can be more than just a ticket to Japan. It means lifelong networks, and a chance to grow not only as professionals, but also citizens of the world.

It is in these moments your choices will reveal your character as MEXT scholars. Know that no life-changing journey magically

hands out courage or wisdom. Instead, it sends perfect opportunities to forge them, to earn them.

Beyond its lessons, MEXT is a cultural experience at its heart. Its full essence won't just be in the confines of a lecture hall. Do not be afraid to share your Filipino heritage to your Japanese and foreign friends. Let them taste adobo or sinigang. Show them how to sing using the karaoke – which, as you know is originally from Japan, but perfected here in the Philippines.

With over 700 cities and 120 million people, every place has a moment ripe for discovery. Wherever this program leads you, your encounters will be your lifelong link to Japan.

So, allow yourselves to stop and smell not just the roses, but the cherry blossoms, and *konbini* karaage too. And if you cannot ride a bicycle yet – this is the perfect time to learn. It is in these unscripted moments that Japan can truly show itself. In these cultural detours, you may even find yourselves.

As you embark, remember that you are a part of MEXT's proud history. Former scholars have gone on to connect our countries through their brilliance as leaders and educators. As you inherit this legacy, I trust you will make future scholars proud to follow in your

footsteps.

Before you depart, remember to carry gratitude to whatever pushed you to where you sit today. I believe there is a certain clarity in gratitude. One that not only reminds us to value our opportunities, but also our responsibility to make the most of them.

Bring back as many friendships and stories as you can. In time, they will be symbols of the hardships you have overcome. Your true mark as MEXT scholars.

I wish you all the best of luck on this adventure. I hope your brilliance will echo our countries' remarkable friendship.

Once again: Congratulations for reaching this MEXT level. Itterashai! Ganbatte kudasai!

Maraming salamat po! Mabuhay kayong lahat!