

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Naoto Kan of Japan in Yokohama

November 13, 2010

Prime Minister Kan. First of all, I'd like to welcome President Obama warmly to Japan. Exactly 1 year ago, the President visited Japan on the first leg of his visit to Asia, and I'm very happy to welcome him here in Yokohama as he visits Japan once again, this time to wrap up his Asia trip, during which he's visited many Asian countries.

We were able to have a very fruitful discussion today. First, Japan and the United States, at this meeting of APEC, of pan-Pacific countries, we shall step up our cooperation. So we agreed on doing that. And in Japan's relations with China and Russia, recently we've faced some problems, and the United States has supported Japan throughout, so I expressed my appreciation to him for that.

For the peace and security of the countries in the region, the presence of the United States and the presence of the U.S. military, I believe, is becoming only increasingly important. And that is not only my sense, but I think the sense of many countries, many neighboring countries in this region. So that is one point that I made to him.

And we discussed various issues between Japan and the United States, including host-nation support, and we are producing agreements on Okinawa. Following the conclusion of the gubernatorial election in Okinawa, I shall be making my maximum efforts on the basis of the May 28 Japan-U.S. agreement and that I shall be making my utmost efforts. That is what I told the President as well.

On the economic front, with regard to comprehensive economic partnership agreement, I explained that Japan is steering significantly towards opening up itself and that he stated he would welcome this.

With regard to TPP, of course we have to also consider the other participating countries, but we would like to get down to consultations with the participating countries of TPP. And the President also expressed his support that—will

support our efforts or consultations in order to glean information about TPP.

We did engage in very broad-ranging discussions as the changes may take place around the world. I believe it is important that countries around the world comply with the internationally accepted rules. And the President suggested that Japan is a model country in that respect.

And on the question of permanent membership on the Security Council of the U.N. in the future, the President also stated his support for Japan.

Next year, sometime in the coming spring, the President kindly invited me to visit Washington, DC. This year marks the 50th anniversary of the Japan-U.S. Security Pact. By the time I visit Washington, DC, I hope I will be able to issue a joint statement which is very broad-ranging, and so we agreed that we'll launch working-level efforts towards that end.

Tomorrow the President will be visiting Kamakura to, I understand, enjoy his good, old memories. And I wish him a very pleasant stay so that he'll be able to return to the United States with pleasant memories of this trip.

President Obama. Thank you very much, Prime Minister Kan, for your warm welcome and hospitality. And to the people of Yokohama, it is wonderful to be here. Japan was my first stop in Asia as President last year, and it is a pleasure to be back for the APEC summit. And I'm very appreciative to all the people of Japan and send warm regards from the American people.

As allies for half a century, the partnership between Japan and the United States has been the foundation for our security and our prosperity, not only for our two countries, but also for the region. It's allowed us to become two of the world's largest economies. It has made Japan the second largest trading partner outside of North America.

We are bound by our people, our families, our businesses, students, and tourists, who bring us closer every day. We are partners in

Asia and around the world. And as Prime Minister Kan noted, I expressed my deep appreciation for the fact that Japan is really a model citizen internationally and works in support of international rules and norms that can make all of us more prosperous and more secure. And so I'm very grateful for this partnership.

And as Prime Minister said, we had a very productive meeting on a whole range of challenges that we face together. We are deepening our economic relationship. I'm pleased that the Open Skies agreement that enters into force today will expand air service between our two countries and strengthen the ties between our peoples and our businesses.

We're launching new partnerships in pursuit of the clean energy economies of the future. Following our work together at the G-20, the Prime Minister and I discussed our close cooperation in APEC, and I thanked him for the hard work that Japan has done in preparation for our meetings here.

I have a special interest in a successful summit, since I will be the host of the next APEC meeting in Honolulu next year.

We discussed the need to expand trade and open markets across the region. I very much welcomed the Prime Minister's interest in liberalizing trade and his promotion of domestic reforms. He explained that these steps could put Japan on the road to membership in the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and I very much welcomed Japan's interests. And we agreed that our Government will be consulting closely on these matters in the months to come.

With regard to our shared security, we affirmed our commitment to our alliance, which marks its 50th anniversary this year. Five decades of experience make this clear: Japan and the United States are stronger when we stand together. I'm pleased that our teams have completed an agreement in principle outlining Japan's commitment to host nation support, including continued financial investments in the alliance.

And, Mr. Prime Minister, I want to thank you for this important demonstration of Japan's commitment to our alliance and to regional peace and stability.

The commitment of the United States to the defense of Japan is unshakeable. Our alliances, bases, and forward presence are essential not only to Japan's security, but as Prime Minister noted, they help us ensure stability and address regional challenges across Northeast Asia.

For this reason, the Prime Minister and I agreed to keep moving forward on our roadmap on realignment so that we can meet Japan's defense needs and also address the needs of Japanese communities that host our bases. And I'm confident that we can continue to work together to ensure both.

As partners around the world, we reviewed the range of security challenges we face together, including our cooperation on the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons and the need to secure the world's vulnerable nuclear materials. I discussed our progress in Afghanistan and expressed my appreciation to Japan. Japan is the largest donor of assistance for reconstruction and development. And I told the Prime Minister how much we value Japan's willingness to accept the obligations of leadership, including its contributions to the United Nations.

And as the Prime Minister noted, we discussed the issue of Security Council reform. I reiterated our longstanding view that Japan stands as a model of the kind of country we would want to see as a permanent member of the Security Council, and I look forward to a reformed Security Council that includes Japan as a permanent member.

Finally, I'm delighted that the Prime Minister has accepted my invitation to visit the United States in the first half of next year. We've instructed our governments to intensify their efforts to deepen and modernize our alliance, and I hope that by the time the Prime Minister arrives in Washington, we'll be able to lay out a joint vision that can guide our partnership for decades to come.

Just to close, the Prime Minister mentioned that as a young boy I had the occasion to visit Japan, including touring the Amida Buddha at Kamakura. I am looking forward to an opportunity to return tomorrow and again experience the extraordinary aspects of Japanese culture.

So again, to all the people of Japan, thank you so much for your hospitality and your friendship. And, Mr. President [Prime Minister], I'm very much looking forward to us working together not only at this summit, but on a whole range of bilateral issues in the years to come.

Thank you.

Prime Minister Kan. Thank you.

Remarks Following a Meeting With Prime Minister Julia E. Gillard of Australia in Yokohama November 13, 2010

President Obama. Well, let me just say very briefly, I've had a chance to speak previously with Prime Minister Gillard on the phone. It is a wonderful opportunity for me to meet her during the course of both the G-20 and now in our first face-to-face meeting. The United States does not have a closer or better ally than Australia. We are grateful for all the work that we do together.

I expressed my personal thanks to the people of Australia through the Prime Minister for the enormous sacrifices that are being made in Afghanistan by Australian troops. We, I think, are going to be discussing these issues further when we see each other at the Lisbon summit. But obviously, all of us have an interest in bringing about a good outcome in that region that ensures our safety and security over the long term.

On the economic front, I reiterated to the Prime Minister how important the Asia-Pacific region is to our economy and to world economic growth. Australia is a central player in that economy. And so we are going to continue to explore ways that we can work together to expand trade, expand investment, ensure that everybody is playing by the rules of the road in the region and cooperating effectively. The Trans-Pacific Partnership is a good example of the kind of collaboration between our two countries that, I think, can expand opportunity for all peoples.

So I am just grateful to have this opportunity to speak with the Prime Minister. I've extended

NOTE: The President spoke at 11:32 a.m. at the InterContinental Yokohama Grand hotel. Prime Minister Kan spoke in Japanese, and his remarks were translated by an interpreter. Audio was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.

an invitation to her to visit the United States sometime early next year, and we'll find a date, and hopefully, we can build on some of the discussions that we've already had to further enhance our bilateral cooperation.

So, Prime Minister, thank you and to your entire delegation for the good work that you've done. And I look forward to seeing you in Washington.

Prime Minister Gillard. Thank you. And I have to say to President Obama, we've had the opportunity to be at the G-20 over the last few days and had the opportunity for a few brief discussions there, and we will see each other in Lisbon next weekend. Our two countries are great mates, to use our terminology, and as great mates, we are continuing to work together in our region and beyond.

We have had the opportunity to talk about Afghanistan, and I do want to take this opportunity to pass on the condolences of the Australian people for the losses that you have suffered there. But we are working together there and will have time next weekend at Lisbon to talk about the transition strategy.

We've also had the opportunity to reflect on the discussions we had at AUSMIN about the American force posture review and the work that we are doing on new challenges like cybersecurity. And we've had the opportunity to talk about our engagement in the region, where the U.S. engagement is strengthening through forums like the East Asia summit.

* White House correction.