

Joint Statement
On the Strengthening of the Comprehensive Partnership towards
Stability and Prosperity between
Japan and the Kingdom of Bahrain

H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, visited the Kingdom of Bahrain from August 24 to 25, 2013. Prime Minister Abe was graciously granted an audience with H.M. King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, King of the Kingdom of Bahrain. He met with H.R.H. Prince Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Bahrain on August 24, and they reaffirmed the importance of further expanding bilateral cooperation. Recalling the outcomes of the H.M. King Hamad and H.R.H. Crown Prince Salman's visit to Japan in April 2012 and March 2013 respectively, both sides welcomed tangible progress of the bilateral cooperation in the political and economic fields, as well as in cultural and people-to-people exchanges.

A plenary session chaired by H.R.H. Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was held at Al-Gudaibiya Palace. Both sides attached great importance on Prime Minister Abe's official visit as the first official visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain for Japanese Prime Minister. This visit provided a good opportunity for both sides to further expand and deepen bilateral cooperation in all areas.

Both sides had fruitful and cordial discussions on all aspects of bilateral relations, as well as regional and global issues. Both sides expressed their satisfaction with the development of their cooperation and reiterated their commitment to further enhancing cooperation in all mutually beneficial areas, with particular focus on the development of their strong economic partnership.

While welcoming the signing of the Memorandum on Policy Consultations between the Foreign Ministries in April 2012 when H.M. King Hamad visited Japan, both sides emphasized the importance of cooperating in the political and security fields, and shared the view to continue to facilitate policy consultations between the Foreign Ministries

of the two countries, the last of which was held in Tokyo in February 2013.

Both sides emphasized the importance of implementing the recommendations of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Bahrain and resuming the National Dialogue as a means of achieving national unity through consensus and constructive dialogue. Both sides welcomed the continued substantial progress towards reform in the country. Both sides condemned all acts of violence and terrorism and asserted the need to safeguard social security and stability in accordance with national legislation and international laws.

Both sides decided to hold a Comprehensive Security Dialogue to discuss regional situations, maritime security including the safety of the sea lanes of communications and counter-piracy, non-proliferation, anti-terrorism, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, among other issues between the Foreign Ministries and the Defense Authorities of the two countries, and the Ministry of Interior of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Both sides expressed their intention to promote defense exchanges, including working level exchanges, unit-to-unit exchanges, education and research exchanges, exchange of views on mutual interests, and multilateral cooperation based on the Memorandum on Defense Exchanges between the Defense Ministries of the two countries signed in April 2012.

Both sides welcomed the signing of the Statement of Cooperation between the Japan Financial Intelligence Center of the National Public Safety Commission of Japan and Bahrain Financial Intelligence Directorate concerning the Exchange of Financial Intelligence Related to Money Laundering and Terrorist Financing on the occasion of this visit.

Both sides emphasized the importance of expanding dialogues and cooperation between Japan and the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) based on the Memorandum on Cooperation and Strategic Dialogue and on the Action Plan, and holding Japan-GCC Strategic Dialogue at

Ministerial level and a Senior Officials Meeting as early as possible, while recalling Bahrain is the GCC presidency holder in 2013.

In the area of cooperation in the fields of economy, agriculture and medical service, both sides shared the view to expand bilateral cooperation in infrastructure construction in Bahrain such as refinery projects of Bahrain Petroleum Company, waste water treatment, rehabilitation of the Tubli Bay and earth observation satellite.

Both sides welcomed the activities of Japan-Bahrain Economic Cooperation Association (JBECA) including dispatch of a Japanese mission to Bahrain in May 2013 to strengthen the business relationship between the two countries.

Both sides welcomed the cooperation between Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEC) and National Oil and Gas Authority of Bahrain (NOGA) in the field of oil and natural gas development.

Both sides commended the long-standing implementation of training programs for engineers and dispatch of experts of oil industry including refinery by Japan Cooperation Center, petroleum (JCCP).

Both sides emphasized the importance of increasing cooperation among small and medium-sized enterprises of the two countries regarding for instance natural pearl research and solar thermal energy.

Both sides noted with appreciation the establishment of the new scheme of cost-sharing technical cooperation for human resources development by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

Both sides emphasized the importance of medical exchanges and cooperation between the two countries, including human resources development in the health sector, by utilizing Japan's advanced medical technology and services, while welcoming the ongoing pharmaceutical cooperation between the private sectors and universities of the two countries.

Both sides expressed their intention to discuss legal methods to promote and protect mutual investment between the two countries.

Both sides also expressed their intention to cooperate to resume the negotiation of the Free Trade Agreement between Japan and the Cooperation Council for the Arab State of the Gulf (GCC) member states.

Both sides shared the view to promote mutual understanding of food cultures and information exchange between Japanese and Bahraini food industries in order for Japan to contribute to healthy and rich dietary customs of the people of Bahrain.

In this regard, Japan welcomed Bahrain's decision to lift its restrictions on food imports from Japan upon mutually decided terms.

Both sides emphasized the importance of actively participating in the 3rd Japan-Arab Economic Forum and contribute to the success of the Forum.

Both sides emphasized the importance of cultural and people-to-people exchanges. In this regard, both sides expressed their intention to promote bilateral cooperation in the field of education, science and technology, and cultural and people-to-people exchanges through for instance Japanese language education and dispatch of Japanese experts to Bahrain, and increase the number of Bahraini students who study in Japan, while noting Japan's policy to invite trainees from the Middle East and send in return Japanese instructors to the region which will amount to 20,000 people over the next five years.

Both sides welcomed their respective consideration of the waiver of visas for Japanese and Bahraini diplomatic or official passport holders, seeking entry into the other country for diplomatic or official purposes, or for a temporary visit.

Both sides discussed situations in the Middle East and North Africa, and emphasized the importance of maintaining peace, stability and prosperity

in the region. Both sides also exchanged views with regards to situations in Asia and the Pacific, and stressed the importance of stability and prosperity in the region.

After the plenary session, the two Prime Ministers presided over the signing ceremony on the Memoranda of Cooperation in the fields of agriculture, health, and exchange of financial intelligence related to money laundering and terrorist financing.