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Japan New Zealand
Partnership Forum
2008

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FORUM ADVANCES JAPAN NEW ZEALAND LINKS

The first ever Japan New Zealand Partnership Forum which closed in Tokyo yesterday (15 May) has met its objective of strengthening the business and economic relationship with Japan.

Forum Co-Chair Hon Philip Burdon said that the Forum had been energised by Prime Minister Helen Clark's announcement that Japan and New Zealand would initiate a study on a possible Economic Partnership Arrangement (EPA).

"The proposed study was a dramatic development on the eve of the Forum's opening. This set the scene for a highly productive meeting. Delegates came away from the event resolved to continue to expand the dialogue the Forum had begun.

"This Forum gave some concrete indicators of where the partnership with Japan can be deepened. We are likeminded on the need for new economic structures to accommodate change in the Asia Pacific region. We see the potential for innovation bridges to be built between our two countries. We also see great benefit from joint approaches to addressing climate change and sustainability.

"This was a substantive, forward-looking and stimulating event."

NZ International Business Forum Chairman Graeme Harrison said the event had exceeded expectations in terms of the Japanese attendance and the quality of the discussion.

"The Forum was designed to capture the imagination of a range of players in moving the relationship forward and the high level attendance on both sides indicates that there is plenty of scope to build on this first gathering.

"The Forum has already been successful in exposing some key Japanese leaders and opinion formers to the value of co-operation with New Zealand. The chemistry at the meeting was excellent and we will see the impact of the Forum in coming years.

"Our Co-Chairs have suggested we meet again within the next 12 to 18 months and the International Business Forum will certainly take up this suggestion".

For further information

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About the Japan NZ Partnership Forum

93 business, government and community leaders attended the first ever Japan New Zealand Partnership Forum held in Tokyo on 14 and 15 May with the theme "New Thinking, New Partnership". The Forum was co-chaired by Mr Yoshihiko Miyauchi, Chairman and CEO of ORIX Corporation and Hon Philip Burdon, Chairman of the Asia NZ Foundation. The Forum was addressed by the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Rt Hon Helen Clark and by the Japanese Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs Mr Osamu Uno representing the Prime Minister of Japan. Trade Minister Hon Phil Goff also addressed the Forum. The event was organised by the NZ International Business Forum with the support of the Japan NZ Business Council, the New Zealand Government and partners in Japan and New Zealand.

About the NZ International Business Forum

The Forum is a business organisation which aims to generate wealth for New Zealanders by helping ensure that New Zealand enterprises are fully integrated and engaged in the global economy and New Zealand's global competitive position is maximised. The Forum provides leadership, works with companies and other business organisations to implement key projects and articulates New Zealand's international business priorities to both the New Zealand Government and stakeholders. Forum participants represent companies and sectors with a turnover of over \$20 billion.

About the NZ Japan relationship

Japan is a major bilateral and regional partner of New Zealand. Japan is New Zealand's third largest trading partner, with exports totalling NZ\$3.49 billion to the end of June 2007. For New Zealand Japan is a major market for dairy products, fruit and vegetables, beef, wood products and fish. The cumulative value of total Japanese investment in New Zealand in March 2007 was roughly NZ\$7.6 billion. Japan is also the fifth most significant source of tourist revenue for New Zealand with 117,743 arrivals in the year to February 2008. At the political level strong political ties are underpinned by a commonality of views and shared interests in the stability, growth and development of the Asia/Pacific community.