

April 1, 2026

President's Message at FY2026 Company Entrance Ceremony

Congratulations. I would like to warmly welcome all 69 of you as new employees of Nippon Steel Trading (NST). First and foremost, I would like to extend my warmest welcome and heartfelt congratulations to each of you. I am truly delighted that you have chosen our company from among the many options available, and I thank you sincerely for doing so.

All of you have spent your student years in a period of rapid and significant change. Beginning in your high school days, the COVID-19 pandemic dramatically altered daily life, and you personally witnessed how social and economic structures were transformed. Today, with the rapid advancement of technologies such as AI, the way society operates and the values we hold continue to change even more dramatically. You have experienced this fast-moving era firsthand during your student life.

Even in such an environment, you devoted yourselves to your studies and various activities, learning and growing through many experiences. Drawing on those experiences, you have come here today with great expectations for your new careers and with dreams you hope to realize at our company. Seeing your hopeful expressions, I feel truly encouraged. I strongly wish to help you fulfill your ambitions on the stage that NST provides and to support you to the fullest.

Let me take a moment to share a brief history, current status, and future strategy of our group. Our company was established in 2013 through the merger of Nippon Steel Trading Co., Ltd. and Sumikin Bussan Corporation. Though the two companies had different cultures and climates, they overcame various challenges as the business environment evolved, and continued to grow. In fiscal 2018, our ordinary income reached a record high compared with the simple combined total of the two companies prior to the merger. We regard this as proof that the integration and unification of the two companies had been fully achieved.

Since fiscal 2021, under our previous Medium-to-Long-Term Management Plan, we promoted growth strategies aimed at realizing sustainable profit expansion. In 2023, we became a subsidiary of Nippon Steel and have since worked as one to strengthen strategic collaboration and generate synergies as the core trading company of the Nippon Steel Group. As a result, we achieved record-high profits for four consecutive fiscal years from FY2021 to

FY2024. Excluding temporary factors, our substantive profits have exceeded 50 billion yen since FY2023. This demonstrates the strength of our diversified business portfolio—Steel, Industrial Supply & Infrastructure, Foodstuffs, and Textiles—and confirms that we have established a profit structure capable of consistently generating more than 50 billion yen in any business environment.

Meanwhile, the external environment surrounding our businesses remains extremely uncertain. Changes in U.S. policy have disrupted supply chains, the prolonged conflict between Ukraine and Russia continues, geopolitical risks are rising due to U.S.–China tensions and conflicts in the Middle East, and Japan–China relations remain strained. Inflation persists in Japan and overseas; in recent months, crude oil prices have surged due to the closure of the Strait of Hormuz. Frequent natural disasters add further volatility. In addition, the strengthening of economic security policies in many countries is directly affecting supply and demand, prices, and supply chains for the products we handle.

Even in such circumstances, companies must never stop moving forward toward growth. This fiscal year marks the first year of our new Medium-to-Long-Term Management Plan toward FY2030. The plan aims to solidify our fundamental concept: “Becoming a strong growth company that contributes to society, as the true core trading company of Nippon Steel Group.” To achieve this, we will focus on four pillars: pursuing sustainable profit growth through growth strategies; maximizing synergies through strategic collaboration with Nippon Steel; promoting human capital management and operational reform and efficiency; and advancing ESG management. Through these efforts, we aim to raise our substantive profits from the current 50-billion-yen level to the 60-billion-yen level.

Though a challenging business environment is expected to continue, I am greatly encouraged by the prospect of working together with all of you to promote the initiatives needed for us to achieve sustainable growth as the true core trading company of the Nippon Steel Group.

I have shared the history, current status, and future strategy of our group. I hope you now understand that NST Group is steadily on the growth path and that the stage for your future performance has expanded more than ever before.

The NST Group's primary business resource is its people, or all employees of NST Group companies. Your growth through everyday work as a member of NST Group employees will

lead to the further growth of our Group. Today, you became a member. I hope that you will get accustomed to life as a working adult first, learn how to do your work under the guidance of your supervisors and superiors, and play an active role as our strategic assets as soon as possible.

The keywords of NST's Employee Code of Conduct are Challenge, Growth, Reliability, and Borderless. Please act with this Code of Conduct as the guideline of your life as a working adult. I hope that by acting based on the Employee Code of Conduct, you will become a member of a group of professionals that is second to none in their fields—a group of professionals that always responds to customers' wishes and creates new products and values on their own. For all of you to become professional human resources, we ensure on site educational training and a wide range of opportunities for growth through a wealth of experience. I would like you to work on each task by bearing in mind of your personal growth.

I sincerely hope that each of you will develop yourself at your workplace. To support your growth, I would like to talk about the three things I value most and I always impart to young people.

The first thing is to thoroughly practice the "consider, judge, and act" process. I want you to rack your brain about how to undertake the present operations more effectively and efficiently, how to respond to risks arising from environmental changes, what chances can lead to the growth of the company, and so forth. After racking your brains, what is important is that you or the organization quickly and precisely judge and take action with conviction. If this process is established, it will improve yourself and enhance organizational capabilities, eventually leading to the further growth and development of the NST Group. In managing the Group, I value the saying: "When taking responsibility by yourself, making judgements independently, and acting autonomously, people display their full potential." I highly expect your independence and autonomy.

The second thing is to maintain a challenging spirit without any fear of failure. You will encounter various difficulties in your work. Sometimes, you may fail. What is important is how to act after such failure. It is often said that failure is the highroad to success, but this is not applicable to everyone. As well as those giving up easily or running away, those who recklessly continue to take on a challenge in the same way will not see success. What is important is to take on a challenge once again with a strong conviction after finding the key to success that is hidden in the failure.

Thirdly, I want you to treasure an encounter with people. You will meet many people from now on. In every encounter, please remember the spirit of "Ichigo Ichie," which means "once-in-a-lifetime encounter," and deal with people with sincerity. The accumulation of such wonderful encounters will surely be your asset. The first step for this is meeting employees of 63 who have joined the company with you. I hope that you will form a strong bond with your precious colleagues and aim for the realization of your dream in your future life at the company while helping each other and sometimes competing with each other.

Finally, once again, I extend my heartfelt congratulations to all 69 of you. In today's rapidly changing business environment, I hope that you will grow into individuals who "think strategically, take on challenges without fear, collaborate with diverse colleagues, and create new value," while also being mindful of your social responsibilities and acting with integrity at all times.

Congratulations, and I look forward to working with you. Let us all strive together for the sustainable growth of our company—while taking good care of your health.