

Australia Japan Business Co-operation Committee (AJBCC)
Japan Australia Business Co-operation Committee (JABCC)

Sydney, Australia
Tuesday 9th October, 2012

50th Anniversary Australia-Japan Joint Business Conference
7th – 9th October, 2012 - Sydney

JOINT STATEMENT

The fiftieth anniversary annual conference has been a chance for the business communities of Australia and Japan to reflect on the remarkable achievements of a strong bilateral relationship. This has been built on the Australia-Japan Agreement on Commerce of 1957 – a far sighted document which speaks to the courage and vision of the political and business leaders of the time.

Fifty years ago, the business response to the agreement included the establishment of the Australia - Japan and Japan – Australia Business Co-operation Committees. The agreement enabled the remarkable economic links between Australia and Japan of today. Commerce underpins the strong political, security, educational, and the extensive people-to-people links between our two countries.

The 'Asian Century' presents new political, security and commercial challenges and opportunities for Australia and Japan. The conference believes that 'collaboration' will be the defining characteristic of the years ahead as both Australia and Japan see increasing integration of their 'services' dominated economies. New initiatives in infrastructure and healthcare are examples of new collaboration.

Ten years ago, the AJBCC and the JABCC first issued a Joint Statement at a conference here in Sydney that called for a bilateral free trade agreement. Since the negotiations began in late 2006, past conferences have issued joint statements urging a speedy conclusion to the negotiations. This 50th Anniversary Australia-Japan Joint Business Conference calls on both governments to display political leadership of the type displayed in the past. We believe that further integration of the two economies will increase the standard of living in both countries.

The AJBCC and JABCC remain hopeful that a comprehensive, WTO consistent Economic Partnership / Free Trade Agreement (EPA/FTA) will be concluded within this celebratory year, and thereby underpin the commercial dynamism and vitality of the next fifty years. ■