

**Remarks by H.E Ambassador YAMAGAMI Shingo to the 53rd  
AusCSCAP Meeting: Australia-Japan Dialogue on Strategic Trends in  
the Indo-Pacific, Tuesday 2 August 2022**

**The Honourable Tim Watts**

**Mr Ric Smith**

**Professor Anthony Milner**

**1. Introduction: The Importance of Intellectual Exchanges between  
Japan and Australia**

- I'm delighted to see that today's AusCSCAP seminar drew so many of what I might term the *jūyō-nin* (or the usual suspects) of the foreign policy and security literati of Japan and Australia.
- While each of us has their own perspective on how the trends of the region are affecting its security, what is undeniable is the fact that Japan and Australia have grown closer in response to those trends.

- At a time when the security situation in the Indo-Pacific grows ever more severe, timely scheduling of events like today's AusCSCAP seminar present an ideal opportunity for experts from Japan and Australia to share their views and gain some new perspectives on one another's positions and how they might evolve.
- We are clearly going to need more such opportunities in the future. Hence I'm glad to play a part in fostering what I hope will be a steady growth in intellectual discussions between us.
- Ladies and gentlemen, the relationship that Japan and Australia share today is one based on mutual trust.
- It's a point that has been reiterated many times, but it deserves to be emphasised again for what it signifies.
- As Natasha mentioned in the seminar, according to this year's Lowy Institute Poll, Japan is regarded as Australia's 'best friend in Asia' by a majority of Australians.

- Indeed this level of affinity has grown by 18 points since 2016, and is echoed by the numbers for 'feelings of warmth' towards other nations.
- Japan, at 74 degrees, is the highest ranked of all nations in Asia, above the US and EU and only just below the UK and Canada.
- That reveals as much about how successful Japan and Australia have been in promoting our bilateral relationship, as it does about Australia's affinity for its neighbour in the far north of this region.
- For countries who's histories and cultures are so different, our shared values of the rule of law, democracy, open markets free from coercion and the sanctity of human rights have drawn us together to defend those values.
- We have come a long way together, but in many respects we are only just getting started.

## 2. **About the Seminar**

- Today's seminar thus comes at just the right time for an exploration of how Japan and Australia might better respond to the challenges of our region.
- As an Ambassador, I often feel I am something of a frustrated milliner, forever putting on and taking off hats.
- I normally wear my ambassadorial hat. However today I've decided to put it aside and adorn my think-tanker hat!
- The themes raised during today's seminar, from Russia's egregious and illegal invasion of Ukraine, the relationship between China and Russia, and Japan and Australia's diplomatic activity with ASEAN are all crucial from the point of view of Japanese and Australian foreign policy.
- They represent an opportunity to learn from one another and swap notes on where we go from here.

- The centrality of ASEAN in the foreign policy of the newly formed Albanese government is a point of convergence with Japan's own thinking. The discussions on this area during today's seminar were thus both important and timely.
- What added to their substance was the attendance today of our experts from Japan. I do wish to thank former Ambassador to Malaysia Miyagawa Makio and former Ambassador to Indonesia Ishii Masafumi, and many other Japanese foreign policy and security professionals for their participation and for sharing their wisdom with us.

### **3. Conclusion**

- Finally, I would also like to express my profound gratitude to the co-chairs for today's seminar, Professor Anthony Milner and Mr Ric Smith, for both leading the discussions on issues and for their insights into the state of security in this region.

- I count myself lucky to have been able to listen to your views and believe that they, along with many other discussions had today, will help provide the intellectual foundations for policy positions to be adopted in the years ahead.
- The Japan-Australia relationship is one strategic trend garnering more interest from both within and outside the region, and so it won't be too long before we are back to examine more themes in depth together.
- So thank you, ladies and gentlemen, and here's to many seminars to come. 本日のご参加、誠に有難うございました。

**[Ends]**