

Remarks

**Presented by Mr NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth
Reception Celebrating the Birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan
Consul-General's Official Residence, Perth, Australia
February 23, 2023**

1 Acknowledgements

The Hon Mark McGowan MLA, Premier of Western Australia,
H.E. Richard Court AC, Former Australian Ambassador to Japan, and Former
Premier of Western Australia

The Hon Madeleine King MP, Minister for Resources, Minister for Northern
Australia

Ms Libby Mettam MLA, Leader of Liberal Party WA, representing Leader of the
Opposition in WA

Ms Tania Lawrence MP

The Hon Matthew Swinburn MLC

The Hon Tjorn Sibma MLC

Ms Jessica Stojkovski MLA, Convener of Western Australia Japan Parliamentary
Friendship League

Dr Jags Krishnan MLA

Mr Yaz Mubarakai MLA

Mr Kevin Michel MLA

Ms Meredith Hammat MLA

Mr Paul Lilburne MLA

Ms Devina D'Anna MLA

The Rt Hon, the Lord Mayor of Perth Basil Zempilas

Dr Andrew Forrest AO, Chairman of Fortescue Metals Group Ltd,

Ms Melanie Brock, Chair Emeritus of Australia NZ Chamber of Commerce

Mr Chris Rodwell, Chief Executive of Chamber of Commerce and Industry

Commodore Ivan Ingham, AM, CSC Senior Officer West Australia ADF
Captain Gary Lawton RAN, Commanding Officer, HMAS Stirling
Captain Bradley Francis RAN, Commander Submarine Force, HMAS Stirling
Brigadier Brett Chaloner CSC, Commander 13th Brigade
Wing Commander Paul Taylor RAAF, Commanding Officer at 25 Squadron

Your Worship the Mayors, including Sister Cities Relations with Japanese Municipalities;

Ms Deb Hamblin, Mayor of City of Rockingham (sister city with Ako city),
Mr Phil Marks, Mayor of City of Belmont (sister city with Adachi-ku Tokyo),
Mr George Gear, Mayor of City of Mellville,
Mr Paul Gillet, Shire President, of Harvey (friendship city with Moka City in Tochigi Prefecture),

Special welcome to councilor Philip Matsumoto, all the way from Broome (sister city with Taiji town, Wakayama prefecture)

Dean of Consular Corps and Fellow Consul-Generals, including MS Nguyen Thanh Ha, Consul-General of Vietnam who just arrived Perth recently.

Mr Yosuke Ueda, Chairman, Japan Chamber of Commerce & Industries in Perth & Major Japanese Business leaders,

Friends of Japan, Ladies and Gentlemen,

2 Introduction

It is my honour and pleasure to host you this evening in this historic building “Minawarra”, meaning “rest a while”, built by Sir Walter James, the 5th Premier of Western Australia, designed by Sir Talbot Hobbs. It was commissioned 123 years ago in 1900. Since 1974, when Japanese Government purchased it from previous owner, this space has served as a heritage of Western Australia as well as a place of Japanese hospitality, “Omotenashi”. So, you are all welcome.

Today 23rd of February is National Day of Japan. We gather here to celebrate birthday of His Majesty the Emperor, who turned 63 years of age today. His majesty has long-standing ties with Australia, stemming from time he spent in this country during his first overseas trip as a youth during the 1970s.

He is a keen tennis player and must have been impressed with the great achievements of Australian players including Men's Doubles champions Rinky Hijikata and Jason Kubler at the Australian Open. Rinky Hijikata is an Australian tennis star with Japanese parentage who made us all proud.

3 Economic Relations

Last year, 2022 was a milestone year for Japan and Western Australia. We have received the Prime Minister Kishida here in Perth, and also to Rockingham. We thank Premier McGowan for receiving two Prime Ministers at the same time. It was only natural that Perth was chosen as the venue for the Leaders Meeting and Prime Minister Kishida's only destination this time, as Western Australia was showcasing all the key elements of Japan Australia relations that is becoming increasingly important, including partnerships on energy, mineral resources, critical minerals, energy transition and security cooperation.

At the beginning of 2023, we have had wonderful progress already, namely the visit of Premier McGowan to Japan. It was perfectly timed after the visit of Prime Minister Kishida, which uplifted the profile of Western Australia even further. The visit of Premier was a great success. The Premier started off by meeting with the CEO of All Nippon Airways, Mr. Shinichi Inoue who told Premier that his honeymoon destination was Perth, and discussed the resumption of Perth-Tokyo direct flights later this year and beyond, expecting its impact not only on tourism but also on trade and educational interactions. The Premier went on to explore energy opportunities. With the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) who has provided finance to a number of WA energy and resource projects, the Premier signed new MOU with JBIC with a renewed emphasis on energy transition including hydrogen, ammonia and critical minerals. The Premier witnessed another MOU between the Pilbara Port Authority and the Port of Himeji

for their partnerships on net-zero carbon emission. The Premier met with Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihiko Isozaki and Minister Yasutoshi Nishimura, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, whom Premier knows and agreed on advancing our Partnership. A number of top executives of major trade houses and utility companies held meetings with Premier, where they discussed on ongoing investments as well as projects on hydrogen, ammonia, critical minerals and other areas of energy transition.

Premier also renewed the Sister City Agreement between Hyogo and Western Australia focusing not only cultural but also economic relations. From Hakata port, the Premier traveled to South Korean port of Bussan by a Western Australian made Jet Ferry, 'JR Queen Beetle' owned and operated by Kyushu Railway Company. I am happy that CEO of Austral that manufactured the ship is also here with us today.

The Premier kindly agreed to us of sharing his impressions of the visit. We are also keen to hear his impression on his test drive of Mirai, the hydrogen fuel cell car he just had on arrival with offer by Toyota Australia. We remember Premier opened the first hydrogen fueling station in Western Australia last November at ATCO with collaboration with Toyota, who is looking forward to the next stage of the application of hydrogen to busses and industrial vehicles.

We thank sincerely to Premier for visiting Japan in the freezing week, and for reaffirming the partnership we built as well as for visioning it for years ahead. Japan's remarkable economic development after 1960 was possible with energy and resources of Western Australia. And we hope Japanese contribution, including investment, technology, innovation and network have been also useful for the development of industry and of economy in Western Australia.

4 Cultural Interaction

These complimentary relations were possible thanks to the deep mutual understanding between people of Japan and Western Australia forged over the longtime. We have 11 sister city agreements in WA. The City of Perth and

Kagoshima are preparing to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the sister city agreement in 2024. The City of Belmont and Adachi ku will also celebrate the 40th anniversary next year. All looks good with the resumption of Perth Tokyo direct flights in October, which will enable further interactions. It is encouraging to note that statistics show Tokyo was the 2nd most popular destination for Australian tourists last December after Bali. And hundreds of Japanese students have come back to Perth for learning since the pandemic.

We are blessed with so many goodwill ambassadors making bridges between Japan and Western Australia. Tonight, I am delighted to present a Certificate of the Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation to the Western Australia Bonsai Association. The President, Dianne Boekhout who is also President of the Australia Bonsai Association, has kindly provided a great exhibition of their Bonsai tonight, including this iconic Bonsai with a Salt Water Paper Bark, an Australian native plant. In spite of having fewer members than the eastern states, the Western Australia Bonsai Association is exceptionally active as highlighted by their hosting of the World Bonsai Convention virtually last year and it is preparing to host the Australia Convention face to face in May this year in Perth.

5 Global vision and ahead

Japan and Australia shared principle of the rule based order and democratic values. In 2023, we share the responsibility to uphold the rules based order, not to allow rules by force, and to uphold democratic values regionally and globally. Australia is the chair of the Quad Leaders' Meeting, whereas Japan is the host of the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May as well as non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 2 years. Japan and Australia are in the driver's seat to seek peace and prosperity of humanity and we wish to continue to work closely.

Lastly, please enjoy a taste of Japan. In the room at the far end, you'll have an opportunity to enjoy and to be briefed on Sake by Mr Andre Bishop, Sake specialist with extraordinary knowledge who has the rare title of "Sake Samurai". Try Traditional Japanese food, not only Sushi, but also Tempura, Yakitori prepared by head Chef Jinichi Osawa and also try his Udon noodles made out of

famous WA wheat flower just ideal for Udon. Visit desks of Fukushima and Okinawa prefectures where they share their products. Visit also the latest model Mirai exhibited outside and Enjoy Wadaiko, festival drumming by Taiko-On,

Thank you for your attention.

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