

Speech by Consul-General Kiya Masahiko

Imperial Decoration Conferral Ceremony for the
Mr Manuel Panagiotopoulos

22 February 2022 (Tuesday)

Acknowledgements

- Distinguished Guests, Ladies & Gentlemen

Introduction and Ambassador's Message

- It is an honour to welcome you all to my residence and to present the Imperial Decoration, on behalf of the Government of Japan, to Mr Manuel Panagiotopoulos, in the presence of his family and friends.
- Let me begin by reading a message to Manuel from the Ambassador of Japan to Australia, HE Yamagami Shingo:

I ... offer my sincerest congratulations on your receiving the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Rosette. This decoration acknowledges your vast contribution to the promotion of Japan-Australia relations in the field of economics. I am most grateful for your more than 30 years of work to enhance economic cooperation between our two countries and create new platforms for dialogue.

I would also like to make special note of the fact that your exemplary contribution to our bilateral relationship goes beyond the realm of economics and commerce, and is reflected in your natural affability. This in turn has established long lasting friendships and bonds at the people-to-people level, which has become a hallmark of the Australia-Japan relationship.

The conferment of the Order of the Rising Sun is thus a fitting recognition of your role in furthering our ties.

*Warmest regards,
Yamagami Shingo, Ambassador of Japan to Australia.*

Message from the Consul-General including recipient's achievements
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- The Ambassador's message puts it so very well.
- I would like to offer my own congratulations to you, Manuel.
- You have greatly contributed to the development of mutual understanding between Japanese and Australian business communities through organising economic seminars and providing them with relevant economic information and liaison services as the Managing Director of Australian and Japanese Economic Intelligence, that you established in 1998.

- In particular, you have provided invaluable networking opportunities through the Australia-Japan Roundtable that you created.
- Thanks to you, so many new friendships have been made in the world of Japan-Australia business! I am one of the beneficiaries since I came here.
- It is for this reason that I thought it only right to make today's event in the style of a Roundtable.
- I am sure that Manuel will be feeling very much at home!
- And for the same reason, Manuel will be speaking after the main course this evening in keeping with the familiar pattern.