

## **Australia-Japan Ministerial Economic Dialogue**

**Melbourne, 10 January 2020**

### **Joint Statement**

1. The Australian Minister for Trade, Tourism and Investment, Senator the Hon Simon Birmingham, and the Japanese Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, Mr Kajiyama Hiroshi, co-chaired the second Australia-Japan Ministerial Economic Dialogue on 10 January 2020 in Melbourne. They were joined for elements of the dialogue by Australian Minister for Resources and Northern Australia, Senator the Hon Matthew Canavan.
2. Ministers shared the view that the Special Strategic Partnership between Australia and Japan has never been stronger. Both sides welcomed growing trade, investment and development cooperation. Ministers acknowledged the upcoming fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (JAEPA), in January 2020.
3. The two sides noted the importance of ensuring an open, prosperous and inclusive Indo-Pacific economic order. Ministers welcomed close cooperation on regional economic architecture, including working to resolve India's outstanding issues and sign the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in 2020, based on the Joint Leaders' Statement on RCEP in November 2019, and implementation and expansion of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). They welcomed ASEAN's Outlook on the Indo-Pacific as an important affirmation of the principles of openness, transparency, inclusivity and respect for sovereignty, among others, that will underpin the future prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region.
4. Ministers noted the importance of Australia and Japan continuing to work together to sustain a strong, credible rules-based multilateral trading system. They shared the view that it was key to raise political support for WTO reform in order to pave the way for concrete outcomes at the 12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference (Kazakhstan June 2020). Ministers committed to addressing concerns to restore the full functioning of the Appellate Body. Ministers also discussed possible multi-party practical arrangements while the Appellate Body is unable to function. Ministers were also pleased at progress in the negotiations under the

WTO Joint Statement Initiative on e-commerce and reconfirmed to work towards achieving substantial progress in the negotiations by the 12<sup>th</sup> WTO Ministerial Conference in June 2020. Ministers noted the importance of pressing for improved transparency and notifications in the WTO.

5. Ministers discussed the need for Australia and Japan to work together, and with a range of other partners, to ensure the significant infrastructure needs of the Indo-Pacific region are met in a manner consistent with the “G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment” and other international principles. They committed to continue working with other partners on the effective implementation of such principles, and acknowledged the Blue Dot Network as an important initiative launched by OPIC, DFAT and JBIC in Bangkok in November 2019.
6. Ministers discussed the opportunities and impact of technology and digitisation on economies, including for businesses, consumers and society. Both sides committed to continue cooperation on digital economy and emerging technology policies, including global digital trade rules, standards and norms that promote industry collaboration and build confidence in the use of digital technologies. Acknowledging Japan’s work through the Osaka Track, they reaffirmed their support for cross-border data flows, data innovation and appropriate protection of privacy and security, which strengthen business and consumer trust and facilitate the free flow of data. Such data free flow with trust will harness the opportunities of the digital economy. They also reaffirmed their determination to protect critical technologies from illicit or malicious use.
7. Ministers affirmed their commitment to open and transparent energy and resources markets. They acknowledged Australia’s status as a stable, reliable supplier of energy and resources, such as LNG. Ministers discussed opportunities to cooperate on energy, resources and technologies of the future, such as hydrogen and carbon recycling, including to reduce carbon dioxide emissions while ensuring cleaner use of fossil fuels. Carbon recycling was recently highlighted in the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed in September 2019. Both sides also welcomed ongoing engagement by Ministers to improve resilience in the supply of critical minerals.

8. Ministers welcomed the steady progress made in the Hydrogen Energy Supply Chain Project and also signed a Joint Statement on Cooperation on Hydrogen and Fuel Cells to enable further collaboration to promote deployment of hydrogen as clean, secure, and affordable source of energy. They noted that Australia and Japan are in a unique position to maximise the opportunities hydrogen presents as part of our global effort to address climate change. Ministers shared the view that the two countries will focus on building hydrogen markets for domestic and international demand, shaping global regulations, codes and standards, addressing hydrogen safety, and promoting research, development and deployment.
9. Ministers also witnessed the signing of a revised Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between Austrade and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) on Bilateral Cooperation between Australia and Japan. The MoU will enhance cooperation in priority areas, including agribusiness and food, hydrogen, infrastructure and urban development, life science and health, regional collaboration, and start-ups and innovation, supporting new trade and investment opportunities for each country.
10. Ministers welcomed the warm and productive discussions at the Ministerial Economic Dialogue, and looked forward to opportunities to further deepen the bilateral economic relationship.