

Remarks
Presented by NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth
On the occasion of the Launch of WA Parliamentary Friendship Group of Japan
March 15, 2023
(delivered version)

The Hon Mark McGowan MLA, Premier of Western Australia;
Mrs Jessica Stojkovski MLA, Co-Chair, WA Parliamentary Friendship Group of Japan;
The Hon Samantha Rowe MLC, Co-Chair, WA Parliamentary Friendship Group of Japan;
The Hon Michelle Roberts MLA, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly;
Members of Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council;
Japanese business leaders and friends of Japan in WA;
Ladies and Gentlemen;

Thank you for the wonderful drum beat of friendship between Japan and Western Australia.

We would like to express our appreciation to the Co-Chairs, Mrs Jessica Stojkovski MLA and the Hon Samantha Rowe MLC for convening the WA Parliamentary Friendship Group of Japan. Establishment of the Parliamentary Friendship Group on Japan is the start of another new chapter of Japan-WA bilateral relations. Timing of this launch is exceptionally great as the bilateral relations deepens with the visit of Prime Minister KISHIDA Fumio to Perth and Rockingham and the visit of Premier McGowan to Japan with the announcement of the resumption of direct flights later this year. And from today, Minister Bill Johnston is visiting Japan to discuss energy partnership, including CCS and critical minerals.

I am looking forward to seeking meetings with the Friendship Group with visiting Japanese politicians or other prominent delegations for exchanges, and for receiving guidance and support on advancing the bilateral relations between Japan and Western Australia, including energy and resources, security cooperation, science and space, education, sports, art and culture. We invite everyone here to the Perth Japan Festival on Saturday 25th of March at the Supreme Court Gardens from 11:00am.

Lastly, I visited Broome for the first time 10 days ago. The resilience of the pearl divers and their love for the land and people of Australia became a solemn inspiration. Japan and Australia have an extraordinary relationship that transcends time, distance and culture, united in resolve, admiration and enduring friendship. We wish to keep on beating the drums of friendship.

End.