

JOINT COMMUNIQUÉ
by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
and the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain
13 February 2013

Mr Fumio Kishida, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan and Mr José Manuel García-Margallo, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain, visiting Japan as an official guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan met each other in Tokyo on 13 February 2013.

At the outset of the meeting, the Ministers recognized that Japan and Spain share values and principles such as democracy, fundamental human rights, the rule of law and free trade as well as interests and responsibilities in addressing a broad range of international affairs.

The Ministers also confirmed that the “400th Anniversary of Japan-Spain Relations” straddling years 2013 and 2014, provides the two countries with an excellent opportunity to even further enhance their bilateral relations and cooperation. In connection with this celebration, they expressed their appreciation for the Honorary Presidency by His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince of Japan and His Royal Highness the Prince of Asturias of Spain, which will greatly encourage the peoples of the two countries and the programmed activities.

Building upon this common recognition, the Ministers had a candid and in-depth discussion on bilateral relations, cooperation between Japan and the European Union and regional and international issues.

As a result, the Ministers stressed that, in the globalized world, Europe and the Asia-Pacific region are economically interdependent and closely linked in terms of security, at a time in which the security environment of East Asia is becoming increasingly severe.

In this regard, the Ministers condemned in the strongest terms North Korea’s nuclear test on 12 February 2013 and missile launch in December 2012 as they seriously undermined the regional and international peace and stability. They strongly urged North Korea to fully comply with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions, including Resolution 2087, and the 2005 Six-Party Talks Joint Statement, and refrain from any further provocative actions. They also reiterated that North Korea must address the humanitarian concerns of the international community, including the abductions issue.

The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to fight terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and strongly condemned the recent terrorist attack to a natural gas plant in eastern Algeria. They expressed concern regarding the instability in the Sahel, North Africa and the Middle East, warning that this could result in a threat to the security of both Europe and Japan. The Ministers reconfirmed the necessity of concerted efforts by the governments concerned and the entire international community to increase cooperation in the fight against terrorism, through a comprehensive security and development approach and the implementation of the UN Global Counter Terrorism Strategy.

The Ministers also shared the recognition that Japan and Spain are trading countries that prosper through maritime trade and that oceans as shipping routes should be free and open, concurring with each other on the importance of maintaining maritime order, including ensuring freedom and safety of navigation, based on international law.

Consequently, the Ministers decided to take the following actions with a view to revitalizing their economies, strengthening their bilateral relations and ensuring the stability and prosperity of Asia, Europe and the entire world.

1. Japan and Spain will intensify policy coordination and information exchange regarding the situations in the Asia-Pacific region, the Middle East, Maghreb, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America, as well as in global issues such as the state of the world economy or the European debt crisis. For that purpose, the two countries will conduct multilayered policy dialogues at both political and working levels. In particular, the Ministers will:
 - (1) Endeavour to hold a summit meeting between the two countries at the earliest time possible;
 - (2) Intensify exchange of information related to the safety of both nationals and business corporations in unstable countries and regions through their missions abroad; and
 - (3) Give appropriate instructions to relevant departments to conduct close consultations for exchanges of views and information between the two countries regarding **common** interest in Latin America, including cooperation in the Pacific Alliance.
2. Japan and Spain will take actions to promote open trade and investment, expanding markets and resisting protectionism in all its forms. The two countries will promote a deep and comprehensive Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)/Free Trade Agreement (FTA), recognizing its importance not only in increasing trade and investment between Japan and the EU but also in fostering stable growth of the world economy.

Japan and Spain recognize the significance of leading efforts by the international community to uphold and refine a rules-based regional and global order, and commit to cooperate with each other in moving towards a binding agreement covering political, global and other sectoral cooperation between Japan and the EU.

3. Japan and Spain will actively promote mutual exchanges, seizing the opportunity of the 400th Anniversary, in a broad spectrum of areas including politics, economy, culture, academics and education, science and technology as well as tourism and explore ways to enhance mutual understanding and friendship between their peoples. In this regard, the both governments will:
 - (1) Provide as much assistance as possible for events expected to take place under the Year of Spain in Japan and the Year of Japan in Spain in close cooperation with institutions from both countries;
 - (2) Welcome the recommendations of the final report of the 15th Japan-Spain Symposium held in Seville last November, as meaningful guidelines towards strengthening the bilateral relations, intend to cooperate with each other to materialize them and support the 16th Symposium to be held in Japan; and
 - (3) Welcome the resumption of activities of the Japan-Spain Joint Economic Commission, spurred by the momentum of the 400th Anniversary, at the next meeting scheduled in June in Madrid and provide necessary assistance.
4. With a view to reinforcing the bilateral relationship on the occasion of the 400th Anniversary, Japan and Spain will:
 - (1) Commence consultations for introducing a bilateral Working Holiday programme;
 - (2) Accelerate necessary works towards the signing of the Japan-Spain Agreement Regarding Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters;
 - (3) Cooperate with each other towards the holding of the 2nd Joint Committee under the Japan-Spain Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement as early as possible; and
 - (4) Expect that the Defense Ministries of the two countries explore ways to promote concrete cooperation.

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