
**Speech by H.E. Mr. Masahiro Omura, Ambassador of Japan, at the Send-Off
Reception for Participants of “High School Students Summit on World
Tsunami Awareness Day”
Thursday, 2 November 2017**

Mr. Meleti Bainimarama, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Rural and
Maritime Development, and National Disaster Management,

Your Excellencies and Members of Diplomatic Corps,

Mr. Peni Senikarawa, Principal, Ratu Kadavulevu School,

Mr. Richard David Lewis, Principal, Nauru Secondary School,

Mr. Penehuro Hauma, Principal, Fetuvalu Secondary School,

Participants of the “High School Students Summit on World Tsunami
Awareness Day”,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Bula Vinaka and Good Afternoon.

I welcome you all to my residence. Today, we have gathered here to send-off
30 students from Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, together with
their teachers. They are going to attend the “High School Students Summit
on World Tsunami Awareness Day” in Okinawa, Japan.

I would like to congratulate all participating students who are going to be
appointed as Youth Ambassadors for World Tsunami Awareness Day. 150
students from 25 countries including many Pacific Island Countries, as well
as 102 from 42 schools in Japan will participate in this Summit.

The World Tsunami Awareness Day on November 5th, is an international day
which was proposed by Japan and co-tabled by 141 countries at the UN

General Assembly in December 2015. It was adopted by consensus for the purpose of raising international awareness on the threat of tsunamis and for undertaking precautionary measures against such disasters.

In November 2016, the first year after the establishment of the World Tsunami Awareness Day, the High School Students Summit on World Tsunami Awareness Day was held in Kuroshio-Town, Kochi Prefecture, Japan. We will hold this year the “High School Students Summit on World Tsunami Awareness Day 2017”, in Okinawa Prefecture.

In Okinawa, Yaeyama Earthquake accompanied by Meiwa Giant Tsunami in 1771, caused many casualties. This giant tsunami is considered to be one of the world’s largest and the heritage from the tsunami, called tsunami stones, remains in various parts of Okinawa. In addition, Okinawa is the sole island prefecture in Japan with many inhabited remote islands.

We invite high school students from island countries and provide them with opportunities to acquire knowledge on disaster reduction and understand the threat of earthquakes and tsunamis. We will also provide them with opportunities to learn how to save peoples lives and properties from tsunamis. We intend to do this by showing the importance of implementing policies on disaster mitigation and risk reduction, rapid rehabilitation and reconstruction as well as international cooperation.

All the participants of the Students Summit will leave Nadi day after tomorrow and stay in Japan for about a week. Okinawa is relatively warm but you might find Tokyo rather cool. I sincerely wish safe journey and success of the Summit. I also wish the students will play the role of young Tsunami Ambassadors in each of their countries. Also, since this is a precious opportunity for the students to experience Japan, I would like all of them to enjoy their stay greatly. I hope this Students Summit will serve not only as an opportunity to promote cooperation regarding disaster management but also as a medium to further deepen the friendship between Japan and each of the participating countries.

Vinaka Vakalevu and Thank You Very Much.

The End.