

**Remarks by H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan,
at the Qatar-Japan Business Forum**

Wednesday, August 28, 2013 Sheraton Hotel, Doha, Qatar

[Provisional Translation]

Your Excellency Dr. Muhammed bin Saleh Al-Sada, Minister of Energy and Industry,
Distinguished participants,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Today leaders of both Japan and Qatar, representing various fields such as infrastructure, industry, finance, food and medicine, and education have come together here in great numbers indeed. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to those of you who have travelled long distances to be here and to the many people graciously participating from Qatar.

On this occasion today, first of all, I wish to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Qatari people. Roughly a month after the Great East Japan Earthquake struck Japan, Sheikh Khalid bin Khalifa Al Thani, the CEO of Qatargas came all the way to Japan to assure us that “Japan need not worry at all about getting an additional supply of natural gas.” I can hardly imagine how truly relieved the Japanese side felt upon hearing that.

Not only that, but he continued saying, “Japan is our foundation customer, who has strongly supported the economic development of Qatar. It is now our turn to continue to provide all the support we can extend.”

We were deeply touched by this. Indeed, I visited Qatar six years ago as Prime Minister. And, for a time, I worked for Kobe Steel. So I know a bit, limited though it may be, about the relationship between Qatar and Japan.

In 1974, Qatar constructed a steelworks called Qatar Steel, and it was in fact Kobe Steel that came to be Qatar Steel’s partner in a joint project. This project was still in its early years when I graduated from university and started working for Kobe Steel. I remember that the building of the first integrated steel mill on the Arabian Peninsula came up as a subject at that time.

JOGMEC has just now newly concluded a memorandum of understanding with Qatar Petroleum Company. While its objective is to reinforce cooperation in the areas of oil and natural gas, I am especially pleased at the fact that over the past nearly 40 years, the resources and energy relationship between Qatar and Japan has been developed so successfully.

Qatar and Japan have been growing side by side, so to speak, up to the present day. We have enjoyed a warm-hearted relationship with a compassionate human touch. I would like to take this opportunity to express once more our sincere gratitude for the heartfelt assistance given to us after 3.11—the great earthquake and tsunami of March 11, 2011.

I am visiting Qatar for the first time in six years, and I have been amazed at how dramatically the scenery has changed because of increasing in the number of high-rise buildings. I have heard that in the coming months and years, as you prepare to host the FIFA World Cup nine years from now, well more than ten trillion yen of demand for infrastructure investment will be generated.

I also heard that in anticipation of this, in just the last few years, as many as 20 countries have newly entered into diplomatic relations with Qatar and opened embassies here.

Moreover, Qatar's per capita GDP is more than double that of Japan. We rarely see such an affluent market. This is precisely why I recommend the Qatari people to enjoy a variety of Japanese food as well as our highly-developed medical technologies and services, and why I aim for Japan and Qatar to live and prosper together.

Cooperation has already begun between Medical Excellence Japan and Qatar's Hamad General Hospital. Moreover, I believe Qatar is the best place where Japan's regenerative medicine can become popular here.

Another example is Japan's vegetable factories. The highest level of technology in Japan can successfully cultivate fresh lettuce in the midst of a parched environment. With one thing and another, I would like the people of Qatar to come to think, "The one who always comes to help us is none other than Japanese."

Of course, I would also like to urge the people of Qatar to remove import restrictions that impede Japanese food items from entering into the Qatari market.

I intend to deepen the cooperation between Japan and Qatar across a broad range of areas such as political and security matters, economic issues, education, agriculture, medical technologies and services, and culture and exchanges of personnel rather than having our relations stay limited to the area of energy.

I moreover intend to give relations between Japan and the Middle East a robust push forward, based on the three pillars of collaboration (*al-ta'āun*), coexistence and co-prosperity (*al-ta'āish*), and harmony and tolerance (*al-tasāmuh*).

I would like to close my remarks to you with my great expectations that today's seminar becomes a good opportunity to lift the existing relations between Qatar and Japan to a more elevated level. I also want to extend my best wishes for the good health and success of all those gathered here today.

Thank you very much for listening.