



Report

**Visit of the Honourable Andrew Scheer, M.P.,
Speaker of the House of Commons,
and a Parliamentary Delegation,
Kyoto and Tokyo, Japan,**

May 13-18, 2013

The Honourable Andrew Scheer, M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons, and a parliamentary delegation, visited Japan from May 13 to 18, 2013.

The delegation has the honour to present its

Report

The Canadian delegation was comprised of the following members:

- The Honourable Andrew Scheer, M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons;
- Mrs. Jillian Scheer;
- Mr. Tom Lukiwski, M.P.;
- Mr. Philip Toone, M.P.;
- Mr. Rodger Cuzner, M.P.;
- Ms. Kenzie Potter, Chief of Staff, Speaker's Office; and
- Mr. Michel Marcotte, Secretary to the Delegation.

Context

As early as October 2010, the Speaker of the Japanese Diet invited the Speakers of the House of Commons to visit Japan, but the terrible earthquake and the ensuing tsunami of March 11, 2011 have delayed the plans to accept this invitation. The stabilization of the situation in Japan and the recent election, on December 16, 2012, of Shinzo ABE's Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and its ally, New Komeito, with a decisive majority in Japan's general elections (taking 325 of the 480 seats in the Lower House of the Japanese Diet) provided more incentives to visit Japan to meet these parliamentarians and renew the strength of the Canada-Japan parliamentary relationship. Japan is a global economic power with significant influence in Asia, and one of Canada's most important economic and commercial partners.

Japan is the third-largest national economy in the world, with a gross domestic product of approximately \$5.9 trillion (8.6% of global GDP), and the world's fifth-largest merchandise importer. It is a vital hub to access the Asia region and global value chains and China's number-one source of merchandise imports. Japan also holds the world's second largest foreign exchange reserves (approx. US\$1.26 trillion). It constitutes the world's largest net creditor country and a leading overseas investor, including in Canada.

Speaker Scheer's visit to Japan was the first official visit by a Speaker of either Chamber of Parliament in almost a decade. The purpose of this visit was to promote parliamentary dialogue and future parliamentary exchanges. The delegation was particularly interested in matters of trade, the economy and agriculture. The visit provided the opportunity to discuss foreign policy on issues of international and mutual interest, and subjects of common interest arising from our membership in multilateral organizations.

Meetings

The delegation first visited Kyoto, hometown of our guest Mr. Bunmei IBUKI, Speaker of the House of Representatives, where they met the Governor of Kyoto, the Honourable Keiji YAMADA, and Mr. Hiroyuki FUJITA, Deputy Mayor of Kyoto. The delegation also visited the headquarters of two companies - Omron and Shimadzu Corporations – as well as cultural sites in the area.

In Tokyo, Mr. and Mrs. Scheer were received, in a private audience, by the Emperor and Empress of Japan. The delegation met with:

- The Honourable Bunmei IBUKI, Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- The Honourable Kenji HIRATA, Speaker of the House of Councillors;
- The Honourable Shinzo ABE, Prime Minister of Japan;
- The Honourable Sadakazu TANIGAKI, Minister of Justice and President of the Japan-Canada Diet Friendship League;
- The Honourable Fumio KISHIDA, Minister for Foreign Affairs; and
- The Honourable Akira AMARI, Minister in charge of Economic Revitalization.

The Speaker effectively used his meetings with senior members of the Diet and Cabinet to promote Canada's interest to strengthen economic relations through the Canada-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (CJEPA) negotiations and as stable source of energy products. He used the opportunity afforded by his meetings with senior members of the ABE government to encourage Japan to support Canada and oppose the Qatari bid to bring the International Civil Aviation Organization's (ICAO) headquarters to Doha from Montreal. In all meetings, especially with Foreign Affairs Minister Kishida, the Japanese officials sought Canada's support for Tokyo's bid for the 2020 Summer Olympics.

In meetings with his host, Speaker IBUKI, and other members of the Diet, the Speaker built upon the successful work of the co-chairs of the Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary group in strengthening the relationship between the two parliaments and reiterated the invitation for Japan-Canada Diet Friendship League to visit Saskatchewan over the autumn of 2013. In addition to these meetings, the delegation was invited to attend a sitting of the Japanese House of Representatives where it was introduced by Speaker IBUKI. While there, the delegates took a guided tour of the Parliament Building.

Private audience with Emperor and Empress of Japan

Mr. and Mrs. Scheer were received, in a private audience, by the Emperor and Empress of Japan.

Meeting with His Excellency Bunmei IBUKI, Speaker of the House of Representatives

During a session with Speaker IBUKI and the Lower House Committee on Administrative Affairs, the two Speakers discussed the extensive people to people and economic links between Canada and Japan including the CJEPA and the prospects for increased activity in the energy sector. In addition, Speaker IBUKI was interested in Canada's experience with immigration and the impact of immigration on Canadian society and the economy. Speaker Scheer explained that immigration continues to be a positive experience for Canada as new immigrants assist in building the economy. As changes to the number of seats in the Lower House is a hot political topic in Japan, the Diet was eager to hear of the Canadian experience in changing electoral boundaries. Both Speakers were pleased to learn that Japan was granted observer status to the Arctic Council a few hours before their meeting and discussed about future cooperation between Japan and Canada in other areas as well.

The Honourable Kenji HIRATA, Speaker of the House of Councillors

A session with the Upper House Speaker, Mr. Kenji HIRATA, and other members of the House of Councillors focused on the respective responsibilities of each Speaker and the status of the government's economic plan (Abenomics).

Also in attendance, the then vice-president (Deputy Speaker) of the House of Councillors, but now (since August 2, 2013) President (Speaker) of the House of Councillors, Mr. Masaaki YAMAZAKI informed us that he visited Canada fourteen years ago.

Meeting with the Honourable Shinzo ABE, Prime Minister of Japan

Prime Minister ABE spoke to the importance of cooperation between Japan and Canada during the TPP process. Prime Minister ABE stressed the importance of security cooperation between Canada and Japan and his hope that the deputy minister level 2+2 process will lead to a strengthened security relationship. Looking toward the G8 Leaders Summit in Lough Erne, Prime Minister ABE indicated that he is eager to meet with Prime Minister Harper on the margins of the Summit. The Speaker reflected on the importance of the economic relationship between Japan and Canada. He urged the Prime Minister to continue to place importance on CJEPA negotiation process as it complements the TPP process.

Meeting with Mr. KISHIDA, Minister of Foreign Affairs

The meeting with the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Fumio KISHIDA, provided the Speaker with an opportunity to address a number of Canada's priority issues including CJEPA negotiations and ICAO. Both sides acknowledged and expressed appreciation for the excellent relations enjoyed by Japan and Canada. Speaker Scheer stressed the importance of the economic relationship, welcomed Japan's entry into the TPP and encouraged Japan and Canada to continue the momentum on their bilateral EPA. Minister KISHIDA agreed with the importance of the economic relationship and the trade agreement negotiations. Speaker Scheer congratulated Japan on the Arctic Council decision accepting Japan as a permanent observer. Minister KISHIDA was grateful for Canada's support at the Arctic Council and looked forward to working with Canada on Arctic issues. KISHIDA noted that the Canada-Japan relationship was very positive and encouraged greater cooperation on non-economic issues such as the Arctic as well as peace and security. Minister KISHIDA stressed the importance of peace and security cooperation, and expressed hope that the overdue Canada-Japan sub-cabinet (2+2) meeting would take place soon.

Meeting with Mr. Akira AMARI, Minister of Economic Revitalization

As Minister Akira AMARI wears many ministerial hats (currently Minister in charge of Economic Revitalization, Minister in charge of Total Reform of Social Security and Tax, and Minister of State for Economic and Fiscal Policy), the Speaker and the Minister had a wide ranging conversation that covered Japan-Canada economic relations, the TPP and Abenomics early successes. Minister AMARI discussed the need for the government to create a roadmap that will lead them to their view of an ideal society 15 years hence including the challenges faced by Japan (aging demographics; energy constraints; stagnating domestic economy; and obsolete / aging infrastructure). In particular he focused on infrastructure proposals under consideration (e.g. sensors on government roads to auto-assess infrastructure obsolescence; sale of highway income rights to private sector to recoup costs). Minister AMARI emphasized (which other government trade officials have done as well) that they see Canada as serving an intermediary role (presumably between the US and Japan but perhaps also between Europe and Japan) in the various multilateral agreements at play.

Meeting with Mr. TANIGAKI, Minister of Justice and President of the Japan-Canada Parliamentary Friendship League

On the margins of his farewell event at the Official Residence of the Ambassador of Canada, Speaker Scheer was able to have a private session with Minister of Justice TANIGAKI and Ms. Shinako TSUCHIYA, respectively President and Secretary General of the Japan-Canada Diet Friendship League. Speaker Scheer reiterated the invitation for the League to visit Saskatchewan

during the fall 2013, which Mr. TANIGAKI and Mrs. TSUCHIYA accepted right away: Mr. TANIGAKI mentioned that he only came once before to Canada, in Quebec City about 10 years ago.

Acknowledgements

The members of the delegation obviously wish to thank their Japanese hosts for the excellent program they have prepared and in particular the team who accompanied the delegation throughout Japan. Our gratitude also goes to the services of the State Guest House in Kyoto and the Hotel New Otani in Tokyo who contributed in making this visit to Kyoto and Tokyo a success.

The delegation also wishes to thank the staff at the Canadian Embassy in Tokyo for their assistance in preparing the visit and during the meetings, as well as for accompanying them to their various destinations. Special thanks to H.E. Mackenzie Clugston, Canada's Ambassador to Japan, for his unconditional support and availability.

Finally, the delegates would like to thank the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development, as well as the Library of Parliament for the documentation they provided as part of the preparation of the trip.

Respectfully submitted,

The Honourable Andrew Scheer, M.P.,
Speaker of the House of Commons

Travel Costs

Visit of the Honourable Andrew Scheer, M.P., Speaker of the House of Commons, and a Parliamentary Delegation, Kyoto and Tokyo, Japan

TRAVEL	\$ 48 221,15
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 1 133,90
PER DIEMS	\$ 3 681,93
PROTOCOL	\$ 4 566,88
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 0
TOTAL	\$ 57 603,86