

Wednesday, July 29, 2020

Osaka Convention & Tourism Bureau
President Hiroshi Mizohata

Kansai Hotel & Restaurant Show
Maintenance & Resilience OSAKA 2020 / Plant Show OSAKA 2020 /
International Drone Expo 2020
Opening Ceremony Address

Good morning everyone.

The 12th Kansai Hotel & Restaurant Show has finally opened. First of all, there are people in northern Kyushu who are suffering greatly due to the heavy rain, and those in Nagano, Gifu, as well as the Tohoku region are also in difficult situations. Additionally, while all of Japan is in distress because of the coronavirus, many people have still managed to attend today. I am truly grateful.

Since last year we have been aiming for Kansai and Osaka to be the Number One MICE destination, and are looking towards 2030 with the operation of an IR and as well as the EXPO 2025 Osaka, Kansai. Last year's G20 summit and Rugby World Cup 2019 brought us a hop, step, and a jump closer to realizing this 2030 goal, and Osaka has taken a step closer to becoming a leading destination.

I have come today with those goals in mind. Chairman Nakamura of the Japan Management Association has agreed to raise the MICE industry in Kansai and Osaka to new heights, and last year decided to host this event in Osaka. The coronavirus has caused the complete postponement of exhibitions as well as international meetings across Japan. However, without an economic revival Japan cannot recover.

While both controlling the spread of infection and contributing to economic recovery, we are taking this strong step towards economic revitalization. In particular, many business discussions will be born from this B2B trade fair, and the event plays a huge role in tourism and MICE. Today, July 29, 2020, is the first step in activating the MICE industry. This B2B MICE event, which cannot lose to Universal Studios Japan, Tokyo Disneyland, pro baseball, and the J League, is restarting today, and having this competitive stage take place in Osaka is a true inspiration for us.

Osaka Prefecture Governor Yoshimura and Osaka City Mayor Matsui originally wanted to come and speak to you all today, but were unable to make it, so I will speak on the behalf of both of them. Opening this MICE event has enormous significance. By firstly holding Japan's first major exhibition amid the coronavirus pandemic, we want to send a big, encouraging shout to those concerned about exhibitions and international meetings held across Japan. And with the wisdom collected with everyone put into these guidelines, we would like to carry out this mission together of resolutely hosting exhibitions and international meetings, while carrying out infectious disease control measures.

Japan will definitely recover. I believe that this day will be a step for the history of the MICE

industry. For these three days, with everyone I would like to make this exhibition a spectacular one. These really are difficult times, but I wholeheartedly pray that when 10, 20 years have passed and we can open the door to history and see that this day was the day everyone gathered to create a new history for MICE. I truly thank all of you. I would like to get everyone even more excited for this event. Thank you.