

July 18, 2014

Prime Minister Abe hosted an "Iftar" (fast-breaking dinner during the Holy Month of Ramadan)

1. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe hosted an "Iftar" (fast-breaking dinner during the Holy Month of Ramadan) for the ambassadors of Islamic nations and other officials at the Prime Minister's Office on July 16. 34 representatives from the Islamic Diplomatic Corps in Tokyo participated in the Iftar and provided their local cuisines. Mr. Hiroshige Seko, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary, and Mr. Nobuo Kishi, Parliamentary Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs, also participated in the Iftar. Mr. Kosei Inoue, who is a Gold medalist in men's judo at Sydney Olympics and is currently the head coach of Japan's national judo team participated as a special guest.
2. Prime Minister Abe stated in his welcome remarks that through his visits to Islamic countries in the Middle East and Southeast Asia since he came to power, he realized the ideas of "harmony with those who are different" and "love for others" underlying the spirit of Islam, and strongly felt the commonality with the idea of "co-existence" in the Japanese culture. Prime Minister Abe expressed that achieving peace and prosperity in the Islamic countries is our Japanese earnest wishes, and stated, however, that he was saddened by the recent situation in the Middle East. Prime Minister Abe concluded his remarks by expressing his sincere hope for further development of friendship and cooperative relationship with many of our friends from the Arab and Islamic countries.
3. Speaking as Dean of the Diplomatic Corp of Islamic countries in Japan, H.E. Mr. Waleed Siam, Ambassador of Palestine, said that the recent events in the Islam world make Japan to pay more attention to the Middle East, to continue to sustain efforts to promptly establish a just and lasting peace between Palestine and Israel, and that we offer a prayer for the innocent lives lost in the conflicts of the world.
4. After that, Mr. Masahiko Komura, Vice President of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan, gave an address and prayed for further development of relationship between Japan and the Islamic world.

(END)

\* The foregoing is a provisional translation. The date indicated above denotes the date of the original in Japanese.