

Consul-General of Japan in Sydney's Newsletter

No. 65 The passing of former Prime Minister Abe and the visits of two Ministers to Sydney

28 July 2022



**The Hinomaru projected on to the Sydney Opera House
(10 July 2022)**

Already a month has passed since my last consul-general's newsletter (dated 24 June). Since then, there has been a succession of major events at this consulate. Ahead of the 10 July House of Councillors election, a polling booth operated here from 23 June to 4 July, involving the entire consulate. Just before the House of Councillors election, former Prime Minister Abe died, and a book of condolences was open on 11 and 12 July. On the following two days, 13-14 July, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Hagiuda visited Sydney, immediately followed by a visit by Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications Kaneko on 15-16 July. In this issue of my newsletter, I would like to report about the passing of former Prime Minister Abe and both Ministers' visits.



**A book of condolences and floral tributes
at the Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney**

● The passing of former Prime Minister Abe

The shooting of former Prime Minister ABE Shinzo on 8 July was a huge shock. With the report of his passing, messages of condolence began to be received from all quarters. This office was instructed to open a book of condolences, and on the weekend we made preparations, informing people about it via our consular email service, on our website and via note verbale¹.

In NSW, Premier Perrottet released a [message of sympathy](#) on the evening of 8 July. On 9 July, he [announced](#) that the Sydney Opera House would be lit up in red and white, and the following evening (10 June), the Hinomaru was projected on to the Sydney Opera House. I went to The Rocks and shared a picture of it via [Twitter](#) with a message of thanks. It was retweeted more than 2,500 times, and not only did more than 12,000 people like it, [Channel 9](#) broadcasted my Twitter message – this made me realise the magnitude of the response.

¹ A type of written diplomatic note

This was widely reported in Japan. In [his address to the Keidanren](#) (Japan Business Federation) on 20 July, Prime Minister Kishida introduced the fact that “in Australia, landmarks – including the Sydney Opera House - were lit up in red and white to express sympathy with Japan.”



A photo NT Chief Minister Fyles posted to her Facebook with former Prime Minister (photo taken 17 November 2018, posted 8 July 2022)

A steady stream of local dignitaries came to the consulate to sign the book of condolences, including NSW Governor Margaret Beazley, former Australian Prime Ministers John Howard and Malcolm Turnbull, International Olympic Committee Vice President John Coates, former Australian Ambassador to Japan Bruce Miller, and consuls-general from various countries. They shared their memories of former Prime Minister Abe and praised his wide-ranging achievements.

Many local Japanese expatriates and Australians also came to sign the book of condolences and the signing table filled up with floral tributes.

In the Northern Territory too, sympathies were expressed: Northern Territory Administrator Vicki O'Halloran called Japanese Honorary Consul-General James Paspaley and posted a [message of sympathy](#) on Facebook; Chief Minister Natasha Fyles also [expressed her sympathy](#) via Facebook, posting it with photos of former Prime Minister Abe during his 2018 visit to Darwin; and Deputy Chief Minister Nicole Manison called me directly on behalf of the NT Government.

In view of such expressions of condolences and the high evaluations seen abroad, including here in Australia, it was decided to hold a state funeral for former Prime Minister Abe on 27 September, and preparations have already begun.



The Quad Energy Ministers' Meeting at the opening of the Sydney Energy Forum (13 July 2022) (Photo: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry)

- **Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Hagiuda visits Sydney**

On 13 July, the day after the book of condolences closed, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Hagiuda Koichi [arrived in Sydney](#), a day later than originally planned, to attend the Quad Energy Ministers' Meeting and the [Sydney Energy Forum](#), among other appointments.

At the start of the opening of the Sydney Energy Forum (the morning of 12 July) there was an expression of sympathy on the passing of former Prime Minister Abe; I also attended as the representative of the Government of Japan. Then, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese gave the [keynote address](#) and committed to Australia becoming a renewable energy superpower.

Minister Hagiuda arrived at the venue at the Fullerton Hotel on the morning of 13 July to participate in the first-ever Quad Energy Ministers' Meeting, which was convened as a result of the Quad Leaders' Meeting held in Tokyo in May this year. The ministers agreed on the importance of accelerating the development and uptake of technologies to transition to clean energy and of ensuring energy security through supply chain resilience.



**Exchanging views over a working lunch with Japanese companies in Australia
(14 July 2022) (Photo: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry)**

In his speech at the Sydney Energy Forum working lunch, Minister Hagiuda introduced the steps Japan is taking towards energy security and decarbonisation, and he noted the importance of three points in order to realise carbon neutrality for the entire world – 1) having different pathways according to the circumstances of individual countries, 2) creating innovation, and 3) promoting initiatives on a world-wide basis inclusive of large-emitting countries and Asian countries.

On the same day, the Minister had bilateral meetings with the US, India and Indonesia, and that evening, Ambassador Yamagami and I had the opportunity to explain the situation in Australia to him.

On the following day (14 July), there was a working lunch with Japanese companies in Australia. The participating companies each explained the current state of their local operations, their challenges and requests. I was also present and received instructions to follow up points raised. I will continue to work towards the further development of the Japan-Australia business relationship.



**Meeting between Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications Kaneko and
Minister for Communications Rowland (15 July 2022)**
(Photo: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications)

● **Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications Kaneko visits Sydney**

The next morning, 15 July, Minister of Internal Affairs and Communications KANEKO Yasushi arrived in Sydney. He came to Sydney after visiting Singapore, meeting with Federal Minister for Home Affairs Clare O’Neil in Melbourne and attending the ceremony in Canberra to confer the Imperial Decoration on former Prime Minister Tony Abbott.

In the afternoon of 15 July, Minister Kaneko had [a meeting with Minister for Communications Michelle Rowland](#). After exchanging views regarding cooperation in areas such as the utilisation of 5G, satellite communications and ITU (International Telecommunication Union), the Ministers signed a [Joint Statement](#). The Joint Statement announced the establishment of the “Australia-Japan Policy dialogue on Telecommunications Resilience” which will see regular head-of-agency level meetings between the relevant ministries of both countries.

That evening at my official residence, I had the opportunity to brief Minister Kaneko on Japan-Australia cooperation in fields such as communications and smart infrastructure.



Minister Kaneko visiting the University of Technology, Sydney (16 July 2022)
(Photo: Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications)

The next morning, 16 July, Minister Kaneko went to observe [“Tech Central”](#), the high-tech development precinct around Sydney’s Central Station. After receiving an overall explanation at the Scaleup Hub, he visited the construction site of Australia’s first unicorn company, [Atlassian Central](#). This new Atlassian headquarters will be a

wooden high-rise building and it will incorporate the latest zero-emissions technology. The Minister also met the head of Obayashi Corporation, which is [involved in the Atalassian project](#).

The Minister also visited the [University of Technology, Sydney \(UTS\)](#). There he was guided around by UTS Vice-Chancellor Andrew Parfitt to observe the latest developments in IoT (internet of things) devices and the utilisation of 3D printing, among others. He also received an explanation from NTT Australia General Manager YOSHITANI Hirofumi about collaboration between UTS and NTT. In November last year, UTS and NTT signed an [MoU](#). Later that afternoon, Minister Kaneko met with Japanese companies and exchanged views.

This was the first time since I assumed my position two and a half years ago that members of the Japanese Cabinet visited Sydney. Now that COVID-19 regulations have eased, it is likely that from here on, a succession of dignitaries will visit. Here in Sydney, I will work to strengthen Japan-Australia cooperation in all areas.

Kiya Masahiko, Consul-General of Japan in Sydney