

Remarks by Yukio Hatoyama, former Prime Minister of Japan

Originally delivered in Japanese

Let me express my heartfelt congratulations to all Myochikai members on the occasion of Myoochikai's 60th Anniversary.

As an individual with the good fortune to be present on this occasion, I find myself deeply moved. Myochikai has developed prayer and action for the last 60 years. I am truly impressed once again by your splendid work.

I have heard that both Rev. Kohei Miyamoto, your great spiritual leader, and Rev. Mitsu Miyamoto, your great spiritual master, were born in Kujukuri of Chiba prefecture. I am confident that they must be overjoyed watching over this magnificent celebration taking place here at Makuhari Messe.

I also understand that Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto, leader of Myochikai, is now 93 years old. He seems stronger than ever and remains devoted to reciting the Lotus Sutra in prayer for the sake of the souls of ancestors and teaching Myochikai members to attain enlightenment. As a human being, he has lived a more wonderful life than anyone could imagine. In his training in how to live the Buddhist way of life, Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto emphasizes gratitude, or *arigatou*, to people. There is no one who cannot be impressed by this singular focus.

This must be why Myochikai has surpassed one million in membership. Isn't that so? Now more than one million strong, I sincerely hope that Rev. Takeyasu Miyamoto will gain more and more strength and live beyond 100, guiding the members of Myochikai, serving society and building world peace.

As we learned in the video just shown, the Arigatou Foundation was established 20 years ago.

I have visited the United Nations several times, and Myochikai and the Arigatou Foundation are highly recognized there. I think this is only natural.

The Arigatou Foundation was initiated to pray for the repose of children who lost their precious lives at an early age and further pave the way to safe and sound development

for the children who will lead the world and inherit the future. There is no more noble action than that.

I don't know any other Japanese word more beautiful than "arigatou". Thanks to Myochikai, the word "arigatou" has become a universal expression of a wonderful Japanese word. From the bottom of my heart, I sincerely pray that Myochikai will grow further for the sake of world peace.

Rev. Mitsu Miyamoto said that we are *absolutely* opposed to nuclear weapons, not just opposed. Now that spirit of Myochikai has reached President Obama, and it is wonderful to see that the effort to eliminate nuclear weapons has been making great progress. I sincerely hope that your activities for world peace with prayer will continue to grow so that true world peace will be realized.

To take its effort even further, you all have now launched the World Day of Prayer and Action for Children to build a worldwide movement for children.

I am heading to Seoul, South Korea, today and will talk about this spirit of fraternity there.

Nowadays, it is not easy to bring such a spirit into the world of politics. However, I truly hope that Myochikai, as a religious organization that advocates love, will grow and prevail widely.

Congratulations again on the 60th anniversary of Myochikai.