

The visit of Prime Minister Turnbull to Japan

29 January 2018



Dear friends

The Hon Malcolm Turnbull MP, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia paid an official visit to Japan on January 18. This was his second trip to Japan since becoming Prime Minister. I accompanied Prime Minister Turnbull during his visit in my capacity as the Ambassador of Japan to Australia.

Granted it was only a fleeting 16-hour visit, Prime Minister Turnbull enjoyed an efficient program in Tokyo, which consisted of the Japan-Australian Summit Meeting, a special meeting (Four Ministers' Meeting) of the National Security Conference, a joint press occasion, and a banquet dinner hosted by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe at his official residence. Furthermore, Prime Minister Turnbull visited the Ministry of Defence, Japan Self Defense Force (JGSDF) Camp Narashino, Tokyo Metropolitan Police Headquarters, Tokyo Station as well as taking a subway ride on Tokyo's Marunouchi Line as well as a luncheon meeting with both Japanese and Australian business executives.



Japan-Australia Summit Meeting



The Prime Ministers visiting the JGSDF Narashino Training Area

Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister Turnbull held candid discussions concerning the Indo-Pacific region, security and defence cooperation, trade relations, and people-to-people exchange. The two leaders affirmed Japan and Australia's shared values and the agenda to move forward with TPP11 and the Asia-Pacific strategy as well as bilateral defence cooperation. I believe that this confirmation of deepening cooperation between Japan and Australia through Prime Minister Turnbull's visit is extremely significant.

With this visit, Japan and Australia confirmed their positions in the world are remarkably similar. I am delighted that our two nations can respond to our shared strategic interests in current regional and international affairs with the continued cooperation of our mutual ally, the U.S.



Special meeting of the National Security Council



Joint press announcement

In the summit meeting, the two leaders highlighted the ever-growing convergence of the strategic interests of both countries and confirmed that Japan and Australia share a vision for the Indo-Pacific region, consistent with Japan's Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy and Australia's 2017 White Paper, both of which attach much importance to open, inclusive and prosperous region based on the rule of law. I would like to take each opportunity, starting with you, opinion leaders in Australia as well as readers of my 'Ambassador's Message', to continue to further deepen your understanding of this topic.

I greatly look forward to continuing to work with my counterparts in the Australian Government to build on the momentous diplomatic achievements both Prime Ministers reached together through the visit of Prime Minister Turnbull to Japan this time, while also cooperating closely to further advance the invaluable ties of our two nations under common values and strategies.

After the summit meeting in Tokyo, the outcomes of the summit meeting were released and Japan and Australia held a joint press announcement which includes the two leaders;

- Reaffirming their determination to further strengthen the Japan-Australia Special Strategic Partnership, which is founded on common values and strategic interests.
- Highlighting the ever-growing convergence of the strategic interests of both countries and confirming that Japan and Australia share a vision for the Indo-Pacific region.
- Directing their respective Ministers of Defence to pursue even deeper and broader defence cooperation in 2018, including exercises, operations, capacity building, navy, army and air force visits, and further cooperation on defence equipment, science and technology.
- Underlining the strategic importance of a free and open rules-based trading system for global stability and prosperity. They shared their determination to coordinate closely and exercise leadership towards the signing and entry into force of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership as soon as possible.
- Reaffirming the enduring importance of Japan's and Australia's respective alliances with the United States, which are fundamental to each country's security and underpin broader regional stability and prosperity. They welcomed the United States' strong engagement to bolster security, stability and prosperity and the rules-based order in the region.
- Reaffirming their strong commitment to further enhancing trilateral cooperation among Australia, Japan and the United States, in order to ensure the peaceful, stable and prosperous future of the Indo-Pacific region.
- Condemning in the strongest terms North Korea's continued development of its nuclear and ballistic missile programs in flagrant violation of relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions.
- Remaining concerned about the situation in the South China Sea (SCS). They reiterated the importance of freedom of navigation and overflight, and resolving maritime disputes peacefully through full respect for legal and diplomatic processes and in accordance with international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

[\(Full text of the Joint Press Statement\)](#)

Yours sincerely,

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Sumio Kusaka

Ambassador of Japan to Australia