

Japan-Iran Relations

June 2009

1. Japan-Iran Relations

(1) Japan-Iran Political Relations

- **Japan highly values its relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran in view of a stable supply of crude oil and ensure stability in the Middle East.**
- **Based on friendly relations, Japan has conveyed Iran of its stance, as well as the international community's stern view, on the nuclear issue.**
- Last year, Japan continued to maintain a close exchange of views with Iran through mutual visits, including the Regular Japan-Iran Vice-Ministerial Consultations in May in Teheran and in December in Tokyo; a visit to Japan in February by Dr. Mohammad-Javad ARDASHIR=LARIJANI, Secretary General of National Supreme Council of Human Rights of the Judiciary; a visit to Iran in June by Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Itsunori Onodera; a visit to Japan in October by H.E. Dr. Mohammad Baqer Ghalibaf, Mayor of Tehran; a visit to Iran in November by Mr. Taro Nakayama, chairman of the Japan-Iran Parliamentarians Friendship League; and a visit to Japan in November by Vice President Esfandiyar Rahim MASHAEE. This year, Minister for Foreign Affairs Hirofumi Nakasone held a telephone conference in January with Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs Manouchehr Mottaki (on the situation in Gaza). Mr. Samareh Hashemi, Senior Advisor to the President of Iran, visited Japan as a special presidential envoy, and met with Prime Minister Taro Aso, Chief Cabinet Secretary Takeo Kawamura, and Foreign Minister Nakasone. In April, **Foreign Minister Mottaki visited Japan** to attend the Pakistan Donors Conference and met with Prime Minister Aso and Foreign Minister Nakasone.
- In June 2008, then **Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda held a summit meeting with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad** in Rome.
- In May 2009, **Foreign Minister Nakasone visited Iran and met with President Ahmadinejad and Foreign Minister Mottaki**, the first visit to Iran by a Japanese foreign minister in five and a half years, since the visit by then Foreign Minister Yoriko Kawaguchi in January 2004. Since 2006, talks between the foreign ministers of Japan and Iran have been held 16 times, including five meetings and 11 telephone conferences.

(2) Japan-Iran Economic Relations

- As of 2008, Iran was **the third leading crude oil supply country to Japan, accounting for 11.8% of Japan's oil imports**, after Saudi Arabia with 27.8% and the UAE with 23.8%.
(Source: Agency of Natural Resources and Energy, *Preliminary Report on Petroleum Statistics* for December 2008, figures in the Revised Report)
More than 85% of the crude oil Japan imports is shipped by way of the Strait of Hormuz.
- As of 2006, Japan was Iran's **second largest trade partner** after China. (Crude oil accounted for approximately 96% of Japan's total imports from Iran.)
The trade value between Japan and Iran was **approximately 20.15 billion dollars** in 2008, with 1.91 billion dollars of exports to Iran, and 18.24 billion dollars of imports to Japan (Source: Trade Statistics of Japan)
- As of October 2008, there were 711 Japanese nationals residing and 33 Japanese corporations (mainly trading companies) in Iran.

2. Japan's Stance on the Nuclear Issue

1. It is deplorable that Iran has not complied with the requirements of the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, including the suspension of uranium enrichment-related activities. The Iranian nuclear issue should be dealt with decisively in view of the need to maintain the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and the implications for North Korea's nuclear issue, as well as the need to ensure stability in the Middle East, which has a significant bearing on global energy supplies.
2. Japan strongly hopes that Iran will comply with the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and thus suspend enrichment and reprocessing activities and heavy-water related projects, so that negotiations can be resumed for a peaceful and diplomatic resolution to the issue. Japan intends to seize every opportunity to urge Iran to meet these requirements for that purpose.