

Joint Press Statement
Visit to Darwin by Japanese Prime Minister Abe

16 November 2018

Overview

1. Prime Ministers Scott Morrison and Shinzo Abe met today in Darwin for the annual Australia-Japan summit meeting. The annual meetings between Australia and Japan are symbolic of the deep, enduring and resilient friendship between the two countries, based on common values and interests. This engagement builds on strong business, community and education ties between the Australian and Japanese people.
2. During Prime Minister Abe's first visit to Darwin, the two leaders acknowledged the loss and sacrifices of World War II and their determination to work tirelessly to ensure a peaceful future for the region. They highlighted the immense progress made since the war, the speed and sincerity of reconciliation between the two countries and the development of deep trust, reflected in the Special Strategic Partnership the two countries share today.
3. The Prime Ministers noted the significance of their meeting in Northern Australia, at the confluence of the Indian and the Pacific Oceans. They reaffirmed their commitment to deepen cooperation to ensure a free, open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific region underpinned by the rule of law, as enunciated in Australia's 2017 Foreign Policy White Paper and Japan's vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific.
4. They acknowledged the important role of regional and global institutions and welcomed substantive discussions at the East Asia Summit (EAS) [Singapore, 15 November] on regional strategic issues. The Prime Ministers looked forward to attending the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Meeting in Papua New Guinea.
5. The Prime Ministers reiterated the importance of deepening and expanding people-to-people exchanges between the two countries, including at the regional level, which underpin the vitality of the bilateral relationship. In this regard, they looked forward to the expansion of the exchange of researchers and students.

Economic Cooperation

6. The Prime Ministers reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to a free and open rules-based multilateral trading system for global stability and prosperity. They moved to enhance cooperation to improve the functioning of the World Trade Organization (WTO) through its reform, including to address market distorting subsidies, support monitoring and notification, and strengthen dispute settlement functions. They reaffirmed the importance of the ongoing WTO e-commerce initiative, including with a view to moving to negotiations in light of the importance of e-commerce to global economic growth.

7. The Prime Ministers committed to continue to work together to advocate the importance of free trade and promote practical initiatives to liberalise international trade, amidst rising concerns over protectionism. They welcomed expeditious completion of domestic processes by seven members, including Japan and Australia, which ensures entry into force of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP-11). They confirmed their commitment to expand free markets in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond through expansion of the agreement. The leaders also shared their commitment to the conclusion of negotiations in 2019 for a high-quality Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) agreement, which would promote closer regional economic integration.
8. The Prime Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to cooperate closely to ensure the success of Japan's G20 Presidency and to reinforce the role of the G20 as the premier forum for international economic cooperation.
9. The Prime Ministers recognised the importance of strengthening Japan and Australia's strategic economic partnership. They emphasised the value of the inaugural Ministerial Economic Dialogue held in July this year. They also noted the ongoing success of the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (JAEPA) and expressed their hope to further deepen bilateral economic relations under the agreement.
10. The leaders committed to cooperate in enhancing connectivity in the Indo-Pacific region through the development of quality infrastructure in accordance with international standards and principles, such as openness, transparency and economic efficiency. They highlighted fiscal soundness, including debt sustainability and transparency, as essential for sustainable development and sovereignty. They welcomed progress in developing international standards for investment in infrastructure under the framework of APEC and committed to further collaboration in the G20 in this area.
11. They welcomed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT), the Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (Efic) and the Nippon Export and Investment Insurance (NEXI) to advance infrastructure financing and investment cooperation. They also welcomed the signing of a MOU among DFAT, Efic, the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) of the United States which reflects the strong commitment to regional cooperation by Australia, Japan and the United States. The leaders underlined the importance of accelerating the discussion at the International Working Group on Export Credits (IWG).
12. The Prime Ministers looked forward to continued and sustainable cooperation on resources and energy, and looked forward to expanding their work to third countries in the Indo-Pacific region to achieve open and competitive energy markets and universal access to affordable and reliable energy. They were delighted to celebrate the first gas production and LNG shipment from the INPEX-operated Ichthys Project which illustrates the development of bilateral energy cooperation. They welcomed the signing of a MOU

between the Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEC) and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to further scientific cooperation in the field of energy.

13. The Prime Ministers welcomed the progress in bilateral collaboration in agriculture, including in northern Australia, on prawn farming in the Northern Territory and a research project on a new variety of soybean in North Queensland. They recognised the potential for the two countries to boost agricultural exports into international markets through cooperation on bilateral counter-seasonal production.

Strategic Cooperation

14. The Prime Ministers decided to continue to support regional stability and security, including through broader and deeper defence cooperation. They welcomed ongoing growth in the bilateral security relationship, including initiatives identified at the Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations (“2+2”) in October 2018, and directed their respective Ministers of Defence to further enhance and explore practical and effective defence cooperation.
15. The Prime Ministers affirmed their shared view of the strategic importance of concluding a reciprocal access agreement, which would improve administrative, policy and legal procedures to facilitate joint operations and exercises, in order to deepen the mutually beneficial defence cooperation and strengthen the Special Strategic Partnership between Japan and Australia. They welcomed the significant progress made to date in negotiations, and directed all relevant Ministers to accelerate negotiations with a view to concluding them, preferably by early 2019.
16. The leaders reaffirmed the importance of the United States’ role in the stability of the Indo-Pacific region and their respective security alliances with the United States. They welcomed the progress in cooperation among Japan, Australia, India and the United States, and reaffirmed their commitment to further enhancing trilateral and quadrilateral cooperation with both the United States and India.
17. The leaders reaffirmed their strong support for ASEAN centrality and the ASEAN-led regional architecture and noted the achievements of ASEAN in fostering peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific. They resolved to further enhance their engagement with ASEAN, noting the success of the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit 2018 and the Japan-ASEAN Summit to commemorate the 45th anniversary of Japan-ASEAN Friendship and Cooperation in 2018.
18. The Prime Ministers recognised the importance of a stable and secure regional maritime order, and looked forward to increased cooperation on maritime safety and security in the Indo-Pacific region between Australia and Japan, and trilaterally with the United States. Prime Minister Morrison welcomed the visit of Japanese Coast Guard Patrol Vessel Echigo to Darwin.

19. The Prime Ministers stand united behind the international community's commitment to the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement of all North Korea's nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, in accordance with relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions (UNSCRs). They welcomed ongoing discussions between North Korea and each of the United States and Republic of Korea as a step towards the comprehensive resolution of outstanding issues regarding North Korea. They emphasised the importance of full implementation of UNSCRs to urge North Korea to take concrete steps towards compliance with relevant UNSCRs. They reaffirmed their commitment to cooperate to that end, such as through surveillance of suspicious maritime activities, including illicit ship-to-ship transfers involving North Korean-flagged vessels. Leaders noted the United Nations cap on the North Korean importation of refined petroleum products for 2018 had been breached, and called upon all Member States to immediately stop supplying these products to North Korea in accordance with UNSCR 2397. They also called on North Korea to end its human rights violations and immediately resolve the issue of Japanese citizens abducted by North Korea.
20. The Prime Ministers reiterated their commitment to international law and its importance in maintaining peace and stability in the maritime domain. They remained seriously concerned about the situation in the South China Sea and reiterated the importance of freedom of navigation and overflight and of upholding the rules-based regional and international order. They noted the importance of resolving maritime disputes peacefully and in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). They urged all parties to pursue demilitarisation of disputed features and to fully respect legal and diplomatic processes without resorting to the threat or use of force. The leaders emphasised the importance of self-restraint and expressed strong opposition to any coercive or unilateral actions by claimants that could change the status quo or increase tensions.
21. They urged relevant states to make and clarify territorial and maritime claims based on international law. They acknowledged recent movement towards a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea and called for it: to be consistent with existing international law, as reflected in UNCLOS; not to prejudice the interests of third parties or the rights of any state under international law; to reinforce existing regional architecture; and to strengthen parties' commitments to cease actions that would complicate or escalate disputes, including militarisation.
22. The Prime Ministers shared their intention to remain in close communication about the situation in the East China Sea and expressed opposition to any coercive unilateral actions that seek to alter the status quo or increase tensions in the area.
23. The Prime Ministers emphasised the importance of close cooperation between Australia and Japan to work in partnership with Pacific island countries to support the region's economic and social resilience, stability and prosperity. They committed to strengthen

collaboration in the Pacific, including in the context of Australia's stepped up engagement in the region and Japan's PALM process.

24. The Prime Ministers also reaffirmed their commitment to an open, free, fair and secure cyberspace, and resolved to deepen cooperation and promote information sharing, including in the United Nations, to deter and respond to the malicious use of cyberspace, particularly by states and their proxies. They reiterated that existing international law and voluntary peacetime norms of responsible state behaviour apply in cyberspace. They also recognised the importance of taking appropriate measures to protect critical infrastructure from ICT threats and ensuring the security of the supply chain from cyber threats.

Science and Innovation Cooperation

25. The Prime Ministers recognised the opportunity for greater collaboration between Japan and Australia in space activities, noting the establishment of the Australian Space Agency on 1 July 2018. They welcomed the official launch of Japan's Quasi Zenith Satellite System services on 1 November 2018 and ongoing projects using the system.
26. The Prime Ministers welcomed the expansion of collaboration under the bilateral Innovation Framework, including into healthcare, artificial intelligence and the internet of things for Smart Cities. The Prime Ministers welcomed the launch of the joint Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain Pilot Project this year as a significant first mover project in the development of a low-emissions hydrogen partnership.
27. The Prime Ministers acknowledged the Japan Agency for Medical Research and Development (AMED) and the National Health and Medical Research Council of Australia (NHMRC) signed the first memorandum of cooperation in the field of medical research and development between Japan and Australia on 17 October 2018.
28. This year's meeting coincides with the 30th anniversary of Questacon, Japan's 1988 Bicentennial gift to the people of Australia. Celebrations include Questacon's Science Circus Tour of Japan as part of the successful *Australia Now* public diplomacy program. Prime Minister Morrison thanked Japan for the contribution Questacon had made over 30 years in inspiring Australians to participate in and learn about science. He was pleased to gift Japan with three Questacon exhibits, and hoped they would inspire future generations of Japanese scientists.

Conclusion

29. Prime Minister Morrison and Prime Minister Abe look forward to the next annual summit meeting in Japan.