

The 49th Japan – Australia Joint Business Conference
9th – 11th October, 2011

Joint Chairs' Statement

The 49th Japan-Australia Joint Business Conference has been held in Kyoto over the period from October 9th to 11th, 2011. This is the fifth occasion that our annual conference has met in this historic city. This time the Japanese delegation was constituted by 128 persons and the Australian side had 82 delegates. There was a separate program of visits to historic places of interest and cultural activities for the 24 accompanying persons.

Following the opening statements by the conference's joint chairmen, Sir Eddington and I, the reading of the messages from Prime Ministers Gillard and Noda respectively, and the welcome speech from Mr. Tateishi, the Chairman of Kyoto Chamber of Commerce, the conference commenced its seven plenary session program.

Plenary Session One, discussed "Japan – Australia relations in East Asia /Asia Pacific" including India and China from the multi-angle viewpoint of political, economic, and security aspects.

Plenary Session Two, considered "Sustainable Growth- the challenges for the Japanese and Australian Economies." In this session, discussion included, how Japan and Australia could maintain sustainable growth over a mid to longer term period based on the issues effecting the Japanese economy, including those caused by March's Tohoku earthquake. Also considered was the current situation of the Australian economy including the effects of the appreciation of the Australian dollar and the high prices of energy and mineral resources.

In Plenary Session Three, the progress of the EPA and TPP negotiations, both long outstanding issues for Japan and Australia, were the primary matters discussed under the topic of "Regional economic integration- entering a new phase."

The agenda for the Plenary Session Four was “Japan and Australia – collaboration in the Asian market.” We received presentations regarding the Japan – Australia collaboration in infrastructure and the prospects for doing so in health services. The discussion included the challenges for the expansion of business in the future.

The Plenary Session Five picked up the topic of “Globalizing Innovation and Technology - Some Kyoto Experiences” and focused on the reasons for the success of the high technology enterprises of the Kyoto region.

Plenary Session Six, considered global greenhouse emission reduction – the Japanese and Australian responses”. The Japan side reported on the business opportunities created by environment constraints and the relevant new technologies. The Australia side reported on government moves to initiate emissions trading.

Plenary Session Seven discussed “Building on energy, resources and food complementarities of the bilateral relationship”. In each field there are a lot of bilateral business opportunities. We stated the need and also our determination to maintain a closer relationship.

I observed that each discussion was substantive and passionate.

Lastly, I would like to express my appreciation for all the efforts of those persons who made speeches and participated as Panelists, and as Moderator, Chairman or Co-chairman in each plenary session.