

Papua New Guinean prime minister's visit



Papua New Guinean Prime Minister Peter O'Neill meets with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe on May 21 in Tokyo ahead of the Seventh Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM 7) held in Iwaki, Fukushima Prefecture. CABINET PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICE

Working to promote friendship, cooperation

The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea Peter O'Neill, together with his wife, Lynda Babao, is paying an official working visit to Japan through Oct. 16. O'Neill's government has undertaken initiatives to create an environment conducive for businesses to feel confident to invest in the country and, in this way, grow the economy and create employment opportunities for Papua New Guineans. Social sector reforms, infrastructure development, law and order support, public sector institutional reforms and other measures are geared to improving the social and economic environment to support the country's broad development plan: The Papua New Guinea Vision 2050.

Since assuming the post in August 2012, O'Neill has visited Japan three times.

In March 2013, the prime minister paid a working visit and had a fruitful meeting with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and many Japanese private businesses.

In June 2014, the prime minister led a strong delegation of ministers, provincial governors and members of parliament to Japan on a business visit to celebrate and mark the arrival of the "Spirit of Hela," the liquid natural gas (LNG) ship carrying the first LNG as part of the Papua New Guinea LNG (PNG LNG) project for Tokyo Electric Power Co.

The Exxon-Mobil-led \$19 billion PNG LNG project was completed in May 2014, well ahead of schedule. This resulted in the first PNG LNG shipment from the project leaving PNG in May 2014 and arriving at Tepco's Futaba Terminal on June 2, 2014, as an early delivery. TEPCO and Osaka Gas are the two foundation customers for the PNG LNG project. Osaka Gas received its first early cargo from the project in July 2014.

In May, O'Neill came to Japan to attend the Seventh Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM 7), which was held in Iwaki, Fukushima Prefecture. On the sidelines of the conference, O'Neill had a summit meeting with Abe on May 21.

This is his fourth visit as prime minister, and the first bilateral

official working visit at the invitation of Abe, marking the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and PNG. This follows Abe's visit to PNG in July 2014 at O'Neill's invitation.

The visit demonstrates the importance that both governments place on bilateral relations at the highest possible level. It gives impetus for all aspects of the relationship to be conducted knowing that the political leadership of both countries support the work the two countries do to promote friendship and cooperation among our peoples and business communities.

During his stay in Japan, Their Majesties Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko will also receive the prime minister and his wife.

Abe will hold a summit meeting and host a dinner for O'Neill and his wife. At the summit meeting, the two leaders will discuss bilateral economic and investment projects; people-to-people cooperation and exchanges; global issues such as maritime security; U.N. Security Council reform; and climate change. O'Neill will confirm anew his support to Japan's proposal to the U.N. regarding a World Tsunami Day.

During the summit, the both sides are scheduled to sign agreements covering new projects aimed at improving the economic and social infrastructure in PNG, including a loan of approximately ¥27 billion for the redevelopment of PNG's second-largest city's Lae Nadzab Airport; ODA-funded Port Moresby water sewage project; and technical cooperation through JICA programs for human resources development.

The prime minister is accompanied by a delegation of around 30 members from the government and the private sector, including three ministers: Minister for National Planning Charles Abel; Minister for Public Enterprise Ben Micah; and Minister for Petroleum and Energy Dixon Duban. The first meeting of Joint Committee based on PNG-Japan Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (IPPA) will be

held among those ministers, their Japanese counterparts and other representatives from the both countries.

Through the signing of agreements among the private sectors of both countries for individual projects, strengthened business cooperation can also be expected on this occasion.

Additionally, O'Neill will receive an honorary doctorate from Soka University in Hachioji, Tokyo, during his stay.

Before leaving Japan, the prime minister is scheduled to travel to Osaka to inspect the Senboku Terminal, which serves as the terminal of the PNG LNG shipments for Osaka Gas.

Information provided by the Embassy of Papua New Guinea

Background of PM Peter O'Neill

Peter Charles Paire O'Neill, CMG (born Feb. 13, 1965) is the prime minister of Papua New Guinea. He is the leader of the People's National Congress and represents the constituency of Ialibu-Pangia. He was sworn in on Aug. 4, 2012 as the ninth prime minister of Papua New Guinea.

His mother, Awambo Yari, a Papua New Guinean, came from the Southern Highlands. His father moved to Papua New Guinea in 1949 as an Australian government field officer, known in Tok Pisin as a kiap, later serving as a magistrate in Goroka until his death in 1982.

The prime minister grew up in rural PNG, with a very basic upbringing. He was educated at

the Pangia Primary School, Ialibu High School and Goroka High School. After leaving school he was educated at the University of Papua New Guinea, graduating with a Bachelor of Accountancy and Commerce in 1986.

The prime minister was a businessman before entering politics. As of 2011, he lives in Port Moresby with his partner and has five children; two daughters (Loris and Joanne O'Neill) and three sons (Travis, Brian and Patrick O'Neill). The prime minister first was elected to the National Parliament of Papua New Guinea in 2002 and became a minister the same year.

He became the leader of

Papua New Guinea's opposition in 2004. He joined the government of Prime Minister Michael Somare in 2007, serving as treasurer. During Somare's absence due to illness he served as works minister under acting Prime Minister Sam Abal.

In August 2011 he joined with opposition MPs and was elected as the acting prime minister in a parliamentary vote on Aug. 2, 2011, and was sworn in later in the day by the governor-general.

This text is an edited excerpt from the official website of the Office of the Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea.



Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea Peter O'Neill

Celebrating 40 years of fruitful and amicable diplomatic relations

Kazunori Tanaka
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-PAPUA NEW GUINEA PARLIAMENTARY LEAGUE



On behalf of the Japan-Papua New Guinea Parliamentary League, I would like to extend our heartfelt welcome to Prime Minister Peter O'Neill of the Independent State of Papua New Guinea, who is paying an official working visit to Japan this year, marking the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and PNG.

Both countries have nurtured a good relationship over the years. In 2014, the PNG-Japan Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (IPPA) came into effect and PNG started to export its liquefied natural gas to Japan, further strengthening our countries' ever-closer relations.

Last year, on the occasion of the Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's visit to Papua New Guinea, I was also a member of the delegation, leading the delegate parliamentarians as the chairman of the Japan-PNG Parliamentary League. I was very much moved beyond words by the hearty and enthusiastic welcome by the people of your country.

Papua New Guinea always takes a leadership role as a great nation in the Pacific Islands and it is expected that the nation will continue with its economic growth through the development of its rich natural resources.

I sincerely hope the prime minister's visit to Japan this time will be a fruitful one that contributes to further mutual understanding and friendship promotion between both countries.

Finally, I would like to pledge that our parliamentary league will continue to work hard to further enhance the bilateral relationship.

Connections growing stronger on multiple levels

Katsuo Yamashita
CHAIRMAN, JAPAN-PAPUA NEW GUINEA ASSOCIATION

On this auspicious occasion marking the 40th anniversary of independence, it is with great pleasure that we receive Papua New Guinean Prime Minister Peter O'Neill, who is paying an official working visit to Japan. I would like to extend our heartfelt welcome.

Papua New Guinea is today a great South Pacific nation. Since the nation's independence, both its public and private sectors

have consistently shown close and friendly attitudes toward Japan despite bitter experiences during World War II.

For the groups and individuals that continue to pay visits to console the souls of the dead and identify the remains of war dead to this day, the nation has offered a warm welcome and provided assistance both at the governmental and grass-roots levels. More recently, it is still fresh in our minds that Papua New Guinea was among the first countries to offer a large donation in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami four years ago.

Since O'Neill assumed his post in 2012, the ties between both countries, including sum-

mit-level exchanges, are being further strengthened. O'Neill has paid a series of visits to Japan, including his first as the prime minister in March 2013; a business visit in June 2014 to mark the arrival of the liquid natural gas ship carrying the first cargo for the PNG LNG project; and a visit in May to attend the Seventh Pacific Leaders Meetings. Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was the first Japanese prime minister to visit Papua New Guinea in 29 years and received a warm welcome by both the public and private sectors.

Regarding economic cooperation at the government level, Japan is offering grant aid in the areas of education and road rehabilitation and yen loans in the energy field. Also, the PNG-Japan Investment Promotion and Protection Agreement (IPPA) came into effect at the beginning of last year, and it is expected to promote mutual investment from both countries at the private level.

It is always our hope that the Japan-Papua New Guinea Association will continue to make steady efforts to promote the long-lasting bilateral friendship at a grass-roots level.



PNG LNG plant site to the northwest of Port Moresby in Papua New Guinea EMBASSY OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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to The Honorable Peter O'Neill,
Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea
on His Official Working Visit to Japan



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