

10 years since the Great East Japan Earthquake

Remembering 3.11 ~ Thanking Australian friends



Consul-General Kiya was among the many who gathered in Sydney at the Rainbow Project commemoration to remember the victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake and to thank Australians for their support over the decade since the disaster.

In his opening speech, the Consul-General expressed his profound gratitude to the people of NSW and Australia, and he noted that there has been continuing exchange between Japan and Australia born out of heartfelt efforts to assist friends in a time of need.

The Consul-General said a wonderful example of this exchange was Rainbow Project's homestay program that brought young people from Fukushima to Sydney, and he thanked Rainbow Project and its supporters for everything they have done over the last 10 years.

He also conveyed Japan's determination to share what it has learnt from the disaster and contribute to disaster management. Noting Japan's assistance to operations during the Black Summer bushfires in Australia, he explained that in a spirit of friendship, together Australia and



Japan can contribute much to disaster management in the Indo-Pacific and around the world.

The week after the 11 March commemoration, the Consul-General hosted a dinner at his official residence to convey the gratitude of Japan for the various support and exchange activities in response to the disaster. Among the honoured guests pictured above was The Hon. David Elliott, NSW Minister for Police and Emergency Services [centre].



Beyond Sydney—commemoration in Bathurst

This year, the sister city relationship between Bathurst in NSW and Ohkuma in Fukushima celebrated its 30th anniversary. Ten years ago, Ohkuma Town had to be evacuated after the tsunami devastated the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station which is located in Ohkuma.

Despite this, the exchange between people of Bathurst and Ohkuma has continued to this day—a truly inspirational example of friendship.

Also on 11 March, a tree-planting ceremony in honour of the Ohkuma 30th Sister City and 10th Earthquake Anniversary was held by Bathurst Regional Council. Deputy Consul-General Tanaka Noriko participated in the ceremony representing the Consul-General. Afterwards, she visited the Bathurst Regional Council office and met with the Mayor and Councillors.

On 24 March, Consul-General Kiya took the opportunity to visit Bathurst for himself and he was warmly received by former and current mayors as well as long-term Bathurst resident Ms Fudeko Reekie, a key player in facilitating communication between these inspiring sister cities.



The Consul-General reported on the 3.11 commemorations, including his visit to Bathurst, in issue #37 of his newsletter:

Japan-Australia Exchange - Coming together for areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake

www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/document/CGKiya_37newsE.pdf