

Remarks
Presented by NAITO Yasushi, Consul-General of Japan in Perth
On the occasion of the APRSAF-30 Reception
On November 28, 2024

(Acknowledgments)

I wish to start by acknowledging the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar Nation, and pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging.

- The Hon Stephen Dawson MLC, Minister for Emergency Services; Innovation and the Digital Economy; Science; Medical Research; Minister Assisting the Minister for State and Industry Development, Jobs and Trade
- Mr Enrico Palermo, Head of the Australian Space Agency,
- Dr YAMAKAWA Hiroshi, President of JAXA,
- Mr HASHIZUME Atsushi, Deputy Director General of Minister's Secretariat, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

(Welcome and thanks)

I wish to welcome all the delegates from the Asia-Pacific and across the world to the 30th conference of APRSAF, hosted by the Government of Japan, namely the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, JAXA and the Australia Space Agency, in collaboration with the Western Australian Government. I believe you all had fruitful discussions during the first day of the APRSAF plenaries.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Australian Space Agency and Western Australian Government, as well as the organizers of IPSEC, for this fantastic collaboration for "Space Week," where a number of space-related activities are taking place beyond APRSAF, including joint exhibitions and educational programs for next generation space leaders. I understand more than 520 delegates registered for APRSAF, that is one of the largest in its 30 year history and nearly 1,000 registered for the entire Space Week. It is wonderful to have the Pacific community participating in APRSAF for the first time.

(Expectations for APRSAF 30)

APRSAF has been an open forum promoting space collaboration and seeking sustainable solutions to common challenges, such as disaster mitigation and environment protection, in the Asia-Pacific Region for the past 30 years.

I believe your input on the revision of the Nagoya Vision in 2019 will present a framework for responding to broad global challenges in collaboration with governments, academia and industries.

(Western Australia and Space)

I am glad this milestone 30th APRSAF is taking place in Perth where we see a lot of relevance with space activities. Along with South Africa, Australia is co-host of the Square Kilometer Array, and Western Australia is the home of the world's largest radio telescope, as shared by professors from Curtin University in the plenary today. I had the opportunity to visit the site 800 km north of Perth where the sharing of advanced astronomical knowledge among the member states and countries is very active.

I also had the privilege of visiting the West Angelas Mine in the Pilbara, a Rio Tinto and Mitsui Iron Ore Joint Venture. There gigantic driverless Komatsu trucks and driverless Hitachi rail, the heaviest and longest robot in the Guinness Book of Records, are operating on a massive scale and controlled from an operation center thousands of kilometers from the site near Perth Airport for twenty-four hours a day.

These advanced mining operation systems have close synergy and affinity to remote the control operations seen in the extreme conditions of space. Furthermore, a number of companies are utilizing remote sensing data for prospecting mineral resources. Thus, as Minister Dawson said yesterday, Western Australia is place for the Space.

(Japan-Australia Space collaborations)

JAXA, after decades of collaboration with the Australian Space Agency, signed a formal Memorandum of Cooperation on Space in 2020. In December of the same year, with the cooperation of Australia, the capsule of the Asteroid Explorer Hayabusa2 was recovered in Woomera, South Australia, as was also done for the Hayabusa1 in 2010. The samples collected from asteroid Ryugu, containing five and a half grams of the most pristine pieces of the solar system ever studied, have been analyzed by many experts including those from Curtin University and are found to contain amino acids that could have given rise to life on Earth.

Furthermore, when we received then-Prime Minister Kishida to Perth in 2022, Australia kindly expressed support of Japan's Martian Moons eXploration (MMX) program, scheduled to be launched in 2026 with the aim of bringing back geo-samples from Phobos in 2031. A number of other possibilities for future collaboration are being discussed among stakeholders and our two governments.

(Space in Japan-WA context)

As a Japanese Government representative in Western Australia, let me share the developments in space collaboration in the context of the broader Japan-Western Australia relationship.

Japan is fortunate to have strong investment, trade and technology partnerships with Western Australia in mineral resources and energy that has led to the economic success of both Japan and Australia, and has even contributed to the Asian and world economy.

Last month, I had the pleasure of accompanying the Governor of Western Australia, HE the Hon Chris Dawson, to the Australia-Japan Business Co-operation Committee Joint Business Conference, the largest Japan-Australia business conference, which was held in Nagoya, a manufacturing powerhouse of Japan.

AJBCC and JABCC have been leaders in business collaboration for the past 60 years and have issued a Chair's Statement, expressing a commitment to work in science and innovation, including space, in collaboration with partners in Asia, which aligns with the policy direction of APRSAF.

In fact, the Governor and I visited the Tobishima Plant, the H3 rocket manufacturing site of Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, during our visit to Japan and were amazed to see the precision of the assembly process. And only a week later, the H3 rocket was successfully launched from Tanegashima Space Center on November 4.

MHI is also involved in shipbuilding and the energy transition that has the potential to broaden opportunities for collaboration beyond resources and energy here in Western Australia. I see a number of related industry corporations including IHI and Mitsubishi Electric are also represented in the Exhibition this time.

With the next AJBCC Joint Business Conference to be hosted in Perth next October, the first time since 2008, and the resumption of the ANA Perth-Tokyo direct flight enhancing opportunities for exchange, we look forward to seeing Western Australia at the centre of important developments in Japan-Australia trade and investment, security, the energy transition and energy security, education, science, technology and space.

(Closing)

We hope all the delegates enjoy the rest of the conference and wish for fruitful discussions and outcomes.

Thank you for your attention.

End