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深まった日本とクウェートとの 親交と経済協力

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クウェート首長殿下を正殿竹の間へご誘引になる天皇 皇后両陛下(宮殿)=宮内庁ホームページから

The Emperor and Empress leading the way for the Emir of Kuwait toward the Bamboo Room of the main building of the Imperial Palace. = From the homepage of the Imperial Household Agency

なり、サバーハ首長は天皇陛下の手術後の健康を 気遣われるなど、親しく会見される場面が放映された。今回、天皇皇后両陛下との二度の会見によって、日本の皇室とサバーハ首長家との交流が深められたことは大変喜ばしい。また22日にはサバーハ首長、野田首相立会いの下「投資の促進及び保護に関する日本国とクウェート国との間の協定」の署名が行われた。

サバーハ首長はクウェートの外務大臣として40年間の経歴を持つクウェート外交の第一人者である。難しい湾岸諸国の外交問題を直接対処してきた人物で、クウェート国内での評価は高い。ジャービル・アルサバーハ第13代首長から首長の座を引き継いだのは2006年1月である。現サバーハ首長はクウェート首相であった2004年7月にも国賓として来日している。

2007年招聘によりクウェートを訪問した安倍晋 三元首相と随行代表団は、サバーハ殿下と皇太子 に謁見する栄誉を授かっている。公式会談では 「クウェート国と日本国の間の共同声明」が発表 された。安倍元首相は先ずクウェートのアリ・ア ルサーレム基地(イラク復興支援の際に航空自衛 隊が拠点としたクウェートの基地)を視察し、自 衛隊のイラク復興支援事業に対するクウェート国 の支援に謝意を示した。

Deepened friendship and economic cooperation between Japan and Kuwait

Ikuzo Kobayashi, Chairman of Salaam Association

His Excellency Sabah al-Ahmad al-Jabir al-Sabah, emir of Kuwait visited and stayed in Japan as a state guest from March 20 to March 23, accompanied by his country's leaders including Minister of State, Minister of Finance, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Commerce and Industry and Minister of Oil. Personally welcomed by the Emperor and Empress, Emir Sabah expressed sympathy for the Emperor's health after a surgical operation and the scene of their meeting filled with cordial amity was broadcasted. It is a very positive development that through the emir's two meetings with the Emperor and Empress this time the exchange between Japan's imperial family and Emir Sabah' s family was deepened. On March 22, the Agreement Between Japan and Kuwait Concerning Investment Promotion and Protection was signed with Emir Sabah and Prime Minister Noda present.

Emir Sabah served as Kuwait's foreign minister and is No.1 expert of Kuwait foreign policy with 40-year diplomatic career. He has dealt with difficult diplomatic issues of Persian Gulf countries and is highly evaluated in Kuwait. He inherited the emirate from the 13th emir, al-Jabir al-Sabah in January, 2006. Emir Sabah visited Japan as a state guest in July, 2004 when he was Kuwait's prime minister.

Japanese delegation headed by former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was invited by and visited Kuwait in 2007, and met Emir Sabah and Crown Prince. In the official bilateral meeting, the Joint Statement Between Kuwait and Japan was issuedformer Prime Minister Abe first visited Ali Al Salem Air Force Base which was used by Japanese Air Self Defense Force for Iraq reconstruction support activities, and expressed his gratitude for Kuwait's support for JASDF Iraq reconstruction efforts.



クウェート文化イベント開幕式典でテープカットされる高円宮妃殿下(左)。右はクウェートのアルオタイビ駐日大使=3月19日、東京・六本木のミッドタウン

Princess Hisako (left), wife of Prince Takamado, cutting the tape during the Opening Ceremony of the Kuwait Cultural Event. H.E. Mr. Abdul-Rahman Al-Otaibi, Ambassador of Kuwait to Japan is to the right. = March 19, Roppongi Midtown in Tokyo

2006年1月29日、首長に 即位したときの日本の首 相は小泉首相、野田首相

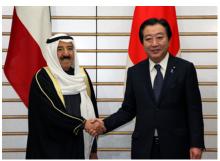
は7人目の首相となる。その間サバーハ首長は一貫して対日友好姿勢を堅持し続けている。今回の首脳会談は、湾岸戦争以来の湾岸地域に関する安全、アラブ諸国の動静等に対する両国の認識を共有する会談であった。また2011年に行われる予定であったが3・11東日本大震災のため延期となった懸案の「投資の促進及び保護に関する日本国とクウェート国との間の協定」が3月22日に署名された。これはここ5年間の外交努力の実りといえよう。FTAの締結もGCC6カ国の中での最初の国となる予定だ。

1990年8月、イラク軍の侵攻によりクウェートは7カ月間イラク軍の暴虐の犠牲となった。「まさかアラブの同胞からかくも残虐な行為を受けるとは夢にも想像しなかった…」

アラブ諸国は、当時一様に反米感情を抱いていた。アメリカのアラブとイスラエルに対するダブルスタンダードがその理由だ。アラブには厳しくイスラエルには甘いという西側の国際戦略の総元締めアメリカへの反発だ。しかし、イラクのサダム・フセインによってクウェート国は存亡の淵に立たされ'アラブは一つ'という反米感情に押し流されるわけにはいかなくなった。「真の友人は誰か?イスラムの同胞からその友人を見いださねばならないのか?」と深く考えさせられた、と言う。

Japan and Kuwait decided to work toward bilateral tax treaty and FTA negotiation between GCC composed of 6 Gulf countries to promote bilateral commercial and economic activities and expressed commitment to further strengthen mutual economic relationship in the areas of stable oil supply, economy, environment and education. Both countries also agreed to launch joint enterprise initiatives in commemoration of 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relationship in 2011.

When the emir assumed his current position on January 29, 2006, Mr. Koizumi was Japan's prime minister. Prime Minister Noda is the 7th prime minister since that time. During that period of time, Emir Sabah has consistently maintained friendly posture toward Japan.



会談を前に握手する野田佳彦首相(右)とクウェー war and situation トのサバハ首長=3月22日午後、首相官邸(写真提 of Arab countries・供:内閣広報室)

Prime Minister Yoshihiko Noda (right) and Emir Sabah of Kuwait shaking hands before their summit meeting. = Afternoon of March 22 at the Prime Minister's

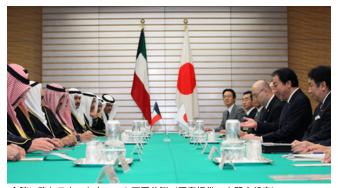
Afternoon of March 22 at the Prime Minister' : Office (Photo provided by the Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

Japan-Kuwait
summit this time
was the meeting
for both countries
to share common
views on security
of Gulf region
since the Gulf
War and situation
of Arab countries.
The Agreement
Between Japan
and Kuwait
Concerning
Investment

Promotion and Protection was originally scheduled to be signed in 2011 but signing was postponed due to the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 11, 2011. The agreement was signed on March 22. This agreement is the fruit of the diplomatic efforts for the past 5 years. Kuwait is expected to sign FTA with Japan first among 6 GCC countries.

As the result of Iraqi military invasion on Kuwait in August 1990, Kuwait was subjected to brutal occupation by the Iraqi military for 7 months. "No one in Kuwait dreamed of the situation in which Kuwaiti people are subjected to such brutality from Arab brethren…" At that time, all Arab countries had antipathy against the United States because of the perceived double standard of the United States in its dealing with Arab countries and Israel.

昨年東日本大震災後、そのお見舞いとしていち早く500万バーレル (約400億円) の原油無償供与をクウェート政府は決定した。石油があるからできる振る舞いである、と簡単な気持ちで片付けてはならない。また"気前が良いね"という軽い気持ちで受け止めるべきでもない。500万バーレルにはクウェート政府と国民のどのような気持ちが込められているのか考える責任がある。



会談に臨む日本・クウェート両国首脳 (写真提供 内閣広報室) Leaders of Japan and Kuwait meeting at the office of the Prime Minister

(Photo provided by the Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

外務省のある元アラビストは「1970年のオイルショックからの20年間、日本の中東政策は無定見で、油乞い外交であった」と総括した上で、「湾岸戦争のとき日本が130億ドル(*注)を拠出したにもかかわらず、too little, too late とアラブの人に揶揄されたことは、その付けを払わされたようなものである」と指摘している。

そのときから20年経った今日、日本が湾岸戦争に 拠出した130億ドルと、クウェートから贈呈された 原油500万バーレル無償供与が、両国の'国家の命 運'と両国の'国民の生命'を結びつける新たな 絆となることを祈って止まない。

サバーハ首長殿下と天皇皇后両陛下とのお互いを 思いやる温かい心遣いは両国の心を深い絆で結ん でくださった素晴らしい元首の外交として、深く 感謝を捧げたいものである。

(*注) 130億ドル:当時のレートで換算すると、赤ちゃんから寝たきり老人まで全国民1億2500万人全員が、一人当たり15000円の税金を払って賄った勘定になる。

The United States was hated as the linchpin of the West for the West's international strategy that is lenient to Israel but harsh to Arab countries. However, Kuwait was force to face the risk of extinction by Saddam Hussein of Iraq and could not afford to go along with anti-U.S. sentiment from "unified Arab." People in Kuwait were forced to think deeply, "Who is a real friend? Do we have to find a real friend among Islamic brethren?"

In the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake last year, Kuwaiti government quickly decided to provide Japan with 5 million barrels of crude oil (worth approximately 40 billion yen) free of charge. This action's importance should not be underestimated for the reason that Kuwait has abundant oil. It should not be lightly regarded as an act of generosity. Japan has a responsibility to consider the heart of Kuwaiti government and people manifested in 5 million barrels of oil.

A former Ministry of Foreign Affairs official who is an Arab-specialist points out as follows. "For 20 years since 1970 oil shock, Japan's Middle East policy has lacked a consistent principle and focused on begging for oil. Japan donated 13 billion dollars* at the time of the Gulf War, but was criticized as 'too little, too late' by the Arab people. Japan paid a price for its inconsistent policy."

20 years have passed since then, and I sincerely pray that 13 billion dollars* Japan donated for the Gulf War and 5 million barrels of crude oil Kuwait donated form a new bond connecting two countries' "national destiny" and "people's life."

Emir Sabah and the Emperor and Empress mutually showed warm compassion and amity, connecting Japanese people and Kuwaiti people in deep bond of heart. I want to express my deep gratitude for the great diplomacy conducted by two heads of state.

* 13 billon dollars: Calculating with the exchange rate back then, the amount is equivalent to the sum of tax payment by 125 million Japanese people (including babies and ailing seniors) with individual tax payment of 15,000 yen per person.