

# Addresses by His Majesty the Emperor of Japan on the Occasions of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games

His Majesty the Emperor of Japan declared the opening of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games as Honorary Patron, and also held audiences for members of each International Committee and distinguished foreign guests. The following are transcripts of the addresses given by His Majesty on these occasions.

## Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games (Held from July 23 to August 8, 2021)

On July 23, 2021, His Majesty the Emperor attended the opening ceremony of the Games of the XXXII Olympiad (Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games) as Honorary Patron of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and declared the Games open. Prior to the opening ceremony, in the Imperial Palace, His Majesty held an audience for members of the International Olympic Committee on July 22, and held an audience with foreign heads of state and other dignitaries attending the opening ceremony of the Games on July 23.

### Address by His Majesty the Emperor on the Occasion of the Opening Ceremony of the Games of the XXXII Olympiad (July 23, 2021)

I declare open the Games of Tokyo celebrating the thirty second Olympiad of the modern era.



The opening ceremony of the Games of the XXXII Olympiad (Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games)

Tokyo 2020 / Ken Ishii



His Majesty the Emperor (center) attends the opening ceremony of the Games of the XXXII Olympiad (Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games)

Tokyo 2020 / Shugo TAKEMI

### Address by His Majesty the Emperor at the Audience with Members of the International Olympic Committee (July 22, 2021)

President Bach,

Members of the International Olympic Committee,

The Opening Ceremony of the Games of the XXXII (32nd) Olympiad is going to be held tomorrow.

At present, countries all over the world are faced with the severe ordeal of the spread of COVID-19, which has been sweeping the world since the end of 2019. The virus continues to make gatherings and connecting with one another difficult.

Under such circumstances, the managing of the Games, while at the same time taking all possible measures against COVID-19, is a far from easy task. I would like to pay tribute to all those who have been involved in the management of the Games for their efforts at various venues.

I believe that the reason for the long and widespread support for the Olympic Games is the spirit of Olympism, which cherishes peace and harmony. I myself have a lasting memory of the closing ceremony of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, where athletes from different countries paraded together shoulder to shoulder, not divided by country, and this became the source of my wish



His Majesty the Emperor at the audience with members of the International Olympic Committee

Photo: Courtesy of the Imperial Household Agency



His Majesty the Emperor at the audience with H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President of the French Republic

Photo: Courtesy of the Imperial Household Agency

for world peace.

The Tokyo 2020 Games Vision states, “Sport has the power to change the world and our future.” Seeing athletes taking up the challenges of their respective sports, and seeing their families and those who support them, inspires us in many ways. The Tokyo 2020 Games will be held in the face of COVID-19. Caution is also necessary for the heat-wave in the height of summer. I hope that the closely coordinated measures implemented by you and all those involved for the prevention of infection will allow all athletes to compete in their sports in good health with complete commitment and peace of mind. It is my hope that through their performances the Games will be a beacon of hope for a new future. I would like to join you in wishing all the athletes the very best.

Thank you.

## Remarks by His Majesty the Emperor on the Occasion of the Audience with Foreign Heads of State and Other Dignitaries attending the Opening Ceremony of the Games of the XXXII Olympiad (July 23, 2021)

Your Highnesses,  
Excellencies,

Today, it gives me great pleasure to receive all of you who have come here from around the world.

At present, countries around the globe are facing the very difficult challenge of the spread of COVID-19. It has not been easy for people to gather and connect with one another.

I would like to express my deepest respect for the efforts of all athletes who have continued to do their best under such difficult circumstances in order to participate in these Games, as well as the efforts of their families and all those who have supported them. It is my hope that the athletes will be able to give their best performance in good health fending off COVID-19 and mindful of the hot weather which may be different from that of their own countries and regions.

I believe that the reason for the long and widespread support for the Olympic Games is the spirit of Olympism, which cherishes peace and harmony. I myself have a lasting memory of the closing ceremony of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics, where athletes from different countries paraded together shoulder to shoulder, not divided by country, and this became the source of my wish for world peace.

In order to overcome the ordeal of COVID-19, it is imperative for all of us, whether at home or abroad, to work together with an even greater unity of mind. I would like to conclude my remarks with the hope that the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games will remind us of the spirit of Olympism, peace and harmony, and that we will relay the torch of that spirit to the future. I would like to join you in wishing all the athletes the very best.

Thank you.

## Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games (Held from August 24 to September 5, 2021)

On August 24, His Majesty attended the opening ceremony of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games as Honorary Patron and declared the Games open. Before the opening ceremony, on the same day, His Majesty held an audience for members of the International Paralympic Committee in the Imperial Palace.

## Address by His Majesty the Emperor on the Occasion of the Opening Ceremony of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games (August 24, 2021)

I declare open the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

## Address by His Majesty the Emperor at the Audience with Members of the International Paralympic Committee (August 24, 2021)



His Majesty the Emperor (center left) declares the opening of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games

Tokyo 2020 / Shugo TAKEMI



His Majesty the Emperor at the audience with members of the International Paralympic Committee

Photo: Courtesy of the Imperial Household Agency

President Parsons,  
Members of the International Paralympic Committee,  
The Opening Ceremony of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games is going to be held later today.

At present, countries all over the world are faced with the severe ordeal of the spread of COVID-19, which has been sweeping the world since the end of 2019. The virus continues to make gatherings and connections with one another difficult.

I would like to express my deepest respect for the efforts of all athletes who have continued to do their best under such difficult circumstances in order to participate in these Games, as well as the efforts of their families, coaches, engineers, and all those who have supported them. At the same time, I appreciate that managing the Games while taking all possible measures against COVID-19 is far from easy. In particular, the Paralympics may present difficulties that differ from those



The opening ceremony of the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games


Tokyo 2020 / Uta MUKUO

at the Olympics: for instance, the potentially higher risk of exacerbation for athletes with weak respiratory function and athletes with underlying disease. Caution is also necessary for the hot weather which may be different from that of their own countries and regions. I would like to pay tribute to all those involved in management of the Games for their efforts at the various venues.

My parents, Their Majesties the Emperor Emeritus and the Empress Emerita, warmly watched over the 1964 Tokyo Paralympic Games with their keen interest in the development of parasport. They have told me various stories about the Tokyo Paralympic Games, and I myself, together with Empress Masako, enjoyed watching some of the competitions at the 1998 Nagano Winter Paralympic Games. We recall fond memories of being deeply impressed with the athletes who eagerly pursued their potential during the Nagano Paralympic Games.

I see the Paralympics, where athletes with disabilities from all over the world challenge their limits with creativity and ingenuity, as an opportunity to remind us of the irreplaceability and preciousness of our individuality. It is my sincere hope that these Games should be an impetus for progress to be made in building a society in which all of us, regardless of disabilities, can live together while placing greater importance than ever before on respecting and caring for one another.

I hope that the closely coordinated measures implemented by you and all those involved for the prevention of infection will allow all athletes to compete in their sports in good health with complete commitment and peace of mind. I would like to join you in wishing all athletes the very best.

Thank you. 

**Note:** This article has been created with the consent of the Imperial Household Agency and on the basis of materials published by the Agency. The article was edited with the cooperation of the Secretariat of the Headquarters for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games of the Cabinet Secretariat.