

# Confirming Intentions to Enhance Private Exchanges Aiming at Development of Japan-China Relations Friendship Exchange Meeting Held in the Great Hall of the People with the Exchange Delegation Visiting China



Mr. Nikai(left) and President Xi

The Japan-China Tourism Cultural Exchange Delegation visited China with 3,162 participants and participated in the Japan-China Friendship Exchange Meeting held in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing on May 23. The visit was coordinated by three associations, JATA, All Nippon Travel Agents Association (ANTA), and Japan Travel and Tourism Association. The exchange meeting achieved great results toward an expansion

of tourism exchanges between Japan and China. In the meeting, Chinese President Xi Jinping made a speech which stressed the necessity of strengthening people-to-people exchanges and coordinating conditions and environments to improve and develop the two countries' relations. At another point in the meeting, Mr. Toshihiro Nikai, chairman of ANTA who served as an honorary leader of the delegation, appealed concerning the importance of promoting tourism and cultural exchanges, pointing out that Japan-China relations are supported by deep human relationships at the private level which will be never influenced by the political circumstances of the moment.

## Xi Jinping Directly Speaks to 3,000 Participants

Chinese President Xi Jinping, who greeted the Japanese delegation at the beginning of the friendship exchange meeting to welcome them to China, told them, "It is a great pleasure that we can have the Japan-China Friendship Exchange Meeting in the Great Hall of the People in Beijing with 3,000 Japanese people in various fields who traveled a great distance to China, as one of the greatest events in recent private exchanges between our countries," and citing the words of Confucius, he said, "The coming of a friend from a far-off land, is this not true joy?"

Xi presented his view of China-Japan relations that, for over 2,000 years, peace and friendship have been the guiding principle for the people of the two countries separated by only a narrow strip of water. Looking back on the time when he visited Japan in 2009, Xi said, "I directly felt the cultural roots and historical ties which have never ended between the people of the both countries."

Xi also pointed out that, as proven by the history, China-Japan friendship projects have been beneficial to both countries and their people, and also to Asia and the world, and so we should further value, protect, and make continuous efforts for such projects. While saying that it is possible to choose a neighbor but impossible to choose a neighboring country, Xi argued that as China-Japan friendship is based on people-to-people exchanges, the future of China-Japan relations will depend

on people in the two countries. "Especially when the two countries' relations are not developing favorably, Chinese and Japanese people in various fields need to take positive action, mutually strengthen people-to-people exchanges, and coordinate conditions and environments to improve and develop the two countries' relations," Xi also stressed.

## Deep Human Relationships Supporting Japan-China Relations

Mr. Nikai expressed his appreciation for China's invitation of the delegation to a reception dinner which the Chinese president attended. "Through both good and bad times in Japan-China relations, we have been committed to promoting tourism and local exchanges, etc., between the two countries. Japan-China relations are supported by deep human relationships at the private level which will be never influenced by political circumstances of the moment," Mr. Nikai said. Regarding the large delegation of over 3,000 people, he expressed his perception that it was meaningful for each of them to have voluntarily decided to participate in the delegation in accordance with the above-mentioned beliefs.

The participants in the delegation included 23 bipartisan Diet members such as Mr. Mikio Hayashi, chairman of the Lower House Committee on Rules and Administration, who participated in the delegation on the weekend between Diet meetings; Harumi Takahashi, governor of Hokkaido Prefecture; Kazumi Nishikawa, governor of Fukui Prefecture; Shogo Arai, governor of Nara Prefecture; Kiyoshi Ueda, governor of Saitama Prefecture; and many other parties concerned with local governments. Mr. Nikai stressed that the delegation was representing Japanese enthusiasm for Japan-China exchanges, with abundant human resources represented in the exchanges of Diet members and local officials between Japan and China.

## Private Manifesto Pledging "Commitment to Japan-China Exchanges"

Mr. Nikai also referred to the importance of promoting exchanges among young people. In consideration of the fact that 500 Japanese children were invited to Hainan Island after the Great East Japan Earthquake, he indicated his willingness to "boost Japan-China friendship" by inviting 500 Chinese children to Japan and appealed for the necessity to make their best efforts for promoting private exchanges again.

In the friendship exchange meeting, Mr. Koji Kinutani, an artist painter who headed the Japan-China Tourism Cultural Exchange Delegation, read aloud the Private Manifesto for the Japan-China Friendship Exchange Meeting, saying, "We desire that this activity will become the spark that promotes further exchanges between the two countries, leading to improvement and development of the overall relations between Japan and China."

In the private manifesto, reference is made to the Japan-China Cultural Tourism Exchange Delegation (2000), the 30th Anniversary Memorial Project after Diplomatic Normalization Between Japan and China (2002), the Japan-China 30,000-People Interaction Project (2007), Japan-China

# Japan-China Tourism Cultural Exchange Delegation

Exchange Delegation for Recollection of Kobo Daishi Kukai (2012), and other events, and those exchange projects are appreciated because they greatly contributed to improving and developing Japan-China relations. The manifesto concludes by saying, “We pledge to continue to make efforts for promoting Japan-China exchanges in future generations at individual workplaces and in various regions.”

## Hoping to Disseminate the Profound Enchantment of China to Japanese People

In the press conference of the Japan-China Tourism Cultural Exchange Delegation held at the Japanese Embassy in Beijing on May 24, Mr. Hiromi Tagawa, chairman of JATA, indicated strong enthusiasm for developing tours from Japan to the Chinese market in the future, saying, “I hope to make the delegation’s visit to China memorable as a new start of exchanges between Japan and China.”

”In addition to existing tourism patterns centering on world heritage sites, we intend to make continuous efforts for disseminating the profound enchantment of China to Japanese people by focusing on the most ideal exchanges, for example, experiencing local living culture, while sparing no effort to see the new China. For example, in Shanghai which has developed as a destination for urban tourism, we would use an approach similar to the one used for European cities,” Mr. Tagawa said.

Mr. Fujio Mitarai, chairman emeritus of the Japan Business Federation who participated in the delegation as a special advisor, highly appreciated the significance of the visit to China in which exchanges were promoted in various fields such as politics, economics, and culture. He indicated his expectation for an expansion of tourism exchanges, pointing out that experiencing other countries and actually feeling their history and culture will deepen mutual understanding and lead to a trusting relationship.

In the light of talks with Mr. Li Jinzao, director of the National Tourism Administration, Mr. Nikai said, “We hope to be able to realize China’s idea that it is important to have exchanges with Japan, by concretely planning various things together with Mr. Li.” He also indicated ANTA’s intention to put emphasis on increasing the number of Japanese tourists visiting China in cooperation with JATA, and simultaneously expressed its strong confidence in developing tourism exchanges between Japan and China.

## Japanese overseas departures decreased by 3.4% in April

## Foreign visits to Japan grew 43.4% to 1,764 million, a new single-month record

The preliminary data released by JNTO on May 20, shows that 1,149 million Japanese traveled abroad, which is 3.4% less than the same month last year.

This 11th consecutive month decrease began in June last year. While every month has seen fewer Japanese departure when compared to the same period of 2014, after the first in 19 months two-digit drop in February (10.2%), this year’s decrease in March has narrowed the extent of negative results.

The total number of Japanese who traveled abroad from January to April this year is 5,171,800, a 5.0% decrease from the same period last year.

For the first time the number of foreign arrivals exceeded 1.7 million on a single-month basis, as 1.74 million foreigners visited Japan in April, a 43.3% increase on year-on-year basis, and both February and March saw new record-high arrival

figures.

Thanks to measures undertaken to expand the inbound market, the visit-Japan momentum has increased in every source market and the devaluated yen, the popular cherry blossom season, Easter, the Taiwanese holiday season, the Thai New Year, etc. as well as the launch of new air flights and an increase of services on already existing routes have led to the dramatic increase in April.

In terms of source markets, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, the Philippines, Vietnam, the US, Canada, the UK and France sent the highest-ever numbers of visitors. With the exception of Russia and Spain, 18 source markets recorded the-best-ever results.

The number of Chinese visitors to Japan reached 400,000 for the first time on single-month basis. Taiwanese visitors, for the first time, too, exceeded 300,000 and Thai arrivals, for the first time in the South-East Asian market recorded 100,000 in a single month.

JNTO’s forecast for May – the short time between the sakura season and the beginning of the summer holiday season – is for continued strong performance of the inbound travel. In addition to the cheap yen, the increased number in flight services for the holiday season in East and South-East Asia and North America, as well as the lower fuel surcharges will play a positive role

and we can expect further increase in the number of foreign visitors to Japan.



Over 3000 participants gathered in the Great Hall of the People

### 2015 Visitor Arrivals & Japanese Overseas Travelers (Unit: Persons)

Month	Visitor Arrivals			Japanese Overseas Travelers		
	2014	2015	Change %	2014	2015	Change %
1 Jan.	944,009 (730,519)	1,218,393	29.1 (33.9)	1,253,404	1,235,612	-1.4
2 Feb.	880,020 (688,902)	1,386,982	57.6 (75.2)	1,404,873	1,257,154	-10.5
3 Mar.	1,050,559 (802,434)	*1,526,000	*45.3	1,596,751	*1,530,000	*-4.2
4 Apr.	1,231,471 (1,020,474)	*1,764,700	*43.3	1,189,132	*1,149,000	*-3.4
5 May.	1,097,211 (892,577)			1,280,765		
6 Jun.	1,055,273 (866,883)			1,289,029		
1~6 Jan.-Jun.	6,258,543 (5,001,789)			8,013,954		
7 Jul.	1,270,048 (1,080,552)			1,414,912		
8 Aug.	1,109,569 (903,919)			1,783,127		
9 Sep.	1,099,102 (846,241)			1,520,863		
10 Oct.	1,271,705 (1,029,922)			1,417,766		
11 Nov.	1,168,427			1,355,246		
12 Dec.	1,236,073			*1,397,520		
1~4 Jan.-Apr.	4,106,059 (3,242,329)	*5,896,100	*43.6	5,444,160	*5,171,800	*-5.0
1~12 Jan.-Dec.	13,413,467 (10,880,604)			16,903,388		

◆Note 1. The figures for Jan.-Nov.2014 are provisional, while \* stands for the preliminary figures estimated by JNTO.

◆Note 2. Provisional and definitive figures for Visitor Arrivals are compiled by JNTO (source: Ministry of Justice), and provisional and definitive figures for Japanese Overseas Travelers are provided by the Ministry of Justice.

◆Note 3. The figures in ( ) represent the number of tourists among the total.

### “JAPAN NIGHT 2015” at Tokyo’s Marunouchi “TOKYO” & “JAPAN” Conveying their appeal to the world



Traditional performing arts and popular Japanese dishes in JAPAN NIGHT 2014

JAPAN NIGHT 2015 will take place in Tokyo’s Marunouchi area on September 25th, a day before the opening of the second Tourism EXPO Japan.

JAPAN NIGHT 2015 will unfold on Gyoko Dori, Marunouchi Naka Dori and the JP Tower. The event, which is staged in the model-for-the-future downtown area, will introduce “city-type MICE” in Tokyo, the 2020 Olympic and Paralympics host. The JAPAN NIGHT will also present Tokyo as an international city to the participants from Japan and all over the world.

Gyoko Dori, which connects Tokyo Station with the Imperial Palace will be the “Welcome Plaza” and Marunouchi Naka Dori will be the “Experience Avenue.” The guests and buyers from Japan and overseas will experience Japanese culture, enjoy traditional performing arts, a Japanese festival and popular Japanese dishes.

Part of the program will be open to the general public ensuring direct exchange between local people and overseas guests. Designed as an international exchange event, JAPAN NIGHT will present our guests with opportunities not only to observe but to actively interact with the local residents and thus expand their experience of Japan.

This year, as a result of a tie-up with Aomori Prefecture, the famous Aomori Nebuta floats will add authenticity and excitement to the JAPAN NIGHT. As the large lanterns and the accompanying dancers parade through the Marunouchi Area.

#### Outline of “JAPAN NIGHT 2015”

- Date & time: Friday, September 25, 2015; 19:30 – 21:30
- Venue: Marunouchi Area (Gyoko Dory, Marunouchi Naka Dori, JP Tower)
- Organizers (tentative): Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism; Japan National Tourism Organization; Japan Travel and Tourism Association; Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA)
- Number of invited guests: 1,700 (preliminary number)
- Guests: State officials; foreign ministers of tourism; ambassadors; Tourism EXPO Japan organizers and exhibitors; overseas buyers and sellers taking part in the Japan Travel Mart and Visit Japan MICE Mart; media

### Enhancing the Global Perspective by Establishing a New Commendation Enterprise incollaboration with UNWTO

The new commendation enterprise will be initiated as one of the main projects of Tourism EXPO Japan. It will encompass domestic, overseas and inbound travel business and by doing so, become representative of the Japanese travel industry. By adding the UNWTO award categories, Tourism EXPO Japan will strengthen its relations with UNWTO and expand the range of its global functions.

In order to ensure participation in the new commendation program, we will include categories which are already part of ongoing award programs run by travel business organizations.

Cultural and business exchange is expected to increase with establishing travel and tourism as the strategic driving force for economic growth in Japan. The travel and tourism industry is expected to play a major role in the economic development of the country by encouraging domestic, inbound and overseas travel.

The new awards will commend remarkable development and exceptional results achieved by organizations, businesses and individuals in each field of the travel and tourism industry. They are intended to deepen Japanese people’s understanding of “the power of travel” and to help establish Japan as a major tourism power.



JATA TOURISM AWARDS in 2014

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