

Press Release

Embassy of Japan
Press Release
8 November 2013

Conferral of the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun upon the Honourable John Winston Howard OM AC, former Prime Minister of Australia

The Government of Japan has announced the conferral of the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun upon the Honourable John Winston Howard OM AC, former Prime Minister of Australia, in recognition of his outstanding contribution to strengthening relations between Australia and Japan.

“The Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun”, the highest decoration in Japan, is awarded by the Emperor of Japan to foreign nationals who have made extraordinary contributions to enhancing bilateral relations with Japan.

The wide and deep contribution made by Mr. Howard laid the foundation of today’s amicable partnership between Australia and Japan. He visited Japan seven times while he was Prime Minister, and he undertook various initiatives and provided leadership to further enhance relations between the two countries.

When Mr. Howard visited Japan in 2007, he signed the “Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation” with Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister of Japan. As a result of the Declaration, security cooperation has rapidly progressed between Australia and Japan with the convening of the Joint Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations (“2+2”), which have occurred four times, the conclusion of an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) and an Information Security Agreement (ISA).

Mr. Howard also took initiatives in the field of economics and trade. When he visited Japan in 2003, he signed the “Australia-Japan Trade and Economic Framework” with Mr. Junichiro Koizumi, then Prime Minister of Japan. Based on the framework, several joint studies were held which led to an agreement between Mr. Howard and Mr. Shinzo Abe to start “Negotiations for Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)” in 2007. Although the EPA negotiations still continue, the process has contributed to enhancing trade and investment between Australia and Japan.

The ceremony to confer the decoration on Mr. Howard will be held later this year at the Ambassador’s residence.