

Foreign Minister Seiji Maehara visits Australia

Japan's Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Seiji Maehara, visited Canberra on 23 November 2010. It was the Foreign Minister's first bilateral visit to a foreign capital since he assumed office, signifying the importance Japan places on Australia.

Minister Maehara had a busy schedule during his day-long visit to Australia. He paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Julia Gillard and had meetings with the Minister for Trade Craig Emerson, Minister for Foreign Affairs Kevin Rudd and Minister for Defence Stephen Smith.

Minister Maehara explained to the Australian side the Basic Policy on Comprehensive Economic Partnerships announced by Japan's Cabinet on 9 November. Both sides agreed to advance negotiations for an Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and look to convene the next negotiation meeting in early 2011.

The Japanese Foreign Minister emphasised that Australia is an important country for the three pillars of Japan's economic diplomacy: namely, a free-trade system; a stable supply of resources, energy and foods; and development of infrastructure overseas. He expressed his wish to enhance political dialogue with Australia in the areas of resources and infrastructure.

Foreign Ministers Maehara and Rudd reaffirmed cooperative relations between Japan and Australia in the areas of security cooperation and coordination in regional and global issues, releasing a joint statement on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, an area in which the two countries have been playing a leading role.

Minister Maehara paid a visit to the Australia War Memorial where he placed a wreath on the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. He also visited the statue of Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop, a former prisoner of war.

Further details of the Minister's visit and the joint statement regarding nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation can be found at:

www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/australia/visit101123.html

For Japan's **Basic Policy on Comprehensive Economic Partnerships** see:

www.kantei.go.jp/foreign/kan/topics/20101109basicpolicyepa.pdf

The JENESYS program—fostering understanding

During the East Asia Summit held in January 2007, the then Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe announced the creation of the **Japan East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youth Program**, referred to as the 'JENESYS' program*. JENESYS is now in its fourth year and it continues to evolve and develop. Since its inception several exchange programs have been implemented as part of the JENESYS scheme.

Two of the exchange programs took place in December 2010: one for Australian high school students and teachers and the other for Australian university students. Taking up the second of these, the JENESYS 'Invitation Programme for Japanese-Learning Students at Australian Universities' aims to deepen understanding of Japan among young Australians—young people who are strongly interested in strengthening relations with Japan and who will assume greater responsibilities within society in coming years.

From 7 to 16 December, a total of 45 Australian university students visited Japan under this exchange program. While in Japan they had unique opportunities to visit major Japanese industries such as Mitsubishi Corporation, a Toyota Motor Corporation factory and Kyocera Corporation. They had lectures on topics such as Japanese society, economy, culture, tourism and entrepreneurship, and participated in study tours to key sites within Japan. They also interacted with Japanese people including university students who were able to give them an insight into their lives. Participants also took part in a home stay.

It is hoped that this type of exchange will not only help the participants gain knowledge to help them with their studies and future aims, but that they will also share their experiences with family and friends.

JENESYS also provides opportunities for young Japanese to undertake exchange in Asia. This March will see a group of Japanese university students visit Australia.

The **JENESYS Training Programme for University Students Studying Japanese** is currently open for applications. Five places are available for Australian university students alongside 30 others from Brunei, India, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Singapore and Vietnam for study in Japan in June-July 2011.

See www.jpfa.org.au/07_grants/jleo.htm#pl for more information.

*JENESYS is pronounced as for 'Genesis'.



A word from the Editor

This is the second last issue of *Japan Reports* before we become an e-publication. Our next and final printed issue will look back over previous years' newsletters since *Japan Reports* was first published in 1967.