

**Speech by Ambassador Toshihisa Takata, on the occasion of  
Gathering of New Zealand Antarctic Society and Narashino High  
School Symphonic Band to commemorate the 105th anniversary  
from Kainan Maru's 2nd call at Wellington  
at  
Frank Kitts Park**

Dr Robin K H Falconer, Chair of NZ Antarctic Society Wellington  
Branch,

Member of Narashino High School Symphonic Band,

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Kia ora Koutou

I am honoured to be here today alongside the New Zealand Antarctic Society to commemorate the 105<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Kainan Maru's 2<sup>nd</sup> call to Wellington Harbour. I would also like to take this time to thank the members of the Narashino High School Symphonic Band for coming to New Zealand, and for their joint participation in this memorial ceremony.

The Japanese ship, Kainan Maru, made her first stop in Wellington on February 8th, 1911, carrying the Japanese Antarctic Expedition crew on their way south. Her second stop in Wellington came upon returning from Antarctica, before starting the long trip back to Japan — on March 23rd, today, in 1912.

Coincidentally, Narashino High School Symphonic Band's trip coincides with the Kainan Maru's historic second visit to Wellington. As such, it seems only fitting to invite the Narashino High School Symphonic Band, an orchestra from Japan, to be the ones to play the Shirase Anthem for the unveiling of the renewed Shirase Antarctic Expedition memorial plaque.

Thanks to the funding and efforts of Nikaho City in Akita prefecture, home of the Shirase Antarctic Expedition Memorial Museum, the memorial plaque has been restored to its former glory, and will stand as a symbol of friendship between New Zealand and Japan for many more years to come. It is my hope that everyone here, Japanese and New Zealander alike, will be able to leave today with a special memory they can cherish well into the future.

Finally, I would like to extend my gratitude to The NZ Antarctic Society Wellington Branch for hosting this memorial gathering, and special thanks to the Wellington City Counsel, and Wellington Museum for their continued support maintaining this historic plaque.

No rei ra Kia Ora Koutou