



**REMARKS BY CJS DIRECTOR MARK A. LEVIN WELCOMING DR. GENSHITSU SEN TO UHM  
February 14, 2024**

Aloha and Happy Valentine's Day!

My name is Mark Levin. I am the Director of the UH Mānoa Center for Japanese Studies which houses and supports the UH Mānoa Sen Way of Tea Center.

It is my great honor to be here today to once again introduce Daisosho Dr. Genshitsu Sen who served as the 15th generation Grand Master of Urasenke, a leading path of Japanese tea represented here in Hawai'i by the Chadō Urasenke Tankokai Hawai'i Association.

As I shared from this platform one year ago, perhaps most everyone in the audience today already understands that speaking of a "Japanese tea" or as Doctor Sen has expressed it, the Way of Tea, encompasses a tremendous amount more than the presentation and consumption of a wonderful and delicious hot beverage. The Way of Tea represents a fundamental archetype built into deep layers of Japanese culture over the course of centuries. Its influence on aesthetics, cuisine, architecture, and norms of social relations is often subtle, but vibrant and significant. And the bowl of tea, where Doctor Sen has encouraged us to find peacefulness, serves as the nucleus of this vital system upon which so much more has been positively built.

For those of you listening to Dr. Sen for the first time today, he is an astonishingly talented orator. If he had been born one hundred years earlier, he'd have been on the lecture circuit with Mark Twain. If he were getting started today, he'd be a star on TedX stages and YouTube. This is not only demonstrating speaking talent, but because he has so much of value to share from his life experiences through the lens of tea culture.

We celebrate Doctor Sen's passing his 100th birthday year last year. So it was a little ago that he was born into the family lineage of the Urasenke tradition, and took on the leadership role where he served from 1964 to 2002. Following his retirement from that formal role, he has continued in many many engagements towards international understanding, earning honorary recognition as a UNESCO goodwill ambassador by the director general of UNESCO, and advisor to the ministry of foreign affairs of Japan, honorary academic degrees including from the University of Hawai'i in 1983 and elsewhere, and national honors including the order of culture by the His Royal Majesty the Emperor of Japan and the legion of honor with the degree of commander from the government of France.

Doctor Sen's generous donations to UH have been transformational just as much as we have benefitted from the warm and ongoing personal support that he has shown to students and faculty for decades.

Dr. Sen's lecture is co-sponsored by the University of Hawai'i's Department of History, represented here today by Dr. Nancy Stalker, the Sen Sōshitsu XV Professor of Arts and History. Thanks also go to the UH President's office and President David Lassner, who unfortunately can not be here at the moment, but we hope will be able to come in later to share some remarks, Provost Michael Bruno, College of Arts Languages and Letters Dean Peter Arnade, and the Urasenke Foundation of Hawai'i. I'd also like to acknowledge in the audience today Dr. Yoshinori Kodama, Consul General of Japan in Hawai'i, Former First Lady Mrs. Jean Ariyoshi, Former U.S. Representative Colleen Hanabusa, and apologies to whoever I might have missed.

Dr. Sen will speak on "The Spirit of Tea and Peacefulness." I've learned this incorporates notions of *Wa* (harmony or peacefulness), *Kei* (respect), *Sei* (purity), and *Jaku* (tranquility). In short, the spirit of tea offers valuable lessons for us all.

Please welcome Dr. Genshitsu Sen.