

FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN AND TURKMENISTAN



Fumio KISHIDA,
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Central Asia is well-known to all over the world by its famous Silk Road crossroads. It served about 2,000 years as the crossroad of Eurasia where the movement of peoples, outputs and cultures were interchanged. Civilizations and cultures of the entire world had been extended to the north, south, east and west along the territory of Central Asia. A great distance separates the Central Asia and Japan, but we are from the time immemorial connected by common historical roots.

Since the 8th century B.C. Shosoin Treasury House exists in the ancient capital of Japan where the treasury of the imperial family is located. Origin of the precious heritage of this treasury dates back to the middle of the 8th century. Various jewelleryes, including musical instruments, national attires, swords and other articles brought from the far West through Central Asia that are still kept there. Moreover, Buddhism that is the basis of Japanese culture penetrated into Japan from India through Central Asia, China and Korean peninsula. The first prevalence of Buddhism in Japan started from 538 A.D. The "Silk Road" word provokes in Japanese people especial warm feelings as the main source of origin of our culture.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and gaining the independence in 1991 by five countries of Central Asia, Japan commenced to render assistance

Fumio KISHIDA, 2000, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Construction; 2001, Senior Vice-Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology; 2005, Chairman of the Committee on Health, Labour and Welfare of the House of Representatives; 2007, Minister of State for Special Missions (1st Abe Cabinet) (undertaken for the issues related to Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs, Quality-of-Life Policy, "Challenge Again" Initiative, Science and Technology Policy, and Regulatory Reform); In the same year, the Minister of State for Special Missions (Fukuda Cabinet) (responsible for the issues connected with Okinawa and Northern Territories Affairs, Science and Technology Policy, Quality-of-Life Policy and Regulatory Reform); 2008, Minister for Consumer Affairs (Fukuda Cabinet), Minister for Space Policy (Fukuda Cabinet); 2011, Chairman of the LDP's Diet Affairs Committee; From December 2012, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan (2nd Abe Cabinet).



The building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan.

to the "New Old" friends in various fields as the support in forming up the new state. Japanese assistance covers various aspects of life such as development of the large-scale infrastructure, in particular, water supply and sewerage, modernization of airports and thermal power stations, laying

of the railways, as well as the technical cooperation including the reconstruction of schools, providing the medical equipments to the hospitals, conducting of trainings in the sphere of business and agriculture.

Adhering to such cooperation that is based on mutual trust, Japan and five Central Asian countries created the dialogue "Central Asia plus Japan" in August 2004. With the view of further achievement of development as the independent region that open to all over the world, Central Asian countries in unanimous cooperation should promote to the solution of the issues occurred in the region. In order to promote suchlike regional cooperation, Japan intends to offer and move ahead together with all countries of Central Asia. According to this principle the Dialogue "Central Asia plus Japan" was established. I am convinced that due to the dialogues and cooperation held up to now, our Central Asian friends also began to share this principle.

The Dialogue "Central Asia plus Japan" marked its 10th anniversary of its establishment. Today under the Chair of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan the 5th Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs will be held in Bishkek. At this meeting, I would like to put forward the main direction on practical cooperation with Central Asian countries. More specifically, I would like to promote the cooperation that contributes further development by applying the technology and experience of Japan in the field of agriculture that is the key factor for Central Asian region development. Over six months, Japan and five countries of the Central Asia discussed this issue with a view of studying the cooperation possibility. Of course, the cooperation between Japan and Central Asia should not be limited by agriculture. In connection with the situation in Afghanistan that experiences a significant changes this year, I would like to raise the issues related to the fight against the drug trafficking and control of the state borders in the region, but from the point of view of sustainable development in the Central Asia – prevention of the natural calamities and status of women are also the pressing issues of today. I look forward to open exchange of views with the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of each member-states.

Nowadays the Central Asia continues to show the high dynamic indicators.

On September of the last year a high results in various fields, including in politics and economy were achieved within the framework of the visit of the President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov to Japan. In particular, due to the high interest of the Japanese companies to Turkmenistan the contract in the field of gas chemistry in the amount of 1 trillion yens and framework agreements were signed. It is worth of mentioning that after this event the relations started to develop not only at the intergovernmental level but the chain of events followed after that as appointment of the Ambassador of Turkmenistan to Japan and visits of high ranking officials as well as on June of the current year participation of Nobel Laureate, Professor Ei-ichi Negishi from Japan in the opening ceremony of Centre of technologies of Techno Park of Turkmenistan took place.

Japan intends to continue to render all-round support to the Central Asia in all its needs, to be its partner and collaborate together in ensuring the stability and development of the region. This is the practice of "pro-active contribution to the world", based on principles of international cooperation put forward by the Cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

I believe that Japan's partnership with Turkmenistan is not limited with the issues related to the Central Asian region but it is also covers such global issues as disarmament, non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and reforms the UN Security Council. I do hope to cooperate with Turkmenistan in the international arena. In this context, Japan all-roundly made its due contribution to the process of working out the draft of "Central Asian Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Agreement", and I would like to note that on May of the current year, the five nuclear states signed the Protocol on security assurances. I am inspired by such steps, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs being the only country that suffered atomic bombings in the war and the Deputy who hails from Hiroshima, I set a high goal of creating "a world without nuclear weapons".

Through today's discussion, I do hope that the next 10 years will become the general perspectives that aimed at continuation of mutually beneficial partnership between the Central Asia and Japan on a wide range of issues.

In conclusion, I would like to present to you our new friends who will implement in life the idea of the Dialogue "Central Asia plus Japan". These characters present themselves a partnership between the five Central Asian countries with Japan. I would like to observe all these developments with you.