

Fourth Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit

In advance of the Fourth Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit on May 20 and 21, a discussion was held at the Prime Minister's Official Residence in Tokyo between Wen Desheng, counselor at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Park Yongmin, counselor at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea, Yoshinori Fujiyama, director, Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with Noriyuki Shikata, director of Global Communications at the Prime Minister's Office, acting as moderator.

Shikata: I'm very pleased that following the March 19 Japan-China-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kyoto, the heads of both China and ROK will be coming to Japan for the Japan-China-ROK Summit. Today, with these members of the Chinese and South Korean embassies, I would like to discuss the aid both countries have provided in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake and developments in relations between our three countries.

In response to the Great East Japan Earthquake, many countries from around the world have provided much aid. Both China and ROK have dispatched rescue teams and provided relief supplies. As well as expressing our appreciation for this aid, I would also like to say that I believe this has deepened the relationship between Japan, China and ROK.

Therefore, first I'd like to discuss the aid from the governments and people of China and ROK.

Wen: On March 13, the Chinese government dispatched fifteen rescue team members who conducted rescue operations in Ofunato, Iwate Prefecture, from March 14 to 20. In addition, on March 14, blankets, tents and other goods were provided. Since there was a large earthquake in the Yunnan Province of China on March 10, the



From left: Yoshinori Fujiyama, Park Yongmin, Wen Desheng, Noriyuki Shikata, at the Prime Minister's Official Residence in Tokyo.

TADASHI AIZAWA



Wen Desheng, Counselor at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China

Wen Desheng served as section chief of the Chinese Association for International Understanding between 1988 and 2009. He became a counselor at the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Japan in December 2009. He is a council member of the China-Japan Friendship Association and of the Chinese Association for Japanese Studies.

day previous to the Great East Japan Earthquake, rescue teams were conducting operations there. Even so, some team members were dispatched from the disaster area in Yunnan to Japan. On March 16, the Chinese government announced it would provide aid of 10,000 tons of gasoline and 10,000 tons of diesel fuel.

From the private sector too, various kinds of aid are being provided. For example, Sany, a construction equipment company, donated a pump truck with a 62-meter arm, which was of great assistance in pumping water to cool the nuclear reactor at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. A large amount of donations has also been collected from ordinary citizens. From universities in Beijing, Shanghai and Changchun, many university students have gone into the cities with over 300 collection boxes to collect donations.

China was severely damaged by the 2008 Sichuan Earthquake. Therefore, instead of considering the earthquake in Japan to be irrelevant to them, much of the nation responded with very warm feelings, a so-called warm current, toward the Japanese people.

Park: ROK government dispatched a 107-member rescue team, which includes five members dispatched immediately the day fol-

lowing the earthquake, and two rescue dogs, that conducted rescue operations from March 14 to 23 in the cities of Sendai, Tagajo, and Shiogama in Miyagi Prefecture. In addition, water, food and other relief supplies were sent five times by military aircraft, private aircraft and ship to Iwate, Miyagi and Fuku-

shima Prefectures.

Aid from private companies has also been provided. For example, Hyundai Heavy Industries supplied four moveable power generators to Tokyo Electric Power Company's thermal power plant in Chiba. These have been providing electricity to the Tokyo area since the end of April. Also, within ROK, there have been a large number of voluntary relief efforts for Japan. I have been surprised by three things about the Great East Japan Earthquake: First, the strength of the earthquake, second, the sense of orderliness among Japanese after the earthquake, and third, the widespread enthusiasm mostly among young South Koreans to aid Japan.

Fujiyama: In response to this earthquake, we have received much support from the international community, but the very first to extend assistance were our neighbors ROK and China. As both counselors have stated, we have received much support, and as a representative of the Japanese government, it is difficult to express my appreciation in words. Though there are various pending issues between Japan and China and Japan and ROK, I believe that the nature of the relationship between the three countries can be clearly seen in the way that they work together as one to help each other when

one of them is suffering. In order for the people of Japan to know about the considerate aid that China and ROK have given, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been reporting about the assistance from both countries on its website. In regards to the Japan-China-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting mentioned earlier by Director Shikata, it was an important opportunity for expressing feelings of thanks for the assistance provided by both our neighbors, as well as for explaining Japan's response to the earthquake. As a result, it was an extremely good meeting that was filled with expressions of China and ROK's solidarity with Japan.

Shikata: Could you please talk about the relief efforts of Chinese and South Koreans living in Japan?

Wen: There are around 700,000 Chinese residing in Japan. There are 33,000 living in the Tohoku prefectures of Iwate, Miyagi and Fukushima. The Chinese living in the disaster-stricken area are working toward reconstruction along with the Japanese.

In addition, since just after the Great East Japan Earthquake, various Chinese resident associations have donated a large amount of money for reconstruction in the disaster area. Furthermore, an organization of Chinese scholars living in Japan, the Society of Chinese Professors in Japan, released "Let's work hand in hand with the Japanese community to overcome this natural disaster!—An appeal to Chinese descendants, Chinese nationals and exchange students living in Japan."

Park: There are 600,000 Koreans in Japan, with 40,000 living in the Tohoku region. For Koreans, the Great East Japan Earthquake is not an irrelevant event.

Since just after the earthquake, organizations and businesses made up of Koreans living in Japan have been collecting donations, and

Park Yongmin, Counselor at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea

Park Yongmin began his career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 1991. He has served as an officer of the Permanent Mission to the United Nations and of the embassies of Oman, the United States and Indonesia and deputy director of the North Korean Nuclear Negotiation Division. He became counselor at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in Japan, in August 2010.



sending water, food and other supplies to the disaster stricken area. In addition, Koreans living in Japan and South Korean exchange students have established a volunteer organization to give aid to the disaster area. The volunteers have been distributing meals and providing medical assistance in the affected area.

Shikata: The areas affected by the earthquake have been receiving aid from China, ROK and many other countries, and have started on the road to recovery. Along with that, tourism has begun again in the areas where the recovery is moving ahead. Of course, in locations around Japan outside of the disaster area, foreign tourists are as welcome as always. What are some places that you have visited in Japan that impressed you, and where would you like to visit in the future?

Wen: I have been working with Japan for

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around twenty years, so I've visited places throughout Japan, from the south to the north. Every area has its unique features, and all of them have left an impression on me.

In recent years, the natural beauty of Hokkaido has been very popular among Chinese tourists. Chinese also love the scenery of the Japanese coastline. Two places I visit almost every year, Hiroshima and Nagasaki, are also well known in China as cities of peace. Sendai in Miyagi Prefecture, which was damaged by the earthquake, is also famous as a tourist spot since the Chinese literary master Lu Xun lived there. After the quake, I went to Ofunato as part of the rescue operations. If I have a chance in the future, I would definitely like to visit the disaster stricken areas after they've recovered.

Park: It has not been long since I was stationed in Japan, so besides Tokyo, I have only visited Ito hot springs on the Izu Peninsula in Shizuoka. When I was walking along the Jogasaki coastline near the hot springs, I realized that the character of the Japanese people is embodied in the natural scenery of Japan. It has a feeling of immaculateness and moderation.

Actually, I had planned a ten-day vacation from March 20 during which I would drive around Kyoto and Nara, but unfortunately, due to the earthquake, it had to be cancelled. Other than those places, I would also like to visit Echigo Yuzawa, the setting for Kawabata Yasunari's novel, *Snow Country*.

Shikata: Now what are the principal themes for this Japan-China-ROK Summit?

Fujiyama: In relation to the Great East Japan Earthquake, Prime Minister Kan has released a message to major newspapers around the world, expressing thanks for the aid from every nation, and strong determination on the path to recovery. What the Prime Minister says at the summit will be entirely left up to him, but it's likely that his comments will be of a similar nature. Also, since there was an agreement at the Japan-China-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting the other day to produce some tangible results regarding trilateral co-

**Yoshinori Fujiyama, Director,
Asian and Oceanian Affairs
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Yoshinori Fujiyama began his career at MOFA in 1984. He has served as director of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty Division, counselor of the South Korean Embassy, and minister of the German Embassy. He became director of the Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau in July 2010.



operation on nuclear power safety and disaster prevention in preparation for this summit, we are currently doing our utmost in that regard. As for nuclear power safety, an important theme is expected to be a sharing of lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident and subsequent thorough inspections.

In addition, discussions are expected regarding the currently ongoing Japan-China-ROK investment accord negotiations and joint studies on a Japan-China-ROK FTA.

Shikata: Finally, what are the Chinese and South Korean viewpoints on the prospects for the Japanese economy?

Wen: I have an optimistic view of the Japanese economy after the Great East Japan Earthquake. The reason for this is the great demand both within Japan and China. The earthquake has been a great tragedy, but demand will increase tremendously as recovery begins. I believe that new growth patterns that can invigorate the economy will emerge from the power shortages and lifestyle changes.

Also, in China at present, an emphasis has been placed on energy conservation and environmental protection, and efforts are being put into maintaining sustainable economic growth, so demand has increased extensively in these areas. Since the oil crisis of the 1970s, Japan has accumulated know-how regarding energy conservation and environmental protection. Many Chinese have gone to Kitakyushu in Fukuoka Prefecture, to observe the recycling industries concentrated in that area. Now is the time for Japan to make use of its knowhow in energy conservation and environmental protection in China. ROK also has much expertise in this field, so I am convinced that a bright future can be achieved through trilateral cooperation.

Park: Japan cannot help but be affected economically by the Great East Japan Earthquake. However, it is more important to think about what can be done in the future than to think about what has already happened. I believe that difficulty always brings opportunity with it.

The earthquake has also taught us that ROK and Japan are in many ways close neighbors, not distant ones. The crisis in Japan is not just Japan's alone. It is for this reason that coopera-

tion between two countries is of momentous importance. The effects of the earthquake in Japan have reached South Korean industries. But on the other hand, ROK can supplement the Japanese industries that were damaged by the quake.

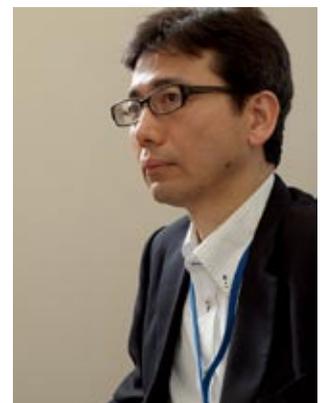
Moreover, the combined populations of ROK, Japan and China make up one quarter of the world population, and our combined GDPs equal one sixth of the total world GDP. With this size, I believe that any number of potentialities can emerge through trilateral cooperation.

Fujiyama: I believe that this Japan-China-ROK Summit has the possibility of being an important step towards recovery in the disaster stricken areas. I expect economic partnerships, tourism, personal and cultural exchanges, and cooperation in a variety of other fields to support recovery in the areas affected by the disaster.

Shikata: I greatly appreciate your gathering here today during this busy time. I sincerely hope that relations among our three

Noriyuki Shikata, Director of Global Communications at the Prime Minister's Office

Noriyuki Shikata began his career at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 1986. He has served as director of the International Press Division, director of the Second North America Division, and director of the Economic Treaties Division. He became director of Global Communications at the Prime Minister's Office in 2010.



countries can be advanced further through agreements on the environment, energy and other common issues at the upcoming Japan-China-ROK Summit.

