

Joint Meeting Outcomes

Visit to Australia by Japanese Prime Minister Abe

Prime Minister Turnbull and Prime Minister Abe held a productive working meeting in Sydney today. Discussions highlighted the depth of the Australia-Japan relationship and our shared strategic and economic interests. The Australia-Japan Special Strategic Partnership has never been stronger or more important.

As dynamic and agile economies, Australia and Japan are leading voices for an open global trading environment that contributes to inclusive economic growth, higher living standards and more jobs for the Australian and Japanese people.

In that light, the two leaders are delighted to celebrate the second anniversary of the ground-breaking bilateral Economic Partnership Agreement on 15 January 2017. The ongoing success of this agreement demonstrates our commitment to open markets and also the benefits that comes from freer flows of trade and investment.

The two leaders stressed that implementing the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) remains an indispensable priority because of the significant economic and strategic benefits it offers. The two leaders reaffirmed that a high quality Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) offers opportunities for closer regional economic integration.

Asia's economic rise rests on continued regional peace and stability. To this end, the two leaders directed Defence Ministers to pursue deeper defence cooperation in 2017, including joint training, exercises, operations and capacity building. They witnessed the signing of a new Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement to further facilitate mutual logistical support between the Australian Defence Force and the Japan Self-Defense Forces.

The two leaders also expressed their expectation to conclude negotiations as early as feasible, preferably in 2017, on an agreement to reciprocally improve administrative, policy and legal procedures to facilitate joint operations and exercises.

The two leaders reaffirmed that these initiatives strengthen their countries' long-standing strategic ties, together with our expanding security cooperation in key areas like cyber, space and defence science and technology, and in broader security matters such as counter-terrorism and non-proliferation.

The two leaders affirmed that Japan and Australia's respective security alliances with the United States remain as relevant and important today as they have been for over six decades. These alliances are the cornerstones of Australia and Japan's peace and security, and underpin regional stability and prosperity. Japan and Australia will continue to work proactively, alongside the US and other like-minded countries, including India, to maintain the rules-based international order and support a peaceful and stable Indo-Pacific region. In this context, Prime Minister Turnbull appreciated Prime Minister Abe's briefing on Japan's

'Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy' and welcomed its focus on greater regional engagement by Japan.

The two leaders reaffirmed the importance of strong regional institutions, such as the leaders-led East Asia Summit, as a vital means to identifying collective solutions to emerging challenges.

The situation in the South China Sea remains of serious concern to both leaders. They underlined Australia and Japan's shared interests in freedom of navigation, overflight and unimpeded trade in the South China Sea and urged all parties to exercise self-restraint, and to avoid actions that would escalate tensions, including the militarisation of outposts in the South China Sea. They called on parties to resolve disputes peacefully in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. The two leaders reiterated the need for the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states and China to ensure full and effective implementation of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea in its entirety and the early establishment of an effective Code of Conduct.

The two leaders reiterated their opposition to any unilateral or coercive actions that could alter the status quo and increase tensions in the East China Sea. The two leaders underlined that their respective Foreign Ministers should remain in close contact on the situation.

The two leaders condemned in the strongest terms North Korea's continued nuclear tests and multiple ballistic missile launches as destabilising and provocative and urged North Korea to desist. North Korea's actions underlined the importance of its full and thorough implementation of all relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including the recently adopted Resolution 2321, and the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks. They also strongly urged North Korea to end its human rights violations and resolve the abductions issue immediately.

Acknowledging the importance of building connections between business, researchers and universities, and strengthening personal ties between nations, the two leaders welcomed the opportunity to meet with Australian and Japanese senior business and other representatives. This included a Japanese business delegation accompanying Prime Minister Abe, facilitated by Japan's Conference for Promotion of Exchanges between Japan and Australia. In this context, the two leaders also welcomed the signing of memoranda of cooperation on innovation and sport, and major initiatives such as the Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain Project, Ichthys LNG Project, and space cooperation, including utilisation of the Quasi Zenith Satellite System.

The two leaders also supported the signing of memoranda of cooperation on agriculture, between Australia's Northern Territory Government and Japan's Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries; and on tourism, between Tourism Australia and Japan National

Tourism Organisation. These initiatives reflect the growing depth and diversity of the bilateral relationship at all levels of government.

Prime Minister Abe's visit to Sydney, as part of the annual meetings between the two leaders in their respective countries, reinforces the depth, warmth and strength of our bilateral ties and the high importance of the long-standing partnership between Japan and Australia.

Sydney

14 January 2017