



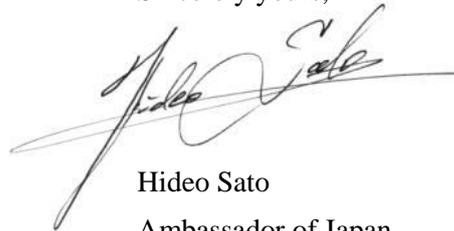
Embassy of Japan in Israel
Ambassador's Newsletter #3, July 2012

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Time flies, and we are already halfway through the year of 2012. I am pleased to take this opportunity to send you my third Ambassador's Newsletter. In this edition, I would like to cover three topics which may well be of your interest:

1. Continued Celebration: 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Israel
2. One Year after 3/11: A New Concept of "Security" from Japan
3. G8 Summit in Camp David

Sincerely yours,



Hideo Sato
Ambassador of Japan

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Continued Celebration: 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Israel

Since the beginning of this year, we have been holding various cultural events to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of our diplomatic relations. First and foremost, I would like to take this opportunity to express my heartfelt gratitude for your continued support.

The celebration of the year began with a major success at the annual Red Sea Classic Music Festival in Eilat, where six Japanese musicians from Europe conducted joint performances with Israeli musicians. The stunning collaboration of the promising musicians was no doubt the highlight of the festival, marking a brilliant start of the year. The tour was partly extended to Tel Aviv as well.



Red Sea Classic Music Festival

Then in February, two top Jazz musicians from Japan came to perform for the Tel Aviv Jazz Festival. Kazumi Watanabe, the Japanese virtuoso of jazz guitar, played swing, be-bop, blues and free style with his superb technique, while Minako Yoshida, the diva from the far east, sang standard, original and improvisational tunes with her strong and soulful voice. Frenzied applause of joy became endless at the end of the evening.



Tel Aviv Jazz Festival

In March we held the *Furoshiki* (Japanese traditional wrapping cloth) Design Contest in collaboration with Design Museum Holon. Young and talented Israeli designers beautifully incorporated the essence of Japanese traditions into their creative designs of contemporary *Furoshiki*.

The highlight of May was the visit of the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs Koichiro Gemba to Israel. In the meeting with H.E. Avigdor Liberman, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Israel, both sides agreed to continuously work together, so as to seize the opportunity of the 60th Anniversary for further promotion of our bilateral relations. In the evening of the same day, I had the privilege to host the reception in the presence of Minister Gemba to commemorate the Anniversary. Among the distinguished guests were H.E. Mr. Reuven Rivlin, Speaker of the Knesset, H.E. Mr. Avigdor



Japan-Israel Foreign Ministerial Meeting

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Liberman, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Israel, H.E. Mr. Ehud Barak, Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister of Israel, and The Hon. M.K. Mr. Shai Hermesh, Chairman of the Israel-Japan Friendship League of the Knesset. The evening turned out to be bliss for all the participants, adding to the momentum of the ever growing friendship between the two countries.

The month of May also witnessed another major achievement in the academic sphere. The Hebrew University of Jerusalem hosted, in commemoration of the 60 Anniversary, a special international symposium on an unprecedented large scale. With many renowned experts and scholars joining from within and without the country, the 3-day symposium entailed an eclectic spectrum of themes ranging from politics, economics and diplomacy, to literature, art and language studies; all relevant to the Japan-Israel bilateral context. Taking this occasion, the Israeli Association for Japanese Studies (IAJS) was newly established as the second national academic body for Japanese studies in the entire Middle East region, only after Turkey. The Association now provides a solid ground for academics of both countries to engage in extensive intellectual exchanges.



Inauguration of Israeli Association of Japanese Studies

The annual Israel Festival also featured Japan this year. Yamato, a Japanese drumming troupe, successfully presented the opening of the festival, stirring the mass audience of over 1,000 with excitement. Also highlighted this year was Karas, a contemporary dance group led by Mr. Saburo Teshigawara, who is one of the world's most respected choreographers. Both groups received extensive media exposure through local TV and newspapers, contributing greatly to the success of the entire festival.



Israel Festival Opening: Yamato

In June, we had the pleasure to introduce *Noh* to the Israeli audience for the very first time ever. This classic theater of Japan is an art of true authenticity and aesthetics expressed through unique vocalizations and extremely simplified yet abstract movements. As part of their national tour, a special evening of performance was held at my residence, where many Israeli guests came to enjoy their first encounter with the traditional performance art of Japan.



Noh Performance in Haifa

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Now it is July; we are seeing a number of Japanese art exhibitions happening simultaneously. In Jerusalem, the Israel Museum began a new exhibition of woodblock prints and stage costumes of *Kabuki*, another classic theater of Japan with more than 400 years of history. Design Museum Holon just successfully had the grand opening of their new exhibition of Yohji Yamamoto, one of the most prominent fashion designers of the world. In Haifa, Tikotin Museum of Japanese Art and Haifa Museum of Art will soon present to us a major exhibition on Japanese contemporary art.



Yohji Yamamoto Exhibition: Design Museum Holon

Our celebration of the 60th Anniversary will continue until the very end of the year. We believe that only the accumulation of tireless efforts can make a difference in people's minds and hearts in the field of cultural exchange. I would like to express anew my sincere gratitude for your ceaseless support and understanding, and look forward to your continuous participation in our programs.

One Year after 3/11: A New Concept of 'Security' from Japan

One Year On

On March 11 this year, the Government of Japan held a ceremony in Tokyo to commemorate the first anniversary of the Great East Japan Earthquake in the presence of Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress. Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda addressed the ceremony on behalf of the government, saying: "The fight against the nuclear accident is continuing. We will make every effort to ensure that the rebirth of Fukushima is definitely achieved and beautiful hometowns are restored to their people . . . In order to repay the warm and kind assistance shown to us by other countries, we must exert every effort to make an active contribution to the international community." (See [full address](#) by Prime Minister Noda.)

On the following day, March 12, Minister for Foreign Affairs Koichiro Gamba hosted a reception, which was attended by many foreign residents in Japan who extended assistance to the affected areas as well as diplomatic corps. Minister Gamba expressed his condolences for the people who lost their lives, and reiterated his gratitude for the assistance from the international community, where he particularly highlighted the achievement of the medical support team of Israel. Similarly, Japanese diplomatic missions hosted receptions in 214 locations in 136 countries, which were attended by many government officials, organizations and individuals who

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provided assistance, Japan experts as well as press corps. At my residence gathered over 250 guests to pay tribute to the victims and express continued solidarity with Japan, wishing anew for its steady recovery and reconstruction.

Towards Japan That Leads the World

We are deeply grateful to the international community for its assistance in all of its forms to the people of Japan in the face of this unprecedented disaster. Most areas in Japan, except restricted areas, have returned to normal since the earthquake. We are more than happy to welcome people from abroad, be it for business, travel, or study. We will continue to provide the international community with timely and accurate information on the situation in Japan and the safety of Japanese products.

The March 11th disaster has reminded us of the importance of *kizuna* (bonds of friendship) we share with the international community. Japan reaffirms its commitment to its international cooperation so as to achieve human security as well as sustainable and inclusive growth for the world, and to take leadership in addressing a range of global issues facing the international community. In this way, Japan can finally reciprocate the assistance it received from the international community. Japan has also continued to share with the international community the knowledge and lessons learned from the earthquake, the tsunami and the nuclear accident. Japan strives to become a model for the international community as a top problem-solver in such areas as open reconstruction from a natural disaster, disaster prevention, transition to a green economy, measures against an aging population, and high-level economic partnership.

Safe and Secure Japan

Is Japan an unsafe country to visit? The answer is no. First and foremost, the release of cesium (a radioactive material) from the containment vessels of Units 1 to 3 of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station of Tokyo Electric Power Company is now about one 80 millionth of the amount at the time of the accident in March last year. This means that if one was exposed to radiation on the boundary of the site for one year, the total dosage would only be 0.02 millisieverts (mSv) or less. (This is far less than the amount of a round trip by air between Tokyo and New York, which is a little over 0.1 mSv, and a gastrointestinal X-ray examination, which is 0.4 mSv.) Second, the nuclear reactors are now in a stable state after achieving a condition equivalent to “cold shutdown” in December last year. Third, air radiation levels in areas around the nuclear power station are largely rather low, as shown in the attachment. For example, radiation levels in the Aizu area in Fukushima Prefecture are on par with those in major cities in the world (0.08-0.14 μ Sv/h against 0.108 μ Sv/h in Seoul). Again, Japan is safe to visit. Please

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feel at ease to visit our country, be it for business, travel, or study.

G8 Summit in Camp David: The Summit Emphasized the “Back to Basics” Approach and the Leaders Had Frank Discussions on Various Agenda Such as the Global Economy and Regional Issues

On May 18 and 19, [the G8 Summit](#) was held in Camp David, the United States, where Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda attended as the Japanese head of delegation. As the Chair, the United States hosted the summit at the President’s country retreat, emphasizing “back to the basics” of the G8 Summit. The leaders exchanged their views in detail on a broad range of political and economic issues.

Japan mainly discussed the following points at the Summit:

(1) Regional and Political Issues

A series of Discussions was held concerning Iran, Syria, North Korea, Myanmar and others. Regarding Iran, Prime Minister Noda noted that imports of Iranian crude oil to Japan have been dramatically reduced despite the difficult circumstances caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake, and expressed his hope that progress will be made through each and every effort by the EU 3+3, IAEA and other entities. Concerning North Korea, he stated that the international community should make clear that any wrongdoing will not be rewarded, and that the international community, including the G8, should convey their united and firm resolve to North Korea in order to prevent further provocations. Prime Minister Noda also called for continued support of G8 nations on the abduction issue.

(2) The Global Economy

During discussions on the response to the resurging European debt crisis and the importance of achieving fiscal consolidation while also maintaining economic growth, Japan explained how it has contributed to resolution of the crisis and prevention of its spread into Asia through measures such as strengthening the IMF resources and enhancing the Chiang Mai Initiative. In addition, Prime Minister Noda reiterated that achieving both fiscal consolidation and economic growth is also of great importance to Japan, and explained its domestic initiatives on the comprehensive reform of social security and tax. Japan also reaffirmed the need to promote free trade and economic partnerships as a driver for growth, and stressed the importance of avoiding protectionism.

(3) Africa and Food Security

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Together with the African leaders and the private sector participants, the G8 leaders discussed the “New Alliance” aimed at stimulating private sector investment to improve food security in Africa. Japan expressed its determination to make next year’s TICAD V a success by building up on the outcomes of TICAD IV. In this regard, Japan intends to further enhance cooperation with United Kingdom, the G8 Chair of the next year.

(4) Afghanistan’s Economic Transition

Japan explained the importance of a mutual commitment between the international community and the government of Afghanistan, describing the need to improve the governance in Afghanistan and to establish biennial review mechanisms.

Following these discussions, the Japanese and Afghan Governments jointly held [the Tokyo Conference on Afghanistan](#) earlier this month. Japan took the initiative and secured high-level participation of the major donor countries such as India, Pakistan and Iran as well as international development organizations. Through long-term coordination efforts as a host nation, Japan was able to ensure commitments from the international community for strong support totaling over \$16 billion till 2015, as well as commitments from Afghanistan in the areas of development and governance. Japan also managed to demonstrate its presence in the international arena by newly establishing Tokyo Framework.

For inquiries, comments, and suggestions about this newsletter, please kindly refer to below

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