



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

AUSTRALIA JAPAN BUSINESS COOPERATION COMMITTEE
Sunday 8 October 2023

Acknowledgments

Tim Pallas MP, Treasurer, Minister for Industrial Relations and Minister for Economic Growth
Senator the Honourable Don Farrell, Commonwealth Minister for Trade and Tourism and
Special Minister of State

His Excellency Yasutoshi Nishimura, Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry

Jan Adams AO PSM, Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

His Excellency Kazuhiro Suzuki, Ambassador of Japan to Australia, and **Justin Hayhurst**,
Ambassador of Australia to Japan

Michiaki Hirose, Chairman, Japan Australia Business Co-operation Committee, and **Peter
Grey**, President, Australia Japan Business Co-operation Committee

Distinguished guests

I begin by acknowledging the Traditional Owners of the lands on which this House stands – the
Wurundjeri and Bunurong people – and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present.

It's a pleasure to welcome you all to Government House to mark the opening of the 60th Annual
Australia-Japan Joint Business Conference.

This year's theme, *The Australia-Japan Business Partnership: Looking to the Next Sixty Years*, is
an important reminder of how far this relationship has come.

Trade between Australia and Japan dates back to the 19th century when Japanese buyers began
importing coal and wool from Australia.

This relationship continued to develop in the post-war period. In 1957, Australia became one
of the first allied nations to normalise its post-war trade relations with Japan and actively
encourage greater two-way trade.

The Australia-Japan Commerce Agreement opened the door for an exchange of knowledge and
information through conferences like these.

For 60 years, your conferences have contributed to the development of the mutually beneficial partnership we enjoy today.

And it is a significant partnership.

In 2022, Japan was Australia's second-largest trading partner and our second-largest export market, focussing on coal, natural gas and iron ore.

Of course, this relationship isn't only beneficial to Australia.

Last year, Japan was Australia's fifth largest import source with a value of \$27.4 billion.

But our relationship goes beyond the purely financial.

We are united by a shared commitment to those values and ideals that define both nations. Ideals of democracy, free trade and international collaboration have provided valuable points of connection.

It is important that we recall the long history of friendship between our two nations.

Aichi and Victoria have enjoyed 43 years of sister-state relations, trading cultural, artistic and commercial knowledge. And later this week, I look forward to welcoming His Excellency Hideaki Ōhmura, Governor of Aichi to Government House.

Friendships help us understand one another. They also help us understand how to move forward into the future.

I understand that in Japanese culture, a 60th anniversary marks the end of one lifecycle and the commencement of another.

The next 60 years will bring new challenges that reflect this contemporary period.

Action on climate change, the development of AI and a changing world order will require innovative solutions.

They will also require continued commitment to cross-cultural collaboration and international partnership.

I am delighted that the Co-operation Committee's Future Leaders Program ensures just that. Supporting the next generation of Australia-Japan business leaders ensures the continuation of this important relationship and our ability to meet the challenges of the future.

Thank you to the Australia-Japan Business Cooperation Committee for hosting this year's conference.

And to all of you participating in the important discussions of the next few days.

I'd now like to invite the Treasurer to speak.