

**Speech by His Excellency YAMAGAMI Shingo**  
**Ambassador of Japan to Australia**  
**INPEX Luncheon, 30 March 2023**

*The Hon. Milton Dick, Speaker of the House of Representatives,*

*The Hon. Madeleine King, Minister for Resources,*

*Senator the Hon. Don Farrell, Minister for Trade and Tourism,*

*Senator the Hon. Simon Birmingham, Shadow Minister for Foreign Affairs,*

*The Hon. Susan McDonald, Shadow Minister for Resources,*

*Current and former members of the Australia-Japan Parliamentary Group,*

*Ms Jan Adams, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade,*

*Mr Takayuki UEDA, INPEX President and CEO,*

*Mr Innes Willox, Chief Executive of AI Group,*

*Ms Tania Constable, Chief Executive of the Minerals Council of Australia,*

*Ms Samantha McCulloch, Chief Executive of the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association,*

Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to address you this afternoon and to acknowledge the exceptional contributions of INPEX to the Japan-Australia economic partnership.

This is not my first INPEX rodeo.

I feel very privileged to say that back in 2018, when I was Director-General of Economic Affairs at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, I had the opportunity to accompany then-Prime Minister ABE to the opening ceremony of INPEX's Ichthys project in Darwin.

I was left awe-inspired by not only the sheer physical size of the project, but the scale of its vision and the impact it was sure to have on Australia's energy industry.

I could really feel that history was being made on that day.

Five years later, it turns out my spymaster instinct was correct.

Now in Australia as Ambassador, it brings me great pride to follow closely the progress of established and emerging INPEX initiatives in the energy space. I even had the pleasure of visiting some of INPEX's facilities in Broome during a visit last year.

But it is their flagship project, as an all-Japan initiative, that is particularly close to my heart. Not only is it one of the largest gas fields in the world, it is the first Japanese-operated LNG project in the world, and the largest-ever single Japanese overseas investment.

This historic project has become an important bridge between our two nations.

It provides lasting social and economic benefits to Australia – particularly the Northern Territory and Western Australian economies – while delivering long-term energy security to Japan. In fact, it is expected to supply approximately 10 per cent of Japan's LNG requirements over the next four decades.

In many ways, the project is the perfect representation of our highly complementary economic partnership.

For decades, resource-rich Australia has supplied the coal, iron ore, gas and other commodities that keep Japanese homes warm and allow our industry to flourish.

In return, Japan has provided Aussies with capital, entrepreneurship and markets, along with affordable, reliable and energy efficient machinery, electronics and automobiles.

Japan and Australia have grown – and continue to grow – together.

You only have to look at the vibrant streets of Japan's never-sleeping capital. It's hard to imagine the neon lights of Tokyo ever going out, but with Australia now supplying 70% of coal, 60% of iron ore, and 40% of Japan's gas imports, this is exactly what would happen if Australia stopped producing energy resources.

But – I've said it many times and will say it again - I have every confidence our Aussie mates will remain a trusted and stable energy exporter moving forward.

It is these same time-tested complementary economic ties and mutual trust that have enabled Japan and Australia to drive our partnership even further forward, engaging in new frontiers of the energy and resources space.

One of these new frontiers is hydrogen and ammonia.

Across the country, Australian and Japanese companies are working side-by-side to develop cutting-edge hydrogen and ammonia hubs.

In total, there are now a massive thirty hydrogen and ammonia projects with Japanese involvement underway across the country.

This includes feasibility studies being carried out by INPEX and its partners at the Hunter Energy Hub in New South Wales and Torrens Hydrogen Hub in South Australia.

When it comes to hydrogen and ammonia, Japanese businesses are investing in all available avenues of production - both green *and* blue. We do not have the luxury to be picky in choosing the colour or origin of hydrogen.

Japanese business are also still active in gas and coal, as well as making long-term investments in carbon capture, utilisation and storage. For example, the INPEX and Woodside joint venture that received an assessment permit for greenhouse gas storage in the Bonaparte Basin last year.

These developments are just as important.

While Japan is absolutely committed to decarbonisation and reaching net zero by 2050, we do not believe a transition to renewables can be achieved overnight.

We see the need for a pragmatic process of transition.

That is why we will still need Australian gas for the foreseeable future.

It is industry leaders like INPEX who are forging the path ahead by proactively engaging in energy structure reform while also ensuring the stable development and supply of energy.

The energy and resources sector is the bedrock of the Japan-Australia economic partnership, and INPEX have been laying the foundations for investment for four decades.

As we look towards the next four, the role of INPEX will only become more crucial, as Japanese investment continues to support Australia, Japan and the world through a smooth energy transition, while ensuring the security and prosperity of generations to come.

Thank you.

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