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パースエクスプレス読者の皆様、新年明けましておめでとうございます。

昨年一年を振り返りますと、内外では政治的なものも含め大きな動きがいろいろありましたが、日本・西豪州関係におきましても関係の幅を広げるような動きが幾つかありました。

先ず政治面では、2月に岡田外務大臣(当時)がパースを訪問し、スミス連邦外務大臣(当時)と二国間会談を行なった他、バーネット州首相とも会談しました。

また、4月には、ウッドアムス州議会下院議長一行が訪日し、衛藤衆議院副議長への表敬、兵庫県訪問(知事、県議会議長、神戸大学等)等を行いました。

経済面では世界的な資源ブーム、日本による資源の長期安定供給の確保の必要性等を背景に日本企業による投資・プレゼンスの漸増傾向が見られました。

日本と西豪州間の緊密化に重要な役割を果たしている文化交流・人的交流も幅広いレベルで引き続き活発に展開されました。

日本・西豪州間には現在、兵庫県・西豪州姉妹州関係に加え、9つの姉妹都市関係が設定されておりますが、11月には、アルバーニー市においてアルバーニー港・宮崎県日南市油津港の姉妹港提携10周年記念式典に併せて、新たにアルバーニー市・日南市の友好都市提携の盟約が締結されました。

また、2009年には鹿児島市・パース市姉妹都市提携35周年記念行事が鹿児島、パースの両市で開催されましたが、本年には、

兵庫県・西豪州姉妹州交流、またブルーム町・太地町(和歌山県)姉妹都市交流が共に提携30周年を迎えます。

さて、今般新年を迎えた訳ですが、在パース日本国総領事館と致しましては、本年におきましても日本・西豪州関係の基軸となっている経済関係の強化に引き続き努力を払っていくことは勿論のこと、それに加えて双方間の相互理解・友好促進のため文化交流・人的交流を更に促進して行きたいと考えております。

また邦人の皆様にとって最も関心の高い領事業務につきましても、引き続き行政サービス向上のための努力を行っていく所存です。私達が生活環境、言葉、文化等、いろいろな面で日本のそれとは異なる外国の地で生活あるいは旅行したりする場合、外国人であるが故に、一定の制約やリスクに直面する可能性は常にあります。海外で安全で快適な生活や旅行を出来るようにするためには、この点についても認識を新たにされ、身の安全等に十分心がけることが大切であると思えます。

最後に、読者の皆様方の本年におけます益々のご発展とご健康とご発展を祈念し、私の年頭の挨拶とさせていただきます。

To the readers of *The Perth Express*, Happy New Year.

Looking back over the last year, a lot has happened in the world, including the political arena, both domestic and international, while there were also a great many opportunities to expand the width of Japan-Western Australia relations.

Firstly, on the political front, the former Japanese Foreign Minister Mr. Okada made a visit to Perth in February and had bilateral talks with the former Australian Foreign Minister, the Hon. Stephen Smith, as well as talks with Premier of Western Australia, the Hon. Colin Barnett.

In addition, in April, a delegation led by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia, the Hon. Grant Woodhams, visited Japan and made a courtesy call on the Vice-Speaker of the House of Representative, Mr. Eto as well as touring Hyogo Prefecture to meet the governor of Hyogo and the Chairman of the prefectural assembly and to visit Kobe University, etc.

Economically, Japanese companies increased their presence and investment in the resource and energy sector of Western Australia as part of the resurgence of the global resources boom, as well as for Japan's high demand for

a long-term stable supply of resource.

There were also active developments in cultural and people-to-people exchanges, which play a significant role in strengthening the ties between Japan and Western Australia.

There are currently nine sister-city agreements between cities in Japan and Western Australia as well as a sister-state agreement between Hyogo Prefecture and the State of Western Australia. In addition, a friendship agreement between the City of Albany and Nichinan City was struck at a commemorative ceremony in November for the 10th Anniversary of the sister-port relationship between the Port of Albany and the Port of Aburatsu, located in Nichinan City, Miyazaki Prefecture.

Looking back, 2009 marked the 35th anniversary of the sister-city agreement between Kagoshima City and the City of Perth, with a number of commemorative events being held in both cities. This year will be the 30th anniversary of the sister-state relationship between Hyogo Prefecture and the State of Western Australia and also the sister-city relationship between the Shire of Broome and Taiji Town in Wakayama Prefecture.

As we welcome in the new year, it is the goal of the Consulate-General of Japan at Perth to increase in efforts to not only strengthen the economic relationship between Japan and Australia, which is the basis of our relationship, but also to promote cultural and interpersonal exchange, which are vital in order to gain a greater understanding of each other and also to encourage friendship between our two regions.

We also intend to continue to improve our administrative services in consular affairs, which is an important service for the Japanese people here in Western Australia. When Japanese people live or travel abroad where the lifestyle, language, and culture are different from that of Japan, there is always the possibility of coming across certain restrictions or some risks because of different backgrounds. So that Japanese nationals enjoy a safety while abroad, it is vital that people pay attention to the possible risks of being in a foreign country.

Finally, I wish all the readers further prosperity and good health in the New Year.