

**Remarks**  
**Presented by NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth**  
**On the occasion of the TAP Welcoming Ceremony for TCU students Cycle B**  
**at Edith Cowan University**  
**Monday 5<sup>th</sup> August, 2024**

Mr Jake Garman, Deputy Vice-Chancellor International, Edith Cowan University,  
Mr Simon Davies Burrows, Manager of Internationalization,  
Prof Mark McMahon, Director International Strategy,  
Professors, staff and buddy ambassadors at ECU,  
Monica Barry who used to be in the very first group of the buddy ambassadors &  
graduate from ECU now working with us at the Japanese Consulate,  
Newly arrived Tokyo City University students,

**(Words of Welcome)**

I wish to welcome the 113 students from Tokyo City University on the TAP Program Cycle B 2024 to Perth. This is a great opportunity to learn, experience and make friends with different cultural backgrounds. After the program's 16 weeks, I believe how you see Australia, Japan and the world will be different. In this cycle, you are lucky to be embraced by beautiful blossoms of wild flowers and jacaranda.

As you know, Tokyo City University's TAP program dispatches a total of 450 undergraduates every year to two universities in WA for 16 weeks and is the biggest program of this duration by a single Japanese university in Australia.

I am sure it is going to be fun, but I recommend you try to maximize this opportunity, as this learning experience will be an important turning point for your future careers. This experience can be life changing.

**(Bilateral Relations)**

Japan and Western Australia share very strong ties that have been built over many years.

Japan's bilateral relation with Australia is at an all-time high. Last week we just had the Quad Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Tokyo with the participation of Minister Penny Wong from Australia. The meeting affirmed the importance of strengthening our collaboration to uphold peace and rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific in the challenging situation. This is on top of our strong relations around resources and energy built upon mutual trust among business leaders and government officials with the broad support of people-to-people friendships.

I say this every time that economically, 53% of Japan's imported iron ore, 30% of LNG and 15% of wheat, just ideal for udon noodles are from Western Australia. Substantial

amounts of Japan's imported sugar, beef and canola oil are also from Australia. Australia is everywhere in our life in Japan, with 8 hours of Japan's electricity owed to energy imported from Australia.

#### (Expanding people-to-people exchange)

During 2023 and 2024, we have seen a remarkable expansion of people-to-people exchange. In December and April, more than 80,000 Australians visited Japan, in June it surpassed pre-COVID levels. It is to the extent that one high ranking official of WA government even told me two-thirds of Australians have visited Japan, which is not quite true but it sounds like it is.

Kagoshima City and the City of Perth have just celebrated the 50th year of their sister city relationship, with an Adachi-ku delegation from Tokyo currently visiting the City of Belmont to celebrate 40 years. Bunbury which is sister cities with Setagaya-ku, as well as Busselton with Sugito-cho in Saitama are also very active with exchanges and who are now preparing for the South West Japan Festival in September which you can enjoy during your stay.

#### (Goodwill ambassadors between Japan and Australia)

We have 8,500 Japanese citizens living in Western Australia, and Japanese language is a popular foreign language taught in government schools. You will find friendliness and a level of understanding of Japan among people all around you. Our close bilateral relationship is based on mutual trust built over the years through people-to-people interactions between Japan and Australia, and is something we should all cherish.

We have many goodwill ambassadors who bridge Japan and Australia, and for the next 16 weeks you will find yourself to be an ambassador.

I attended the ECU Japan Festival organized by Cycle A students this year. As you can see from the slides, the festival was full of cheerful spirit sharing fun of Japanese Matsuri activities. I am looking forward to joining you again this time, perhaps I will introduce some local prominent residents who have rich experience with Australia and have their business careers for you to gain broader insights, that is what I promised to Prof.Yashiro, the President of TCU, who visited March this year.

#### (Words of Appreciations)

I wish to express my sincere appreciation to the professors and staff of Edith Cowan University for supporting this excellent program and the students of TCU, and for promoting exchange between Japan and Australia.

I congratulate you on the massive achievement that more than 1400 students from TCU at the end of this cycle and more than 700 ECU students have joined TAP being buddy

ambassadors to support TCU students since it started in 2016.

Thank you also for receiving journalists from Japan earlier this year who wrote a number of good articles on Western Australia and its relations with Japan including student exchange programs.

Prof Yashiro was impressed with the study environment and support by ECU including the fantastic buddy system, and he was looking forward to advancing the partnership further on which the Japanese Consulate is willing to support. We are glad the joint Master's degree program for environmental studies has launched. Yanchep with the vision of "Clean Green & Sustainable City" developed by Tokyu Corporation for 50 years now connected with Metronet for 49 minutes from Perth, is another possibility for collaboration.

Let me now say a few words to the TCU students in Japanese.

東京都市大学の皆さん、パースへようこそ。在パース日本国総領事の内藤です。貴重な 16 週間の留学の機会を楽しんで有効に活用して頂ければと思います。海外から日本を見つめ、世界を見る、そして自分自身を向上させるチャンスです。様々な発見を日本に持ち帰り、職業選択の時にも役立つと思います。今後、海外留学を続ける方や、オーストラリアを含め、世界を相手に活躍する方もおられると思います。

パースは安全で暮らしやすい街ですが、やはり外国ですので十分注意して下さい。くれぐれも体調管理には留意され、旅券等紛失しないよう、また犯罪に合うリスクが高まるような行動しないよう心掛けてください。具体的には総領事館の担当者より注意がありますので、参考にして頂ければと思います。その上で困った事態となれば総領事館までご相談頂ければと思います。

今日から始まる留学経験が、実りのあるものになることを願っております。  
ありがとうございました。

Thank you for your attention.

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