

**Joint Communiqué**  
**on the Strengthening of the Comprehensive Partnership**  
**towards Stability and Prosperity**  
**Between**  
**Japan and the Sultanate of Oman**

His Excellency Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan, visited the Sultanate of Oman on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January and departed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2014. During the visit, Prime Minister Abe met with His Majesty Qaboos bin Said, Sultan of Oman. On behalf of the people of Japan, Prime Minister Abe expressed Japan's deep appreciation for Oman's generous and humanitarian support to Japan in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred in March of 2011. Both Oman and Japan expressed their satisfaction with the continually growing bilateral relations, as well as the intent to further strengthen partnership and cooperation between the two countries on all levels and fields.

**1. Cooperation in Political and Security Fields**

Both sides welcomed the signing of a Memorandum on Policy Dialogue and Consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Sultanate of Oman to further enhance the relations and to continually exchange views on the bilateral, regional, and international issues.

Acknowledging the importance of stability on sea-lanes of communication for the peace and prosperity of the international community as a whole, both sides shared the common interest in strengthening the maritime order based upon such fundamental principles as the rule of law and the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with relevant international law including the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). In this regard, Prime Minister Abe expressed Japan's deep appreciation towards Oman's cooperation in maintaining anti-piracy activities. Looking at the geopolitical importance of Oman, both sides shared the need to strengthen their cooperation on maritime security including anti-

piracy operations. Prime Minister Abe stressed his resolve to even more actively contribute to peace and stability in the world including the Middle East in accordance with the policy of “Proactive Contribution to Peace” based on the principle of international cooperation. His Majesty Sultan Qaboos welcomed this resolve and confirmed the importance of the continuing efforts of the Sultanate by working with the international community in securing a peaceful and stable passage in the Gulf Region. Both sides confirmed their commitments and readiness to work towards this goal. In this regard, they expressed their intention to promote defense exchanges at various levels.

As both sides are members of the Executive Council of the Middle East Desalination Research Centre (MEDRC), both stressed the importance of providing continuous support and funding to the Centre.

Both sides acknowledged the importance of regular senior official visits between both countries.

Both sides decided to continue discussions on visa exemption between both countries for their diplomatic and official passport holders.

Both sides acknowledged the importance of the Japan-GCC Strategic Dialogue at the Ministerial level.

## **2. Cooperation in Economic Fields**

Both sides reiterated the importance of stability of the global energy market and Prime Minister Abe welcomed Oman’s continuous endeavor to supply oil and LNG to Japan.

Both sides reaffirmed to further strengthen cooperation in the energy sector utilizing Japan’s advanced technologies. In this regard, they welcomed the Japanese companies’ participation in oil and natural gas development and LNG projects and confirmed their willingness to support their efforts. They also welcomed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding on the cooperation on their field of technological and research cooperation for oil

and gas development in Oman between Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEC) and Ministry of Oil and Gas in January 2014.

Both sides welcomed the long-standing implementation for training programs for engineers and dispatch of experts of oil industry including the refinery sector by Japan Cooperation Centre, Petroleum (JCCP).

Both sides welcomed the signing of the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Sultanate of Oman for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and the substantial agreement on the bilateral investment agreement to reciprocally promote and protect investment recently reached between the two countries. Both sides supported the resumption of negotiations on the Free Trade Agreement between Japan and the GCC member states.

Both sides recognized the importance of further cooperation in the development of electricity and water infrastructure through encouraging the private sector to participate and invest in the Independent Power & Water Projects (IPP, IWPP, IWP) and welcomed the developments of AL Ghubrah IWP Project to which Japanese companies contribute.

Both sides welcomed the ongoing discussions on the cost-sharing technical cooperation for human resources development by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). They expressed their expectation that such efforts will contribute to further strengthening the economic relationship between the two countries.

Noting that there is a need of tourism promotion and urban development including the improvement of transportation systems, both sides expressed their intention to further strengthen cooperation through exchanges of experts in those areas.

Both sides affirmed to strengthen cooperation and exchanges between their medical sectors utilizing Japan's advanced medical technologies and services.

Both sides acknowledged the importance of fostering mutual understanding related to their food cultures and developing information exchange especially regarding the quality of food.

Both sides expressed the importance of further promotion of trade and investment between the two countries and working towards supporting and enhancing the relationships between the relevant organizations and other bilateral cooperation to promote business between the two countries. In this regard, both sides welcomed the development of cooperation between the Omani Public Authority for Investment Promotion and Export Development (PAIPED) and Japan Cooperation Center for the Middle East (JCCME) and their intention to hold the Oman Investment Forum in Tokyo in 2014.

Both sides expressed their intention to work together for further Japan-Arab cooperation based on the successful outcomes of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Japan-Arab Economic Forum in Tokyo in December 2013.

### **3. Cooperation in the Areas of Education and Culture**

Both sides mentioned the importance of strengthening cooperation in the field of education. In this regard, they highly appreciated the academic contribution achieved through the establishment of the Sultan Qaboos Academic Chair in Middle Eastern Studies at the University of Tokyo-Centre for Middle Eastern Studies. Both sides expressed that such efforts will further promote Middle Eastern Studies in Japan, looking forward to the upcoming symposium of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Academic Chairs in Tokyo in October of 2014.

Both sides expressed their expectation that the number of Omani students who study in Japan will further increase through exchanges of institutions between the two countries. In this regard, the Omani side welcomes Japanese students to take part in courses provided by the Sultan Qaboos College for Teaching Arabic Language to Non-Native Speakers, as part of enhancing the cultural exchanges between the two countries.

Both sides expressed their expectation that efforts towards offering introductory Japanese language courses at the Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) will further promote Japanese language education in Oman.

Both sides welcomed initiatives in the Dialogue between Civilizations taken by the Sultan Qaboos Higher Centre for Culture and Science.

Both sides reiterated the importance of strengthening cultural and youth exchange between the two countries and of the cooperation in the field of developing the youth's talent and the exchange of expertise in fields such as the handicrafts industries. They also expressed their appreciation for the role that the friendship societies between the two countries play in regards to enhancing these exchanges.

Both sides expressed their satisfaction in regards to the cooperation between the National Archives of Japan and Omani National Records and Archives Authority. The Omani side expressed its appreciation of the efforts provided by Japan in regards to the exchange of archival information and the provision of specialized training programs to its counterpart in Oman in the field of the preservation and restoration of archives.

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos expressed his congratulations to Japan for winning the title of host nation to the Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020.

#### **4. Regional and International Issues**

Both sides shared the view that the visit of Prime Minister Abe to Oman contributed to deepening mutual understanding of their respective foreign policies on a wide range of regional and international issues of mutual interest.

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