

AUSTRALIAN POLITICAL EXCHANGE COUNCIL

23rd AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION TO JAPAN
7 TO 14 MARCH 2015



DELEGATION

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Executive Summary

March 2015 was a fascinating time to visit Japan. It was the year of the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, and of the end of World War II. The Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe, had visited Australia for the G20 and had addressed our Parliament a few months before. Japan's government, which was unable to amend the peace clause, Article 9 of the Constitution, was working towards a reinterpretation of that Article that would allow Japan to change the way it engages with the world. President Obama had been talking for months about the US pivot to the Asia-Pacific and had made a point of talking about shared values between Japan and Western democracies. And in our bilateral relationship, the Japan Australia Economic Partnership Agreement, and the Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology, among other bilateral instruments, had recently come into force. Japan, like Australia, was involved in negotiations for both the Trans Pacific Partnership and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership.

It was in this context that our Australian Political Exchange Council (Auspol) delegation visited Japan. We had opportunities to meet with several Parliamentary Vice-Ministers, senior government officials, our own Ambassador and his Embassy colleagues, and representatives of business and academia. In those meetings we had the opportunity to discuss security, defence, defence procurement (in particular submarines), economics, trade, and foreign affairs matters. Our discussions were frank and of a high quality. Our hosts were very interested in strengthening what they see as the two pillars of our bilateral relationship: our complementary economic relationship and security cooperation.

We had many discussions about the Japan Australia Economic Partnership Agreement. We were fortunate to meet with senior businessmen who added a private sector perspective to our visit. We also met with a number of respected academics who are part of the Japan Australian Studies Association. We benefited greatly from their expertise.

We gained an invaluable opportunity to better understand Japanese democracy and its post-war history, along with the work that the Prime Minister is doing to reconfigure Japan's place in the world, and to respond to Japan's 'lost decades' using this 'three arrows' strategy.

In visiting Nagasaki we had the somber experience of learning more about the lasting legacy of World War II and the nuclear bombs that were dropped. It was a reminder of the importance of the work being done, globally, to stop nuclear proliferation.

As well as being the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II, this year is the fourth anniversary of the great earthquake, tsunami and nuclear disaster that changed Japan. We were in Japan on the fourth anniversary itself, 15 March. Our discussions with MP Shinjiro Koizumi, the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Reconstruction, along with reconstruction officials were both impressive and greatly moving.

We had the great benefit of experiencing aspects of Japanese society and culture. We were grateful for the wonderful hospitality afforded to us, and particularly the opportunity to sample Japanese cuisine and culture.

One feature of the delegation which we all appreciated was the warmth that our hosts expressed towards both former Prime Minister Julia Gillard – the first foreign leader to visit the site of the great disaster four years earlier – and then Prime Minister Tony Abbott.

On behalf of the delegation I express my gratitude to all who made this visit such a fruitful, constructive, and interesting one. I commend the experience to any of my colleagues who may consider participating in future delegations.

Terri Butler MP

Member for Griffith

Delegation Leader

Report

A key objective of the Auspol delegation to Japan was to make general observations from our site visits and meetings with key personnel to report on cultural, social, economic, political, and strategic opportunities to improve cooperation between Australia and Japan and foster closer international relations.

Peace, disaster relief, security and foreign affairs

Japan considers its relationship with Australia to be a special relationship, and of course, it is focussed on its alliance with the United States. President Obama had recently spoken of both the US' pivot to the Asia Pacific region, and of the shared values between Japan and Western democracies, and our own country had been grappling with the question of submarine procurement (discussed below). So it was an interesting context in which our delegation discussed defence, foreign affairs and security matters with Japanese parliamentarians and officials.

The Second World War

Our visit occurred in the year of the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Japan and of the end of the Second World War. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had, in November 2013, addressed our parliament in Australia. That address had included an acknowledgement of the events of the war, as had our then Prime Minister's address.

Defence

One of the major pillars of Japan-Australia relations is our defence and security cooperation.

Historically, the Japan Self-Defense Forces or JSDF is a unified military force that was established in 1954. Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution outlaws war as a means to settle international disputes involving the State. In its text, the State formally renounces the sovereign right of belligerency and aims at an international peace, based on justice and order, unless otherwise amended by Article 96 of the Japanese Constitution with two-thirds super majority of each of the both houses of the Japanese Diet and a simple majority approval by a public referendum of Japan. The article also states that, to accomplish these aims, armed forces with war potential will not be maintained, although Japan maintains *de facto* armed forces, referred to as the Japan Self-Defense Forces or a collective security police (peacekeeping) force operating under the United Nations (subject to limitations described below).

In recent years Japan has been engaged in international peacekeeping operations. Recent tensions, particularly with North Korea, have reignited the debate over the status of the JSDF and its relation to Japanese society. In July 2014, the Japanese government approved a reinterpretation which gave more powers to its Self-Defense forces, allowing them to defend other allies in case of war being declared upon them, but the motion did not pass the amendment of Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution.

Given these recent changes, it was considered a priority of the delegation to discuss these issues with the relevant Japanese political leaders and departments and was a key priority for the delegation. The delegation was also keen to discuss Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation and defence procurement and manufacturing.

The delegation had a number of occasions on which to discuss these matters. Significantly, we met with the Vice-Minister for Defense, MP Kenji Harada. That meeting was very valuable and engaging. It is discussed further below.

Nagasaki

Today Nagasaki is the capital and the largest city of Nagasaki Prefecture on the island of Kyushu in Japan. It became a centre of Portuguese and other European influence in the 16th through 19th centuries, and the Churches and Christian Sites in Nagasaki have been proposed for inscription on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The delegation visited two Catholic churches in Nagasaki and learned about the historical persecution of Christians in the local area.

During World War II, the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki made Nagasaki the second and, to date, last city in the world to experience a nuclear attack.

At 11.02 am on 8 August 1945, an atomic bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. 2015 marks 70 years since that occurred. Within less than a second after the detonation, the north of the city was destroyed. Roughly 39,000 to 80,000 people were killed. About half of these died immediately, while the other half suffered lingering deaths. Among the deaths were 6,200 out of the 7,500 employees of the Mitsubishi Munitions plant, and thousands of others (including 2,000 Koreans) who worked in other war plants and factories in the city, as well as 150 Japanese soldiers. Another 75,000 people were injured. The damage occurred across an 800 km radius.

The delegation visited some of the rubble which was left as a memorial; such as a one-legged *torii* at Sannō Shrine and an arch near ground zero. We also visited the Atomic Bomb Museum (as discussed below) to learn firsthand about the human toll and impact of this nuclear bomb. Our visits to the Atomic Bomb Museum, Peace Park and Hypo Centre Monument in Nagasaki, discussed below, were solemn and moving. One delegation member found this particularly moving— having heard of the atomic bombing from grandparents liberated from the Japanese occupation of Singapore.

Camphor Trees

The delegation visited the Camphor Trees, which have long become a tribute to the rebirth and rebuild of Nagasaki.



Camphor Trees in Sanno Shinto Shrine

The devastating blast of the atomic bomb stripped naked these trees and scorched black what remained. Considered dead at the time, the trees have since come back to life and reflect the symbolic rebirth of the city of Nagasaki. These trees are considered natural monuments to the devastation of the war period and the city's rebirth.

Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum

The delegation toured the Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Museum established to recognize the impact of the atomic bomb on Nagasaki and to provide an understanding of the global efforts underway toward a world free of nuclear weapons.

The three-story museum takes visitors through a series of exhibits regarding the impact of the atomic bomb, such as the damage caused by the heat of the flash, the damage caused by the blast and the damage caused by the radiation. The Museum also reflects on the rescue and relief efforts by the community and the efforts underway to pursue nuclear free global cooperation.

Hypo Centre

The delegation was taken to the Memorial Park marking the location of the Hypo Centre, where temperatures reached in excess of 4000 degrees. On 8 August every year, victims' names are recognised, both those killed at the time and those whose injuries relate to the devastating impact of the atomic bomb.



The Hypo Centre

Briefing by the Ministry of Defense on Disaster Response and International Cooperation

The Japanese Constitution sets out the principles for its international engagement under Article 9, ensuring Japan's conduct isn't deemed to be a 'use of force'.

This issue was timely during our visit as there was broad discussion about Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's endeavours to broaden the interpretation of Article 9 to allow for a wider scope of international engagement activities.

Presently, in order for Japan to undertake defence activities abroad, domestic laws are needed to validate each activity. In international engagement, Japan has been able to develop a particular capability in disaster response and relief areas.

The delegation met with Mr Hiroyuki Tahara and Mr Osamu Ashizuka, officials from the Ministry of Defense, to discuss disaster relief operations and international cooperation.

The Ministry officials gave an overview of the disaster relief operations by the Ministry of Defense and the Japan Self-Defense Forces, including the framework for requests for assistance. The Ministry officials also highlighted three key areas of international peace cooperation activities: Peacekeeping and Humanitarian Assistance; International Disaster Relief activities; and Counter-Piracy Operations.

With a view to consistency with the Constitution of Japan's prohibition against war and the threat or use of force, Japanese Peacekeeping efforts are undertaken through adherence to five key principles:

- Ceasefire Agreement in place
- All parties consent to Japanese participation
- Impartiality to any parties to the conflict
- Withdrawal capacity should the above principles not be adhered to
- Use of weapons being limited to the minimum necessary for protection of personnel

Japan's disaster relief activities are underpinned by operational guidelines that include focusing support in the Asia-Pacific Region. The Japanese Minister for Defense undertakes the process of dispatch in consultation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Recent disaster relief deployment included immediate response in the Philippines in November and December 2013 following Typhoon Haiyan. Aid was dispatched as well as medical assistance with the provision of aircraft and vessels deployed to the affected areas.

Counter-piracy activities by the Japanese include operations off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. Under Article 82 of the *Self-Defense Forces Act*, Maritime Security Operations can be enacted to protect Japan-affiliated vessels from acts of piracy. In 2009 Japanese destroyers were mandated to protect the vessels of all nations from acts of piracy, regardless of their flag states.

The Earthquake, Tsunami and Fukushima disaster

The Japanese were most appreciative of Australia's practical emergency assistance following the earthquake and tsunami. The visit by then Prime Minister Julia Gillard to the disaster zone had significant symbolic importance to the Japanese national psyche.

We had the benefit of a briefing from the Reconstruction Agency, as to the current status of reconstruction, and the challenges faced. We were advised that the major issues were: rebuilding houses and reconstructing communities; reviving industry and livelihoods; providing health and living support; and revitalizing and reconstructing Fukushima. We also heard of the work being done for the creation of a "New Tohoku".

We were fortunate to meet with MP Shinjiro Koizumi, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Reconstruction. We were all moved by the story of a survivor who lost her mother and grandmother.



Meeting with Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Reconstruction, MP Shinjiro Koizumi

Our nations' bilateral relationship

Our bilateral relationship is important to Australia for trade and security reasons, among others. The delegation was pleased to have the opportunity to explore the relationship while in Japan.

Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement

A key matter for discussion was the recent Japan Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (JAEPA), which had taken effect on 15 January 2015. We had the opportunity to hear from officials of the Ministry of Economics, Trade and Industry (METI) in relation to trade, and the Agreement. We were also fortunate to meet with the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry, MP Yoshihiro Seki, a member of the LDP's coalition partner the Komeito party.

There was widespread enthusiasm and optimism for the Agreement among business and political leaders. Discussions related to how the private sector and entrepreneurs could implement the Agreement and take advantage of the opportunities to develop trade and investment. Australia is Japan's fourth largest trading partner.

Japan continues to be an attractive export destination for liquefied natural gas and coal as it currently has no active nuclear power plants. There is discussion about resuming nuclear power, but community sentiment is in opposition. Iron ore and mineral exports to Japan are projected to remain strong into the future.

Automobiles and machinery attract a taxation rate of 5 per cent. Within 10 years of the Agreement having taken effect, 95 per cent of tariffs are expected to be removed.

Japan has a 29 per cent self-sufficiency rate on food, which presents Australia with significant trade opportunities. There is scope to expand exports of Australian agricultural produce including wines: there will be no tariffs on bottled wines in seven years.

As well as goods-trade, we discussed the non-goods trade benefits of the Agreement. Australia will benefit from non-goods trade in government procurement and services.

We also discussed foreign investment thresholds.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)

In Tokyo, delegates had an introductory meeting with the Oceania Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA).

Delegates were introduced to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and received a briefing in regards to the high level bilateral relationship between Japan and Australia. We were grateful to meet Mr Yukihiko Wada, Mr Daisuke Roberto Kido, and Mr Maiko Ishizaki.

In MOFA's view the two major pillars of our bilateral relationship are strengthening the mutually complementary economic relationship and security cooperation.

Complementary economic relationship

In relation to the complementary economic relationship, the key issues discussed included:

- Japan and Australia sharing fundamental strategic interests in the region
- How the special relationship between Australia and Japan contributes to peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region
- Japan relies on 24 per cent of its energy supply from Australia
- The relationship further strengthened in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, including Australia providing search and rescue and C-17 aircraft support
- Japan is Australia's second largest trading partner, with key exports from Australia including;
 - Iron ore, liquefied natural gas and uranium
 - Food, including barley, beef, raw sugar and wheat.

The trade relationship has been strengthened by the recently executed Japan Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (which took effect on 15 January 2015). Negotiations are underway with the 12 country Trans Pacific Partnership and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). There are significant investments in Australia by Japanese companies in the resources area.

Security cooperation

Security cooperation was also discussed, highlighting the Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation signed in March 2007, which undertakes greater bilateral consultation regarding non-proliferation, peacekeeping operations and information sharing, maritime security and disaster relief.

This cooperation has also provided people exchange and joint exercises. The concrete measures in place are:

- Japan-Australia Information Security Agreement (March 2013)
- Japan-Australia Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (January 2013)
- Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology (December 2014)
- Fifth rounds of 2+2 consultations (most recent had been June 2014)
- The promotion of cooperation between the Japan Self-Defense Forces and the Australian Defence Force in international peace cooperation, disaster relief activities, etc.

We were also briefed about people-to-people exchanges, Japan's efforts to address regional and global issues, and, significantly, the then Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott's visit to Japan in July 2014. In addition to our briefing with MOFA, we were also fortunate to be hosted by Mr Hideo Suzuki, Deputy Director-General, Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, and his colleagues from MOFA, for dinner in Tokyo.

Meeting with Vice-Minister of Defense, MP Kenji Harada

As noted above, the issue of the reinterpretation of Article 9 of the Constitution, the role of defence in Japan, and defence procurement and manufacturing were topical issues. The delegation had the opportunity to meet and discuss these critical issues with Japanese Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Defense, MP Kenji Harada.

The focus of these discussions was first a briefing on the current status of these agreements and how the Self-Defense Force of Japan and Australia Defence Force could further develop and strengthen bilateral consultation and cooperation.

The meeting was an important opportunity to promote Australia's proud defence manufacturing industry. It was an opportunity for the delegation to share with the Vice-Minister the great success story of the Bendigo-built Bushmaster and to learn firsthand how the Japanese Government intends to use our Bushmasters.

Japanese Ministry of Defense has recently purchased and received four Bendigo-built Thales Bushmaster vehicles which will be used by the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force. The Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicle or Infantry Mobility Vehicle is a four wheel, all-wheel drive armoured vehicle.

In our meeting, the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Defense paid tribute to the enduring strength of the Japan—Australia relationship. He noted:

- Australia's swift response to support Japan following the Great East Japan Earthquake, including then Prime Minister Julia Gillard being the first world leader to visit Japan in the aftermath
- Our nations' shared commitment to human rights and international and regional stability
- The bi-lateral relationship enhanced by joint effort in information sharing and personnel exchange and the potential opportunities with supply of equipment, noting (as stated above) that 10 Thales Bushmasters constructed in Bendigo, Victoria are headed to Japan

Whilst the Bushmasters (at the time of the meeting) were still in transit, the delegation was able to give the Japanese officials a taste of what was to come with the gift of four small replica Bushmasters. Vice-Minister for Defense MP Harada also invited the delegation to discuss their view on how Japan and Australia could strengthen their defence manufacturing ties.



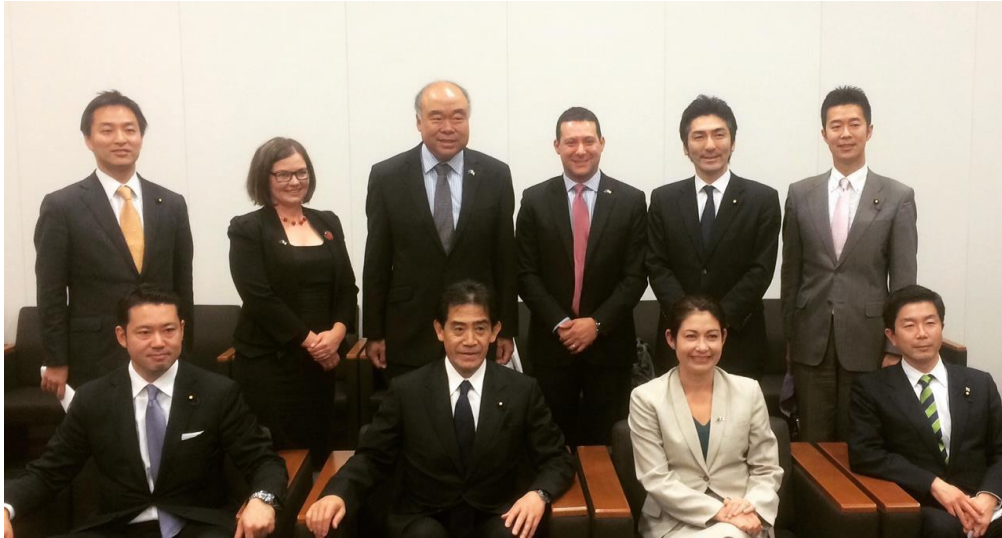
Meeting with the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Defense, MP Kenji Harada

Submarines

During the course of our delegation, mention was made about the supply of submarines to Australia with a number of officials acknowledging the “competitive evaluation process” but openly advocating the merits of Japanese supply. Those who raised the issue with us were curious about why there is domestic political resistance within Australia towards Japanese submarines. It was made clear to us that the Japanese had overcome resistance, domestically, to sharing the submarine technology with Australia. One official indicated to us that he was confident Australia would choose Japan for submarines, as their submarines have the best technology. He mentioned it is also in Japan's interest for Australia to have good defences, in an obvious reference to our countries' friendship. Japan is focussed on its alliance with the USA and further cooperation with Australia.

Attendance at the Diet and Meeting with the Japan-Australia Parliamentarians' Friendship League

The delegation was given the opportunity to visit the bicameral Japanese Diet and learn about Japan's parliamentary system. Our visit to the Diet revealed the workings of a modern democracy in action. At the Diet and elsewhere we met several Members of Parliament¹ representing different prefectures and holding various portfolios.



Meeting with the Japan-Australia Parliamentarians' Friendship League¹

One such occasion was the meeting with the Japan-Australia Parliamentarians' Friendship League, hosted by MP Taku Otsuka, Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Justice, and MP Ichiro Aisawa. The importance of the Japan-Australia relationship is reflected with more than 100 parliamentary members in Japan joining that group. At this meeting we also had the opportunity to meet MP Hideki Makihara, a Liberal Democratic Party Member of the House of Representatives who was subsequently the leader of the Japanese Auspol delegation to Australia in April – May 2015.

When we met with that group, there was a discussion about the difficulties in negotiations for agricultural goods in the Japan Australia Economic Partnership Agreement having been overcome. One of the members present, who represented Hokkaido (and whose constituency had significant agricultural interests) noted concerns within his electorate about the benefits, for Australia, in the Japan Australia Economic Partnership Agreement, in respect of beef. He also mentioned concerns about the Trans Pacific Partnership. However, he acknowledged the agreements as being mutually beneficial. The Australians present complimented our Japanese hosts on the quality of Japanese beef.

There was acknowledgement of the events of World War II. As noted above, this year marks the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The Japanese members present expressed hope that the post-war generation would cooperate more closely. The Australians present acknowledged that Japan had done much work in the past 70 years to promote peace and stability in the world.

The following topics were also discussed:

- The possibility of becoming more open to immigration, and attracting talent from abroad
- social welfare
- labour issues
- Japan's trilateral relationship with China and Korea (including trade and security matters).

¹ Including MP Yutaka Kumagai, Member of the House of Councilors; MP Shinjiro Koizumi, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Reconstruction; MP Arata Takebe, Member, House of Representatives; MP Hideki Makihara (Macky), Member of the House of Representatives; MP Taku Otsuka, Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Justice; MP Hideki Murai, Member of the House of Representatives; MP Ichiro Aisawa, Member of the House of Representatives; MP Nobuhiko Isaka, Member of the House of Representatives; MP Kazuyuki Nakane, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs; MP Yoshihiro Seki, Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry; MP Takeshi Miyazaki, Member of the House of Representatives; MP Takayuki Shimizu, Member of the House of Councilors

Meeting with the Australian Ambassador to Japan and Embassy officials

We were fortunate to meet with Ambassador HE Bruce Miller, Mr Tom Connor, Minister and Deputy Head of Mission, Ms Carolyn Barton, Counsellor (Resources and Industry), Ms Julianne Merriman, Counsellor (Commercial), and Ms Imogen Evans. They discussed the bilateral trading relationship and the opportunities for Australia, including under the Japan Australia Economic Partnership Agreement.

Experiencing Japan

As well as engaging with government, our delegation had the honour of meeting with persons of significant standing in both the private sector and academia. We also had the opportunity to experience some aspects of Japanese society and culture.

Economy

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is seeking to address Japan's decades of slow growth and low inflation with a 'three arrows' strategy, combining monetary policy – including quantitative easing - with fiscal policy, and structural reform.

Japan-Australia Business Cooperation Committee and the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce

Our delegation was honoured to meet with the leadership of the Japan-Australia Business Cooperation Committee including Mr Yoshihiro Okabe, the Director-General of the Committee, and Mr Nobuyuki Koga, the Chairman of the Board of Nomura.



Meeting with Mr Yoshihiro Okabe and Mr Nobuyuki Koga

The Japan Australia Business Cooperation Committee represents 92 leading Japanese companies. The representatives present were also engaged, at senior levels, with the Tokyo Chamber of Commerce.

The meeting noted the increased number of international flights between Japan and Australia. The 2020 Tokyo Olympics were discussed as it is anticipated this significant international event will lead to an increase in tourism. Australians have been engaged as consultants to assist with the preparations for and organisation of the Olympic Games.

The use of Public Private Partnerships for building infrastructure was discussed. The Japanese representatives present were interested in how public private partnerships might be used in Japan.

Japanese investment in Australia was discussed, as was airport infrastructure investment.

One of Prime Minister Abe's 'three arrows' for reforming the Japanese economy, structural reform, has as part of its approach the promotion of greater gender equity. We discussed this issue with the private sector representatives with whom we met. In their view, female workforce participation could be increased through improved access to childcare and aged care for dependent parents.

We also discussed nuclear power. This remains topical in Japan as the fourth anniversary of the Fukushima disaster occurred during our visit, on 11 March. Japan continues to grapple with whether to bring its nuclear power plants back into operation.

Japan-Australian Studies Association

We had the pleasure of meeting with the Japan-Australia Studies Association, an association of Japanese academics dedicated to Australian Studies over a period of 30 years. Our hosts included Professor Teruhiko Fukushima, Professor Mayumi Kamada, Professor Tetsuaki Okamoto, Dr Hiroya Sugita, Professor Takayuki Nagano and Dr Megumi Kato.

Many Japanese academics have studied in Australian Universities such as Australian National University, Flinders University and Sydney University. The matters discussed included:

- Australian sport
- Australian university fees are high for Japanese on average incomes
- Scholarships and exchange programmes will improve access to international education
- Homestays and working holiday programmes are popular
- New Colombo Plan with emphasis on outward bound Australian students
- Industrial diversification, economic reform
- Poverty, wealth inequality, single parents self-funded welfare: The Japanese National mindset is to be self-reliant and self sufficient
- Japanese immigration policy, refugees and its peacekeeping role internationally

Infrastructure logistics

On arrival at Narita Airport in Tokyo our clearance of immigration and customs was efficient and orderly able to efficiently cope with international passengers.

Our experience of the public transport system on our journey by bullet train (shinkansen) from Tokyo to Kyoto revealed that the rail system is highly organised and efficient, with punctuality being a key feature. Road traffic was manageable even during peak times with developed highways, tunnels, and road infrastructure.

Logistics in terms of cargo and ports were advanced and efficient. There is great capacity to cope with the merchandise imports/exports.

Agriculture

We observed agricultural activity in the form of rice paddies, on small lots of between 2 to 5 hectares. There appeared to be little mechanisation in the cultivation process. This represents an opportunity for Australian agricultural expertise and exports of agricultural machinery. There is sensitivity about maintaining self-sufficiency for rice and beef production among the Japanese.

We observed that the production of fruit and vegetables is a high value agricultural activity with consumers placing emphasis on high quality consistent produce – for example large strawberries can retail for A\$10 and cantaloupe melons for A\$120. This represents an export opportunity for high quality Australian gourmet produce.

Recycling

Recycling was advanced with sorting bins for glass, plastics, and paper provided in public places. Paper used in offices was recycled and of a lighter weight than 80 gsm. Use of packaging was efficient and frugal.

Tourism

Our visit to the Huis Ten Bosch theme park revealed that a world class tourism and hospitality venue is able to be operated in Japan. (Disneyland Tokyo, which we did not visit, is another well-known tourist attraction.) We were also fortunate to have visited the Tokyo Tower which afforded us a unique perspective on the city.

Preservation of heritage and historical buildings is of a high standard with a number of ancient temples, cathedrals, and gardens well maintained. Japan is very Western-friendly, making it relatively easy for English-speaking international visitors to travel and do business.

Food

Our delegation had the opportunity of trying various Japanese foods and preparation styles, including sushi, sashimi and teppanyaki.

Culture

Japan is a nation with a rich artistic heritage and diverse culture. During the delegation's time in Japan, the delegates had the opportunity to experience first-hand the many wonders of Japanese culture which developed a deeper understanding and respect for its people and their culture.

Indeed, the archaeological artefacts, temples, gardens, traditional fine arts and performing arts represent the Japanese experience, its people and their nation.

Whilst in Kyoto, delegates had the opportunity to attend Gion Corner and take in seven kinds of performing arts, most notably kyo-mai dance performed by maiko dancers. It was an opportunity to experience Japan's traditional performing arts in 'digest' form all on one stage.

Other performances included in the 'digest' were the art of creating and enjoying arrangements made from flowers and other materials; the koto, an ancient Japanese six-stringed zither, traditionally played with ivory plectrums worn on the fingers, producing wonderful harmonies; and Kyogen, a form of theatre that portrayed life as it was in a comical manner.

In Tokyo, the delegates had the opportunity to participate in a traditional Japanese tea ceremony, known as Chanoya. The art of tea, or Chanoyu, is an aesthetic cult of spiritual refinement and was very popular among the ruling samurai.

Japan is a beautiful country and Japanese gardens are renowned around the world. Evolving from the principles of Buddhism and Shintoism, Japanese Gardens are a combination of plants, sand, water and rock that celebrate the beauties of nature in a structured artistic form. The delegation had a few moments throughout the trip to enjoy the numerous gardens in the grounds of temples, memorial and community parks.

The history of temples in Japan widely differs, but the history of Buddhism overall lies very close with governmental changes, which affected these beautiful landmarks. During our time in Japan, the delegation had the opportunity to visit various temples to gain a great appreciation and understanding of their significance to the Japanese people. Buddhism was introduced to Japan from China and Korea in the sixth century. Prince Shōtoku adopted Buddhism and implemented it into the government's practices and the constitution. The landscape of Buddhism in Japan changed throughout various points in history.

Kiyomizu-dera is a historic temple that was established in 778 and is located halfway up Otowa Mountain in the eastern part of Kyoto City. Since its foundation, the temple has burned down many times. Most of the current buildings were rebuilt by the third Shogun Tokugawa Iemitsu in the early Edo period (1631 to 1633). The Main Hall (Hondo) of the temple is designated as a national treasure. The temple has many other important cultural properties including the Deva gate, west gate, three-storied pagoda and bell tower. In 1994, it was registered on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage List as one of the Historic Monuments of Ancient Kyoto. The two most famous places of the temple are the Main Hall, where the Eleven Headed and Thousand Armed Kannon Bodhisattva - which is famous for the power of answering prayers - is enshrined and Kiyomizu Stage, which is the veranda of the Main Hall extended over a precipice.

Kiyomizu-dera (the temple of clear water) was named after Otowa Waterfall. Water from a spring in the mountain has been falling there since its foundation. Fifteen colourfully-painted halls and pagodas stand in its verdant precincts.

Sanjūsangen-dō is a Buddhist temple in Higashiyama District of Kyoto, Japan. Officially known as "*Rengeō-in*" or *Hall of the Lotus King*, Sanjūsangen-dō belongs to and is run by the Myōhō-in temple, a part of the Tendai school of Buddhism.

The temple also contains one thousand life-size statues of the Thousand Armed Kannon which stand on both the right and left sides of the main statue in 10 rows and 50 columns. Of these, 124 statues are from the original temple, rescued from the fire of 1249, while the remaining 876 statues were constructed in the 13th century.

The statues are made of Japanese cypress clad in gold leaf. Around the 1000 Kannon statues stand 28 statues of guardian deities. There are also two famous statues of Fūjin and Raijin. Taira no Kiyomori completed the temple under order of Emperor Go-Shirakawa in 1164.

Conclusion

The delegation wishes to thank AUS POL and particularly Sharon Forester for the opportunities given to us and the professional manner in which the delegation was conducted. We thank Senator Zed Seselja, the previous delegation leader, for taking the time to brief us, and we also thank those members of the Australian Public Service who ensured we were well prepared. We wish to thank the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, and the Ministry of Defense, along with the Japanese and Australian Embassies, among others, for the warm welcome and the frank discussions. We thank our guide for her excellent work in assisting us through our time in Japan. We thank each of the translators who assisted us. We thank each person who took the time to meet with us and to share perspectives, information and friendship.

Terri Butler MP
Member for Griffith
Delegation Leader