

JOINT STATEMENT
The Second Trilateral High-Level Dialogue on the Arctic
Tokyo, June 8, 2017

The Arctic is experiencing environmental and climate change faster than any other part of the world. These significant changes present the international community with both urgent challenges and opportunities. Climate change is affecting the vulnerable Arctic ecosystems, the livelihoods of local inhabitants and indigenous communities on a global scale, while the melting of ice brings new opportunities such as natural resources and marine fisheries in the Arctic as well as the opening of sea routes. In particular, it is indispensable for the international community to ensure the protection and preservation of the fragile marine environment of the Arctic Ocean, and maintain peace, stability and constructive cooperation based on a rule-based maritime order.

Acknowledging the global importance of Arctic issues, the leaders of Japan, the People's Republic of China and the Republic of Korea, decided to launch a trilateral high-level dialogue on the Arctic to share Arctic policies, explore cooperative projects and seek ways to deepen cooperation over the Arctic in the Joint Declaration for Peace and Cooperation in Northeast Asia issued in November 2015.

Following the first meeting convened in Seoul in April 2016, Ms. Kazuko Shiraishi, Ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Mr. Gao Feng, Special Representative for Arctic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China and Mr. Kim Young-jun, Ambassador for Arctic Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea gathered in Tokyo to hold the Second Trilateral High-Level Dialogue on the Arctic on June 8, 2017.

The aim of the Dialogue was to follow up on the Republic of Korea's initiative to engage in further discussions to address common challenges over the Arctic with a particular focus on measures to strengthen scientific cooperation among the three countries in order to contribute to the efforts of the international community.

Through presenting each country's activities on the Arctic, with the Fairbanks Declaration 2017 and the Agreement on Enhancing International Arctic Science Cooperation signed at the 10th Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council in mind, the three Heads of Delegations (HoDs) of the Dialogue underscored the importance of further strengthening their respective contributions to the work of the Arctic Council through engagement at the Working Groups, Task Forces and Expert Groups, and in particular of enhancing engagement with other various international fora based on the shared recognition that the challenges and opportunities over the Arctic have global ramifications beyond the region.

The three HoDs reconfirmed that scientific research presents the most promising area for their joint activities and trilateral cooperative activities. The three HoDs requested their experts to identify specific cooperative projects on scientific research, such as cooperative research for environmental changes in the Pacific side of the Arctic Ocean as a major contribution to the Pacific Arctic Group (PAG), and Pan-Arctic Ocean observation project in the international coordinated cruises in summer 2020 under Synoptic Arctic Survey (SAS), while taking note of the importance of continually exploring trilateral cooperative activities with the uniqueness and strength of each country in mind. The three HoDs pledged their support and cooperation for the implementation of the aforementioned activities on Arctic science, and confirmed the importance of following up on these activities on a regular basis. The three HoDs also reaffirmed to keep identifying cooperative projects in the other areas.

The three HoDs reiterated that the Trilateral High-Level Dialogue on the Arctic is an important platform for their continued cooperation over the Arctic. The three HoDs decided to continue reporting the discussions of this Dialogue to the Arctic Council through appropriate channels.

Noting that the Trilateral High-Level Dialogue on the Arctic would serve as a useful platform to deepen and expand the existing trilateral cooperative frameworks, Japan and the Republic of Korea welcomed the People's Republic of China's proposal to host the Third Trilateral High-Level Dialogue on the Arctic in 2018.