



The Inaugural Sir Hugh Cortazzi Lecture

24 September 2024

The Locarno Suite, Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office

## The Importance of Diplomacy

Mami Mizutori

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Lady Cortazzi,

Mr Owen Jenkins,

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an immense honour to be invited to deliver the inaugural Cortazzi Lecture in the splendour of the Locarno Suite. While working for the United Nations, I had the opportunity to give quite a few public speeches, but I have never been as nervous as I am today. Sir Hugh was a larger-than-life figure - a grand individual of integrity and consistency. He was also a great mentor and a wonderful friend. As such, to give a lecture established in Sir Hugh's name, in front of Lady Cortazzi and many friends from my time while posted at the Embassy of Japan in London, is indeed a daunting task. I will endeavour to do my best that Sir Hugh would hopefully approve of, but I would also like to enjoy this time with you. As we all fondly recall, Sir Hugh was not only a tireless worker, constantly caring for the state of the Anglo-Japanese relationship, but also a bon vivant who enjoyed life, art, history, good food, along with his wine and whiskey.

My relationship with Sir Hugh literally started the day I arrived at London as head of the Japan Information and Culture Centre of the Embassy of Japan. On day one of my tenure, as I crossed the threshold of the embassy entrance and sat down at my desk, I was informed that lunch the following day was already scheduled with Sir Hugh Cortazzi at his club, the Royal Air Force Club.

I was also alerted that this was not going to be a 'welcome to London nice - to meet you' social lunch. Sir Hugh had a very specific reason, a mission, for which he wanted to meet me immediately upon my arrival. He had translated the autobiography of the then Crown Prince Naruhito, the current Japanese Emperor, entitled 'The Thames and I: A Memoir of Two Years in Oxford'. The manuscript had been submitted to the Imperial Household through the Embassy a while before. The vetting process of the translation was taking far too long, and needless to say Sir Hugh was not pleased. He told me that the book had to come out now, so that it can adorn the windows of Hatchards, the famous bookstore on Piccadilly, in time for people to buy it as a Christmas present.

I had been warned before the lunch that offering mild excuses for the delay would not help my case. Instead, I would have to promise actual delivery. By the end of lunch, I came to understand what that meant, and off I went back to my office to execute Sir Hugh's instruction. As it turns out, there is no such thing as a free lunch.

This was my first encounter with Sir Hugh and the beginning of many stimulating and enjoyable interactions with him. Eventually, I was also able to meet with Lady Cortazzi. Later, after I got married to my husband Barak who I met in Cambridge, he was added to this lovely circle. Many times, we were invited to Sir Hugh and Lady Cortazzi's country



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house over the weekend. We enjoyed delicious home-made food, were enthralled by fascinating stories, and of course there was lots of wine.

Being both enthusiasts of history, Sir Hugh and Barak would chatter into the early hours concerning the past, present, and future of the Anglo-Japanese relationship. These were the moments when I truly realised the passion that Sir Hugh had for our bilateral relationship. I also became very aware that the commitment to strengthen this relationship had always been a joint endeavour of Sir Hugh and Lady Cortazzi as a couple. There is always a strong spouse behind a resolute diplomat.

One of the more remarkable traits Sir Hugh embodied was his determination and tenacity to carry the torch for the healthy and strong continuation of the Anglo-Japanese relationship. This commitment continued well beyond his retirement from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office with a career culminating as Her Majesty's Ambassador to Japan.

His subsequent role, as Chair of The Japan Society in celebrating its centenary with the 1991 Japan Festival, is well-known. The 'Visions of Japan' exhibition at the Victoria & Albert Museum and the sumo wrestling competition at the Royal Albert Hall, are just a few memorable events that took place as part of this historic Festival under Sir Hugh's guidance.

While working at the Embassy, many British colleagues told me enthusiastically about the deep impact this Festival had on many young people in the UK, and how these students often ended up, as a result, choosing to read Japanese at universities and pursuing careers related to Japan. But it was not only these big headline achievements as Ambassador, or Chair of the Japan Society which mattered to Sir Hugh. He cared for much, more, particularly in times of difficulty.

Ten years after the successful festival in 1991, another momentous festival 'Japan 2001' was celebrated in the United Kingdom. Mr Christopher Purvis and his wife Phillida, another power couple well known in the Anglo-Japan circle, were instrumental in orchestrating a nationwide event. This time many community-related grassroots events were also included to be part of the celebration.

However, by the time I was serving in this country as a diplomat in the mid-2000s, Japan was no longer either an exotic cultural phenomenon or the ferocious economic power which the world either marvelled or worried about. Stagnating both economically and politically, Japan was out of fashion to put it crudely. My boss, Ambassador Nogami Yoshiji, explained that my sole mission as the person in charge of information and culture at the embassy was to 'get Japan back on the radar'.

Every day, I had lunch with journalists from various media outlets and talked at length about Japan. I made some very good friends from this group of people with whom I continue to have great exchanges to this day. But none of those lunches resulted in an article. Certainly, I blame my ineptitude as a spokesperson for this failure. But, it is also true that there was not much to write about given diminished dynamism on the part of Japan. Few stories emerging from Japan, either positive or negative, were worthy of making headlines.

As a result of the decline in interest in Japan, Japanese studies was also suffering at this time. Here, once again, Sir Hugh demonstrated his commitment and tenacity to sustain the bilateral relationship. When the University of Durham made the fated decision to close its East Asian Department, Sir Hugh sent a strong letter to the Vice-Chancellor. When SOAS was going to make one of its Japanese librarians redundant, Sir Hugh also posted a letter to the Director.

I confess that at that time, I really did not understand the importance of a specialised librarian, or in other words, the damage that would be caused by the absence of a



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librarian in a certain field. Now, married to and living with an academic who specializes in Japanese studies, I realize what this means. Sir Hugh was well aware of this damage, and of its importance for a thriving Japanese studies in this country.

While Ambassador to Japan, he was instrumental in establishing the Keidanren, Japan Business Federation, Chair at the University of Cambridge with an endowment supported by the Japanese private sector. Therefore, when Sir Hugh became aware that SOAS, where he had studied the Japanese language, was going to make a wrong decision, he did not hesitate to exert earnest influence. I am happy to report that Sir Hugh succeeded in overturning the decision.

Meanwhile, Sir Hugh continued to edit the series 'Britain and Japan: Biographical Portraits' which concluded with its tenth volume. He did this while also writing up the lengthy 'British Envoy in Japan' series. I am now, myself, partly retired so I have more time that I can dedicate to whatever cause I care for. But I must confess that I do not possess either the energy or the passion for a cause to which I would dedicate my days and months in the way that Sir Hugh sustained for Japan until pretty much the very last days of his life. I still remember that he once admitted to me that he might have shortcomings like all of us, but he was definitely not lazy. That was indeed very true, and Sir Hugh did a good job in making a lot of us feel guilty for being lazy.

What I also learned from Sir Hugh, aside from how to channel one's energy, was also how multi-directional true diplomacy could be and what it could achieve. And Sir Hugh would certainly underscore the importance of diplomacy if he were with us today. I can imagine him proclaiming: 'But isn't it so obvious that diplomacy is important?' Such a statement is authentic when it comes from people of his generation who witnessed the whole spectrum of Anglo-Japanese relations - from war to peace. Even during peacetime, there were challenges between the two countries, including the thorny issue of the terrible treatment of British prisoners of war by the Japanese military and acute trade frictions that developed between the two countries as Japan's economy grew.

However, even these issues were resolved or reached closure through diplomacy, and importantly through a determination that differences and challenges could be overcome through negotiating, understanding, compromising and forgiving. Diplomacy, it seemed, worked.

Where are we now? What is the state of the world, and is diplomacy still working? 'We are living in one of the most difficult and precarious times since the end of World War II'. These are not my words, but the words of the Chief of MI6 and the Director of CIA in their joint article recently posted in the Financial Times.

Some of my former colleagues with whom I joined the Foreign Ministry of Japan over 40 years ago are still serving at the forefront of diplomacy, many of them as Ambassadors in multilateral settings. When I speak with them, there is despair for the terribly heightened geopolitical tensions and how the War in Ukraine and the conflict in Gaza are not only attracting a lot of attention, but how these issues are also eating up all available political and financial assets leaving out other pertinent ongoing crisis such as Sudan, Myanmar, North Korea. And the list goes on.

There is also a certain level of despondency concerning how the north-south divide is widening and how reaching any agreement on global issues, even when they are affecting all countries and people, are becoming more and more difficult to unravel. There is also despair concerning how the situation has devolved to an almost futile debate when trying to convince others based on the principles and strategic visions which have succeeded in guiding the international community towards relative stability and rising prosperity.



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I have experienced this spill-over of tensions and division while working as the head of an UN organisation. My team, my organisation was dealing with disaster risk reduction. This global agenda is about how we can come together to implement solutions for managing the risks that surround us. It is about the crucial importance of preventing these risks from developing into disasters that destroy us.

I still firmly believe that there is no other single global agenda that could be more apolitical than this one, disaster risk reduction. Covid-19 and the ongoing climate change crisis tell us that no matter where you are and what you are doing, if we cannot come together to tackle the systemic risk that are connected at a global scale, nobody will be safe.

And yet, even with this agenda of disaster risk reduction which was pretty much devoid of politicization six years ago when I first took up my post, towards the end of my tenure, we started to feel the heat of this global tension. The divide was quite notable when the agenda was discussed under the auspices of the G20 meetings.

At the beginning of this year, UN Secretary General Mr Antonio Guterres, gave a speech at the General Assembly. He characterized our time as the 'age of chaos' where divisions are worse than ever, even worse than during the Cold War era with the absence of systems to guarantee that total mutual destruction could be avoided. In his speech advocating for peace, reducing humanitarian suffering, and aiming for the achievement of sustainable development, the Secretary General expressed his hopes for the Summit of the Future that would take place later in the year where the Pact for the Future would be adopted.

I wonder how many of you have ever heard of this Summit of the Future and the Pact for the Future. If you haven't, it is not your fault. There are so many, perhaps one too many meetings convened by the United Nations, if not monthly, at least weekly at some place in the world. Moreover, there is a plethora of agreements on areas of concern or aspiration that the international community strives toward: sustainable development, climate change, biodiversity loss, gender inequality, nuclear proliferation, urban development, rights of children, rights of people living with disability, to name just a few.

My point is not to agonize about this long list but to emphasize that this is something for which we should be very proud. All these agreements are the fruits of long negotiations, diplomatic perseverance, and importantly compromise among the UN member states and their governments. No matter how challenging our differences on how to approach these issues, there existed a belief that it was crucial to reach these agreements to establish frameworks of governance for issues that affect us all. That is what drove countries to be flexible in their negotiations and to be prepared to compromise when necessary.

Unfortunately, this seems to increasingly not be the situation any longer. A case in point is the failed negotiation to conclude the pandemic treaty this year. This failure developed despite the fact that we know that the breakout of the next pandemic is not a question of will it happen, but when will it happen. We all experienced the total global shutdown which started with a tiny pathogen in Wuhan, China, and yet a treaty could not be agreed upon.

Another rather frightening example of the chaos we live in, is the increasing number of countries where an explicit debate on whether they should acquire atomic weapons is taking place. Pundits are even mentioning that this could become a discussion of interest in Japan. Of all countries that you could dream of this seems one of the most inappropriate. Several years ago, I would have strongly argued that this would be unthinkable, but now, I am not sure whether I can totally refute this hypothesis.





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This is how bad things are at this moment, and this is why Mr Guterrez expressed his hope for the Summit of the Future and the adoption of the Pact for the Future. Little of this made the headlines, but the Summit actually just took place over this last weekend in New York.

And, The Pact for the Future was adopted by consensus after months of negotiation. It is a lengthy document with 56 action points which includes every single item we can think about that could influence the direction of our collective future. Some may say it is about everything and therefore nothing. Nevertheless, this is an outcome to celebrate and it gives us hope. Whether or not this document will have the impact to lead the international community toward more dynamic action for sustainable development, peace and stability, and the reduction of humanitarian suffering remains to be seen.

This week is what is called the annual High-Level Week of the UN General Assembly. When planning your next trip to the Big Apple, make sure you avoid this week because leaders from close to two hundred member states of the United Nations and their large delegations descend on this city at the same time.

Traffic is paralyzed, hotels overcharge and are fully booked. But for all the inconvenience that Manhattan New Yorkers experience during this week, it is crucial that the member states make this once a year pilgrimage to the UN Headquarters, and it matters whether they send their Heads of Governments or not. This is a firm declaration of allegiance to the cause of multilateralism.

In this regard, last year was a sad year. Four out of the five heads of governments of the permanent members of the UN Security Council failed to show up for one reason or another. Even though this year the picture is better with the presence of many, including Sir Keir Starmer and Prime Minister Kishida, the convening power of the United Nations, the power to bring all member states together in one venue, is not at its strongest point, to say the least.

But allow me to try to lift us up from the doom and gloom of the future of multilateralism before I finish this section of my talk. The Deputy Secretary General of the United Nations, Ms Amina Mohammed, who was my boss, is an energetic lady born to a British mother and a Nigerian father. She continually gave her team of senior members of the UN system many pep talks. One thing that she repeatedly said when encouraging us was that the currency of the United Nations was 'hope', in particular for the people left behind, and that we should always remind ourselves of this: Maintain a belief in hope! And I completely agree with her.

Although these days there are sadly fewer things on which the UN member states can agree on, it is absolutely true that many transformations in our societies would never have happened without the United Nations.

For the women and girls of this world, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women has made a great difference in our lives. Japan ratified the Convention in 1985 and in the same year the law for equality in employment was established. Almost forty years on, gender equality in Japan is not where it should be yet. But, the existence of a legally binding international convention on this matter has made a difference, not quickly enough but gradually, for women and girls, in my country.

There are currently worrying setbacks for gender equality, including the right to reproductive choice. Profound differences around contentious issues are apparent in the discussions at the Commission for the Status of Women, which is the annual Conference to discuss progress and challenges on the implementation of the Convention. Year after year, it is more difficult to adopt a conclusion document at this conference based on consensus. Nevertheless, the Convention and all actions for its



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implementation continue to provide hope to many women and girls. This is an example of what the United Nations has achieved and continues to take forward.

At this time, there are many questions we need to ask ourselves so that the United Nations can continue to be the beacon of hope. What are the essential goals that the UN must pursue? Is the system trying to do too much without a clear sense of priority? And if so, what needs to be done to make the UN fit for purpose?

While the number and magnitude of questions on multilateralism requiring answers are considerable, I am sure we can agree on one thing. We cannot afford another global war ending in a total destruction of the current international governance system in order to create a new one. At the same time if we cannot work together in pursuit of a system which reflects how the world has been transformed since the end of the last world war, we will be stuck with a dysfunctional system unable to mint the currency of hope.

But allow me to leave this challenge to be fixed by the great and wise, so that I can turn to what I believe is the importance of diplomacy in the context of bilateral relationships between nation states.

My career as a diplomat was much shorter and not at all as distinguished as Sir Hugh's. But I was fortunate to be engaged in different aspects of diplomacy during my twenty-seven years at the Foreign Ministry. In particular my three years in London from 2005 to 2008, when I was engaged in public and cultural diplomacy working with a rich array of different actors, truly allowed me to open up my mind and heart to the wholistic way in which diplomacy works.

Prior to this, I was at the Headquarters in Tokyo dedicating most of my years working on what is defined as hard power diplomacy. I was assigned to lead a division that dealt with issues related to the existence of US military bases in Japan. There are many US bases in Japan from Okinawa in the south to Misawa in the north, and around 40,000 military personnel and their families reside in Japan. When you have a community of people this large, naturally many things happen. While the big picture is the strong alliance that is housed in the existence of these bases, what attracts attention and calls for management at the local and even at the national level are the incidents and accidents which emanate from and around these US military bases.

From heinous crimes including rape and arson committed by US military personnel, fighter jets crashing into the seas along the Japanese coast while conducting training, the removal of toxic substances from the bases, to the weekend pub brawls near the bases where drunk servicemen would punch and break a local's nose, there was not a single day when a member of my team would not report to me that an incident had emerged. Sorting out these issues in a way that would not harm alliance between the United States and Japan was our daily remit, and there was a lot of stress and pain attached to this job.

After two years in this role, I was assigned to lead a division which liaised with the Ministry of Defence to inform the Prime Minister's Office on national security policy issues. The biggest challenge that emerged during my tenure was deploying the Japan Self Defence Forces to Iraq after the second Iraq war. This was the first time that members of the Japan Self Defence Forces were deployed overseas outside the framework of the UN Peace Keeping Operations.

Even though the objective of this deployment was not to engage in combat but to support reconstruction and rebuilding efforts in Iraq, it was a highly contentious issue not only domestically but also with our neighbour countries in the region who perceived this as the re-emergence of militarism in Japan. Once again, this area of work was accompanied with a lot of stress and pain, so after this stint which lasted another two



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years, my boss told me that I was going to be sent to London to spend a relaxed and enjoyable time there. It almost sounded like I was going on a long vacation.

I did indeed enjoy my new remit in London, but it was more than that. It was a moment of epiphany when I came to appreciate the importance of 'soft power', an expression coined and widely promoted by Professor Joseph Nye as a core means to have success in global politics and diplomacy.

Having been engaged in security issues for quite so long, experiencing the stress and pain that I referred to, by this time I had probably reached a point where I was convinced that hard power was what mattered first and foremost in the execution of diplomacy with, I am ashamed to say, almost a disdain for soft power.

And here, I have to share with you an episode of a very embarrassing moment I experienced. Several years later, after I had left the Foreign Ministry and immigrated to the United Kingdom, I was invited to serve as the Executive Director of the Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures, at the University of East Anglia. This was another of the organisations which Sir Hugh and Lady Cortazzi supported strongly, and we had the honour to invite Sir Hugh many times to give lectures in Norwich on his research on Japanese art history. Sir Hugh and Lady Cortazzi also donated important ancient maps of Japan and books related to Japanese art and culture from their vast personal collection to us. Unfortunately, the train operation between London and Norwich frequently broke down precisely when Sir Hugh and Lady Cortazzi were making their journey to Norwich, so I am afraid Norwich may not have been Sir Hugh's favourite destination!

But coming back to the embarrassing episode, during one of my visits to Tokyo to advocate how this Institute, founded and funded by the Sainsbury family as a British organisation, was promoting Japanese arts and cultures from Norwich, East Anglia, I visited the then Head of the Cultural Agency of Japan, Mr Kondo. Mr Kondo was a senior colleague at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs who had always been a champion of cultural diplomacy and had served as the Japanese Ambassador to UNESCO.

During our meeting he said to me, 'Well, this is quite interesting. You used to insist in internal meetings at the Ministry that all resources, both financial and human for cultural diplomacy, should be re-allocated to security issues, because the latter was no doubt more important for our mission. How ironic that you are now, as the head of an organisation for Japanese art and culture, preaching to me on the importance of soft power.' He was a very kind and sophisticated person, so he was not trying to be cruel, but I am sure he was surprised and a bit amused with my conversion. There is a Japanese saying that when you find yourself in a very embarrassing situation, 'You want to dig a hole and bury yourself in it'. Well that was exactly how I felt at that moment.

My engagement with cultural diplomacy in London, exposed me to many individuals and organisations who resorted to art and culture as a conduit to bringing our two countries and people together. I also engaged with organisations which financially supported these efforts. These were not only the British Council and the Japan Foundation from the public sector but also private foundations including the Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation and the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation.

It was also a revelation to me that, side by side with the governments and the quangos, there were so many different actors in play who were influencing the direction of diplomacy and the stable continuation of the bilateral relationship. Until then, my world of diplomacy was very much centred around the role of the government and related agencies in the public sector. However, once in London, I became aware of issues where the non-governmental sector, in particular the grassroot involvement of individuals and civil society, was not only vibrant but essential.



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The reconciliation process between our two countries is a case in point. Long after the diplomatic relationship was restored, and Japan and the United Kingdom were once again enjoying friendly political and economic ties, many former prisoners of war who had experienced inhumane treatment in the Japanese internment camps felt that justice had not been done. They were not ready for reconciliation.

Many individuals and grassroot organisations from both countries made tremendous efforts over many years to bring the victims and the perpetrators together. They took the victims and their families to Japan to show them that the country had now transformed and was committed to peace. Arranging opportunities for joint prayers of peace, forgiveness and reconciliation was crucial. It was thanks to the tireless efforts of these people that reconciliation was made possible for those to whom it mattered the most, because they were the ones who suffered the most.

How can we foster a wide, deep, and layered understanding of different societies and continue nurturing it? Here, of course, the media plays an important role. In the UK, you have a rich array of media outlets from the BBC, the Financial Times and The Economist with a global readership, and of course to more colourful tabloids. As I mentioned, in the past while working at the Embassy I had lunch every day with a journalist. My boss, Ambassador Nogami, said that I had to reach out to the tabloids as well and get Japan in their pages. I am not sure what kind of article he was hoping to read in the tabloids, but frankly, on this one, I am quite relieved that I did not succeed.

The difference from my time at the Embassy to now is the addition of social media. Many people, especially the younger generation, rely on social media as their main source of information. What gets posted and tweeted matters. Furthermore, the rapid speed at which news and information circulates, can result in how quickly a perception of a certain country can be formed, and then quickly change for the better or worse. I really do not envy the current job of my successor at the Embassy who must be tweeting all day long in addition to talking with journalists, engaging with movers and shakers of art and culture, and writing speeches for the Ambassador.

Indeed, the media plays a crucial role in shaping the direction of global diplomacy. Having said that, in the long term, sustaining and nurturing the mutual understanding of different cultures and societies cannot happen without the work of academia. Japanese studies in the UK, and British studies in Japan matter. And it is not only contemporary international relations studies but also, history, literature, and importantly language studies that matter. As many of you know, the genesis of the Japanese studies in this country goes back to during the war when the British government gathered a group of young soldiers and taught them the Japanese language so that they could translate the intercepted and decoded communications of the Japanese. But also, to prepare for a better post-war.

Together with my dear friend and former colleague at the Sainsbury Institute Professor Simon Kaner, we started a Japanese Language course at the University of East Anglia. Once again Sir Hugh was very supportive of this initiative and he strongly advocated that Japanese history should also be included. Thanks to Sir Hugh's encouragement and the strong support of funders, now there are lecturers for Japanese history, international relations and literature at the University in addition to the study of Japanese arts and cultures that the Sainsbury Institute takes forward.

Museums are also instrumental in populating a deeper understanding of different cultures. The Japanese Gallery of the British Museum is not only the house of beautiful Japanese artefacts but also a venue where these objects tell a visual story of Japan to the millions of people that visit this iconic museum annually.

When I was working at the embassy in London, the Japanese Gallery went through a thorough refurbishment and redesigning supported by the Mitsubishi Corporations. In





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the new display there was a section titled, 'The three gateways to Japan': the Ryukyus, what Okinawa was called when it was an independent island nation, the Ainu, the name of the people in Hokkaido who were discriminated and not legally acknowledged as indigenous inhabitants until very recently, and the Korean peninsula. These three gateways were featured in the new permanent exhibit.

I remember that some of my colleagues at the embassy were slightly concerned about the impact of this display. I am quite sure that the story of Japan would not have been depicted in this way in a Japanese museum. But looking back, I do believe that this display was a fine example of how countries and their cultures can be understood and redefined from the outside. Every country has a certain image of itself and a natural desire to promote these reflections in a comfortable way. If we are not careful, that image can become a set of clichés or even a way to hide uncomfortable truths. The study of Japanese art, culture and history from the Britain perspective, and vice versa, can help us focus on aspects hitherto under-represented or even mis-represented. And by doing this we enrich each other's cultural understanding and further enhance our bilateral ties.

We live at a time when governments are overloaded with missions and targets with limited resources. Governments are under close scrutiny from their citizens with the ebb and flow of social movements. Posts and tweets on social media can amplify or decimate the popularity of governments very quickly, and this can drive the priorities of governments to change not only for domestic policy but also for diplomacy.

I already mentioned how Japan was not the flavour of the month when I started my tenure at our embassy in London in 2005. That job brought with it some struggles, but at the same time, I firmly felt the importance of organisations and partnerships here in Britain which have embodied the strong bilateral relationship of our two countries for decades and even centuries. The UK Japan Society, which exists since 1891 with a brief interruption during the war between our two countries, and the UK-Japan 21st Century Group established in 1985 at the height of trade frictions between the two countries, are two excellent examples. These are the organisations and structures which have continued to be the backbone of strong relations, withstanding changes of governments and the various priorities of diplomacy.

These groups also bring together all the actors who collectively drive diplomacy between the two countries. The partnerships forged amongst the governments, the politicians, the private sector, the cultural organisations, the media, the scientific community and the civil society within the framework of the Japan Society are priceless. We should never take for granted the continuation of these organisations or that such structures exist. They are the clear result of the never-ending work of men and women who accepted positions of leadership. This included Sir Hugh, and now Mr Bill Emmott at the helm of the Japan Society, along with those who supported their leaders and worked with them.

Governments will change in both countries and priorities in their respective diplomatic trajectories will change. This is why we need The Japan Society in the UK, The Japan British Society in Japan, the UK-Japan 21st Century Group and many more organisations dedicated to our bilateral relationship. These groups also need to be more than a club of friendly people but fora where even difficult discussions can take place. Currently we are in dire need to bring in more young participants so that the relevance of these organizations is widely appreciated and so that they can continue to be relevant for future generations.

In closing, I would like to thank the Japan Society for inviting me to give this lecture. I would also like to thank Lady Cortazzi for approving that I would be worthy to deliver the first of this lecture series. And lastly, I thank Mr Jenkins and the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office for hosting this event.



I am sure there will be many wonderful lecturers in this series who will inspire you on the multitude of challenges that we face. Today, I have tried to touch on issues which I deem to be essential for diplomacy to be effective. They are also issues that Sir Hugh embodied as a diplomat to the very end of his life. I remain confident that his legacy to the Anglo-Japanese bilateral relationship will grow from strength to strength.

Thank you very much.

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