

## ***Cooperation between Australia and Japan as global partners* symposium at ANU**

28 February 2018

Dear Friends,

On Friday the 16<sup>th</sup> of February, I was delighted to attend the *Cooperation between Australia and Japan as global partners* symposium at the Australian National University, which was co-organised by the Embassy of Japan and the ANU Japan Institute. A number of distinguished experts were invited to the symposium from Japan and Australia as well as the U.S., India, Indonesia and Cambodia to share their expertise and knowledge.

In a series of panel discussions in front of a large audience, the speakers shared their ideas and suggestions on the current challenges faced by Japan and Australia as well as the regional and international challenges our two nations could work together on as 'Special Strategic Partners'. Furthermore, the speakers discussed ideal regional frameworks needed to deal with the challenges of development aid, the establishment of peace and stability, energy security and regional cooperation. I would like to share with you some of the interesting and thought-provoking points from the personal opinions of the speakers made during the symposium.



Delivering my opening speech



Distinguished Professor Jenny Corbett  
Delivering her opening speech

On the topic of development assistance in the Asia-Pacific and Pacific Island countries, H.E. Vandy Hem, Under Secretary of State, Ministry of Economy and Trade of Cambodia shared how Japan and Australia have played different roles in terms of official development assistance in Cambodia, yet both have complemented each other. Dr Haruo Nakagawa from the University of the South Pacific suggested that long-term cooperation between Japan and Australia could be strengthened to avoid the duplication of ODA programs. Adding to this, Ms Jacqui De Lacy from Abt Associates stated that Japan and Australia need to work together on infrastructure development to drive growth in the region.

Whilst discussing peace and security building in the region, Professor Akiko Fukushima from Aoyama Gakuin University believes that our two nations should continue to capitalise on what we have achieved so far and sees potential in more cooperation in the field of joint exercises, joint operations and joint capacity building. Ms Darshana Baruah from Carnegie India stated that there is converging interest for greater engagement between India, Japan and Australia to maintain a rules-based order and respect for international norms. Dr David Envall from ANU stated there are bigger benefits for Japan and Australia if they were to work together with the U.S., and that the Quad alliance could become not just a political initiator but an economic engine as well.



Session on peace and security building

In responding to ways Japan and Australia can cooperate on energy security, Dr Anbumozhi Venkatachalam from the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) suggested that the rapid growth of energy demand in ASEAN countries could greatly benefit both Japan and Australia and that the formation of the Asian Super Grid could be expanded to include Australia. Dr Jennifer S Hunt from ANU discussed Japan and Australia's mutually beneficial LNG trading partnership and the potential for the two nations to collaborate on research relating to the long-term storage of nuclear waste.



Session on global issues: energy

In the discussions of the final topic of frameworks for regional cooperation, Professor Fukunari Kimura from Keio University suggested that Japan and Australia should seize the moment and act together strategically in the area of international commercial policies and stressed the validation of the

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and assistance in concluding the Regional Economic Comprehensive Partnership (RECP) negotiations. Dr Amy Searight from the Center for Strategic and International Studies stated that the cooperation between U.S. allies such as Japan, Australia and India is received positively by the U.S. as it assists them beyond their traditional 'hub-and-spoke' system. Dr Searight concluded by stating the East Asia Summit needs to be institutionalised in order to realise its potential and that countries should build upon and strengthen trilateral and multilateral arrangements with ASEAN countries.

Upon conclusion of the symposium, I felt strongly convinced of the infinite possibilities for future cooperation between Japan and Australia in the Indo-Pacific region in the areas discussed throughout the day. The success of this symposium is the product of the exceptional and wide-ranging partnership between ANU and the Embassy of Japan and I very much welcome the strengthening of this partnership on all levels.

The ability to have such a frank and open discussion on Japan-Australia cooperation under the Embassy of Japan-ANU partnership, ensured by the traditional principles of academic freedom and freedom of speech in Australian higher education, is made possible by the shared democratic values of Japan and Australia. As the Japanese Ambassador to Australia, I am extremely supportive of and will continue to encourage efforts to broaden collaboration among the Embassy and Japanese consulates, Australian universities and think tanks, academics and experts across all fields all over Australia through symposiums and conferences each year.

This symposium would not have been possible without the ANU Japan Institute's extensive knowledge and broad network. I would like to conclude my message by taking this opportunity to thank the Institute and its staff, with special mention to Distinguished Professor Jenny Corbett, for their efforts in turning this symposium into a reality.

(Full text of my opening speech)

Yours sincerely,

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Sumio Kusaka

Ambassador of Japan to Australia