Remarks
Presented by NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth
On the occasion of the Nagoya Ports and Fremantle Ports
40 Years Twin-Port Partnership Celebration
On January 31, 2024

Mr Chris Sutherland, Chairman of Fremantle Ports Board,
Mr Tomoya Yamashita, Vice Chairman, Nagoya Port Assembly,
The visiting delegation of Nagoya Port Authority,
Her Worship the Mayor Hannah Fitzhardinge, Mayor of the City of Fremantle,
Mr Michael Parker, CEO of Fremantle Ports,
Mr Savio Fernandes, the Harbor Master,
Mr Alan Pearce, the longest serving officer at Fremantle Ports,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my great pleasure to join you in welcoming the delegation of Nagoya Port Authority to Fremantle to celebrate the 40th year of twin-port partnership between Fremantle Ports and Nagoya Ports. Nagoya and Fremantle have had longstanding relations since the twin-port agreement was signed on April 19, 1983. Since then, mutual visits and technical and personnel exchanges have deepened the friendships and partnerships between the two important ports of Japan and Australia.

Ports are an important gateway for the entry and departure of people, thoughts and emotions, as well as for the economy. Japan and Western Australia enjoy longstanding relations over more than 140 years starting with Japanese Pearl divers. Just 12 years after World War II, forward-thinking politicians from Western Australia such as Sir Charles Court and business people joined forces with Japan, looking for ways and means to unlock the potential of our two countries, signing a commerce agreement in 1957. It led to the remarkable economic success of both Japan and Australia, first with iron ore, and later with LNG, and has contributed to the world economy on a massive scale. It is a rare success model of the world.

Investment and trade have played an important role. At Fremantle Ports, WA's largest and busiest cargo port, the port yard is famous for the scenery of hundreds of Toyota cars, manufactured and shipped from Nagoya. Japan has been the top three trading partner and investor to Australia for a very long time. And looking into the future, Japanese and Western Australian companies, namely Chubu Electric, Chiyoda Engineering and Hazer Group are working together to produce hydrogen for the Nagoya area.

In celebrating 40 years in May last year, I was presented by Mr Parker, CEO of Fremantle Ports with a historical framed picture of the Icebreaker Fuji visiting Fremantle in 1968, a touching picture with children welcoming the ship by waiving Japanese flag.

JS Fuji is the predecessor ship of the Icebreaker Shirase which has been visiting Fremantle Ports every year on their expedition to South Pole. The orange coloured hull of Shirase has become a symbol of friendship with Japan and it will visit Fremantle again on the 18th to 23rd of March with resumption of

on board cultural exchanges.

In fact, the last year, 2023, was the year of people-to-people exchanges expanded. It was like the blossoming of flowers after a long winter. This included the resumption of ANA's Perth Narita direct flights after three and a half years of suspension due to the pandemic. More people from Japan are visiting Perth and every visitor spends at least half a day in Fremantle. And the Hon Madeleine King MP from Rockingham is visiting Japan at the moment for energy and resources cooperation.

Today, Japan relies on WA so much that 53 % of Japan's imported iron ore, 35% of LNG, 15% of wheat just ideal for udon noodles, are from Western Australia, and some of these exports are shipped from Fremantle to Japan. Our economic relationship is supported by robust people-to-people bonds which is the most important asset of both Japan and Western Australia. Friendship between Nagoya Ports and Fremantle Ports are certainly part of the asset we cherish. I believe the future prosperity of Japan and Western Australia are inextricably entwined.

I sincerely hope fruitful interactions will be made during this visits and strengthen the relationship for the next 40 years and beyond.

Thank you for your attention.

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