

New Zealand Waitangi Day

Shared interests in region foster deep ties

Ian Kennedy
NEW ZEALAND AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN

Feb. 6 marks the birth of the country we know today as New Zealand. On that day in 1840 Maori rangatira (chiefs) gathered with representatives of the British government at Waitangi, a seaside settlement in the North Island, to sign New Zealand's founding document, the Treaty of Waitangi.

I am grateful to The Japan Times for kindly offering this opportunity to express my warmest greetings on this occasion to New Zealanders and our friends and colleagues in Japan. New Zealand's relations with Japan began at the time of the Meiji Restoration. Today New Zealand is very much an Asia-Pacific nation with a strong Polynesian and Asian community. Japan remains one of our closest and most important partners in the Asia-Pacific region.

The inaugural visit of New Zealand Prime Minister John Key to Japan in October last year, accompanied by Foreign Minister Murray McCully, helped to reinvigorate our already robust bilateral relationship encompassing strong people-to-people, trade and cultural links. During the visit, meetings of the Japan-New Zealand Partnership Forum and the Japan-New Zealand Business Council highlighted the strength of the business connection and the benefits to be gained from a future bilateral trade agreement. Also during the visit, Foreign Minister McCully signed a Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement with Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, which will provide opportunities for enhanced collaboration in research.

also helped to highlight New Zealand's rugby links with Japan, which are continuing to strengthen, driven in no small part by the enthusiasm of Japan's head coach and former



Larger than life: A giant rugby ball-shaped pavilion serves to promote the Rugby World Cup 2011 for host nation New Zealand at the foot of Tokyo Tower in October 2009.

All Black John Kirwan. The New Zealand All Blacks versus Australian Wallabies rugby match at the National Stadium in Tokyo on Oct. 31 before a near-capacity crowd of around 40,000 was a highlight for all rugby fans.

New Zealand is gearing up to welcome the world for the Rugby World Cup 2011 (www.nz2011.govt.nz) with major venue and infrastructure redevelopment well under way. Thousands of people were able to enjoy visiting the giant rugby ball-shaped pavilion erected at the foot of Tokyo Tower during the prime minister's visit. Designed to promote the Rugby World Cup 2011, the ball showcased some of New Zealand's finest creative talent in the form of a breathtaking audiovisual presentation on a unique, 360-degree, indoor screen. With Japan having won the right to host the Rugby World Cup in 2019, there are many opportunities to grow bilateral sporting and business linkages.

With New Zealand's breathtaking scenery, young and vibrant culture and friendly people, the Rugby World Cup 2011

will be an unforgettable experience for visitors from Japan. I hope that many of you will come to join "the stadium of four million" New Zealanders who will bring their energy and enthusiasm to this top rugby event.

As Japan and New Zealand recover from the recent economic downturn, our shared interests in the prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region mean that this year's APEC summit in Yokohama will be very important. New Zealand has a long-held commitment to regional frameworks for economic integration. We support Japan in its role as APEC host and look forward to the presence of Prime Minister Key and other New Zealand ministers at APEC events in Japan this year.

New Zealand, like Japan, is also committed to finding ways to combat climate change. New Zealand has recently led an initiative called the Global Research Alliance that will allow countries to better coordinate and fund research into emissions mitigation in the agricultural sector. This will help all countries to



Pacific relations: New Zealand Prime Minister John Key and Prime Minister Yukio Hatoyama meet at the Kantei in Tokyo on Oct. 21. CABINET PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE

jointly meet the dual challenges of food security and climate change. Japan's support for the initiative is most welcome.

On Waitangi Day New Zealanders reflect on the development of our nation in the 170 years since the treaty was signed. New Zealand is an increasingly diverse nation with a far-flung diaspora of New Zealanders spread around the

world. Waitangi Day is an opportunity for New Zealanders everywhere to look back on our history and celebrate the unique fusion of cultures that makes us who we are. Based

on common values and shared interests, it is exciting to see the connections between Japan and New Zealand continue to develop and diversify. (www.nzembassy.com/japan)

Congratulations on Waitangi Day



Congratulations on the 170th Anniversary of Waitangi Day



Nga Awa Purua Geothermal Power Station
being fully commissioned in April 2010 by Fuji Electric Systems for Mighty River Power.



Fuji Electric Systems Co., Ltd. <http://www.fesys.co.jp/eng/>

Congratulations on the 170th Anniversary of Waitangi Day



Congratulations to the People of New Zealand
on Waitangi Day

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