

52nd AJBCC conference held in Darwin

The Consul-General of Japan in Sydney, Mr Masato Takaoka, attended the 52nd Australia-Japan Joint Business Conference held in Darwin from 12 to 14 October 2014. The theme of the Conference was *Australia and Japan—A New Era in the Relationship*.

The Joint Business Conference is held regularly by the Japan-Australia and the Australia-Japan Business Cooperation Committees. The 52nd Conference was hosted by the Northern Territory Government. The NT Government and INPEX were the principal sponsors of the event.

The approximately 300 delegates included some of the most influential corporate leaders from both Australia and Japan.

His Excellency the Ambassador of Japan in Australia, Mr Yoshitaka Akimoto was also in attendance and he read a statement by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe to the delegates. The comments revealed that Prime Minister Abe is keen to seek an earlier ratification of the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (JAEPA).

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While in Darwin, the Consul-General also paid a courtesy call on The Right Worshipful The Lord Mayor of Darwin, Katrina Fong Lim.

AJBCC/JABCC: make a note

A proposal in 1961 by a visiting Japanese trade representative to form a bilateral cooperation committee provided the spark. In August 1962, the Australia-Japan Business Cooperation Committee (AJBCC) was founded. The Japan-Australia Business Cooperation Committee (JABCC) was established in February 1963, with the first joint meeting of the two committees held over 12-13 May 1963.

The Committees have contributed much to the development of the bilateral economic relationship by promoting ties and mutual understanding between our business communities.

In 2012, the AJBCC published its *50th Anniversary Commemorative Book* which can be viewed online at www.ajbcc.asn.au/history.html

Japanese Maritime Self Defence Forces Training Squadron pays port of call in Sydney

On the morning of September 11, the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Forces Training Squadron [below] made port in Sydney for the first time in seven years. The stop formed part of the Training Squadron's 'Overseas Training Cruise 2014', a 158-day journey stopping at 15 international ports.



That evening a reception was held aboard the JS Kashima which was jointly hosted by the Consul-General of Japan in Sydney, Mr Masato Takaoka, and the Commander of the Training Squadron, Rear Admiral Hideki Yuasa.

Ms Junko Morimoto receives Foreign Minister's Commendation

On Tuesday 21 October Consul-General Masato Takaoka was honoured to host a presentation ceremony and dinner for Ms Junko Morimoto, recipient of a Foreign Minister's Commendation.

The Foreign Minister's Commendation is presented to individuals in various fields who have made significant and long-lasting contributions to bilateral relations. Ms Morimoto has made a great contribution to understanding between Japan and Australia since arriving in Australia in 1982.



Ms Junko Morimoto and the Consul-General of Japan in Sydney, Mr Masato Takaoka, during the presentation ceremony

Through her work as a children's illustrator and author, she has introduced Japanese culture to many Australian children. Some of the books she has had published have been retellings of stories by Japanese literary great Kenji Miyazawa; others were versions of classic Japanese folktales. All were brought to life by the wonderful illustrations of Ms Morimoto.

In all, she has published 14 books. Her books have received multiple awards, and she was twice awarded the prestigious Children's Book Council 'Picture Book of the Year' Award, once for *Kojuro and the Bears* and the other time for *The Two Bullies*. Her autobiographical picture book *My Hiroshima* has been reissued this year.

Minister for Foreign Affairs Fumio Kishida announced Ms Morimoto's award earlier this year in August.

The reception was well attended by senior figures from government, military, academia and business as well as notables such as Olympic champion Ms Dawn Fraser AO MBE and Assistant Commissioner Robert MacNeil of Fire and Rescue NSW, who led Australia's contribution to rescue operations following the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011. About 200 guests participated in total.

The Consul-General [above] was delighted to welcome so many friends of the Japan-Australia relationship to the event.

