

Remarks

**Presented by Mr NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth,
On the occasion of the One Year Anniversary Celebration of the
Launch of the Australia Japan Business Council WA AJBC (WA)
May 1, 2023**

His Excellency Richard Court AC, Former Ambassador of Australia to Japan and Former Premier of Western Australia;

Ms Jessica Shaw, MLA, Assistant Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Premier;

Mr Richard Sandover, Chairman, Australia Japan Business Council;

Councilor Liam Gobbert, Deputy Lord Mayor, City of Perth;

Professor Peter Klinken AC, Chief Scientist, Western Australian Government
Business Leaders of Western Australia and of Japan;

Mr Masaki Takahara, Managing Director of JETRO Australia;

Partners, Friends;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

Welcome to the Official Residence of Japan to join us celebrating one year since the launch of the Australia Japan Business Council. I wish to congratulate AJBC for your efforts in the first year of bridging Australian business sectors in WA with Japan.

On Saturday, Ambassador Shingo Yamagami who was the keynote speaker at the launch of AJBC at Government House one year ago, has departed Canberra with his wife Kaoru for Japan after successfully completing his assignment for two and a half years in Australia. He has send his best wishes to members of AJBC wishing for further success.

Ambassador Yamagami loved Australia and until the last day, availed himself 120 percent for strengthening of Japan-Australia relations, and has achieved historical gain for our two nations. With his guidance, Prime Minister Albanese and Prime Minister Kishida met 5 times within 6 months including Prime Minister Kishida's visit to Perth last year. And in this month, the two Prime Ministers will meet gain at G7 Hiroshima Summit on 19-21th May as well as at the QUAD Sydney meeting on 24th May, both as chairs of prominent forum of the world governance where upholding rules based order is the top of the agenda as a global challenge.

I wish to take this opportunity and thank everyone for your kind support to Ambassador Yamagami and to our diplomatic efforts under his leadership.

In reflecting on the first year of AJBC, we had a session, the Hon Roger Cook, Deputy Premier and I talked about the potential impact of the direct flight. After a special effort by Mr Takeda, MD of All Nippon Airways (ANA) in Perth who was present at the session, an announcement of the resumption in October was made right before the visit of Premier McGowan to Japan in January. And tonight we are delighted to have Mr Mabuchi, the new MD of ANA in Perth who succeeded Mr Takeda. As the resumption of the flight to connect Perth and Tokyo in less than 10 hours is so important for our economies, we look forward to the successful re-launch and the service hopefully to expand its flight frequency.

Another session was by Professor Klinken on the importance of role of advanced technology and innovation in our two economies. In this regard, we are delighted to see the announcement by Hazer Group who went into partnership with Chiyoda Corporation, an engineering giant and Chubu Electric Power Company to produce hydrogen in Japan utilizing the Hazer process.

The Hazer process enables effective conversion of natural gas or similar feedstock such as biogas, into hydrogen and high quality graphite used in lithium ion batteries, using iron ore as a process catalyst. It was timely advancement of what Prof Klinken has suggested in the AJBC seminar. We have with us Mr Luc Kox of Hazer Group and Mr Andrew Tan of Chiyoda Corporation tonight.

We also have a Toyota team headed by Mr Tanabe, General Manager of Hydrogen Business Plan Department. Toyota will have hydrogen showcase event on 13-14 June at Perth Convention Center to share what is possible in the next phase by applying core technology such as hydrogen tank module even to heavy mining machinery. If you are interested in please talk to them. I am glad to know that Deputy Premier is driving Toyota's Mirai.

I wish also to acknowledge Ms Nicole Fasana, Western Australia's Commissioner for Investment and Trade in Tokyo is with us. The success of Premier McGowan's visit to Japan in January as well and Minister Bill Johnston's visit in March owes to the work of

Commissioner Fasana. Thanks to her work, Japan's investment to Australia is increasing. According to Habert Smith Freehills, number of partnerships signed was 51, more than double of previous year.

Active interactions is ongoing in the field of energy sector between gas industries including Japanese side and Australian authorities concerning a series of regulations including the reviewed Safeguard Mechanism. Although the depth of concern among Japanese companies should not be underestimated, it is my hope that with mutual trust forged over years, we will get to wise resolutions through candid exchanges, as we did before.

I wish to mention another encouraging sign, people-to-people interaction. The Perth Japan Festival held on 25th March at the Supreme Court Gardens attracted more than 16,000, the biggest ever in the history of the festival. Many suggested it was better than any Japanese festival in Australia. Next year is a milestone 10th Perth Japan Festival, which coincide with 50th anniversary of Perth-Kagoshima Sister City relations, another opportunity to boost interactions with the help of direct flight. The Yanchep train station will also be completed in next year and we will celebrate 50 years of the JV of clean, green and sustainable project, started by Tokyu Group in 1974. Mr Miura and Mr Jin of the Yanchep Sun City Project who took me to the dream project site last week and impressed us of the vision and the great response from the public, are also with us tonight.

Tonight, I invited Mr Masaki Takahara, Managing Director of JETRO Australia to talk to us. His presentation tonight is on Trends in Japanese Investment in Australia and JETRO's Initiative with Startups.

Japan External Trade Organization is Japanese government organization to promote mutual trade and investment between Japan and foreign countries. JETRO is a major player, like JBIC and JOGMEC when it comes to investment and provides insights, intelligence and an advisory service including to small and medium size business and startups. Though he is based in Sydney, I hope this event becomes a turning point for him to visit Perth often.

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