

Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting

On May 25 and 26, 2012, the Sixth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM 6) took place in Nago City, Okinawa under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister of Japan Yoshihiko Noda and the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands Hon. Henry Puna. Including Japan, there were sixteen countries and one region whose leaders and representatives participated in the Summit.

The Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting is a summit-level meeting which has been held every three years since 1997. Leaders openly discuss various issues that Pacific island countries are facing in order to build close cooperative relationships and forge a bond of friendship between Japan and Pacific island countries.

At the summit, under the slogan of “We are Islanders — For Growing ‘Kizuna’ (Strong Bonds) in

the Pacific,” the Leaders formulated five pillars for cooperation over the next three years: (1) response to natural disasters; (2) environment and climate change; (3) sustainable development and human security; (4) people-to-people exchanges; and (5) maritime issues. The Leaders engaged in lively discussions on these topics, and at the end of the Summit, the Okinawa “Kizuna” Declaration was adopted.

Prime Minister Noda announced Japan’s commitment of making maximum efforts to provide up to 500 million U.S. dollars of assistance over the next three years in order to push forward cooperation in accordance with the five pillars stated above. The Pacific island countries expressed deep appreciation for Japan’s continuing strong commitment to the region, even while Japan is faced with reconstruction challenges from the Great East Japan Earthquake. 



Wearing the *kariyushi* (harmony) shirts unique to Okinawa, venue of the PALM 6 summit, leaders pose for a group photograph on May 26.

Inauguration of the Second Reshuffled Noda Cabinet

On June 4, Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda reshuffled the Cabinet, and the Second Reshuffled Noda Cabinet was inaugurated.

Prime Minister Noda explained at a press conference on the day that he felt he should create an environment that can advance the many issues, including the comprehensive reform of social security and taxation systems cur-

rently being debated in the Diet. He also said that he had reshuffled the Cabinet aiming at the above-mentioned goal from the perspective of strengthening its functions.

The Prime Minister emphasized, “I of course believe that the Cabinet will continue to pool its strength to do what must be done such as initiatives to overcome deflation and administrative reform.”