

Canada – Japan
Inter-Parliamentary Group



Groupe interparlementaire
Canada – Japon

Report of the Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group

Co-Chairs' Annual Visit

Osaka and Tokyo, Japan

October 10 to 15, 2022

Report

Overview

From 8 to 16 October 2022, the Co-Chairs of the Canada–Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group (CAJP) – the Honourable Senator Stan Kutcher and Terry Sheehan, M.P. – conducted their annual visit to Japan. Their agenda included meetings and fact-finding site visits in Tokyo, Osaka, Yokosuka, and Yokohama.

The CAJP's primary purpose is to promote exchanges between Canadian and Japanese parliamentarians, to propose initiatives likely to lead to a better mutual understanding of bilateral and multilateral challenges, and to develop co-operation between Canada and Japan in all fields of human activity.

The Co-Chairs' objectives for this visit were the following:

- to resume in-person exchanges with the Japan-Canada Diet Friendship League (DFL) and discuss the upcoming 21st bilateral meeting, which is expected to take place in Canada in 2023;
- to explore shared interests and mutual priorities with Japanese parliamentarians;
- to identify potential areas for enhancing cooperation, trade, scientific exchange and people-to-people ties between Canada and Japan; and
- to raise Canada's profile by engaging with politicians and local officials involved in preparing for Expo 25, which will be held in Osaka.

The delegation was accompanied by Corentin Bialais, Advisor to the CAJP. At meetings and site visits, the delegation was accompanied by officials from the Embassy of Canada in Tokyo.

MEETINGS DURING THE VISIT

A. The Japan-Canada Diet Friendship League

On 12 October 2022, the Co-Chairs met with the executive members of the DFL to discuss Canada–Japan relations and to prepare for the next bilateral meeting. The DFL's executive members in attendance were ETO Seishiro, President, TSUCHIYA Shinako, Vice-president and Chief Secretary, NAKAGAWA Masaharu, Vice-president and Secretary General, and SASAKI Taroh, Secretary and assistant to TSUCHIYA Shinako.

Participants discussed security issues, including Russia's most recent invasion of Ukraine and the resulting challenges for global food and energy supplies. The Co-Chairs thanked their Japanese counterparts for Japan's decision to impose sanctions on Russia, including on oil imports, which is particularly significant because of Japan's reliance on foreign energy supplies to meet its needs. Because Japan has accepted an unprecedented number of refugees from Ukraine and may accept more immigrants in future for humanitarian and other reasons, the DFL's executive members were interested in Canada's extensive experience with immigrants. The Co-Chairs provided information about Canada's integration of immigrants, including refugees.

As well, participants focused on the anticipated 21st bilateral meeting in Canada. They noted that the [20th bilateral meeting](#) took place in 2017, when a Canadian delegation visited Tokyo and Kyoto. The last visit to Canada by a DFL delegation occurred in 2015, with visits to Ottawa and Toronto. Although the DFL had been invited to visit Canada in 2020, COVID-19–related travel restrictions prevented the meeting from being held. Participants identified various possible locations that could be included in a visit to Canada.

B. Diet Committee chairs

On 13 and 14 October 2022, the Co-Chairs met with several chairs of committees from both chambers of the Diet. Overall, the discussions focused on the six shared priorities identified in the [Canada-Japan Action Plan for contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region](#): the rule of law; peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief; health security and responding to COVID-19; energy security; free trade promotion and trade agreement implementation; and environment and climate change.

During the meeting with TAKIZAWA Motomu, Chair of the Environment Committee of the House of Councillors, participants commented on each countries' strategies to build a net-zero society. TAKIZAWA Motomu explained that, although Japan's goal is to reach net-zero emissions by 2050, the Japanese prefectures must implement measures to reach this goal, an approach that helps to ensure the relevance of measures for each region. The Co-Chairs described Canada's policies to mitigate climate change, such as the carbon pricing system, and explained that responsibilities in this area are shared between the federal and provincial governments.

The Co-Chairs also met with TAKEUCHI Yuzuru, Chair of the Economy, Trade and Industry Committee of the House of Representatives. In reaffirming the commitment to rules-based international trade, including through the World Trade Organization (WTO), TAKEUCHI Yuzuru highlighted bilateral cooperation concerning the WTO, including through the Canada-led Ottawa Group. Participants also discussed various global economic disruptions, including in relation to energy supply because of Russia's most recent invasion of Ukraine. According to TAKEUCHI Yuzuru, these disruptions have led to a renewed interest in nuclear energy as a means for Japan to diversify its energy supply. The Co-Chairs highlighted that the Government of Canada is exploring the potential of small modular reactors as an alternative energy source. Finally, participants exchanged information about their respective countries' strategies to fight inflation, and TAKEUCHI Yuzuru identified the potential global economic vulnerability resulting from supply chain disruptions.

Finally, the Co-chairs held three meetings on the topic of peace and security. In particular, they met with: KIKAWADA Hitoshi, Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives; OKINI Makoto, Chair of the Peace and Security Committee of the House of Representatives; and ADACHI Masahi, Chair of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee of the House of Councillors.

During these meetings on the topic of peace and security, participants discussed the threat posed by North Korea's nuclear program and the recent ballistic missile tests that

flew over Japan's main island, as well as recent tensions in the Taiwan Strait. ADACHI Masahi supported Canada's efforts to enforce the sanctions imposed by the United Nations Security Council against North Korea. Canada's contribution to this effort includes the deployment vessels and aircraft through Operation NEON and its participation to the multinational Enforcement Coordination Cell to prevent sanction evasion by North Korea.

KIKAWADA Hitoshi highlighted Taiwan's geographic proximity to Japan, noting that a military intervention by China would represent a national emergency for Japan. The Co-Chairs mentioned that Canadian vessels have recently navigated the Taiwan Strait as a way to demonstrate Canada's commitment to freedom of navigation in the Indo-Pacific region. Finally, OKINI Makoto and the Co-Chairs commented on the announcement by the Governments of Canada and Japan about an information-sharing agreement that would further enhance collaboration between the Canadian Armed Forces and the Japan Self-Defence Forces.

C. Ministers and other parliamentarians

On 13 October 2022, the Co-Chairs met with NODA Seiko, a member of the House of Representatives and a former Minister in Charge of Measures for Loneliness and Isolation. In discussing Japan's aging population, NODA Seiko explained that cultural factors – including stigma directed against children born outside of marriage, adoption and an expectation that married women will leave the workforce – exacerbate this situation. The Co-Chairs highlighted that progress concerning women's rights is a relatively recent development in Canadian history, with many challenges remaining. They also mentioned that immigration can mitigate the effects of the declining birth rate in both countries.

During a 14 October 2022 meeting with OHNO Keitaro, a member of the House of Representatives and of the DFL, as well as Deputy Secretary General of the Liberal Democratic Party, participants focused on innovation and technology, the development of nuclear energy, collaboration in the field of artificial intelligence, and research and development in the health and medical sciences.

As well, on 14 October 2022, the Co-Chairs and Ian McKay – Ambassador of Canada in Japan – met with OKADA Aoki, Minister for the World Expo 2025. They noted Canada's commitment to participating in Expo 2025 and reminded OKADA Aoki that Canada's hosting of Expo 1967 in Montreal leads to an awareness of the challenges with organizing such a large-scale event. OKADA Aoki highlighted the importance of creating global momentum for Expo 2025 and welcomed Canada's commitment to participating.

Finally, on 14 October 2022, Senator Stan Kutcher – leader of the Canadian parliamentary delegation to the 30th meeting of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF), held from 26 to 29 October 2022 – met with members of the Japanese parliamentary delegation to the APPF meeting in order to understand better their respective positions and to share their perspectives on some of the issues to be discussed at that meeting. In particular, Senator Kutcher met with: YAMAGUCHI Tsuyoshi, a member of the House of Representatives, former Minister of Foreign Affairs and head of the Japanese delegation; and MATSUKAWA Rui and NIIZUAMA Hideki, both of whom are members of the House of Councillors.

FACT-FINDING SITE VISITS

A. The Enforcement Coordination Cell at United States Fleet Activities Yokosuka

On 12 October 2022, the Co-Chairs visited United States Fleet Activities Yokosuka, headquarters of the 7th fleet of the U.S. Navy. They received a briefing from the Canadian Task Force Commander and Deputy Director of the United Nations Security Council Resolution Enforcement Coordination Cell (ECC), and from the Commanding Officer of the ECC from the U.S. Navy. The ECC is the multinational effort to enforce United Nations (UN) sanctions against North Korea. The briefing was also given to the Honourable Mélanie Joly, Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, Ian McKay and YAMANOUCHI Kanji, Ambassador of Japan in Canada. Staff from Global Affairs Canada and military personnel from several countries involved in the mission – including the United States, Japan, Australia, the United Kingdom, France, South Korea and New Zealand – were also present.

The Canadian Task Force Commander explained the work of the ECC, which monitors oil smuggling to North Korea in an effort to implement UN Security Council resolutions 2375 and 2397 that restrict exports of crude oil and refined petroleum to the country. According to him, North Korea has developed elaborate methods to evade sanctions, one of which involves North Korean ships meeting oil tankers in the middle of international waters; fuel is then loaded onto the North Korean ship and delivered to the country without the supplier tanker having to enter North Korean waters. Based on information collected by the ECC, military ships from allied countries – possibly including Canadian ships that are deployed in the region – intercept the vessels involved in these illegal transfers.

The presentation also highlighted that, unlike in Europe where the North Atlantic Treaty Organization serves as the main framework for military cooperation between and among allies, Asia lacks such a framework and countries in the region rely on a system of independent bilateral alliances. In the commander's view, even though the ECC has relatively few personnel, it represents a significant step toward a more integrated security architecture in the region.

B. Yokohama Commonwealth Cemetery

On 12 October 2022, the Co-Chairs, Minister Joly and Ian McKay visited the Yokohama Commonwealth Cemetery, which has a section containing the graves of 164 Canadian soldiers, most of whom died as prisoners of war in Japan during the Second World War. The Co-Chairs and Minister Joly laid two wreaths on the monument on behalf of the Canada–Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group and the Government of Canada, respectively.

C. The Embassy of Canada in Tokyo

On 12 October 2022, staff at the Embassy of Canada in Tokyo provided the Co-Chairs with briefings on Canada–Japan political, security, trade, cultural and academic relations. The Co-Chairs then attended a conference entitled “Canada and Japan in the Indo-Pacific,” at which Minister Joly gave an opening address.

As well, the Co-Chairs visited the Official Residence of the Embassy of Canada, where they met Japanese guests, including HAYASHI Yoshimasa, Minister for Foreign Affairs,

and several members from the DFL, including its President and Vice-Presidents. Following Minister Joly's opening statement, Senator Kutcher spoke about the multifaceted relationship between Canada and Japan, and thanked the members of the DFL for their commitment to the strong relationship between the two parliaments.

D. Osaka

On 11 October 2022, the Co-Chairs visited the site of Expo 2025 in Osaka, where they met with: ICHINOKI Manatsu, Vice Secretary General of the Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition; OHASHI Kazutaka, President of the Osaka City Assembly; and NISHIZAKI Teruaki, Vice-President of the Osaka City Assembly. OHASHI Kazutaka highlighted the long-standing relationship and numerous exchanges between Canada and Osaka. The Co-Chairs committed to promote Expo 2025 in Canada and spoke about a Canadian parliamentary delegation attending the event. Terry Sheehan pointed out that Osaka hosted Expo 1970, demonstrating the city's ability to organize such a large-scale event. As well, Terry Sheehan noted that Canada hosted Expo 67 in Montreal, and characterized a world expo as an important milestone that can have a lasting legacy.

On 10 October 2022, the Co-Chairs and David Perdue, Consul of Canada in Nagoya, met with IKOMA Kyoco, Honorary Consul Designate of Canada in Osaka. As the founder and president of a company producing medical equipment and co-chair of the Kansai Association of Corporate Executives, IKOMA Kyoco discussed research and development, as well as the place of women executives in Japan.

As well, on 10 October 2022, the Co-Chairs visited Tsuji Wellness Cooking, a cooking institute in Osaka that frequently showcases Canadian products. They met TSUJI Mamoru, the cooking institute's president. Along with David Perdue, the Co-chairs also met with TSUDSA Ushio, former Honorary Consul of Canada in Osaka, owner of a company that imports forestry products from Canada, and Chair of the Canada-Japan Society of Kansai.

E. Tokyo

On 13 October 2022, the Co-Chairs visited Tokyo's Canadian International School, which uses the curriculum of Prince Edward Island to teach students from pre-kindergarten to grade 12. They spoke with students enrolled in grades 10 to 12 about careers, studying in Canada and immigration pathways to Canada.

As well, the Co-Chairs met with David Anderson, Chair of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Japan. They discussed trade relations between Canada and Japan, with David Anderson explaining that Japan is the largest foreign investor in Canada's energy sector. According to David Anderson, Japan's focus on Canada's energy supplies has increased recently because Russia's most recent invasion of Ukraine has affected global energy markets. David Anderson also noted that the invasion has caused Japanese investors to become more interested in Canadian potash.

Concerning business exchanges in the high-tech sectors and the potential for attracting more Japanese students to Canada, David Anderson highlighted that the Canadian Chamber of Commerce supports the Canada-Japan Coop program, through which

Japanese companies hire Canadian college and university students. David Anderson also underscored that, in Japan, private companies play an essential role in exchanges by sending employees to study abroad, with Canada being a popular destination.

Finally, the Co-Chairs met with SASAKI Shigeru, head of the Tokyo office of the National Research Council of Canada. SASAKI Shigeru provided the Co-Chairs with a broad overview of the role that the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada play in supporting research collaboration between Canada and Japan.

Respectfully submitted

The Honourable Stan Kutcher, Senator	Terry Sheehan, M.P.
Co-Chair	Co-Chair
Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group	Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group

Travel Costs

ASSOCIATION	Canada-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Group
ACTIVITY	Co-Chairs' Annual Visit to Japan
DESTINATION	Osaka and Tokyo, Japan
DATES	October 10 to 15, 2022
DELEGATION	
SENATE	Hon. Stan Kutcher
HOUSE OF COMMONS	Terry Sheehan
STAFF	Corentin Bialais
TRANSPORTATION	\$ 24,343.62
ACCOMMODATION	\$ 6,071.62
HOSPITALITY	\$ 1,637.65
PER DIEMS	\$ 2,448.24
OFFICIAL GIFTS	\$ 419.29
MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 4,259.79
TOTAL	\$ 39,180.21