## **A Farewell Message**

The Consul-General of Japan in Sydney, Mr Nobuhito Hobo, returned to Tokyo on 23 February, having held the post of Consul-General since 2 October 2007.

Sydney must be one of the friendliest cities to live in with its wonderful environment and people. I have certainly enjoyed the opportunity to live and work in this city. Over the two years and four months I spent in Sydney as Consul-General, I have had many happy experiences and I leave to return to Tokyo confident in the excellent relationship between our two countries.

Bilateral ties are strong. The very last days of my Sydney posting were marked by the visit to Australia by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr Katsuya Okada, who met with Prime Minister Kevin Rudd and the Australian Defence and Foreign Ministers. Japan and Australia share many regional and global common interests and goals, and we will continue to cooperate on a wide range of regional and international issues.

My time in Australia also demonstrated to me how Japan-Australia economic ties continue to provide opportunities for both our countries. Even during the GFC, Australian exports to Japan increased and there were new waves of Japanese investment in Australia. This speaks of the strength of our long economic relationship.

At the grassroots level I witnessed vibrant and enduring ties. During my tenure, I made the most of opportunities to visit regional towns and cities that have sister-city relationships with places in Japan. I was able to observe firsthand the ties of friendship that have grown between Australians and many Japanese expatriates who have made New South Wales and the Northern Territory their home.

Many Japanese expatriates make important contributions to ties between Australia and Japan. I have been very

pleased to see how the various Japanese organisations are working together better than ever to promote friendship between our two peoples and to support cultural exchange within 仕事をする機会に恵まれ大変光栄で their communities.

As we all know, Japanese is one of the most widely studied foreign languages in Australia, but I am also aware that much effort has also been going into providing children of Japanese descent with opportunities to stay in touch with Japanese culture and language. Japanese societies and Australia-Japan friendship associations' festivals and cultural days are popular events among the general public in many places in NSW, in the NT and in New Caledonia\*.

Finally, I would like to thank you for the support so many of you have generously extended to me and my office in the past and ask that you continue to extend this friendship and cooperation to the Consulate and its members in the future.

Thank you and see you again.



**Mr Nobuhito Hobo** 

We look forward to introducing Mr Hobo's successor to readers in our next issue.

\*As the closest diplomatic mission, the Sydney Consulate provides consular support to New Caledonia which is under the jurisdiction of the Embassy of Japan in France.

## 離任の挨拶

かんきょう す ば シドニーの環境は素晴らしく、 人々は親切で、ここは世界で 最もフ とし ひと ちが レンドリーな都市の一つに違いあり ません。 私 はこの都市に住み、 きかい めぐ たいへんこうえい した。総領事として過ごしたシド ねん かげつ あいだ ニーでの2年4ヶ月の間、私は多く の恵まれた経験を積み、二国間の りょうこう かんけい さら かくしん とうきょう 良好な関係を更に確信して東京に 戻ることとなりました。

日豪の二国間関係は強固です。シ にんき お ちょくぜん ドニーでの任期が終わる直前に、 おかだかつやがいむだいじん 岡田克也外務大臣のオーストラリア ほうもん じつげん 訪問が実現し、岡田大臣はケビン・ しゅしょう ラッド首相をはじめ、国防・外務

両大臣と会談しました。日本とオー ストラリアは、地域的そして

ちきゅうきぼてき りえき もくてき きょうゆう 地球規模的な利益と目的を共有して はばひろ しょもんだい たい おり、両国はこの幅広い諸問題に対

> して一層の協力を進める かくにん ことを確認しております。

いっそう きょうりょく すす

オーストラリア在任は、 けいざいかんけい

日豪の経済関係がいかに 双方に新たな機会を与え続 けたかということを確認す る機会でもありました。 さくねん きんゆうきき さなか 昨年の金融危機の最中でさ え、オーストラリアの たいにちゆしゅつ ぞうだい

対日輸出は増大し、さらに

日本からの対豪投資も新たなうねり がありました。こうしたことが、私 たち両国間の歴史ある経済関係の強 さを物語っていると思います。

草の根レベルでは、さらに活発な

息の長い関係を目の当たりにしまし た。私の在任中は、日本の地方公共 団体と姉妹都市関係を結んでいる地方 自治体をできる限り訪問するよう 心が けました。そこでは、NSWと北部準州 とに根を下ろしている多くの日本人 永住者とオーストラリア人の方々との 友好関係を目にする直接の機会に恵ま れました。

多くの日本人永住者は日豪関係に 多大なる貢献をしておられます。こう した多様な日系の団体がよりよい両国 間の友好関係を築くべく努力している こと、そして地域に根ざした文化交流 を広げていることに喜びを禁じ得ませ

みなさま しょうち とお にほんご 皆様ご承知の通り、日本語はオース がくしゅうしゃじんこう トラリアで最も学習者人口が多い 外国語の1つでありますが、私は にっけいじん こどもたち 日系人の子供達が日本の文化と言葉に 触れる機会をもっと与えられることも 重要だと思っています。日本の関連団 体や豪日の友好団体が主催するフェス ぶんかさい

ティバルや文化祭などは、NSWのあちこ ちの都市で、また北部準州で、そして ニューカレドニアでも多く見られるよ うになりました。

最後に、この場をお借りしてたくさ んの方々に対して、私自身、そして 総領事館に対してこれまで頂 戴しまし かずかず しえん かんしゃもう た数々の支援に感謝申し上げます。 とうかんおよ 今後もより一層のご協力を当館及び当 館スタッフに賜りますよう、心よりお わが もう あ 願い申し上げます。

ありがとうございました。またどこ かでお会いしましょう。

## **Visit to Australia** by Japanese Foreign Minister **Mr Katsuya Okada**

Mr Katsuya Okada, the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs, paid his first official visit to Australia on Saturday 20 and Sunday 21 March. During his two-day visit, the Foreign Minister paid a courtesy call on Australian Prime Minister Mr Kevin Rudd and held talks with Defence Minister Senator John Faulkner and Foreign Minister Mr Steven Smith.

engagement was a visit to the Japan Club of Sydney's Japanese Language City School where he was able to observe a class in action.

After arriving in Sydney early on partnership agreement (EPA) and the Saturday morning, Mr Okada's first future regional framework of the Asia-

> Sunday saw Mr Okada in Perth. His engagements included a visit with



Foreign Minister Okada speaking with students at the Japan Club of Sydney's Japanese Language School held at Ultimo Public School.

The Minister later hosted a lunch for Australian Foreign Minister Mr representatives of the Japanese community and he was able to gain an impression of life in Sydney.

In the afternoon, Mr Okada had a meeting with the Minister for Defence Senator John Faulkner. They and half. Whaling was of course one discussed areas of cooperation of the issues discussed, but the including the development of a new ministers agreed that despite it being logistics agreement between the Japanese Self-Defense Forces and the Australian Defence Force. This will enable the two countries to better coordinate, for example, relief and peace-keeping operations. Trilateral security with the United States of America was also discussed.

The Foreign Minister then paid a courtesy call on the Australian Prime Minister, Mr Kevin Rudd, at Kirribilli. Among the topics discussed were negotiations towards an economic

Stephen Smith to the Kings Park War Memorial for a wreath laying ceremony.

The two foreign ministers also held discussions lasting around an hour an issue of significant disagreement, whaling should not be allowed to affect the overall excellent relationship that Japan and Australia

Ministers Okada and Smith issued a joint statement, Toward a World without Nuclear Weapons, in which they confirmed their decision to work together to realise a world with decreased nuclear threat on the way to a world with no nuclear weapons.

For more on Japan-Australia relations see: www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/index.html