

アジアの価値観と民主主義セミナー  
総理メッセージ英訳

Hello everyone. I'm Shinzo Abe. I heartily welcome that the third "SAMVAD" is held in Ulaanbaatar.

This is the 5th seminar since it started in 2015 based on the joint proposal of Prime Minister Modi and myself. I would like to congratulate that this conference is held in Mongolia which shares universal values with Japan.

Among all kind of human virtues, "mercy" is said to be the most fundamental in various religions. Buddhism teaches the importance of the mind of this "mercy" from the outset.

In Shinto, the indigenous faith in Japan, there is a phrase "In the sight of mercy, nothing is to be hated". It is not easy for human beings to attain that state of mind overnight, but that is where we want to reach.

These ways of thinking have shaped the "tolerance" that is the origin of Asian values, and have supported the "diversity" in Asia.

This year marks the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Gandhi. During my visit to India in 2017, Prime Minister Modi showed me around Sabarmati Ashram, the ancient residence of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhi is known for his tolerance for other religions.

Based on the traditions of "tolerance" and "diversity", values such as "freedom" and "democracy" have blossomed in Asia. Today, these traditions and values in Asia are spreading as a foundation of a free and open order that will bring stability and prosperity to all countries without discrimination.

On the other hand, the spirit of "tolerance" in Asian tradition is now facing a threat. Violent extremism in the name of religion has led to an increasing number of attempts to deny others and to paint the world with violence.

Using the analogy of a raft Buddha once preached.

"It is foolish to carry a raft, which is useful for crossing a river, on one's shoulder even after one has crossed the river in the belief that 'it is a precious thing.'"

If one cherished the doctrine of religion resulting in conflict with the people, it would rather undermine the essence. This is my understanding of the teaching of Buddha.

In May this year, Japan opened a new era of "Reiwa". "Wa" means "Respecting and helping each other".

Since the time of Prince Shotoku in the 6th century, Japan has nurtured the sense of values that "Harmony is the greatest of virtues". We hope, in the era of "Reiwa" too, that Japan and the world respect "Wa" or harmony. I wish today's discussion will lead to the realization of such a world.

Thank you for your attention.