

DIPLOMATIC BLUEBOOK

2023

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan



Diplomatic Bluebook 2023

Japanese Diplomacy and
International Situation in 2022

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

Preface to the Diplomatic Bluebook 2023

The world is now at a turning point in history. A free and open international order based on the rule of law, which supported peace and prosperity in the post-Cold War era, is facing serious challenges due to historical changes in the balance of power and intensifying geopolitical competition. Unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force are not limited to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which has shaken the very foundation of the international order. Such attempts also continue in the periphery of Japan. Moreover, economic security issues, such as vulnerability of supply chains, economic coercion, and intellectual property theft, as well as exploitation of emerging technologies, such as cyberattacks and the spread of disinformation, are posing challenges to global peace and stability.

Meanwhile, global issues such as climate change and infectious disease crises are occurring simultaneously, requiring cross-border cooperation among nations. Today, we are in an era where confrontation and cooperation are intricately intertwined in international relations. In the 20th century, distrust of multilateralism and economic blocs based on self-centered mentalities led to the last world war. We must not forget this lesson learned from the failure of humanity. This is the time for the international community to overcome inter-state rivalries and conflicts of interests, address common challenges through dialogue and cooperation, and strive to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order based on the rule of law.

To lead these efforts, I will continue to develop Japanese diplomacy with the following three forms of determination at the heart and by maintaining a balanced and stable posture with a high level of responsiveness: (1) the determination to fully defend universal values; (2) the determination to fully defend the peace and security of Japan; and (3) the determination to lead the international community by addressing global issues.

The Diplomatic Bluebook 2023 primarily presents an overview of the international situation and Japan's diplomatic activities in 2022. The opening pages outline the major events of the past year in chronological order as a way to reflect on the developments in the world. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the recent international situation, the major issues that emerged in the past year, and the corresponding outlook for Japan's diplomacy. Following this summary of the Diplomatic Bluebook, Chapter 2 and the following Chapters describe Japan's diplomatic efforts over the past year under the titles of: Japan's Foreign Policy by Region, Japan's Foreign Policy to Promote National and Global Interests, and Japan's Diplomacy Open to the Public. Furthermore, Russia's aggression against Ukraine, an event that symbolizes the end of the post-Cold War era, is discussed in a "Special Feature" with a focus on Japan's responses.

I hope this Diplomatic Bluebook will deepen the understanding of readers at home and abroad about how Japan carries out diplomacy by exercising leadership on issues facing the international community, which is now at a turning point.

Minister for Foreign Affairs
HAYASHI Yoshimasa



In principle, Diplomatic Bluebook 2023 describes an overview of the international affairs and Japan's diplomatic activities from January 1 to December 31 of 2022; however, some important events that occurred until early 2023 are also included.

Chapters 1 to 4 offer overviews of Japan's diplomatic activities throughout 2022 in a concise and easy-to-understand manner, and also include special features delving into specific foreign policy themes and column articles including contributions from people with global experiences.

This year's and past years' Diplomatic Bluebooks are available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). Summaries of Diplomatic Bluebook 2023 in French and Spanish are also due to be available on the website by autumn 2023.

For more details with respect to Chapter 3, Section 1, "4 Disarmament and Non-proliferation and the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy," and Section 2, "Japan's International Cooperation," please refer to MOFA's publications, *Japan's Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Policy*, and *White Paper on Development Cooperation - Japan's International Cooperation*. They are also available on the MOFA website.

Please note that the titles of persons and names of countries appearing in this book are those as of the events. Website links and QR codes in this book are those as of publication and may be changed or deleted later. The contents and views expressed in contributions from individuals and organizations do not reflect the position of MOFA. The maps in this book are simplified and may not necessarily be drawn to scale or reflect other details precisely.

Previous Diplomatic Bluebooks:

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/index.html>



Japan's Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Policy

(only in the Japanese language):

https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/gun_hakusho/index.html



White Paper on Development Cooperation - Japan's International Cooperation:

https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000017.html



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2022

Major events around the world and in Japan (January to July)

January Unrest in Kazakhstan



Photo: ZUMA Press/
Afla

February 24 Start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine

January

February

January 15 Volcanic eruptions and tsunami disaster in Tonga



Photo:
Pool photo/
Reuters/Afla

March 9 Election of President YOON Suk Yeol of the ROK



Photo: Pool photo/
Reuters/Afla

March 24 Address to the Diet by President Zelenskyy of Ukraine (online)

March

April 7 Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Japan participates for the first time

April 15 The 8th Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue

April 24 Election of President Macron of France

April

May 10 Election of President Marcos of the Philippines



Photo: AP/Afla

May

June 26-28 G7 Elmau Summit



Photo: Cabinet Public
Affairs Office

June

June 29 NATO Summit Meeting, Japan participates for the first time

July 19 The COVID-19 Global Action Plan (GAP) Foreign Ministerial Meeting

July



Photo: NAGATA Yohei /
Aflo Sports

February 4 to March 13

The Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games
Beijing 2022



May 12-14 G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting

May 15 The 50th anniversary of the reversion of
Okinawa to Japan

May 24 Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad)
Leaders' Meeting held in Japan

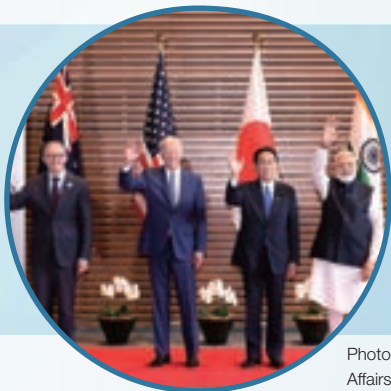


Photo: Cabinet Public
Affairs Office

Russia's aggression against Ukraine

Displaced people from Ukraine



Photo: THE MAINICHI NEWSPAPERS/Aflo

Signs of massacre after withdrawal of Russian troops (Bucha)



Photo: Reuters/Aflo

Military activities around Japan

Missile launches by North Korea with unprecedented
frequency and in unprecedented manners



Photo: AFP = Jiji Press

Photo: KNS=Jiji Press

Joint flights and navigation by China and Russia

Chinese bomber

Russian bomber



Photo: The Japan Joint Staff home page

2022

Major events around the world and in Japan (August to December)

August 4 Chinese military exercise around Taiwan
Missile landing within Japan's adjacent waters



Photo: Xinhua /Aflo

September 16 Death of an Iranian woman; demonstrations and riots in various areas



Photo: AP/Aflo

October 22 Inauguration of President of the Council of Ministers Meloni of Italy

October 25 Inauguration of Prime Minister Sunak of the United Kingdom

October 30 Election of President Lula of Brazil

November 6-20 COP27 in Egypt



Photo: AP/Aflo

August

September

October

November

December

August 3 U.S. Speaker of the House of Representatives Pelosi visits Taiwan

August 27-28 The Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8)

September 8 Passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom



Photo: AP/Aflo

September 30 Declaration of "incorporation" of parts of Ukraine by Russia

October 23 Election of General Secretary Xi Jinping of the Communist Party of China for the 3rd term



Photo: Xinhua/Aflo

November 20 to December 18

2022 FIFA World Cup Qatar

December 3 World Assembly for Women (WAW! 2022)

December 16 Adoption of the new National Security Strategy

August 1-26 The Tenth NPT Review Conference



Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office

September 20-26 Addresses at the General Debate of the UN General Assembly

September 27 State Funeral for the Late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo



Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office

November 3-4 G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting

November 8 U.S. midterm elections

November 11-13 ASEAN-related Summit Meetings

November 15-16 G20 Bali Summit

November 18-19 APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting

December 24 The 9th Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue

Successive abnormal weather

Floods in Pakistan



Photo: AFP/Aflo

Heat wave striking Europe



Photo: Reuters/Aflo

Food and energy crisis

People seeking food assistance



Photo: WFP/Michael Tewelde

Severe energy shortages and rising prices



Photo: Abaca/Aflo

Photo: Reuters/Aflo

Chapter 1

Overview of the International Situation and Outlook for Japan's Diplomacy



Chapter 1

Overview of the International Situation and Outlook for Japan's Diplomacy

In order for Japan to ensure its national interests in the political, diplomatic, security, and economic domains, to maintain and develop an international order based on universal values and principles such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, as well as to prevent crises, and proactively create a peaceful and

stable international environment, Japan needs to strategically advance its foreign policy while grasping changes and trends in international affairs with clear eyes and adapting to them. This chapter outlines a broad overview of the international situation surrounding Japan and the outlook for Japan's diplomacy.

1 Overview of the International Situation

The international community is at a turning point in history.

For some time since the end of the Cold War, a free, open, and stable international order has extended throughout the world. Advanced democracies, including the overwhelmingly powerful United States and Japan, took the lead in maintaining and developing an international order based on universal values and principles such as freedom, democracy, respect for fundamental human rights, and the rule of law. A trend toward international cooperation to enhance fairness, transparency, and predictability of international relations grew stronger. Furthermore, on the premise of such an international order, economic globalization and interdependence have advanced, bringing a certain degree of stability and economic growth to the international community, including developing countries.

However, although globalization has reduced disparities among nations around the world as a whole, some countries, such as Least Developed Countries (LDC), have not been able to fully enjoy its benefits. On the other hand, in developed countries, domestic disparities have rather widened, which has led to political and social tensions and divisions. Furthermore, the rise of China and other emerging and developing countries that developed under the international order described above has brought about a shift in the power balance in the international community in recent years, and geopolitical competition among nations has intensified. Some states are strengthening their military power in

a rapid and non-transparent manner, and are becoming more assertive and challenging, based on their own historical views and values, to the existing international order. Moreover, in recent years, the scope of security has expanded to challenges such as ensuring the resilience of the semiconductor and rare earths supply chain, the promotion and protection of critical and emerging technologies, cyber security, and countering disinformation.

As the existing free and open international order based on the rule of law is shaken, there is a growing tendency among nations to enhance their overall national power and compete for international influence to achieve their own national interests. In response to this situation, it is difficult to say that the United Nations (UN) and other international organizations have been functioning adequately. The interests of each country have become increasingly complex, making it extremely difficult to find a unified position, and the spirit of international cooperation is diminishing. As a result, polarizing forces are gaining power in the international community, and it is feared that the level of tension and confrontation will increase in the future.

At the same time, global issues such as climate change, the environment, infectious diseases, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and terrorism cannot be solved by any one major power alone, and cooperation by the international community is needed more than ever. The world economy is becoming increasingly globalized and interdependent, and complete decoupling

is no longer possible. Thus, international relations have become a complex situation where confrontation, competition, and cooperation are intricately intertwined.

Against this backdrop, the following part explains the major international issues that have become visible and apparent in 2022.

(1) Russia's Aggression: A Blatant Challenge to the International Order

In February 2022, Russia launched its aggression against Ukraine. The principles of the international community, such as respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the general prohibition of the use of force, were blatantly trampled upon by a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Russia's aggression is an outrageous act that shakes the very foundation of the existing international order and symbolizes the end of the post-Cold War era. The international community must not allow such an outrageous act. It is extremely important that the international community unite in response to this aggression by Russia in order to deter any further attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force.

Furthermore, Russia's repeated threats of use of nuclear weapons against Ukraine are inadmissible. The threat of use of nuclear weapons, as Russia is doing, let alone the use of nuclear weapons, in any form, must not be tolerated. Humanity must reflect on the weight of its 77-year history of non-use of nuclear weapons. In this regard, it is deeply regrettable that the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in August failed to reach consensus on the final document due to the opposition of one country, Russia.

It has also been noted that Russia is exploiting emerging technologies including cyberattacks and spreading of disinformation to advance its military operations, and has repeatedly violated international law, including attacks on civilians and civilian facilities. Massacres of civilians near Kyiv, the Ukrainian capital, such as in Bucha, and attacks against nuclear power plants have also been pointed out. Russia's aggression has also caused problems such as the global food and energy crisis, and has brought multifaceted turmoil to many countries, including developing countries.

On February 23, 2023, a resolution calling for

peace in Ukraine was adopted by a majority of 141 votes in favor at the Emergency Special Session of the UN General Assembly. The resolution clearly states that peace does not mean simply halting hostilities; it must be comprehensive, just and lasting, based on the principles of the UN Charter, such as sovereignty and territorial integrity.

(2) Emerging and Developing Countries with Growing Presence

The presence of emerging and developing countries, also known as the Global South, has been increasing through their responses to the challenges facing the international community in recent years, including Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The geopolitical position of these countries, their economic situation, and their relations with Russia and China vary from country to country. While some emerging countries, such as India, Brazil, Indonesia, South Africa, and Turkey are members of the G20, there are vulnerable countries that are suffering from various challenges including development, poverty, regional conflicts, terrorism, and natural disasters, such as those in Africa and the Middle East. However, many of these countries share a commonality in that they take a middle ground between the Western countries and Russia by abstaining from voting on resolutions at the UN General Assembly or showing a reluctance to impose sanctions against Russia. These countries have voiced doubts that developed countries are enthusiastic about the European agenda but do not pay enough attention to the challenges they face, or that the developed countries' responses are double standards in the application of universal values. These current conditions indicate that an era is dawning in which it is no longer possible for the international community to converge under a single set of values and principles. On the other hand, in finding solutions to the major challenges facing the international community, it is extremely important to work with as many emerging and developing countries as possible under multilateralism through an inclusive approach that overcomes differences in values and interests. From this perspective, as a developed country, Japan needs to strengthen its involvement in these countries and take a diplomatic stance to seek cooperation that they truly need.

(3) Rebuilding Global Governance¹

As the international community is reaching a historic turning point, the ideal system of global governance should now be well discussed from the perspective of upholding peace, security, and prosperity of the international community as well as maintaining a free and open international order based on the rule of law.

Against this backdrop, the UN is facing a time of trial. The UN Security Council, which has primary responsibility for international peace and security, has not been functioning effectively in response to the aggression against Ukraine by Russia, a permanent member of the Council. Furthermore, North Korea's nuclear development and repeated ballistic missile launches are clear violations of relevant UN Security Council resolutions, but due to the resistance of China and Russia, including their exercise of veto, neither a new UN Security Council resolution nor even a Presidential Statement has been issued. On the other hand, the UN General Assembly has played a role in demonstrating the collective will of the international community against Russia's aggression by holding the emergency special session based on the "Uniting for Peace" resolution. Six General Assembly resolutions, including the ones condemning Russia, were adopted within one year after the aggression began. In addition, the adoption of a General Assembly resolution that, in effect, requires the vetoing country to be accountable to the UN General Assembly when the UN Security Council fails to exercise its expected responsibilities due to the veto of the permanent member, is part of the efforts by the Member States to strengthen the functions of the UN.

In contrast to the UN, in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, unity and coordination among like-minded countries, including the G7, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and the European Union (EU) are remarkable. In particular, the G7 shared a sense of urgency since immediately after the crisis broke out, and has continuously provided broad support for Ukraine and imposed strict

sanctions against Russia, holding 11 foreign ministers' meetings and six leaders' meetings, both online and in person, in the year 2022 alone. The importance of the G7, whose presence in the international community was said to be declining in recent years, is now reaffirmed in the face of Russia's aggression, which is a blatant challenge to the rule of law.

On the other hand, the G20, a framework that includes Russia and emerging countries, received attention on how to deal with Russia's aggression. At the G20 Bali Summit, hosted by Indonesia in November, the Leaders' Declaration was adopted, agreeing on the language, "Most members strongly condemned the war in Ukraine" included after rigorous coordination, thanks to the leadership of President Joko Widodo. The phrase "strongly condemned the war in Ukraine" was carried over to the subsequent APEC Leaders' Declaration hosted by Thailand.

A move to rebuild global governance on global issues has been observed. In the field of global health, based on the lessons learned from the response to COVID-19 pandemic, efforts are underway to strengthen international norms to respond to pandemic under the World Health Organization (WHO), to coordinate a future medical countermeasures platform on the existing capacity of the ACT Accelerator², and to establish the Pandemic Fund under the World Bank. These efforts to strengthen global health architecture for prevention, preparedness, and response to future health emergencies, are in full swing.

The 27th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) adopted the "Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan," which called for Parties to strengthen actions in each area to address climate change. It was also decided to establish new funding arrangements, including a fund, for assisting developing countries that are particularly vulnerable in responding to loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change.

¹ Global Governance: The totality of institutions, policies, norms, procedures, and initiatives that provide predictability, stability, and order in dealing with inter-state issues in an international community where there is no higher level of government unlike domestic system.

² ACT Accelerator (Access to COVID-19 Tools Accelerator): an internationally coordinated platform for research, development, manufacturing, and equitable access to vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics for COVID-19

(4) Increasingly Severe Security Environment Around Japan

Challenges by force to the existing international order based on the rule of law are no longer a challenge unique to Europe, but one that can arise anywhere in the world, including East Asia. In reality, the security environment surrounding Japan is the most severe since the end of World War II, with North Korea's ongoing rapid progress in its nuclear and missile development and China's ongoing unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion in the East China Sea and the South China Sea.

At the 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China in October, General Secretary Xi Jinping was confirmed for his third term as General Secretary. In the Central Committee Report of this Party Congress, General Secretary Xi Jinping reiterated that China is aiming to become a strong, modernized socialist country by the mid-century, stating that "Momentous changes of a like not seen in a century are accelerating across the world. A new round of scientific and technological revolution and industrial transformation is well under way, and a significant shift is taking place in the internal balance of power, presenting China with new strategic opportunities in pursuing development." China also continues to promote the mechanization, informatization, and intelligitization of the Chinese People's Liberation Army, and continues the rapid buildup of military power without adequate transparency. China has reinforced its unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion in the maritime and airspace areas of the East China Sea and the South China Sea, including intrusions into the territorial sea and airspace surrounding Japan's Senkaku Islands, and has expanded and intensified its military activities in the Sea of Japan, the Pacific Ocean, and elsewhere. In addition, while maintaining its policy of peaceful unification of Taiwan, China has not denied the possibility of the use of force, and it has been intensifying its military activities in the sea and airspace surrounding Taiwan, including the launch of ballistic missiles into the waters near Japan in August. Concerns about the peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait are growing rapidly not only in the Indo-Pacific region, including Japan, but in the international community as a whole. China's current external stance and military activities are a matter of serious concern to Japan and

the international community. It is unprecedented and represents the greatest strategic challenge to ensuring the peace and security of Japan and the peace and stability of the international community, as well as to strengthening the international order based on the rule of law, to which Japan should respond with its comprehensive national power and in cooperation with its allies, like-minded countries and others. At the same time, it is important to seek responsible actions from China to build a "constructive and stable relationship" by the efforts of both sides through frank communication at a high level, including with leaders and foreign ministers.

North Korea has repeatedly launched ballistic missiles with an unprecedented frequency and in unprecedented manners, in violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions, including the ballistic missile launched in October that flew over Japan and the Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)-class ballistic missile launched in November that landed within Japan's exclusive economic zone (EEZ). Furthermore, North Korea has not shown any attitude toward responding to calls for dialogue, but rather has strengthened its hostile posture toward the U.S. and other countries, and has made clear its policy of mass-production of tactical nuclear weapons and an exponential increase of nuclear arsenal. This series of North Korea's activities is a grave and imminent threat to Japan's national security and a clear and serious challenge to the international community.

In addition, Russia is accelerating its external and military activities in the Far East and East Asia, which, especially together with its strategic coordination with China, is of strong security concern.

(5) New Issues Such as Economic Security

In addition to traditional security, addressing economic security as a new challenge is now recognized as an urgent issue for each country. With the deepening of economic interdependence and the development of science and technology, the scope of security has expanded to the fields of economy and emerging technologies. Furthermore, the boundary between military and non-military fields has become blurred. Technological innovations such as the fifth-generation mobile communications systems (5G), artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), quantum technology and others are not only bringing about

substantive changes in society and daily life, but are also directly linked to national competitiveness, as well as to moves to strengthen military power as dual-use technologies for both military and civilian applications. In addition, cyberattacks to disable or destroy critical infrastructures, interference in foreign elections, ransom demands, and theft of sensitive information are constantly being carried out, even in the form of state-sponsored cyberattacks.

COVID-19 and the crisis in Ukraine have revealed the vulnerabilities of the global supply chain. The fact that some countries do not hesitate to use economic dependencies and their own large markets as tools for coercion shows that these risks are not temporary. The challenge of theft of intellectual property and sensitive technologies is also evident.

Addressing these economic security concerns and unfair trade practices are new challenges for the multilateral trading system that has supported the expansion of a free and fair international economic order since the end of the Cold War.

Furthermore, new challenges in the domain of economic cooperation, such as development finance that ignores other countries' debt sustainability, are also emerging.

Rapidly advancing informatization, which has benefited from digital technology, has enabled a society in which anyone can freely collect and disseminate information. On the other hand, it has also given rise to problems such as cyberattacks and the spreading of disinformation. In addition, not only intentional attacks, but also the formation of confirmation bias³ through social media has made it more difficult to form public opinion based on correct information and healthy debate.

The effects of the social divisions thus created are particularly severe in democracies, affecting the process of foreign and general policy consensus formation. There are also concerns that this situation may be exploited to assert the superiority of authoritarian regimes over democracy.

2 Outlook for Japan's Diplomacy

The international community has reached a turning point in history. While the power balance is changing and geopolitical competition is intensifying, global issues such as climate change and infectious diseases threaten the survival of humankind, and the international community as a whole must cooperate to find solutions beyond differences in values and interests. International relations are thus in a complex situation of confrontation, competition, and cooperation. Under these circumstances, Japan must pursue a robust and fine-tuned diplomacy to maintain and develop a free and open international order based on the rule of law, taking an inclusive approach with the diversity of the international community in mind, to ensure the security and prosperity of its own country and people, as well as to promote universal values such as freedom,

democracy, and respect for fundamental human rights.

Japan has consistently followed the path of a peace-loving nation since the end of World War II, contributing to peace and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region and the international community, and working to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order based on the rule of law. It has also developed a "fine-tuned" diplomacy with all countries, respecting the diversity of each country, discussing common issues from the same perspective, and providing support that is truly needed by the other party. Furthermore, while building today's prosperity under a multilateral trading system, Japan as a flag-bearer of free trade, has promoted a rules-based free and fair economic order. At the same time, Japan has cooperated with developing countries based on the principle of

³ Confirmation bias: Refers to the tendency, when testing a hypothesis, to have a bias for selecting information that supports the hypothesis from among many pieces of information, and to devalue or ignore information that does not support the hypothesis. (Source: imidas)

human security and addressed global issues, including the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), through capacity building support and other measures. It has also actively contributed to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and international peacebuilding efforts.

The world's "trust" in Japan that has been fostered through these efforts is the cornerstone of Japanese diplomacy today.

However, a free and open international order based on the rule of law, which has sustained the peace, security, and prosperity of the international community, is facing serious challenges amidst historical changes in power balances and intensifying geopolitical competitions. Pressure to unilaterally change the status quo by force is also increasing in Japan's vicinity, and Japan is facing the most severe and complex postwar security environment. In response, Japan formulated its "National Security Strategy" and other strategy documents in December 2022. Under this strategy, Japan will carry out vigorous diplomacy backed by a fundamental reinforcement of its defense capabilities, and take full advantage of its comprehensive national power, including economic, technological, and intelligence capabilities, to meet the expectations and trust of the international community, while ensuring Japan's own peace and prosperity.

The Kishida Cabinet, as its Basic Policy, advocates developing diplomacy and security with: the determination to fully defend universal values; the determination to fully defend Japan's peace and security; and the determination to lead the international community by addressing global issues. With these "three determinations," Japan will continue to develop its diplomacy with a balanced and stable posture and with a high level of responsiveness. In 2023, Japan holds the G7 chair and serves as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. Japan works closely with the international community to take the lead in resolving the mounting issues facing the international community.

(1) Maintain and Strengthen a Free and Open International Order based on the Rule of Law

First, Japan will further promote efforts to uphold the free and open international order based on the rule of law.

(a) Strengthening Cooperation with its Ally and Like-minded Countries

The G7 has responded most effectively to Russia's aggression against Ukraine through close cooperation. At the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May 2023, as the holder of the G7 Presidency, Japan demonstrates the G7's strong determination to uphold the international order based on the rule of law, firmly rejecting any unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force or coercion, or Russia's threat to use nuclear weapons, or the use of nuclear weapons. At the same time, the G7 takes the lead in addressing the global economy including energy and food security, regional affairs including Ukraine and the Indo-Pacific, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, economic security, and global issues including climate change, global health, and development.

Japan has also significantly strengthened Japan-Australia-India-U.S. cooperation. While demonstrating our determination not to allow unilateral changes to the status quo by force in any region, the four countries promote practical cooperation in a wide range of areas to realize a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)."

In addition, FOIP is becoming even more important at this turning point in history. Japan will advance its new plan for FOIP to strengthen diplomatic efforts, and enhance coordination to realize FOIP, with partners such as the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Europe, Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean and others, in addition to Japan-Australia-India-U.S. In particular, Japan and ASEAN will set out a vision for future ASEAN-Japan relations on the occasion of the Commemorative Summit for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation to be held in Tokyo around December 2023.

(b) Expansion of a Rules-based Free and Fair Economic Order

A rules-based free and fair economic order is the foundation of growth and prosperity not only for Japan but for the world. Japan will continue to exercise its leadership as a flag-bearer for free trade, work to maintain the high standards of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and ensure the full implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

Agreement, and lead World Trade Organization (WTO) reform. In the digital sector, Japan will also play a central role in international rule-making, including WTO e-commerce negotiation, to promote “Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT).” On the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), an important framework for bringing sustainable and inclusive economic growth to the Indo-Pacific region, Japan will contribute to the development of a framework that will lead to concrete results at an early stage in close cooperation with IPEF participating countries.

Japan will also make proactive efforts to support Japanese companies to expand their businesses overseas. It is also working toward the lifting of import restrictions on Japanese food products in all countries and regions through all-Japan efforts. Japan will continue to strive toward successful holding of the 2025 World Exposition (Expo 2025, Osaka, Kansai, Japan).

(c) Strengthening of UN Functions

Faced with Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the UN and the UN Security Council are facing a time of trial. However, it is precisely because we live in an era of deepening division and confrontation that the UN, with its 193 member states, is of great significance in reflecting the collective will of the international community under multilateralism. It is also extremely important for the international community to return to the vision and the principles of the UN Charter, which upholds respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the general prohibition of the use of force, in order to emerge from the current chaos in the international community. Therefore, Japan will proactively contribute to strengthening UN functions as a whole, including UN Security Council reform, through close communication with other Member States so that the UN can fulfill its responsibilities. What is needed now is not discussion for the sake of discussion, but action toward UN reform. Japan will continue to make efforts for early progress through close communication among the G4 (Japan, India, Germany and Brazil) as well as relevant countries such as the U.S., the United Kingdom (UK), France, and African countries. Furthermore, Japan will also continue to contribute to UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKOs) and other UN peacebuilding initiatives.

(2) Dealing with Security Challenges

The first element of comprehensive national power for Japan's national security is diplomatic capability. Under the new National Security Strategy, Japan will develop a strong diplomacy backed by a fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, prevent crises before they occur, and proactively create a peaceful and stable international environment. At the same time, defense capabilities, which express Japan's will and ability to defend itself, cannot be replaced by other means. Fundamentally reinforced defense capabilities will bolster the solid footing of Japan's diplomacy for proactively fostering a desirable security environment for Japan. In pursuing such efforts, as a peace-loving nation, Japan will adhere to the basic policy of maintaining an exclusively national defense-oriented policy, not becoming a military power that poses a threat to other countries, and observing the Three Non-Nuclear Principles. In addition, Japan will work to fundamentally reinforce its foreign policy implementation structure in order to accurately respond to the rapidly changing international situation.

Furthermore, in order to promote economic security, Japan will actively work to further strengthen cooperation with like-minded countries and formulate international norms that address new challenges.

(a) Strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance

Japan will further deepen the Japan-U.S. Alliance, the linchpin of Japan's foreign and security policy.

Through a series of meetings with the U.S., the two countries have confirmed that unilateral change to the status quo by force is never acceptable in any region. On the basis of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, the potential of the Indo-Pacific region, which is strategically most important for both countries, must be linked to its stability and prosperity.

To this end, Japan and the U.S. will work together to strengthen the Alliance's deterrence and response capabilities, taking into account the evolving roles and missions of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. In doing so, both countries will focus on further strengthening bilateral coordination through the Alliance Coordination Mechanism, allied efforts in peacetime, deepening cooperation between Japan and the U.S. for the effective operation of Japan's counterstrike capabilities, cooperation in the

fields of space, cyber, and information security, technology cooperation to ensure that the Alliance maintain its competitive edge, and joint investments in emerging technologies, etc. Japan will also continue its efforts to ensure that U.S. extended deterrence⁴ remains credible and resilient. Furthermore, Japan will further optimize the posture of U.S. Forces in Japan, as well as make every effort to mitigate impacts on local communities through efforts such as the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma to Henoko as soon as possible while maintaining the stable presence of U.S. forces in Japan.

At the same time, through the Japan-U.S. Economic Policy Consultative Committee (the Economic “2+2”) launched in July, the two countries will discuss diplomacy, security, and economy as a whole, and further strengthen cooperation on issues common to both countries, such as economic security and maintaining and strengthening a rules-based economic order.

(b) Strengthening Ties with Allies and Like-minded Countries

In addition to the Japan-U.S. Alliance, it is also important to build a multilayered network among allies and like-minded countries, expand it, and strengthen deterrence. To this end, while utilizing frameworks such as the Japan-U.S.-ROK, Japan-U.S.-Australia, and others, Japan will strengthen security cooperation with Australia, India, the Republic of Korea (ROK), European countries, ASEAN countries, Canada, NATO, the EU, and others.

The Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement⁵ was signed with Australia in January, and at the Japan-Australia Summit in October, the leaders signed the new Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation. Japan has been continuing to steadily strengthen and expand cooperation with Australia in the field of security to ensure peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.

With European countries, the EU and NATO, Japan has been strengthening security cooperation based on the recognition that the security of Europe and of the Indo-Pacific regions is inseparable. European countries,

the EU and NATO are increasing their interest in the Indo-Pacific and against this backdrop, Foreign Minister Hayashi became the first Foreign Minister of Japan to attend a NATO Foreign Minister's meeting in April, and in June, Prime Minister Kishida became the first Prime Minister of Japan to attend a NATO summit. In December, Japan, the UK and Italy announced that they have reached a mutual understanding on the joint development of next-generation fighter aircraft (the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP)) and in January 2023, Japan and the UK signed the Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement⁶. Japan will continue to promote concrete cooperation with European countries, the EU and NATO to expand their engagement to the Indo-Pacific.

(3) Relations with Neighboring Countries and others

In order to maintain peace and security in Japan and the region, Japan will build stable relations with neighboring countries and others, while dealing head-on with difficult issues.

While there are various possibilities between Japan and China, China's unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion in the East China Sea, including the waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands, and the South China Sea are intensifying, and there are a number of challenges and concerns, such as China's intensification of a series of military activities around Taiwan, which includes the landing of ballistic missiles in the waters near Japan including its EEZ in August. Peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait is also important. Furthermore, Japan is seriously concerned about the human rights situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and the situation in Hong Kong. At the same time, both Japan and China have a great responsibility for the peace and prosperity of the region and the international community. Japan will communicate with China at various levels, including with leaders and foreign ministers, firmly assert its position and strongly request responsible actions by China, while at the same time continuing dialogue

⁴ Providing deterrence that a country possesses to its allies and others.

⁵ An agreement which establishes procedures between Japan and Australia for the cooperative activities conducted by defense force of one country while visiting the other country, and defines the status of the visiting force

⁶ An agreement which establishes procedures between Japan and the UK for the cooperative activities conducted by defense force of one country while visiting the other country, and defines the status of the visiting force.

including issues of concern and cooperating on matters of common interest. It is important that both Japan and China make efforts to build constructive and stable relations.

The ROK is an important neighboring country with which Japan should cooperate in dealing with various issues of the international community. With the response to North Korea and other issues in mind, there is no question as to the importance of enhancing Japan-ROK and Japan-U.S.-ROK strategic coordination, including in the area of security. It is necessary to restore and further advance sound Japan-ROK relations, based on the platform on which friendly and cooperative bilateral relations have been built since the normalization of diplomatic relations. Building on the results of the Japan-ROK Summit Meeting held on November, Japan will continue to communicate closely with the ROK government. In addition, Takeshima is an inherent territory of Japan both in light of historical facts and based on international law. Japan will deal with the issue in a resolute manner based on this consistent position.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine shakes the very foundation of the international order. The series of actions by Russia, including the illegal "annexation" of parts of Ukraine and the killing of innocent civilians, are in violation of international law and can never be justified. Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, takes the position that Russia's nuclear threat is absolutely unacceptable, let alone the use of such weapons. The security in Europe and in the Indo-Pacific region can no longer be discussed separately. Japan, with its strong determination not to allow any unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force in any region, will continue to work closely with the international community, including the G7, and strongly promote sanctions against Russia and support for Ukraine. In regard to relations with Russia, Japan will respond in a manner that protects its national interests. Japan-Russia relations are in a difficult situation due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and Japan is not in a situation to talk about the prospects for peace treaty negotiations, but Japan will firmly maintain its policy of concluding a peace treaty through resolution of the territorial issue. In addition, the resumption of the Four-Island exchange program and others including

the Visits to Graves, is one of the highest priorities for Japan-Russia relations in the future.

Regarding Japan-North Korea relations, the Government of Japan has been seeking to normalize its relations with North Korea through comprehensively resolving outstanding issues of concern, such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues, as well as settlement of the unfortunate past in accordance with the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration. While ensuring the full implementation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions by the international community, Japan will continue to aim for the complete denuclearization of North Korea, coordinating closely with the U.S. and the ROK, and cooperating with the international community, including in the UN Security Council. In addition, the abductions issue, which is a top priority for the administration, is a humanitarian issue with a time constraint. It is a critical issue concerning the sovereignty of Japan and the lives and safety of Japanese citizens, and at the same time, it is a universal issue for the international community as a violation of basic human rights. There is no time to lose before we resolve the abductions issue. Japan will continue to make utmost efforts to realize the return of all abductees at the earliest possible date while working closely with relevant countries, including the U.S.

(4) Regional Diplomacy Issues

The crisis brought about by the upheaval of the international order is not "someone else's problem" for any country or region in the world. Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a challenge to the very foundation of the international order based on the rule of law. It has also caused a serious impact on the Indo-Pacific region, Middle East, Africa, and other regions through rising food and energy prices. Japan must also look at the issue of attempts by Russia, China, and other countries to divide the international community by disseminating disinformation. In particular, emerging and developing countries, also known as the Global South, are increasing their presence, and it is important for Japan to strengthen cooperation with these countries. In particular, in addressing common global challenges, Japan must take an inclusive approach, listen carefully to the voices of these countries, and provide them with the support they truly need. Such steady diplomacy

will further strengthen a free and open order based on the rule of law in the international community.

Facing the Indian Ocean, Southwest Asia is a strategically important region located at a strategic point along the sea lanes of communication linking Japan with the Middle East and Africa. This region, with a population of approximately 1.8 billion people and high economic growth rates, is an attractive market and production base for Japanese companies. The countries in Southwest Asia and Japan have longstanding friendly ties and over the years Japan has deepened its engagement with countries in the region in a wide range of areas, including security, economy, economic cooperation, and people-to-people exchange. Based on this foundation, Japan will further deepen its relations with the countries in Southwest Asia, which are important partners in maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order based on the rule of law.

The Pacific Island region is a very important region from the perspective of realizing FOIP. Looking ahead to the 10th Pacific Islands Leaders' Meeting (PALM) to be held in 2024, Japan will robustly support the development of Pacific Island countries and their unity, respecting the needs of each country, through the PALM Ministerial Interim Meeting in 2023, bilateral dialogues and others, in cooperation with like-minded countries.

The Middle East is one of the major sources of energy supply for the international community, and Japan depends on the region for about 90% of its crude oil imports. Therefore, peace and stability in the region, including the safety of navigation, are extremely important for energy security as well as the stability and growth of the global economy including Japan. On the other hand, the region has gone through various conflicts and disputes throughout its history. Tense and unstable situations as well as severe humanitarian conditions still persist. Japan is an ally of the U.S., and also has traditionally enjoyed good relations with countries in the Middle East. Toward maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order based on the rule of law, including in the Middle East, Japan will proactively engage in diplomatic efforts to contribute to easing tensions and stabilizing the situation in the Middle East in close cooperation with the countries concerned, while taking into consideration

the issues of concern and needs for each country through various frameworks such as the "Japan-Arab Political Dialogue."

Africa, which is expected to account for a quarter of the world's population by 2050, is a continent supported by young people with plenty of hope and a dynamic growth perspective. For approximately 30 years since Japan launched the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 1993, Japan has provided support based on the spirit of unfailingly supporting African-led development. At TICAD 8 in August, Japan strongly conveyed the message that Japan will promote initiatives as "a partner growing together with Africa" with quintessentially Japanese approaches, focusing on "people". Japan will continue to contribute to the realization of the resilient Africa that Africa itself aims to achieve, and to further deepen Japan-Africa relations.

Many Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) countries share fundamental values with Japan and are partners with a strong presence in the international arena. Their strategic importance in ensuring supply of resources is also increasing against the backdrop of the recent energy and food crises. Japan will continue to cooperate with these countries to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order. In addition, Japan will also work with the Nikkei (Japanese immigrants and their descendants) communities and people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan, who have supported the traditional friendly relations between Japan and the LAC, and strengthen cooperation in various fields to narrow the development gap in LAC countries and to achieve inclusive and sustainable development through Green Transformation (GX) and Digital Transformation (DX) that will bring about new growth.

The countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus, while having close historical and economic ties with Russia, have been greatly affected by Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Japan will promote cooperation as a partner in maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order based on the rule of law, while also utilizing frameworks such as the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue.

Japan, based on the fine-tuned regional diplomacy that it has established with countries in all regions,

will continue its efforts to share the importance of order based on the rule of law and to maintain and strengthen this together for the stability of the regional and international community.

(5) Dealing with the Common Challenges of Humankind

Japan must take the lead in addressing the common challenges of humankind, in order to ensure the international order that it defends, to receive the trust of people around the world. Developing countries, which make up the majority of the international community, are facing increasingly complex international circumstances and worsening global challenges, and finding it difficult to foresee stable development. Against this backdrop, Japan will further expand and enhance ODA -one of the most important tools of diplomacy- and accelerate efforts to realize FOIP and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through its strategic and effective use based on the concept of human security in the new era. To this end, Japan will revise the Development Cooperation Charter by the first half of 2023.

In response to rising food prices caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Japan will work to support vulnerable countries through cooperation with international organizations and like-minded countries, including through the TICAD process and other mean.

Climate change is a common challenge to all humankind and a critical issue that the entire international community collectively needs to address. In light of the situation in Ukraine, balancing efforts to address climate change with the need to strengthen energy security has become an important issue. Based on the outcome of COP27 held in November, Japan continues to address climate change issues and calls on all parties to take further actions, including efforts to reduce emissions in line with the 1.5 °C goal⁷.

Regarding nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Japan will continue to steadily advance realistic and practical efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons, including the "Hiroshima Action Plan"⁸ proposed by Prime Minister Kishida as the first step of a realistic road map which would take us from the "reality" of a harsh security environment to the "ideal" of a world without nuclear weapons, based on the foundation of trust with its ally, the U.S. In this regard, Japan will further foster the momentum of the international community toward a world without nuclear weapons including through the meetings of the International Group of Eminent Persons (IGEP)⁹ and also deepen discussions with G7 members and others in order to send a powerful message at the G7 Hiroshima Summit.

Global health is an important issue that directly affects not only people's health but also economy, society, and national security. Based on the lessons learned from COVID-19, Japan will contribute to the development of global health architecture that contributes to enhancing prevention, preparedness, and response to future health emergencies, while leading the response to global health challenges set back by COVID-19 to achieve universal health coverage (UHC)¹⁰.

Japan will also proactively address various issues that must be resolved to achieve the SDGs, including plastic pollution, biodiversity conservation, the escalating humanitarian crisis, refugees and displaced persons, terrorism and violent extremism, and gender equality.

In order to protect human rights, which are fundamental values, Japan will promote human rights diplomacy in its own way, by speaking out firmly against serious violations of human rights and encouraging the efforts of countries that are trying to make improvements through "dialogue and cooperation."

⁷ The goal stated in the Paris Agreement, which is to limit the global average temperature increase to well below 2 °C above pre-industrial levels and to continue efforts to limit the temperature increase to 1.5 °C above pre-industrial levels.

⁸ The plan based on the following five actions proposed by Prime Minister Kishida at the Tenth NPT Review Conference held in August as the first step of a realistic roadmap toward a world without nuclear weapons: (1) a shared recognition on the importance of continuing the record of non-use of nuclear weapons, (2) enhancing transparency, (3) maintaining the decreasing trend in the global nuclear stockpile, (4) securing nuclear non-proliferation and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, (5) encouraging visits to the affected communities by international leaders and others.

⁹ An international meeting of which Prime Minister Kishida announced the launch in his policy speech in January. The meeting brings together intellectuals and both incumbent and former political leaders from both nuclear weapon states and non-nuclear weapon states to discuss a concrete pathway toward a world without nuclear weapons. The first meeting was held in Hiroshima in December.

¹⁰ Universal Health Coverage (UHC): To ensure that all people can receive the quality health services they need at an affordable cost without financial hardship.

(6) Strengthening of Comprehensive Foreign Policy Implementation Structure

In order to steadily achieve concrete results regarding the above issues, it is essential to ensure a flexible foreign policy implementation structure and to improve the working environment and the livelihood of staff members of overseas missions who are at the forefront of diplomatic activities. In this light, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) will work to improve various benefits affected by the fluctuation of foreign exchange rates and the rising cost of living. In addition, MOFA will work to fundamentally strengthen the foreign and consular policy implementation structure including its staffing, financial basis including further expansion of

ODA, and digital transformation (DX) promotion, and to engage in strategic communication. MOFA will also strive to increase the number of Japanese nationals working at international organizations, expand the circle of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan, and strengthen cooperation with Nikkei (Japanese immigrants and their descendants) communities. Furthermore, MOFA will also play a steadfast role toward the inscription of the “Sado Island Gold Mines” on the World Heritage List. With the renewed international exchange activity that has accompanied the relaxation of border measures, the Ministry will also continue to take all possible measures to ensure the safety of Japanese nationals overseas.



**Special
Feature**

Russia's Aggression Against Ukraine and Japan's Response

A residential building in Kyiv destroyed by fire after an attack (Photo: AFP=Jiji)

(1) Main Events

On February 24, Russia launched its aggression against Ukraine, and began to attack the northern, eastern, and southern parts of Ukraine, including the capital city of Kyiv (Russia called this a “special military operation”). In a televised speech on the same day, Russian President Vladimir Putin claimed that the purpose was to protect people who had been facing humiliation and genocide perpetrated by the Kyiv regime for eight years, and that Russia would seek to demilitarize and denazify Ukraine to that end.

Intermittent negotiations between Russia and Ukraine were conducted from the end of February, but failed to lead to any concrete agreement. At the end of March, the Russian side announced gradual military de-escalation in the Kyiv area and elsewhere. It withdrew from the north, including Kyiv, but subsequently reorganized its forces and concentrated them in the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine. After the withdrawal of Russian troops, signs of atrocities, including the massacre of civilians, were discovered in Bucha and other areas near Kyiv, which greatly shocked international public opinion.

Moreover, the Russian side has been making claims for total control of almost all of Kherson Oblast in the south and Luhansk Oblast in the east; Zaporizhzhia Oblast in the southeast, including Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant which is the largest nuclear power plant in Europe; and parts of Kharkiv Oblast and Donetsk Oblast in the east.

This impacted food exports through the Black Sea, which remained stagnant. However, on July 22, an agreement on the “Black Sea Grain Initiative” was reached between the United Nations (UN), Turkey, Ukraine, and Russia. Since then, ships carrying grain have been sailing from southern Ukrainian ports.

After the summer, the Ukrainian side launched a counter offensive against Russia. On September 12, it announced the liberation of almost the entire Kharkiv Oblast in the northeast from Russia. On September 21, President Putin announced an order on partial mobilization, which, according to the authorities, mobilized some 300,000

people. In order to escape the mobilization, many people fled from Russia. In late September, so-called “referenda” on “incorporation” into Russia were held in Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson in Ukraine, and Russia illegally “annexed” these regions under the pretext of the results of the referenda. Meanwhile, in early October, the Ukrainian side announced that it had retaken Lyman in Donetsk Oblast.

On October 8, when an explosion occurred on the Russian-built bridge connecting the Crimean Peninsula and Russia, the Russian side declared it an act of terrorism by the Ukrainian authorities. Since then, the Russian side has been carrying out large-scale missile and drone attacks mainly on energy and other infrastructure facilities in Kyiv and other parts of Ukraine, causing significant damage. Russia’s attacks on civilian infrastructure and others have continued to this day.

In November, the Russian side withdrew from some parts of Kherson Oblast in the south, including the oblast capital Kherson City, but subsequently continued its attacks in the region. Entering December, the Russian Ministry of Defence announced that the Ukrainian side had attempted a drone strike on a military airfield within Russia, and that debris from the drone fell and exploded during the intercept, causing casualties. On December 21, President Zelenskyy of Ukraine visited the United States on his first overseas visit since Russia’s aggression began, requesting further military assistance. The United States announced additional military assistance, including “Patriot” surface-to-air missiles.

The year-end and new year holidays also saw intermittent missile, drone, and other attacks against various parts of Ukraine. As it has been pointed out that Russia could implement further large-scale attacks, Western countries are stepping up their military assistance to Ukraine, including the provision of main battle tanks, at the request of Ukraine. As of the end of February 2023, no movements have been seen toward the start of cease-fire negotiations between Ukraine and Russia, and the situation continues to be highly unpredictable, with concerns that it may become protracted and escalate further.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine has not only deprived Ukrainian citizens of their lives and peaceful livelihoods, but also directly impacted neighboring countries affected by the conflict and triggered obstacles and restrictions of grain exports and other goods from both Ukraine and Russia, which are the world's leading grain exporters. Russia has also used its energy resources to exert pressure on countries that depend on imports for their energy supplies. Such Russian attempts to use food and energy as a means of geopolitical coercion have led to global food and energy supply shortages and soaring prices.

(2) Japan's Basic Position


Russia's aggression against Ukraine threatens the very foundation of the international order that the international community has built up over a long period of hard work and sacrifice. No country or region in the world can shrug this off as "someone else's problem." Under the strong determination that unilateral changes to the status quo by force must not be tolerated anywhere in the world, be it in Europe or East Asia, Japan has strongly urged Russia over the past year to immediately cease its aggression and withdraw its troops back to Russia. Japan has also closely cooperated with the international community, including the G7, to implement severe sanctions against Russia and provide strong support for Ukraine. Furthermore, Japan has been actively working to resolve global issues, such as soaring food and energy prices, due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine that have been causing difficulties especially for many developing countries. Japan has also been actively working to address global governance issues such as strengthening of the functions of the UN, including Security Council reform, in order to maintain and strengthen the international order based on the rule of law.

President Putin shifted the Russian deterrence forces to high combat alert immediately after the start of Russia's aggression, and nuclear threats have been made through various forms of transmissions from Russia. Thus, the possibility of Russia using nuclear weapons continues to be a concern in the international community. Under these circumstances, Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, has grave concerns about the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons, and has made strong appeals

in international fora such as the UN and the G7, as well as in bilateral meetings with other countries, that Russia's threat of use of nuclear weapons, let alone the use of nuclear weapons, must not be tolerated. Russia's military actions at and near Ukraine's nuclear facilities are absolutely unacceptable, and Japan condemns Russia's actions in the strongest terms. Furthermore, based on the experience of the accident at the Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, Japan has supported efforts by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to ensure the safety and nuclear security of Ukraine's nuclear facilities.

The international order based on the rule of law, which is under threat by Russia's outrageous acts, is a public good that supports the peace and prosperity of not only the G7, but also the international community as a whole. Over the past year, in addition to the G7, Japan has deepened its relations with countries in ASEAN, South Asia, Central Asia and the Caucasus, Oceania, the Middle East, Africa, and the Latin American and the Caribbean region, and worked together with them to defend the international order. As a result of these efforts, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on October 12 condemning the illegal so-called "referendum" within Ukraine and Russia's attempted illegal "annexation," as well as a resolution calling for peace in Ukraine on February 23, 2023. These resolutions respectively received the support of 143 and 141 countries, more than 70% of all UN member states. This clearly shows the will of the international community. Japan will strengthen its solidarity with the international community, including by urging countries that are not participating in sanctions against Russia, in order to show Russia that outrageous acts come at a high price and make it stop its aggression as soon as possible.

Based on this basic position, on March 21, 2023, Prime Minister Kishida made his first visit to Ukraine since the start of full-scale aggression by Russia and held a summit meeting with President Zelenskyy of Ukraine. Prime Minister Kishida's visit to Ukraine under wartime conditions embodied Japan's belief that the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific are inseparable, and sent a strong message to all the countries concerned. During the summit meeting, Prime Minister Kishida expressed respect for the courage



and perseverance of the Ukrainian people for standing up to defend their homeland and freedom under the leadership of President Zelenskyy. He also conveyed Japan's unwavering support for and solidarity with the Ukrainian people, and Japan's determination to defend the international order based on the rule of law as the country holding the G7 Presidency. The two leaders then agreed to strengthen bilateral cooperation more than ever before, and released the "Joint

Statement on Special Global Partnership Between Japan and Ukraine." Prime Minister Kishida also directly observed the situation in Ukraine, including the damage suffered as a result of Russia's aggression.¹

This Special Feature looks back on Japan's position and efforts over the past year in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its influences.

2

Japan's Response

(1) Change in Policy toward Russia and Sanctions against Russia

Amid the drastically changing strategic environment in the Indo-Pacific region, Japan had been engaged in diplomacy with Russia based on the belief that building stable relations with Russia is extremely important not only for Japan's national interests but also for the stability and development of the region. However, with the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, it has become impossible for the international community to maintain relations with Russia as business as usual, and Japan has made a major shift in its conventional diplomacy toward Russia, taking resolute actions such as implementing severe sanctions against Russia in cooperation with the international community, including the G7.

On February 21, in response to Russia's recognition of the "Donetsk People's Republic" and the "Luhansk People's Republic" as "independent states" and ratification of treaties with both "republics", Japan announced an import and export ban with both republics, an asset freeze against 24 relevant individuals, and a ban on the issuance and circulation in Japan of new sovereign bonds by the Russian government.

Furthermore, on February 24, in response to the start of Russia's military actions against Ukraine, Foreign

Minister Hayashi summoned Russian Ambassador to Japan Mikhail Y. Galuzin, conveyed strong condemnation of Russia's aggression, and demanded that Russia immediately stop its aggression and withdraw its forces back to Russia. On February 25 the following day, in cooperation with the international community including the G7, Japan announced (a) asset freeze measures against six relevant Russian individuals, (b) asset freeze measures against three Russian financial institutions (Bank Rossiya, Promsvyazbank, and VEB.RF), and (c) sanctions on exports to Russian military-related entities (49 entities) and on exports to Russia of controlled items listed on the internationally agreed list as well as dual-use items such as semiconductors. On February 27, Japan also decided on measures such as freezing the assets of Russian government officials, including President Putin, and announced that it would participate in measures to exclude certain Russian banks from SWIFT² based on requests from various Western countries.

Subsequently, Japan continued to closely cooperate with various countries, including the G7, to implement measures such as asset freezes against Russian government officials, military personnel, members of the State Duma, oligarchs, and others. Japan also

1 For more information on Prime Minister Kishida's visit to Ukraine in March 2023, see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website: https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c_sec/page1e_000591.html

2 Overview of the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT):

- An association (cooperative) that serves as an intermediary and executor of financial transactions between banks around the world. Headquartered in Belgium.
- More than 11,000 banks and other financial institutions in more than 200 countries are connected to it, sending an average of more than 42 million messages related to international financial transactions per day.
- The association was established under Belgian law and is subject to the EU regulatory framework.



implemented other financial measures such as asset freezes against banks including Russia's largest bank Sberbank, restrictions on transactions with the Russian central bank, responses to address use of digital assets to evade sanctions by Russia, a ban on new investment in Russia, and a ban on the provision of services to Russia (trust, accounting and auditing, and management consulting services).

In addition, trade measures included amending the Act on Temporary Measures concerning Customs and withdrawing Russia's most favored nation status. Furthermore, Japan implemented severe sanctions such as expanding the scope of measures to include a ban on exports to Russia of luxury goods, advanced goods, goods that contribute to the enhancement of industrial capabilities, and chemical weapons and other related goods as well as introducing a ban on the import of certain goods (machinery, some wood, vodka, etc.) and gold from Russia.

Besides the above economic sanctions, Japan has also suspended issuance of visas to Japan for some Russian individuals.

In response to these moves, on March 21, the Russian side issued a statement that it does not intend to continue negotiations on a peace treaty, suspends the Four-Island exchange program and free visits, and withdraws from the dialogue on the joint economic activities on the Four Northern Islands. On September 5, Russia issued a government decree suspending the validity of the agreement on the Four-Island exchange program and free visits. Furthermore, on May 4, the Russian side announced a ban on entry into Russia for 63 people, including Prime Minister Kishida, and on July 15, another ban was announced for 384 members of the House of Representatives.

Furthermore, on April 8, as a result of Japan's comprehensive judgment based on the situation of the aggression against Ukraine among others, Japan demanded the expulsion of eight diplomats of the Embassy of Russia and personnel of the Russian Trade Representation in Japan. In response, on April 27, the Russian side demanded the expulsion of eight diplomats of the Embassy of Japan in Russia.

With regard to the series of measures taken by the Russian side against Japan, it is absolutely unacceptable that the Russian side is making extremely unjustified claims as if to shift the responsibility to the

Japanese side, despite the fact that it was the Russian side that resorted to military means to conduct aggression against Ukraine and caused the current situation. The Government of Japan has communicated this to the Russian side and has strongly protested.

As for measures in the energy field, the Government of Japan's policy is to phase out dependence on Russian energy, including coal and oil, and will take steps over time to do so in a manner that minimizes adverse effects on people's lives and business activities. Meanwhile, it is Japan's policy to maintain our interests in the oil and natural gas development projects "Sakhalin-1" and "Sakhalin-2" in Russia, as these projects are important for Japan's energy security from the perspective of ensuring stable supply over the medium to long term. Furthermore, the G7 and Australia, together with the EU, have introduced a price cap on Russian oil and oil products with the aim of stabilizing international oil prices while reducing Russia's revenue from energy.

(2) Assistance to Ukraine

Since the beginning of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Japan has promptly provided Ukraine with assistance in close contact with the Ukrainian people while accurately grasping local needs, ranging from financial, humanitarian, and defense equipment assistance to the acceptance of displaced persons. Specifically, Japan has been providing approximately 1.6 billion US dollars in financial, humanitarian, food, and recovery and reconstruction assistance to Ukraine, neighboring countries, and others.

In order to once again show solidarity with Ukraine upon marking one year since the start of Russia's



Welcome ceremony on the occasion of the Japan-Ukraine Summit Meeting (March 21, 2023, Kyiv, Ukraine; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

aggression, Japan decided to provide additional financial assistance of approximately 5.5 billion US dollars, subject to the passage of the relevant budget and laws by the Diet. Furthermore, on March 21, 2023 at the Japan-Ukraine Summit Meeting³ in Kiev, Prime Minister Kishida, who was visiting Ukraine, stated that Japan would steadily implement the total of 7.1 billion US dollars in assistance, and support Ukraine in various fields including electricity, mine clearance, and agriculture. Prime Minister Kishida also stated that the Government of Japan had recently decided to provide the assistance including new bilateral grant aid amounting to 470 million US dollars to various areas including the energy sector, and to contribute to support non-lethal defense equipment assistance amounting to 30 million US dollars through the NATO trust fund.

A Financial Assistance

Prime Minister Kishida announced to President Zelenskyy of Ukraine at the Japan-Ukraine Summit Telephone Talk on February 15 that Japan was prepared to urgently provide assistance through loans. He also announced at the G7 Leaders' Meeting on March 24 that Japan would provide 100 million US dollars in emergency financial assistance through co-financing with the World Bank. Following this, at the April 19 Summit-Level Video Conference on the Situation in

Ukraine, Japan announced the increase of its financial assistance from 100 million US dollars to 300 million US dollars, and a further doubling of the total to 600 million US dollars on May 20. In order to meet Ukraine's urgent and short-term financial requests as it faces an economic crisis, Japan encouraged the Government of Ukraine to advance the procedures quickly. Japan signed exchanges of notes in Tokyo with the Ukrainian side for loan aid on April 28 for the 100 million US dollars (13 billion Japanese yen) that was initially announced, and on June 7 for the additional provision of 500 million US dollars (65 billion Japanese yen).

This financial assistance is used to maintain and continue essential public services by the Government of Ukraine and to promote economic reforms and capacity building of government officials. This is expected to underpin the economy of Ukraine, which is facing an economic crisis due to Russia's aggression.

Furthermore, on January 16, 2023, Japan, as a member of the Group of Creditors of Ukraine, supported Ukraine's request to defer debt payments due to bondholders, and signed and exchanged notes concerning debt relief (debt service suspension) for Ukraine with the aim of encouraging bondholders to agree to this request.

Furthermore, at the G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' Meeting and the G7 Leaders' Video Conference in February 2023, Japan announced additional financial assistance of approximately 5.5 billion US dollars to address Ukraine's financial gap, which has become a major challenge, on the condition of passage of the relevant budget and laws by the Diet.

B Humanitarian Assistance

In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, on February 27, Japan announced, ahead of other countries, 100 million US dollars in emergency humanitarian assistance to Ukraine and neighboring countries. Through international organizations and Japanese NGOs, Japan has been conducting activities in the most urgent fields, including health and medical care, and food. Furthermore, given that many of the displaced persons are women and children, Japan has



Signing ceremony for the exchange of notes on financial assistance (April 28, Tokyo)

³ For more information on the March 21, 2023 Japan-Ukraine Summit Meeting, see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website: https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c_see/ua/page4e_001361.html



also provided assistance that takes into consideration the needs of women and children.

One example is Japan's assistance provided through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to "Blue Dot" Hubs that offer safe spaces to support displaced Ukrainian children and their families. Furthermore, through the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Japan also provides temporary evacuation facilities where women and children can safely take shelter, and is working to prevent sexual and gender-based violence. Japan has also provided support for the provision of hot meals through the UN World Food Programme (WFP).

On March 24, Japan announced an additional 100 million US dollars in emergency humanitarian assistance in light of further humanitarian needs. Specifically, in addition to assistance related to capacity building for human trafficking countermeasures, including for border control authorities and others in Ukraine and neighboring countries, Japan will contribute to ensuring the safe movement of displaced persons through humanitarian activities, including the disposal and handling of landmines and unexploded ordnance in connection with emergency debris clearance. Japan also extended assistance to Moldova, which is accepting the largest number of displaced persons compared to its population.

On April 1, the Government of Japan made a Cabinet decision to provide UNHCR with blankets, plastic sheets, and sleeping mats stockpiled in the Government's warehouse in accordance with the International Peace Cooperation Act. These items were



SDF aircraft transporting humanitarian relief supplies for UNHCR. The transported supplies were delivered to displaced people via UNHCR (May 13, Romania; Photo: Ministry of Defense website)



Generators provided by Japan installed near temporary housing (© UNHCR)

transferred to UNHCR on April 19. On April 28, the Government of Japan made another Cabinet decision on the "Implementation Plan for the International Peace Cooperation Assignments for Afflicted People of Ukraine" based on the aforementioned Act. Following the Plan, the Government of Japan transported UNHCR's humanitarian relief items from Dubai (the United Arab Emirates) to Poland or Romania using Self-Defense Force (SDF) aircraft eight times from May 1 to June 26.

Furthermore, as Ukraine is one of the world's leading agricultural countries but Russia's aggression has made it difficult to plant crops on farmland, Japan distributed seeds and fertilizers for grain production through the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to help restore agricultural production in Ukraine at an early stage and contribute to ensuring food security not only in Ukraine but also around the world. (See 4(1) for details on Japan's support to contribute to ensuring global food security.)

Following this, many energy and infrastructure facilities were destroyed by Russian attacks. As the winter got colder and the days got shorter every day, Japan decided on November 22 to implement winterization assistance by providing generators and solar lanterns through UNHCR to people who were unable to use heating and lighting equipment due to power outages. Since December, Japan has also provided generators through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and has provided approximately 300 generators thus far. Furthermore, in February 2023, Japan decided to implement additional winterization assistance with provision of reflective materials and heat packs to the National Police of Ukraine through the UN Office for Project Services (UNOPS).



C Provision of Defense Equipment and Other Supplies

It is extremely important for the international community to unite in a resolute response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, an act that shakes the very foundation of the international order, not only in Europe but also in Asia, in order to protect the rules-based international order, and from the perspective of Japan's security.

From this perspective, in response to Ukraine's request for the provision of defense equipment and other goods, Japan partially revised the implementation guidelines for the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology at the National Security Council meeting on March 8, in order to provide non-lethal equipment in accordance with the Self-Defense Forces Act within the scope of the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology. Since that month, Japan has used SDF aircraft and other means to transport and provide bulletproof vests, helmets, winter battle dress uniform, medical supply, protective masks and clothing for use against chemical weapons and the like, small drones, and civilian vehicles (vans).

In this context, on March 8, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Ukrainian Ambassador to Japan Sergiy Korsunsky signed and exchanged notes, which took effect on the same day, as an international agreement required under the Self-Defense Forces Act as well as the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology for the transfer of equipment and goods stipulated in the Self-Defense Forces Act. This note ensured appropriate control of the equipment and goods after the transfer to Ukraine by stipulating such provisions as prohibition of extra-purpose use of the transferred equipment and goods.

D Acceptance of Displaced Persons

In response to the displaced persons from Ukraine, which has been described as the largest refugee crisis in Europe since World War II (statement by UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi), Japan has been proactively conducting efforts to accept displaced persons. On March 2, soon after Russia's aggression began, Prime Minister Kishida announced the intention to promote the acceptance of Ukrainian displaced persons, and on March 16, he established the Liaison

and Coordination Council on Measures for Ukrainian Displaced Persons as a command post. On March 18, the Council decided to provide assistance for the acceptance of Ukrainian people who have been forced to flee Ukraine and wish to evacuate to Japan. On March 25, the Embassy of Japan in Poland and the Rzeszów liaison office were strengthened and the "Ukrainian Displaced Persons Support Teams" were established to study and grasp the needs of the displaced persons for travel assistance to Japan.

Furthermore, in early April, Foreign Minister Hayashi and State Minister of Justice TSUSHIMA Jun visited Poland, where they met with Polish government officials, inspected facilities for displaced persons, and visited the Ukrainian border region to confirm the situation of displaced persons in Ukraine, as well as the needs and challenges for accepting them. When Foreign Minister Hayashi returned to Japan, a reserve government airplane also transported 20 displaced persons who were eagerly seeking to evacuate to Japan but had difficulty in securing means of travel on their own.

Moreover, in order to facilitate smooth travel to Japan, from April 8 to now (the end of February 2023), the Government of Japan has been securing seats on weekly direct flights to Poland for Ukrainian displaced persons who eagerly wish to evacuate to Japan but have difficulty in securing means of travel on their own, providing travel assistance from a humanitarian perspective. The Government plans to continue to support travel to Japan for the time being.

In accepting displaced persons, it is important to first of all provide places where Ukrainian displaced persons can evacuate to with peace of mind. Japan will continue to provide support for Ukrainian people facing difficulties in cooperation with relevant ministries and agencies.

E Support for Recovery

While the outlook for the situation remains uncertain, the international community is also moving toward the recovery of Ukraine.

On July 4 and 5, the Ukraine Recovery Conference was held in Lugano, Switzerland. State Minister for Foreign Affairs SUZUKI Takako attended the Conference from the Government of Japan. She emphasized Japan's intention to actively contribute to Ukraine's recovery while leveraging its experience

in recovering from various natural disasters and the like. She also expressed the expectation that Ukraine's recovery plan will give the Ukrainian people hope for a bright future. As an outcome of the Conference, the "Lugano Declaration" was issued, which outlines the guiding principles for Ukraine's recovery as confirmed by the participating countries and institutions.

On October 25, the International Expert Conference on the Recovery, Reconstruction and Modernisation of Ukraine was held in Berlin. Prime Minister Kishida participated in the Conference by sending a video message. He stated that the recovery of Ukraine must firstly be based on Ukrainian ownership of the process. Secondly, all countries, institutions, and companies engaged in assistance must share the overall picture of recovery. And thirdly, they must operate in a transparent and fair manner in line with international rules and standards. Moreover, recovery requires a framework that will enable it to gain the support of the broader international community, including the EU and the countries participating in the Conference. He also stated that Japan, as it would assume the G7 Presidency in 2023, intended to actively lead the international community's discussions toward the speedy restoration of peace and recovery in Ukraine.

On December 13, the International Conference in Support of Ukraine's Civil Resilience was held in Paris, and was attended by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs YOSHIKAWA Yuumi. She introduced the approval of the supplementary budget, including the budget for Ukraine and its neighboring countries, and expressed that Japan will provide necessary

humanitarian assistance as well as recovery and reconstruction assistance, focusing on urgent humanitarian assistance and recovery of the daily lives of Ukrainian people, along with energy-related fields such as generators. She also stated that as Japan assumed the G7 Presidency in 2023, it would actively provide support tailored to the people of Ukraine in close cooperation with the international community, including the G7, and leverage the knowledge and experience that Japan has accumulated in the recovery of other countries.

For the reconstruction of Ukraine, while taking into account the discussions at the above conferences, it is important to enable the Ukrainian people to envision their short-, medium-, and long-term future under Ukraine's own ownership and with strong support from the international community. It is also essential that all countries, institutions, and companies engaged in assistance share the overall picture of recovery and that activities are carried out in a transparent and fair manner in accordance with international rules and standards. Japan will consider and implement reconstruction assistance in close contact with the Ukrainian people, while accurately grasping local needs and making use of the knowledge and experience it has accumulated to date.

As a specific example, in January 2023, in cooperation with Cambodia, where Japan has been supporting mine and unexploded ordnance clearance efforts for more than 20 years, Japan conducted drills and training for Ukrainian government officials in the use of mine detection equipment that Japan plans to provide to Ukraine. In February, Japan provided broadcasting equipment through JICA to the Public Broadcasting Company of Ukraine (PBC), in order to contribute to strengthening Ukraine's democracy through the establishment of an accurate and impartial reporting system. The Government of Japan has been supporting PBC since 2017 in establishing a reporting system for disasters and emergencies, strengthening its TV-program production capacity, and enhancing its ability to operate and maintain its broadcasting equipment.

As the G7 Presidency in 2023, Japan will actively lead the international community's discussions toward the restoration of peace and recovery as soon as possible.



Cambodian Mine Action Center experts training members of the State Emergency Service of Ukraine in the use of mine detectors (January 17, 2023, Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia; Photo: JICA)

Japan has responded to Russia's aggression against Ukraine in close cooperation with like-minded countries, including the G7, as well as with the United Nations and other international organizations.

(1) Cooperation in the G7

Russia's aggression against Ukraine is an act that undermines the very foundation of the international order, not only in Europe but also in Asia, making the unity of the G7 even more important. In 2022, the G7 led the international community's efforts by closely cooperating with unprecedented frequency, such as by holding six leaders' meetings and 11 foreign ministers' meetings, including online.

Firstly, during the G7 Leaders' Video Conference held on February 24 when the aggression began, the G7 condemned Russia's aggression, confirmed that this crisis is a grave threat to the rules-based international order, that its impact is not limited to Europe, and that changing internationally-recognized borders by force cannot be justified. The G7 Leaders' Statement condemning Russia's aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms was released.

On March 24, a G7 Leaders' Meeting was held in Brussels, Belgium. The G7 countries confirmed they would work together with allies and partners around the world to hold President Putin and others accountable. They also emphasized bringing severe consequences to Russia, including by fully implementing economic and financial measures, and, if necessary, to be ready to take additional measures, and to remain united in their actions.

At the G7 Leaders' Video Conference on May 8, the G7 leaders reaffirmed their determination to unite to ensure a democratic and prosperous future for Ukraine. They also expressed high appreciation for Japan's urging of Asian countries, and broadly called on countries outside the G7 and partners in the international community, including international organizations, to cooperate and coordinate with the G7's efforts.

The G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held at Weissenhaus, Germany from May 12 to 14, in which the ministers had an in-depth exchange of views on



G7 Elmau Summit: Session on the situation in Ukraine (June 27, Elmau, Germany; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

the situation in Ukraine. Foreign Minister Hayashi emphasized that the threat or use of nuclear weapons by Russia must not be tolerated, and that it is important to maintain and strengthen the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and called for cooperation among the G7.

At the G7 Elmau Summit held in Germany from June 26 to 28, the G7 again supported Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity and confirmed continued provision of financial, humanitarian, military, and diplomatic assistance. Prime Minister Kishida called for the G7 to continue to lead the international community's efforts, including sanctions.

During the G7 Leaders' Video Conference on October 11, Prime Minister Kishida strongly condemned Russia for its attacks in various parts of Ukraine, stated that the so-called "referenda" in Ukraine and its illegal "annexation" by Russia would never be accepted, and confirmed that the G7 would continue to be united.

The G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Münster, Germany was held on November 3 and 4. The G7 strongly condemned Russia's attacks on civilians and civilian facilities, and confirmed that it would continue to unite and support Ukraine, including through winterization assistance.

During the G7 Leaders' Video Conference on December 12, Prime Minister Kishida strongly condemned Russia's attacks on Ukrainian power plants and other facilities, raised the importance of continuing

support for Ukraine, and reaffirmed the G7's unwavering support and solidarity for Ukraine.

In addition to the above leaders' meetings, the G7 leaders issued the G7 Leaders' Statements on the situation in Ukraine on March 11 (March 12 Japan time) and April 7, promptly issuing a message as the G7 leaders on strengthening sanctions against Russia in light of developments in the situation.

Since the beginning of 2023, Japan has been leading the G7 efforts as the G7 Presidency. On February 18, 2023, the first G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting under the Japanese G7 Presidency was held in Munich, Germany. Foreign Minister Hayashi expressed the G7's firm determination to unite in support of Ukraine and to defend the international order based on the rule of law, as one year was about to pass since Russia began its aggression against Ukraine. He confirmed close cooperation among the G7.

On February 24, 2023, one year after the start of Russia's aggression, Prime Minister Kishida held a G7 Leaders' Video Conference. He reaffirmed the unwavering unity of the G7 in dealing with Russia's aggression against Ukraine and other issues, and announced the G7 Leaders' Statement that included new sanctions against Russia.

Furthermore, on January 24, Japan and the United States co-hosted the G7+ Foreign Ministers' Meeting⁴ which included the G7 as well as Ukrainian Foreign Minister Kuleba, like-minded countries, and international organizations in order to discuss support for Ukraine's energy sector.



G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (November 3, Münster, Germany)

(2) Cooperation in the UN

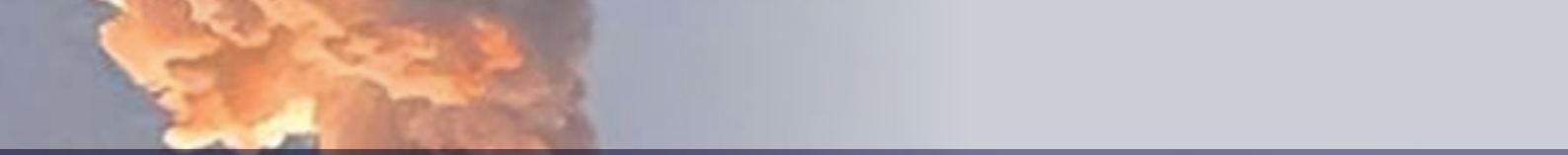
The UN Security Council (UNSC) consists of 15 UN member states, including the five permanent members (China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States). It holds primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and has the role of carrying out its duties on behalf of member states (Articles 23 and 24 of the UN Charter).

Approximately 50 relevant meetings of the UNSC were held during the period from February 2022, when Russia began its aggression against Ukraine, to the end of December 2022. Despite the continuing discussion on the situation in Ukraine, the UNSC has not been able to fulfill its role as specified by the Charter in response to the aggression by Russia.

In order for the UNSC to decide on matters other than procedural matters, it is necessary that all permanent members, including Russia, do not oppose the decision (Article 27.3 of the Charter). Russia has so far opposed the adoption of resolutions by the UNSC twice, in February and in September (by exercising its so-called "veto"). Through Russia's aggression against Ukraine, it again became clear that the actions that the UNSC can take are extremely limited when a permanent member is a party to the conflict.

On the other hand, a mechanism exists to convene the UN General Assembly on an emergency basis if a veto is exercised in the UNSC. Following the rejection of the draft resolution in February, the UNSC requested the UN General Assembly (UNGA) to hold an emergency special session based on the UNGA resolution "Uniting for Peace" adopted in 1950. In response, the UNGA adopted with an overwhelming majority a resolution deploring Russia's aggression against Ukraine and calling for the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops in March. Subsequently, the UNGA adopted a resolution on the humanitarian consequences of aggression against Ukraine in the same month, a resolution to suspend the rights of Russia's membership of the Human Rights Council in April, a resolution on the territorial integrity of Ukraine and the defense of the principles of the UN Charter in October, and a resolution on furtherance of remedy and reparation for

⁴ Participation by the G7 countries, Ukraine, Poland, the Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria, the Baltic States, the World Bank, the UN Development Programme (UNDP), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and the European Economic Community (EEC)



aggression against Ukraine in November. The resolutions were all adopted with a majority. Furthermore, a resolution calling for peace in Ukraine was adopted by an overwhelming majority on February 23, 2023, marking one year since the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The UNGA also adopted a resolution in April 2022 providing that a meeting of the UNGA shall be held when veto power is exercised, in cases where an emergency special session of the UNGA is not convened. This means that countries that exercise their veto power are in effect required to be accountable to the UNGA.

Through these mechanisms, the UNGA, in which all UN member states participate, plays a role of reflecting the voices of the international community in place of the UNSC, which has been unable to fulfill its role due to Russia's exercise of its veto.

Viewed from the perspective of maintaining and promoting the international order based on the rule of law, it is also significant that through the series of UNGA resolutions, the international community has reaffirmed important principles stipulated in the UN Charter and the UN Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States, such as respect for territorial integrity and prohibition of the acquisition of territory by force.

In his address at the General Debate of the UNGA on September 20, Prime Minister Kishida called for a return to the vision and principles of the UN Charter and to ensure international order based on the rule of law in the international community. Japan has become a co-sponsor of all GA resolutions and has

voted in favor of them, in cooperation with Ukraine and like-minded countries with a view to condemning Russia's aggression against Ukraine and demonstrating UNGA's determination to uphold the vision and principles of the UN Charter.

(3) Cooperation with International Judicial Institutions

Efforts are being made in international judicial institutions to address Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and Japan has responded to these efforts from the perspective of emphasizing the rule of law. In February 2022, Ukraine filed a case with the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial body of the UN, against Russia for Russia's military actions against Ukraine on the basis of false allegations that genocide had occurred in Luhansk and Donetsk. In March of the same year, the ICJ issued an order for provisional measures stating that Russia must immediately suspend the military operations it had initiated in Ukrainian territory and ensure that it would not take any action to further these military operations. This order for provisional measures is legally binding for the countries concerned. Japan has strongly urged Russia to comply with it through means such as issuing a Statement by Foreign Minister.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) was established as a permanent international criminal court to prosecute and punish individuals who commit the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole in accordance with international law. In March, Japan referred the situation in Ukraine to the ICC from the perspective of clarifying support for



Adoption of UN General Assembly resolution (October, Source: UN website)



Oral arguments by Ukraine before the ICJ (Source: UN Photo/ICJ-CIJ/Frank van Beek. Courtesy of the ICJ.)



Exterior view of the ICC (Source: ICC-CPI)

the ICC investigation of the said situation. By April, a total of 43 countries, including Japan, the only Asian country to do so, had referred the situation in Ukraine to the ICC.

Voting results for UN General Assembly resolutions related to Ukraine in 2022 (unit: votes)

	Resolution	In favour	Against	Non-voting	Abstentions
March 2	Aggression against Ukraine	141	5	12	35
March 24	Humanitarian consequences of the aggression against Ukraine	140	5	10	38
April 7	Suspension of the rights of membership of the Russian Federation in the Human Rights Council	93	24	18	58
October 12	Territorial Integrity of Ukraine: defending the principles of the Charter of the United Nations	143	5	10	35
November 14	Furtherance of remedy and reparation for aggression against Ukraine	94	14	12	73
(2023) February 23	Principles of the Charter of the United Nations underlying a comprehensive, just and lasting peace in Ukraine	141	7	32	13

4

Response to Negative Effects on the International Community

Russia's aggression has caused a global food and energy crisis, and its attacks on Ukraine's nuclear power plant as well as nuclear threats have caused concerns not only in Ukraine and neighboring countries but also around the world.

(1) Food and Energy Crisis

The shortages and high prices of food and energy supplies caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine affect global economic activities. With regard to food, the disruption of grain exports from Ukraine through

the Black Sea caused international prices of major grains to soar, and export restrictions by Russia on fertilizer materials also caused disorder in the international market, leading to a sharp rise in prices. In response to this situation, Russia has developed propaganda claiming that economic sanctions by Western countries are the cause of the soaring food prices, and is attempting to divide the international community. Furthermore, with regard to energy, Russia is using its energy resources to put pressure on countries that depend on imports for their energy supply. Access to

affordable food and energy forms the basis for people to live with dignity. However, food and energy security, especially for the vulnerables in the international community, are being threatened.

Amidst this situation, in the field of food, through international organizations such as the WFP and FAO as well as bilateral assistance and Japanese NGOs, Japan has been providing food assistance and assistance for strengthening production capacity to countries facing food shortages as well as emergency food aid as humanitarian assistance to countries in the Middle East and Africa. On July 5, Japan decided to provide approximately 200 million US dollars in assistance to countries in need in the Middle East, Africa, and elsewhere as a response to global food security, which has deteriorated due to the effects of the situation in Ukraine.

For Asia, Japan will provide support for the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) and the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS) within the framework of ASEAN Plus Three (10 ASEAN countries plus Japan, China, and the Republic of Korea (ROK)) toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) based on human security.

In July 2022, the Black Sea Grain Initiative was agreed upon between the UN, Turkey, Ukraine, and Russia regarding the resumption of grain exports from Ukraine, a major grain exporting country. Japan has consistently supported this agreement and raised the importance of its implementation. On November 11, Japan decided to provide assistance to transport Ukrainian wheat donated by the Government of Ukraine to Somalia from the port of Odesa through

the WFP for distribution in local areas. In December, the wheat was shipped from the port of Odesa via the Black Sea. Furthermore, from the perspective of promoting exports of grain produced in Ukraine, Japan provided support to Ukraine for simple grain storage facilities in order to expand grain storage capacity in the country, which had been in short supply due to the war.

Through such efforts, Japan has responded to resolve food insecurity around the world and to prevent food from being used for political purposes.

Toward stabilizing the energy market, Japan has urged resource-producing countries to increase their production and has cooperated with international organizations to release oil reserves. Furthermore, a portion of the liquefied natural gas (LNG) handled by Japanese companies was diverted to Europe in February and March 2022, taking into account the severe energy situation in Europe, including the situation in Ukraine. At the same time, in order to enable the international community to secure a stable energy supply while breaking away from its dependence on Russia, which is exerting pressure by using its energy resources, Japan is promoting and supporting efforts toward a realistic energy transition, including diversification of crude oil and natural gas supply sources, and utilization of hydrogen, ammonia, renewable energy and nuclear power.

Japan will continue to make various efforts toward ensuring global food and energy security, based on the belief that it is essential for food and energy to be available to each and every human being.

(2) Efforts for Safety of Nuclear Power

The seizure of nuclear facilities in Ukraine by Russian forces and other such activities are threatening the safety and security of Ukraine's nuclear facilities for peaceful purposes, significantly increasing the risk of nuclear accidents and extraordinary events, and putting people in Ukraine, neighboring countries, and the international community at risk. In particular, the Russian seizure and militarization of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant poses a serious threat to the safety and nuclear security of the facility, its personnel, and the region. Furthermore, shelling has been confirmed intermittently in the vicinity of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant since August, and the severe



Ukrainian wheat transported from Ukraine to Somalia with Japanese assistance
(©WFP/Jamal Ali)



Meeting between Foreign Minister Hayashi and IAEA Director General Grossi (May 19, Tokyo)

situation concerning nuclear safety in Ukraine is continuing.

Since the beginning of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the IAEA has been vigorously gathering information on the safety of nuclear facilities in Ukraine and has continuously disseminated the latest situation to the international community through means such as its website and social media. Moreover, the IAEA has dispatched missions consisting of its experts to Ukraine several times to assess the safety of nuclear facilities in Ukraine and has published reports on the results of these investigations.

In particular, Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi himself participated in the first mission of experts to the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant in September, following the Russian seizure of the plant, and published a report on Ukraine's nuclear facilities, including the aforementioned plant. Based on the IAEA's "Seven Pillars"⁵ for ensuring the safety and security of nuclear facilities, the report pointed out the physical damage to the facilities at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, and called for an immediate suspension to shelling at and in the vicinity of the plant, an agreement among the parties concerned to establish a "Nuclear Safety and Security Protection Zone" around the plant, and

the reestablishment of an appropriate working environment for personnel. The IAEA also released its latest related report in November, announcing that it had dispatched a field inspection mission to Ukraine in response to Russian claims that Ukraine was preparing to use a "dirty bomb," and that no undeclared nuclear activities or nuclear materials had been confirmed at Ukraine's nuclear facilities. Furthermore, in January 2023, at Ukraine's request, the IAEA began stationing of IAEA experts at all Ukraine's nuclear power plants and the Chornobyl site. The IAEA's information and assessments based on these efforts play an extremely important role in the international community's coordinated response to the challenge of ensuring the safety and other aspects of nuclear facilities in war-torn Ukraine.

Japan's position is that it is important that the IAEA's mission be carried out unhindered and that the safety of Ukraine's nuclear facilities and their personnel be ensured. Director General Grossi visited Japan in May upon invitation by the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Through his meetings with government officials and others as well as a visit to TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, Japan promoted understanding of Japan's nuclear safety and efforts for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Furthermore, as part of efforts to support Ukraine through the IAEA, Japan declared support totaling 2 million euros for the procurement of urgently-needed equipment and the dispatch of IAEA experts to the country. Furthermore, in November, Japan also decided to provide a contribution for special vehicles to be used by IAEA experts when they travel within Ukraine. Moreover, as further support for the IAEA's efforts, Japan decided to contribute approximately 867 million Japanese yen (about 8 million US dollars) through the supplementary budget for FY2022. Japan will continue to support the IAEA's efforts to ensure the safety of Ukraine's nuclear facilities in close cooperation with the G7 countries.

- 5
1. The physical integrity of the facilities— whether it is reactors, fuel ponds, or radioactive waste stores — must be maintained;
 2. All safety and security systems and equipment must be fully functional at all times;
 3. The operating staff must be able to fulfil their safety and security duties and have the capacity to make decisions free of undue pressure;
 4. There must be secure off-site power supply from the grid for all nuclear sites;
 5. There must be uninterrupted logistical supply chains and transportation to and from the sites;
 6. There must be effective on-site and off-site radiation monitoring systems and emergency preparedness and response measures; and
 7. There must be reliable communications with the regulator and others.

(Source) Report by the Director General to the Board of Governors, document GOV/2022/52, issued 9 September 2022

State Funeral for the Late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo

On September 27, the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo was held at the *Nippon Budokan*, attended by more than 700 guests, including 48 foreign leaders, from 217 countries and regions. The presence of such a large number of people from overseas was a sign of respect and condolences. On the evening of the day of the funeral, Prime Minister Kishida, together with Mrs. ABE Akie, the spouse of former Prime Minister Abe, and others, took the opportunity to directly express appreciation to the foreign representatives that attended the funeral and to respond courteously to the condolences expressed from overseas.

Some attendees made comments that former Prime Minister Abe was an outstanding global leader, that they wanted to remember his achievements, and that it was a great honor to attend the state funeral, which honored former Prime Minister Abe, who made great contributions to world peace, including the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

From September 26 to 29, Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi respectively held 38 and 24 meetings with visiting foreign dignitaries. They were able to hold multilayered and multifaceted meetings with many leaders from all over the world visiting Japan at the same time, including the U.S., Australia, India, ASEAN, Pacific Island countries, Europe including the EU, and also from the Middle East and Africa, and Latin America and the Caribbean.

During the meetings, there were fruitful discussions on a wide range of topics, such as the maintenance and strengthening of the international order based on the rule of law as advocated by former Prime Minister Abe, the promotion of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” for that purpose, the security situation in the Indo-Pacific region including the East China Sea and South China Sea, issues related to North Korea, the situation over Ukraine, and cooperation for strengthening the overall functions of the United Nations. This demonstrated both in Japan and abroad that the Kishida administration is determined to firmly carry on and develop the diplomatic legacy fostered by former Prime Minister Abe.



Prime Minister Kishida delivering a memorial address
(September 27, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



Prime Minister Kishida shaking hands during a meeting with U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris, who attended the state funeral (September 26, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



Foreign Minister Hayashi holding a meeting with Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia, who attended the state funeral (September 27, Tokyo)

Chapter 2

Japan's Foreign Policy by Region

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Section 1 | Promotion of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)”

1 Overview

The Indo-Pacific region, which stretches from the Asia-Pacific across the Indian Ocean to the Middle East and Africa, is the core of the world's vitality and supports more than half of the world's population. At the same time, the region is home to several countries with strong military capabilities, and there have been some acts that shake the very foundation of the international order based on the rule of law. The region also faces a variety of threats, such as piracy, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, natural disasters and illegal fishing. It is essential to ensure peace and prosperity in the entire region and beyond, through establishing a free and open order based on the rule of law.

Japan has long emphasized the importance of taking a holistic view of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, as seen in the “Confluence of the Two Seas” speech regarding the Indian and Pacific Oceans delivered by Prime Minister Abe to the Indian Parliament in 2007. In August 2016, this concept was brought to fruition as the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” vision, which Prime Minister Abe announced to the world in his keynote speech at the 6th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) in Kenya. In his speech, Prime Minister Abe stated that the key to stability and prosperity of the international community is the dynamism created by combining “Two Continents”—rapidly-growing Asia and potential-filled Africa—and “Two Oceans”—free and open Pacific and Indian Oceans—and that Japan would work to realize prosperity in Asia and Africa.

Japan has strategically promoted efforts to realize FOIP in cooperation with like-minded countries from 2016 to the present. As a result, the vision of FOIP

first proposed by Japan has now gained broad support in the international community, including the U.S., Australia, India, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the European Union (EU), and other European countries. Various consultations and cooperation are also underway. Numerous policy documents on the Indo-Pacific have been released, such as the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) adopted at the ASEAN Summit in June 2019, the Joint Communication on the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific presented by the EU in September 2021, the Indo-Pacific Strategy presented by the U.S. in February 2022 and Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy and the Strategy for a Free, Peaceful, and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region presented by the Republic of Korea (ROK) in November.

However, the current international community is seeing developments in an outright brazen opposition to the “free and open international order based on the rule of law,” which FOIP has advocated. In this very severe situation, it is ever more important to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order in cooperation with a range of international partners. Therefore, in June, at the IISS Shangri-La Dialogue, Prime Minister Kishida presented the “Kishida Vision for Peace,”¹ one of whose pillars is bringing new developments toward FOIP. In this context, Prime Minister Kishida announced that he will further accelerate cooperation for FOIP, strengthen diplomatic efforts including by expanding Official Development Assistance (ODA) while engaging in a proper, efficient and strategic use of international cooperation through ODA, and lay out a new plan for FOIP by the spring of 2023.²

1 The five pillars of the “Kishida Vision for Peace”

(1) Maintaining and strengthening the rules-based free and open international order and bringing new developments toward FOIP

(2) Advancing the fundamental reinforcement of Japan's defense capabilities, further reinforcing the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and strengthening security cooperation with other like-minded countries.

(3) Promoting realistic efforts to bring about a “world without nuclear weapons”

(4) Strengthening the functions of the United Nations (UN), including UN Security Council reform

(5) Strengthening international cooperation in new policy areas such as economic security

2 See the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website regarding Prime Minister Kishida's March 20, 2023, policy speech on Japan's new plan for FOIP: https://www.mofa.go.jp/tp/pc/page1e_000586.html



2 Japan's Efforts and Cooperation toward FOIP

To contribute to regional peace and prosperity as an Indo-Pacific nation, Japan has been cooperating with like-minded countries and strategically implementing measures for the realization of FOIP, including by utilizing ODA. Specifically, Japan has taken measures, including: (1) promoting policy on maritime order and sharing insights on maritime law with the international community; (2) rule-making to expand a free and fair economic area; (3) enhancing connectivity across the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean; (4) enhancing governance through capacity building; and (5) ensuring maritime security and marine safety.

As for (1), Japan has been making such efforts as disseminating Japan's policies on maritime order at the East Asia Summit (EAS) and other occasions, and sharing insights on maritime law through training to Southeast Asian countries and Pacific Island countries.

As for (2), the Japan-UK Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (Japan-UK CEPA) entered into force in January 2021, following the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (Japan-EU EPA), and the Japan-U.S. Trade Agreement. Japan has been leading the creation of economic and trade rules for maintaining and strengthening a free and fair international economic order, as also shown in the entry into force

of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement for those signatory states that have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval, including Japan, in January 2022.

As for (3), Japan has been implementing projects that help strengthen the connectivity of the Southern Economic Corridor, known as “Mekong's main artery,” which connects the megacities of Ho Chi Minh City, Phnom Penh, and Bangkok to the Indian Ocean, and of the East-West Economic Corridor, which connects Da Nang, Viet Nam to Laos and the inland areas of Thailand to the Indian Ocean via Myanmar.

As for (4), in order to support self-sustained and sustainable growth, Japan provides assistance to countries mainly in Asia and Africa, including the Country-Focused Training Course on macroeconomic policy and dispatch of advisors, for capacity building in fiscal policy and public debt management.

As for (5), in order to establish a free and open international order, Japan actively extends capacity building assistance on maritime law enforcement and capacity building assistance in maritime domain awareness (MDA) to Indo-Pacific countries, including provision of patrol vessels, coastal monitoring radars and other equipment, as well as human resource development through the dispatch of experts and trainings.

3 Collaboration and Cooperation with Other Countries

In 2022, Japan remained actively engaged in diplomatic activities for the realization of FOIP.

(1) U.S. (See Section 3)

In February, the U.S. released the Indo-Pacific Strategy. In May, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with President Joseph Biden who was visiting Japan. The two leaders recognized that the Indo-Pacific is extremely crucial to global peace, security, and prosperity, and concurred that Japan and the U.S., as allies sharing fundamental values, will lead the

international community and continue to work closely with like-minded countries, such as Australia, India, Canada, ASEAN, and Europe, toward the realization of FOIP. The two leaders also issued the “Japan-U.S. Joint Leaders' Statement: -Strengthening the Free and Open International Order-.”

In October, the U.S. released the “National Security Strategy.” During the Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting in November, Foreign Minister Hayashi expressed his high appreciation for the U.S. “National Security Strategy,” which reiterated the promotion of

FOIP and the unwavering U.S. commitment to the defense of Japan, including the Senkaku Islands. In response, Secretary of State Antony Blinken stated that the U.S. would continue close coordination with its allies and partners to defend the free and open international order.

(2) ASEAN (See Section 2, 7)

Japan and ASEAN released the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific in November 2020, confirming that the AOIP and FOIP share fundamental principles. At the ASEAN-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting in August 2022, Foreign Minister Hayashi stated that Japan continues to steadily implement concrete cooperation projects toward the realization of FOIP and the AOIP, and that Japan continues to work toward maintaining and strengthening the rules-based free and open international order under the "Kishida Vision for Peace" to bring new developments to FOIP. At the ASEAN-Japan Summit in November, Prime Minister Kishida stated that there have been 89 concrete cooperation projects in total since the adoption of the 2020 Joint Statement, and presented a progress report on AOIP cooperation. Furthermore, Prime Minister Kishida stated that, heading toward the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation in 2023, Japan will enhance cooperation in the areas of: (1) maritime cooperation, such as maritime traffic safety; (2) assistance for connectivity, such as quality infrastructure investment; (3) health issues including universal health coverage (UHC), measures to address climate change and disaster risk reduction; and (4) cooperation in a wide range of economic areas, such as supply chain resilience, digital technology, and food security.

(3) Canada (See Section 3)

At the Japan-Canada Foreign Ministers' Meeting in October, the two Ministers concurred that the realization of FOIP, a vision shared by Japan and Canada, is indispensable for the peace and prosperity of the region, and announced the "Japan-Canada Action Plan for contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region." In November, "Canada's Indo-Pacific Strategy," the country's first such strategy, was launched.

(4) Australia (See Section 2, 6)

In May, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-Australia Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese who was visiting Japan. The two leaders concurred to further strengthen the "Special Strategic Partnership" between Japan and Australia and work together with allies and like-minded countries to realize FOIP. In October, a Japan-Australia Summit Meeting was held in Australia, and the two leaders signed a new Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation that affirmed their unwavering commitment to FOIP. At the Tenth Japan-Australia 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations in December, the four Ministers concurred that Japan and Australia will strengthen coordination to promote further cooperation with ASEAN, while supporting ASEAN centrality and unity and the AOIP.

(5) India (See Section 2, 5)

In March, Prime Minister Kishida, during his visit to New Delhi, held a Japan-India Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The two leaders reaffirmed that it is important for Japan and India to work closely together bilaterally as well as multilaterally, such as through the Quad, toward realizing FOIP. Furthermore, they issued the Japan-India Summit Joint Statement that reaffirmed their common vision for FOIP free from coercion. Moreover, at the Second Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting in September, the Ministers confirmed to cooperate toward the common goal of realizing FOIP and to continue to support ASEAN's unity and centrality. The four Ministers also confirmed the importance of concrete cooperation among FOIP, India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI), and the AOIP.

(6) Japan-Australia-India-U.S.

The four countries of Japan, Australia, India and the U.S. have the shared goal of strengthening a rules-based free and open international order. In order to make tangible progress with FOIP, the Quad is implementing practical cooperation in various areas, including quality infrastructure and maritime security, and shares the view on the importance of expanding cooperation to more countries to realize this vision. The Quad also fully supports the AOIP and welcomes

the proactive efforts by European and other countries toward FOIP. At the Quad Leaders’ Meeting held in Japan in May, the four leaders welcomed that the vision of FOIP is resonating in various regions around the world, and that proactive efforts are underway in those regions, including the AOIP of ASEAN and the Indo-Pacific strategies of the EU and European countries. They shared the view of further deepening engagement and cooperation with each country and region for the realization of this vision. At the Quad Foreign Ministers’ Meeting held in the U.S. in September, the four Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to realize FOIP.

(7) Republic of Korea (ROK) (See Section 2, 3-(2))

In November, the ROK presented the main points of its “Strategy for a Free, Peaceful, and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region.” At the Japan-ROK Summit Meeting in the same month, the two leaders welcomed each other’s vision for the Indo-Pacific and concurred on aligning their collective efforts in pursuit of a free and open Indo-Pacific that is inclusive, resilient, and secure.

(8) Europe

A The EU (See Section 5, 2-(1))

In December 2021, the EU presented its connectivity strategy, Global Gateway. During a telephone call with President Ursula von der Leyen of the European Commission in February 2022, Prime Minister Kishida stated that he appreciated the strategy, and that he intends to continue to work with the EU based on the “Partnership on Sustainable Connectivity and Quality Infrastructure between Japan and the European Union.” At the Japan-EU Summit held in Japan in May, Prime Minister Kishida expressed the intent to pursue cooperation between Japan and the EU, which share fundamental values, in working toward the realization of FOIP. In February, Foreign Minister Hayashi attended the Ministerial Forum for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, co-hosted by France and the EU, in a virtual format. Foreign Minister Hayashi delivered a speech, in which he emphasized the need to build a rules-based, free and open international order in the

Indo-Pacific region, and in this context, the importance of strengthening collaboration with Europe, like-minded countries, the Quad, ASEAN, and others. Furthermore, he stated that ASEAN, located at the heart of the Indo-Pacific, is the cornerstone of efforts to achieve FOIP, and that it is essential that Japan and the EU both support and encourage ASEAN centrality and unity.

B The UK (See Section 5, 2-(2))

In May, during the Japan-UK Summit Meeting and working lunch held in the UK, Prime Minister Kishida commended the deepening of Japan-UK security and defense cooperation and the UK’s engagement in the Indo-Pacific, including the deployment of the UK carrier strike group to the region and joint exercises in 2021, the permanent deployment of UK naval vessels to the region, and the response to ship-to-ship transfers³ by North Korean-flagged vessels. Prime Minister Boris Johnson stated that the UK remains committed to the region. Furthermore, the two leaders shared the view that the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific is inseparable and that a unilateral change of the status quo by force is not acceptable anywhere in the world, and reaffirmed to work closely together toward the realization of FOIP. Subsequently, in the area of security, the joint development of a next-generation fighter aircraft by Japan, the UK, and Italy was announced in December. This was followed by Prime Minister Kishida’s visit to the UK and the signing of the Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement with Prime Minister Rishi Sunak in January 2023, lifting the Japan-UK security and defense cooperation to new heights.

C France (See Section 5, 2-(3))

In January, the Sixth Japan-France Foreign and Defense Ministers’ Meeting (“2+2”) was held via videoconference, at which the four Ministers confirmed to encourage concrete cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. At the Japan-France Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in May, Foreign Minister Hayashi appreciated the leadership of France in enhancing the EU’s engagement in

3 In this context, “ship-to-ship transfers” refers to the transfers to or from North Korea-flagged vessels of any goods or items at sea, which UN Security Council resolution 2375 (adopted in September 2017) prohibits the UN member states from facilitating or engaging in.

the Indo-Pacific, and the two Ministers concurred to promote concrete cooperation through consultations in a range of frameworks to realize multi-layered bilateral cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. On January 1, 2023, Japan opened the Consular Office in Nouméa in New Caledonia, which has geopolitical importance in the Indo-Pacific region and serves as a crucial stronghold for advancing Japan-France cooperation toward the realization of FOIP. At the Japan-France Summit Meeting held in the same month, Prime Minister Kishida stated that the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific is inseparable and that he welcomed the progress in substantive cooperation, such as reciprocal visits of assets and joint exercises between Japan and France. The two leaders concurred to deepen cooperation between the two countries.

D Germany (See Section 5, 2-(4))

In September 2020, the German cabinet adopted the “Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific Region,” which emphasizes the importance of the principles of freedom of navigation, rule of law and connectivity in the Indo-Pacific. In September 2022, Germany released a progress report on the Guidelines. Furthermore, at the Japan-Germany Summit Meeting held in April 2022, Prime Minister Kishida voiced great appreciation for Germany’s increasing interest and involvement in the Indo-Pacific, noting the dramatic deepening of security cooperation between the two countries, as evidenced by the conclusion of the Japan-Germany Agreement on the Security of Information, the holding of the Japan-Germany Foreign and Defense Ministers’

meeting (“2+2”), the port call by a German navy frigate to Japan, and so forth.

E Italy (See Section 5, 2-(5))

In February, Italy announced the Italian Contribution to the EU Strategy for the Indo-Pacific. During his visit to Italy in May, Prime Minister Kishida held a summit meeting with President of the Council of Ministers Mario Draghi. Prime Minister Kishida appreciated the formulation of the document, and the two leaders concurred on promoting cooperation toward the realization of FOIP. Subsequently, the two sides also confirmed such cooperation at the Japan-Italy Foreign Ministers’ Meeting and other opportunities. In December, Japan, Italy, and the UK decided on and announced the joint development of a next-generation fighter aircraft. In January 2023, Prime Minister Kishida visited Italy, where he and President of the Council of Ministers Giorgia Meloni concurred to upgrade their bilateral relationship to a “Strategic Partnership,” launch a consultation between authorities concerning foreign affairs and defense, and further cooperate in the security field.

F The Netherlands (See Section 5, Other European Regions on page 144)

In July, Foreign Minister Hayashi, who was visiting Indonesia to attend the G20 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting, held a Japan-Netherlands Foreign Ministers’ Working Dinner. The two Ministers confirmed to further strengthen cooperation in areas such as security and economic security toward the realization of FOIP.

Section 2 | Asia and Oceania

1 Overview

(General Overview)

The Asia-Oceania region includes not only the second and third largest economies in the world, China and Japan, but also numerous emerging countries with remarkable growth. It is a dynamic region where diverse cultures and races intermingle and influence each other. This region, with an abundance of human resources, drives the world economy and has been increasing its presence. Of the world population of 7.9 billion, approximately 3.7 billion live in East Asia Summit (EAS) participating countries¹ excluding the U.S. and Russia. This represents about 47% of the world's population.² Their combined nominal gross domestic product (GDP) is 32.7 trillion US dollars (2021), and accounts for more than 30% of the world total.³

Furthermore, the total imports and exports of EAS participating countries excluding the U.S. and Russia are 13.4408 trillion US dollars (2021), which is comparable to the EU's imports and exports of 13.0421 trillion US dollars.⁴ The region enjoys close economic relations and sees growing interdependence. Further economic growth is expected, and the strong growth within the region will also bring affluence and vitality to Japan.

Meanwhile, the security environment in the Asia-Oceania region is becoming increasingly severe as seen in the following developments: the nuclear and missile development by North Korea; the strengthening and modernization of military forces in a manner that lacks transparency and attempts to change the status quo in the region by force that goes against the rule of law and openness; and tension within the region growing over the maritime issues. Other factors hindering the stable growth of the region include economic and



Prime Minister Kishida's visit to Indonesia (April 29, Jakarta, Indonesia; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting (June 29, Madrid, Spain; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

financial systems still under development, environmental pollution, unstable demand and supply of food and resources, frequent natural disasters, terrorism, and aging populations.

Against this backdrop, Japan has been actively engaging in diplomacy including at the leaders' and foreign ministers' levels. In 2022, even amidst the impacts of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Japan actively engaged in face-to-face diplomacy and worked

1 ASEAN (member states: Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam), Australia, China, India, Japan, the ROK, and New Zealand
 2 United Nations Population Fund
 3 World Bank
 4 International Monetary Fund (IMF)

to maintain and develop good relations with neighboring countries. Prime Minister Kishida visited India and Cambodia in March as his first bilateral visit after assuming the office of Prime Minister, and from April to June he visited several countries in Southeast Asia and held bilateral leaders' meetings. Furthermore, when the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders' Meeting was held in Tokyo in May, Prime Minister Kishida met with Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, who had just assumed the office of Prime Minister, and met with Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi. In June at the NATO Summit Meeting in Spain, a Japan-U.S.-Republic of Korea (ROK) Summit Meeting was held for the first time in about four years and nine months.

In September, Prime Minister Kishida held Summit Meetings with and met with the leaders of many Asian and Oceanian countries who visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo. In October, Prime Minister Kishida visited Australia, and in November he visited Cambodia, Indonesia, and Thailand to attend the ASEAN-related Summit Meetings, the G20 Bali Summit and the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting. In Cambodia, Prime Minister Kishida attended the ASEAN-Japan Summit, the ASEAN Plus Three (Japan-China-ROK) Summit, and the EAS, and confirmed the further strengthening of Japan-ASEAN relations, which would mark the 50th Year of Friendship and Cooperation in 2023. Furthermore, Prime Minister Kishida deepened discussions on urgent issues facing the region and the international community, including Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the situations in the East China Sea and South China Sea, and the situation in North Korea, and confirmed Japan's will to strengthen cooperation with the relevant countries. Taking advantage of this series of meetings, Prime Minister Kishida also held summit meetings with the leaders of several ASEAN countries, with President of the ROK Yoon Suk Yeol, and with President of China Xi Jinping.

In February, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Australia and the U.S., attended the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Foreign Ministers' Meeting and the Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and also met with the Foreign Ministers of Australia, India, and the ROK. In April, Foreign Minister Hayashi held the first Japan-Philippines Foreign and Defense Ministerial

Meeting ("2+2") in Tokyo, and from the end of April to the beginning of May, he visited Mongolia, Fiji, Palau, and the ROK and held Foreign Ministers' Meetings. In July, Foreign Minister Hayashi took advantage of the opportunity presented by the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Indonesia and held bilateral meetings with the foreign ministers of the participating countries and also held a Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting. In August, Foreign Minister Hayashi attended ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meetings held in Cambodia and had meaningful discussions on a wide range of topics, from specific cooperation in the region, with ASEAN at its core, to the regional situation. He also had bilateral meetings with foreign ministers of ASEAN countries respectively, and participated in the Japan-U.S.-Australia Trilateral Strategic Dialogue. In November, Foreign Minister Hayashi attended the APEC Ministerial Meeting held in Thailand and held Foreign Ministers' Meetings with Vietnam, Thailand, and Papua New Guinea.

Japan is strengthening various cooperation in the Asia-Oceania region and will continue to make meaningful use of various cooperative frameworks.

(Japan-U.S. Alliance and Indo-Pacific region)

The Japan-U.S. Security Alliance, with the Japan-U.S. security arrangements as its core, is the foundation of peace, security, and prosperity, not only for Japan but also for the Indo-Pacific region. In the midst of an increasingly severe regional security environment, the Japan-U.S. Alliance is more important than ever. Since the inauguration of President Biden in January 2021, Japan and the U.S. have held 16 Summit Meetings and 25 Foreign Ministers' Meetings, including telephone calls (as of January 2023). The two countries have been working closely at multiple levels, including at the summit level and at the foreign minister level, to promote cooperation toward realizing a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" and to address various issues in the Indo-Pacific Region, including China, North Korea, and Russia.

In January, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting with President Biden, and the two leaders shared their intention to coordinate closely under the strong Japan-U.S. Alliance and to deepen cooperation with like-minded countries

toward realizing FOIP. Furthermore, based on the importance of Japan-U.S. economic cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, the two leaders concurred on the launch of the ministerial Japan-U.S. Economic Policy Consultative Committee (the Economic “2+2”), and Prime Minister Kishida welcomed the U.S.’ commitment to the region including the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF).

In May, President Biden visited Japan for the first time since assuming the presidency, and held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Kishida. With Russia’s aggression against Ukraine shaking the very foundations of the rules-based international order, under the recognition that the Indo-Pacific is a region of vital importance to global peace, security and prosperity, the two leaders concurred that Japan and the U.S. will lead the international community and continue to work closely with like-minded countries toward the realization of FOIP. President Biden reiterated the U.S. commitment to the defense of Japan, and the two leaders concurred to communicate more closely between Japan and the U.S. to ensure that extended deterrence remains unwavering. Furthermore, President Biden announced the launch of the IPEF, and the two leaders released a joint statement outlining the future direction for strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance, including affirming their commitment to promoting FOIP. Prime Minister Kishida also utilized this opportunity to host the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders’ Meeting. At the Meeting, the leaders of the four countries welcomed that the vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific is resonating in various regions around the world, and that proactive efforts are underway in various regions, and shared the view in further deepening engagement and cooperation with each country and region.

Foreign Minister Hayashi visited the U.S. in July and held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers’ Meeting with Secretary of State Antony Blinken, where the two Ministers reconfirmed their commitment to expand and deepen security and defense cooperation between Japan and the U.S. and to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Furthermore, Foreign Minister Hayashi, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry HAGIUDA Koichi, Secretary of State Blinken, and Secretary of

Commerce Gina Raimondo held the Economic “2+2”, which Prime Minister Kishida and President Biden had agreed to launch during the Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting in January. The Ministers reaffirmed their determination to lead international cooperation in areas such as economic policy of both countries, the establishment of a regional economic order including in the Indo-Pacific region, and economic security.

A bipartisan delegation, led by Vice President Kamala Harris, visited Japan for the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September, reflecting the breadth and depth of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. After a courtesy call to Prime Minister Kishida by Vice President Harris, Prime Minister Kishida had a dinner with the U.S. delegation and remembered former Prime Minister Abe. The two sides also concurred to continue close cooperation between Japan and the U.S. toward further strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance and realizing FOIP.

In November Prime Minister Kishida visited Phnom Penh, Cambodia to attend ASEAN-related Summit Meetings, held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with President Biden, welcomed the progress made on the IPEF and the Economic “2+2,” and the two leaders concurred on promoting efforts to realize FOIP.

In January 2023, the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (Japan-U.S. “2+2”) was held in Washington D.C. in person for the first time in two years, and both Japan and the U.S. firmly reiterated their commitment to champion a free and open Indo-Pacific region.

In January 2023, Prime Minister Kishida, who was visiting Washington, D.C., held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with President Biden. Prime Minister Kishida stated that he will strengthen efforts to realize FOIP, and in response President Biden reiterated the unwavering U.S. commitment to the region. Based on this, the two leaders concurred that Japan and the U.S. will continue to promote endeavors to realize FOIP. The Joint Statement of the United States and Japan, which was issued as a result of the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting, states that their cooperation today is unprecedented, rooted in a shared vision of FOIP and a peaceful and prosperous world, and guided by their shared values and principles, including the rule of law.

(Japan's Efforts on the Issue of Comfort Women)

(See 3(2)B(C) regarding the comfort women issue between Japan and the ROK.)

The Government of Japan has sincerely dealt with the issues of reparations, property and claims pertaining to the World War II, including the comfort women issue, under the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which the Government of Japan concluded with 45 countries, including the U.S., the UK and France, and through other bilateral treaties, agreements and instruments. These issues including those of claims of individuals have already been legally settled with the parties to these treaties, agreements and instruments.

On this basis, the Government of Japan has actively taken measures to recover the honor of former comfort women and to provide remedies for them. In 1995, the Asian Women's Fund (AWF) was established with the cooperation of the people and the Government of Japan for the purpose of carrying out atonement and remedy projects for former comfort women. The Government of Japan provided a total of 4.8 billion Japanese yen. Furthermore, approximately 600 million Japanese yen was donated to the AWF by the people of Japan. The Government of Japan extended maximum cooperation to the AWF, which implemented medical and welfare support projects and provided "atonement money," to offer realistic relief to former comfort women. As part of the AWF's projects, "atonement money" (2 million Japanese yen per person), which was funded by donations from Japanese people, was provided to 285 former comfort women (211 in the Philippines, 61 in the ROK, 13 in Taiwan). Moreover, the AWF provided funds in those countries/areas for medical and welfare support funded with contributions by the Government of Japan (3 million Japanese yen per person in the ROK and Taiwan, 1.2 million Japanese yen per person in the Philippines) (for a total of 5 million Japanese yen per person in the ROK and Taiwan, 3.2 million Japanese yen per person in the Philippines). Furthermore, using funds contributed by the Government of Japan, the AWF extended support for projects to promote social welfare services for elderly people in Indonesia as well as projects to help improve the living conditions of former comfort women in the Netherlands.

When the "atonement money" as well as the medical and welfare support were provided to individual former

comfort women, then-Prime Ministers (namely, Prime Ministers HASHIMOTO Ryutaro, OBUCHI Keizo, MORI Yoshiro and KOIZUMI Junichiro) sent signed letters expressing their apology and remorse directly to each former comfort woman.

As stated in the Statement by the Prime Minister issued in 2015, Japan will engrave in its heart the past, when the dignity and honor of many women were severely injured during wars in the 20th century. Japan will lead the world in making the 21st century an era in which women's human rights are not infringed upon.

Despite such sincere efforts by the Government of Japan, there are claims that can hardly be regarded to be based on historical facts, such as allegations of "forceful taking away" of comfort women and "sex slaves" as well as the figures such as "200,000 persons" or "several hundred thousands" for the total number of comfort women.

The Government of Japan's position regarding these claims is as follows:

"Forceful taking away"

"Forceful taking away" of comfort women by the Japanese military and government authorities could not be confirmed in any of the documents that the Government of Japan was able to identify.

"Sex slaves"

The expression of "sex slaves" contradicts the facts and should not be used. This point was confirmed with the ROK on the occasion of the Japan-ROK Agreement in December 2015 and the expression "sex slaves" is not used in the agreement.

Figures such as "200,000 persons" for the total number of comfort women

The figure "200,000 persons" lacks concrete evidence. As stated in the report of the Government study's result of August 4, 1993, it is virtually impossible to determine the total number of comfort women as no documents have been found which either indicate the total number or give sufficient ground to establish an estimate.

The Government of Japan has been making efforts to provide clear explanations regarding its sincere efforts

and official position in international fora. Specifically, at the United Nations (UN), the Government of Japan has explained its position on a number of occasions such as during the consideration of the Seventh and Eighth Periodic Reports by the Government of Japan on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in February 2016, the Ninth Periodic Report on the Implementation of the CEDAW in September 2021, and the examination of the Seventh Report of Japan under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights in October 2022.

Installations of comfort woman statues⁵ have been observed not only in the ROK but also in some other countries and regions. Such moves are extremely regrettable and incompatible with the position of the Government of Japan. The Government of Japan will continue reaching out to various people involved in this issue to explain its position.

The below Ministry of Foreign Affairs website details Japan's Efforts on the Issue of Comfort Women.

https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/page22e_000883.html



2 China / Mongolia, etc.

(1) China

A Situation in China

(A) Domestic Affairs

In March, the 5th session of the 13th National People's Congress (NPC) was held, and Premier Li Keqiang delivered the government work report. As a goal for 2022, he said that "We must maintain overall social stability and triumphantly welcome the Party's 20th National Congress," and emphasized stable management of the government until the National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

The 20th National Congress of the CPC was held in October. In the Central Committee Report, Xi Jinping, General Secretary of the CPC Central Committee, highlighted three major achievements in the decade since the 18th National Congress of CPC, "We embraced the centenary of the Communist Party of China; we ushered in a new era of socialism with Chinese characteristics; and we eradicated absolute poverty and finished building a moderately prosperous society in all respects." He then declared that the CPC will "advance the rejuvenation of the Chinese nation on all fronts through a Chinese path to modernization," "Basically realize socialist modernization" through "substantially grow[ing] the per capita GDP to be on

par with that of a mid-level developed country," etc. by 2035, and "realize the Second Centenary Goal of building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects" by 2050. Furthermore, as future goals, the "14th Five-Year Plan" and the government policies identified in the government work report were basically followed, and stating "We will endeavor to bring prosperity to all, and prevent polarization," emphasizing that the realization of common prosperity is a medium-term goal. Furthermore, he mentioned that China is "pursuing high-quality development" and will "promote [a] high-standard [of] opening up, and accelerate efforts to foster a new pattern of development that is focused on the domestic economy and features positive interplay between domestic and international economic flows." He also mentioned improving the resilience and safety of industrial and supply chains, and the independence and self-reliance and strength in science and technology, strongly emphasizing economic security.

Furthermore, the first plenary session of the 20th CPC Central Committee was held the day after the CPC National Congress closed. The new central leadership of the CPC, with Xi Jinping as General Secretary, was elected, marking Xi Jinping's third term

⁵ For the sake of practical convenience, they are referred to as "comfort woman statues." However, the use of this term is not a reflection of the recognition that these statues correctly embody the reality of those women at that time.

as General Secretary. Several of General Secretary Xi's former direct subordinates were also elected to the new leadership.

The international community continues to express high interest in China's human rights situation, including in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR). Japan believes that it is important that universal values and principles of the international community, such as freedom, respect for fundamental human rights, and the rule of law, are guaranteed in China, and Japan has also taken summit meetings and Foreign Ministers' meetings as opportunities to directly communicate its position to the Government of China and express serious concern about the situations in Hong Kong, XUAR, and other regions. The Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 were held from February to March 2022. In December 2021, prior to the opening of the Games, the U.S. announced that it would not send diplomatic or official delegations because of the human rights violations in China. Australia, the UK, Canada and other nations expressed similar positions. Japanese Olympic Committee President YAMASHITA Yasuhiro and Tokyo 2020 Organizing Committee President HASHIMOTO Seiko attended the Olympic Games, and Japanese Paralympic Committee President MORI Kazuyuki attended the Paralympic Games. No governmental delegation was dispatched. In 2022, as in the previous year, at the UN Human Rights Council in June and the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly in October, joint statements expressing serious concerns about the human rights situation in China, particularly the human rights violations in the XUAR, were delivered, and Japan was the only participating country from Asia. In the National Diet of Japan, the House of Representatives in February and the House of Councillors in December adopted the Resolution regarding the serious human rights situation in Xinjiang Uighur and other areas. As for Hong Kong, the G7 issued a Foreign Ministers' Statement⁶ about the selection of the Chief Executive in May, expressing grave concern over the selection process.

The Government of Japan will continue to make steady efforts while closely cooperating with the international community.

(B) Economy

At the NPC in March, Premier Li Keqiang stated that the economic situation in 2022 is "facing significantly increasing risks and challenges," and set a growth rate target of around 5.5% with a policy of "placing the highest priority on stability and pursuing progress amidst stability." As for economic measures, he emphasized that "aggressive fiscal policies will improve effectiveness," and proposed tax cuts and refunds of approximately 2.5 trillion CNY for the full year and the issuance of 3.65 trillion CNY in special local government bonds. However, the full-year real GDP growth rate for 2022 increased by 3.0% year on year, and by quarter, the first quarter (January to March) increased by 4.8% year on year, the second quarter (April to June) increased by 0.4% year on year, the third quarter (July to September) increased by 3.9% year on year, and the fourth quarter (October to December) increased by 2.9% year on year, all of which fell short of their targets.

From around March, sporadic lockdowns and severe curfew measures were repeatedly implemented in Shanghai City, the center of China's economic activity, and other areas as COVID-19 spread. In May, the State Council held a meeting on stabilizing the national economy, recognizing that, "Since March, and especially since April, economic indicators such as employment and mining production have clearly slowed, and in some respects, the situation is more difficult than in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic." Premier Li Keqiang, stating that "We must strive to return the economy to a growth track as soon as possible," announced that the State Council would issue workable implementation details for a package of economic support measures by the end of May and would closely track their implementation.

In response to the economic slowdown in the second quarter, General Secretary Xi Jinping stated in July at

6 G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement on the Hong Kong Chief Executive Selection
https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press3e_000376.html



a meeting of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee that the government will “maintain economic operations within a reasonable range, and strive to achieve the best possible results.” Additionally, he indicated that the government would work aggressively to increase demand so as to achieve economic recovery, with a fiscal policy in which local governments will use up to the maximum amount of local government special bonds, a monetary policy which will maintain reasonable and ample liquidity and increase lending to businesses, and guidelines to promote new lending by policy banks and the use of infrastructure construction investment funds. Furthermore, regarding the sluggish real estate market, while stating that the government will maintain its position of “houses for living in, not speculation,” the government will support real demand and demand for relocation, and will guarantee the reliable delivery of housing on the responsibility of local governments.

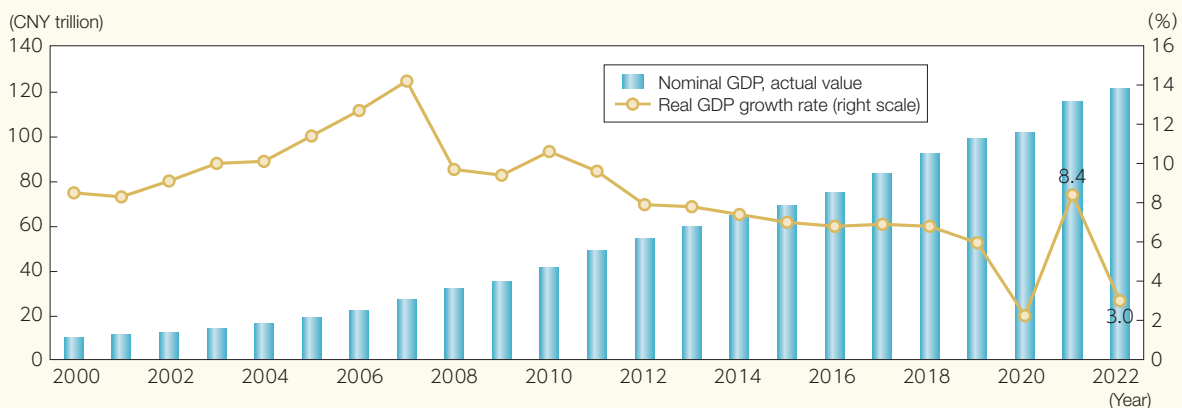
The Central Economic Work Conference held in December indicated that there was still hope for an economic recovery in 2023, although the foundations for an economic recovery were still not solid. It was then stated that, for economic activity in 2023, the government will maintain its policy from 2022 of “making economic stability a top priority and pursuing steady progress while ensuring economic stability,” and continuing an aggressive fiscal policy and a moderate monetary policy, thereby formulating high-quality development. Furthermore, as a priority issue the government will focus on boosting domestic demand and prioritize the recovery and expansion of consumption.

(C) Response to COVID-19

COVID-19 spread from China to the rest of the world, and in China the authorities have taken strict measures such as promptly identifying infection sources and close contacts based on the travel history of infected individuals, restricting movement in infected areas, and mass PCR testing of residents. Although the spread of COVID-19 was controlled in a relatively short period of time, since March, COVID-19 began to simultaneously spread in major Chinese cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangdong, creating the most serious situation since the lockdown of Wuhan City in Hubei Province in the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. In particular, the de facto lockdown in Shanghai City, which lasted for approximately two months from late March, had a tremendous impact on people’s lives and economic activities. While other countries were steering their policies toward coexistence with COVID-19, China maintained its “zero-COVID” policy. At the CPC National Congress in October, General Secretary Xi Jinping stated that the Central Committee’s infection prevention policies had achieved important and positive results in balancing infection control and economic and social development.

In November, the government announced 20 measures that stipulated shortening quarantine periods and curtailing excessive quarantine measures, but strict quarantine measures, including curbs on going out, continued due to the nationwide resurgence of COVID-19 infections, including in major cities such as Guangdong, Chongqing, and Beijing. Amidst this

China’s GDP



Source: National Bureau of Statistics of China

situation, protests and demonstrations against the “zero-COVID” policy, including mourning activities that were triggered by a fire that occurred in Urumqi in the XUAR in late November, broke out in Shanghai, Beijing, and other cities.

In December, China's National Health Commission, on the grounds that the COVID-19 virus had attenuated, lowered the infectious disease level for COVID-19 and announced policies such as abolishing isolation measures for infected individuals and whole-sale PCR testing. As a result of the complete abolition of the “zero-COVID” policy that had been in place up until then and the rapid transition of quarantine policies in such a short period of time, there was a nationwide surge in the number of infected individuals and critically ill patients, and the medical system was temporarily strained. The World Health Organization (WHO) expressed serious concerns about this situation and requested detailed information on the state of COVID-19 infections in China.

(D) Foreign Policy

Even in 2022, for the time being, diplomacy continued with a combination of face-to-face diplomacy by Director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs Yang Jiechi and State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and others, as well as by a combination of telephone calls and video teleconferences by President Xi Jinping, Premier Li Keqiang, and others. In July, Indonesian President Joko Widodo visited Beijing, and in September, President Xi Jinping visited Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan as his first foreign trip since his January 2020 visit to Myanmar, where he attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit. After the National Congress of the CPC, China gradually resumed face-to-face diplomacy, with German Chancellor Olaf Scholz and the leaders of several other countries visiting China, and in November, Premier Li Keqiang attended the East Asia Summit (EAS) and President Xi Jinping attended the G20 Summit and the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, while vigorously holding bilateral meetings with the leaders of other countries.

At the 20th National Congress of the CPC that was held in October, President Xi Jinping recognized the situation, saying “At present, momentous changes of

a like not seen in a century are accelerating across the world... and a significant shift is taking place in the international balance of power, presenting China with new strategic opportunities in pursuing development.” On top of that, through comments such as “The world has once again reached a crossroads in history, and its future course will be decided by all the world's peoples,” “[China] is committed to ... deepening and expanding global partnerships based on equality, openness, and cooperation, ... Building a human community with a shared future is the way forward for all the world's peoples,” and “China plays an active part in the reform and development of the global governance system... and works to make global governance fairer and more equitable,” President Xi Jinping clearly stated that China would increase its influence on cooperative mechanisms such as BRICS and SCO, and increase the representation and voices of emerging markets and developing countries. He also indicated that China will actively participate in rule-making for global security. Its impact on China's future diplomacy will be closely watched.

Continuing on from 2021, severe confrontations between the U.S. and China were seen in a variety of fields. Channels for dialogue, including between both leaders, were basically maintained, although these channels for dialogue were restricted for a certain period when tensions between the U.S. and China increased over Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi's visit to Taiwan. President Biden and President Xi Jinping had telephone calls in March and July, as well as their first face-to-face meeting in November. According to a statement from the U.S. government, the meeting covered a wide range of topics over approximately three hours, including U.S.-China relations, transnational challenges, human rights, the situations in Taiwan, Ukraine, and North Korea. Furthermore, there were also multiple dialogues held between National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan and Director of the Office of the Central Commission for Foreign Affairs Yang Jiechi and between Secretary of State Blinken and State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

In May, Secretary of State Blinken delivered a speech entitled “The Administration's Approach to the People's Republic of China,” in which he stated that “China is

the only country with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to do it,” adding that the U.S.-China relationship is “one of the most complex and consequential relationships.” The National Security Strategy unveiled by the U.S. in October notes that the “PRC presents America’s most consequential geopolitical challenge” and that “the PRC is the only competitor with both the intent to reshape the international order and the power to do it,” pointing out that “Beijing has ambitions to create an enhanced sphere of influence in the Indo-Pacific and to become the world’s leading power” and adding that the U.S. will strengthen ties with its allies and take a stand against China.

At the same time, the U.S. has also indicated a policy of cooperating with China on matters of shared interests. The National Security Strategy states that, on issues such as climate change, infectious disease control, and nuclear non-proliferation, “We will always be willing to work with the PRC where our interests align” and “we intend to work together to solve issues that matter most to the people of both countries.” At the U.S.-China summit meeting in November, President Biden also emphasized the need to work together to address global challenges such as climate change, global macroeconomics including debt relief, health security, and food security, and the two leaders are said to have agreed to hold dialogues and cooperate on these issues. Stable U.S.-China relations are important not only for Japan, but also for the entire international community. Japan will continue to monitor future developments.

(E) Military Affairs and Security

At the 19th CPC National Congress (2017), President Xi Jinping stated that China would transform its armed forces into a world-class military by the middle of this century. Additionally, the communique from the fifth plenary session of the 19th CPC Central Committee, published in October 2020, set the new goal of “securing the realization of the centennial goal by 2027, the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA).” Furthermore, at the 20th CPC National Congress in 2022, he reiterated this point, stating that “Achieving the goals for the centenary of the People’s Liberation Army in 2027

and more quickly elevating our people’s armed forces to world-class standards are strategic tasks for building a modern socialist country in all respects.” China has been increasing its defense expenditures about 39-fold over the past 30 years, but the breakdown of the budget and the intention behind the increase have not been disclosed sufficiently. Under such circumstances, China, under its “Military-civilian integration strategy”, has been extensively and rapidly enhancing the quality and quantity of its military power centered on its nuclear and missile capabilities and naval and air forces, in addition, placing importance on ensuring its superiority in new domains of outer space, cyberspace, the electromagnetic spectrum, AI, and unmanned systems, and promoting the modernization of its military through “integrated development of mechanization, informatization and the application of smart technologies.” In 2022, continuing on from the previous year, Japan has confirmed movements such as navigation by Chinese naval survey vessels in Japan’s territorial waters on the south of Yakushima, joint navigations by Chinese and Russian naval vessels around Japan, and joint flights by Chinese and Russian strategic bombers around Japan, and in addition, Japan has also confirmed Chinese vessels entering the contiguous zone around the Senkaku islands. Additionally, China launched multiple ballistic missiles in August, five of which landed in Japan’s exclusive economic zone (EEZ). In the South China Sea, China has continued and strengthened its actions to unilaterally change the status quo by force and increase regional tensions against the rule of law and openness, such as with further militarization of disputed features.

In recent years, China has grown to have a great influence on the international community, not only politically and economically, but also militarily. China’s current external stance and military activities are a matter of serious concern to Japan and the international community. It is unprecedented and represents the greatest strategic challenge to ensuring the peace and security of Japan and the peace and stability of the international community, as well as to strengthening the international order based on the rule of law, to which Japan should respond with its comprehensive national power and in cooperation with its allies, like-minded countries and others. With regard to China’s

rapid strengthening of its military capabilities and expansion of military activities, Japan will strongly encourage China to improve transparency and to cooperate constructively with international efforts for arms control, disarmament and other such efforts, in cooperation with its allies, like minded countries and others. Furthermore, in order to nurture a relationship of trust between China and Japan, Japan will enhance communication with China in the security field, including through dialogues and exchanges such as the Japan-China Security Dialogue. Additionally, Japan will promote efforts between Japan and China, including the establishment of frameworks to avoid and prevent unforeseen situations with China, such as the Maritime and Aerial Communication Mechanism between the Japanese and Chinese defense authorities. In this way, Japan, in cooperation with related countries, intends to strongly urge China to improve its transparency to dispel the concerns of the international community, including Japan, while further promoting mutual trust in Japan-China relations.

B Japan-China Relations

(A) Bilateral Relations: General

The relations with neighboring China are one of Japan's most important bilateral relations, and the two countries have close economic ties and people-to-people and cultural exchanges. While there are various possibilities between Japan and China, there are a number of challenges and concerns, including unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion in the East China Sea and South China Sea as well as the situation surrounding the Senkaku Islands, a series of military activities around Taiwan, which in particular, includes the landing of ballistic missiles within the waters near Japan including its EEZ. Peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait is also important. Furthermore, Japan is seriously concerned about the situation in Hong Kong and the human rights situation in the XUAR. At the same time, both Japan and China have a great responsibility for the peace and prosperity of the region and international community. Japan will firmly maintain and assert its position, and strongly request responsible actions by China, while at the same time continuing dialogue including on issues of concern and cooperating on matters of common interest. It is important

that both China and Japan make efforts to build such constructive and stable relations.

Continuing on from the previous year, in 2022, high-level communication, including between leaders, was continuously conducted. Japan and China exchanged opinions on a wide range of topics, from bilateral relations to regional and international affairs, including on a variety of issues between the two countries.

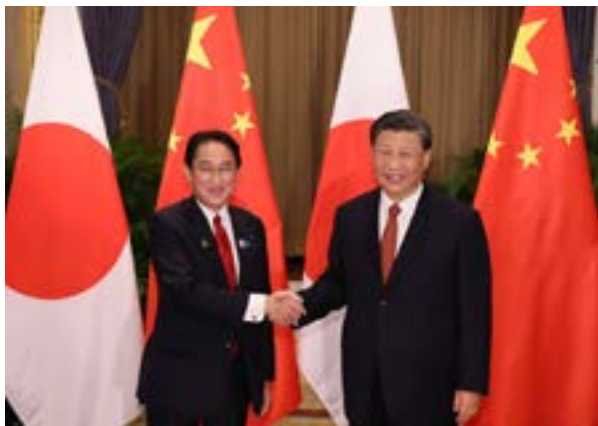
On May 18, a video conference was held between Foreign Minister Hayashi and State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. Foreign Minister Hayashi stated that the two sides must strive to realize their important shared vision for a constructive and stable relationship which was agreed upon at the Japan-China summit telephone call in October 2021, and State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang concurred. Foreign Minister Hayashi, noting the difficulties Japan-China relations are facing and the extremely severe public opinion in Japan toward China, stated that both sides need to say what needs to be said while continuing dialogues and to cooperate in appropriate ways in areas needing cooperation, and that each side needs to fulfil their responsibilities to the international society. Foreign Minister Hayashi also expressed serious concern over the situations in the East China Sea, including the situation surrounding the Senkaku Islands, as well as the South China Sea, Hong Kong, and the XUAR, and stated the importance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. Furthermore, Foreign Minister Hayashi reiterated the position of the Government of Japan regarding the temporary detention of a Japanese diplomat and the detention of Japanese nationals in China. Furthermore, Foreign Minister Hayashi strongly called for the prompt removal of import restrictions on Japanese food products. Both Ministers confirmed that they will promote dialogue and cooperation related to Japan-China economic relations in a variety of areas and at a variety of levels in an appropriate manner and stressed the importance of pushing forward people-to-people and economic exchanges between the two countries through efforts on both sides. Amidst the various impacts of COVID-19, Foreign Minister Hayashi requested that China take appropriate measures including those to ensure the safety of Japanese residents and to protect the legitimate economic activities of Japanese companies. As for regional situations,

regarding the situation over Ukraine, Foreign Minister Hayashi called on China to play a responsible role to maintain international peace and security, noting that Russia's aggression against Ukraine constitutes a clear violation of international law, including the United Nations Charter. Regarding North Korea, the two Ministers exchanged views on the recent situation. Foreign Minister Hayashi stated that the international community must make concerted efforts to realize denuclearization, and the two Ministers confirmed that they will continue to coordinate closely including on understanding and support toward the early resolution of the abductions issue.

On September 28, Chief Cabinet Secretary MATSUNO Hirokazu received a courtesy call from Mr. Wan Gang, Vice Chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference National Committee, who was visiting Japan to attend the state funeral of the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, and Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsuno expressed his gratitude to Vice Chairman Wan for his visit to Japan to attend the state funeral of former Prime Minister Abe Shinzo. In response, Vice Chairman Wan stated that his attendance was on behalf of the Chinese government and that he wished to once again express his heartfelt condolences. He also stated that his visit to Japan indicated the importance the Chinese side attaches to Japan-China relations, as well as to the Kishida administration. The two sides shared the recognition that on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China in 2022, it is important that both sides strive to realize their shared vision for "building a constructive and stable relationship" which was agreed between the leaders of the two countries.

On November 17, Prime Minister Kishida, who was on a visit to Thailand to attend APEC-related Summit Meetings, held his first face-to-face Summit Meeting with President Xi Jinping. Prime Minister Kishida referred to the telephone summit call in October 2021 when the two leaders agreed on a broad direction of establishing a "constructive and stable Japan-China relationship." Prime Minister Kishida also said that as Japan and China marked the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations, bilateral exchanges are steadily recovering, despite the impact

of the spread of a new COVID-19 variant. Prime Minister Kishida went on to state that, while Japan-China relations face many challenges and issues as well as various possibilities for cooperation, both countries have huge responsibilities for the peace and prosperity of the region as well as the international community, and that, for these challenges and issues the two countries face, both sides should accelerate their efforts to build a "constructive and stable Japan-China relationship," where both sides engage in candid dialogue, act together as responsible nations on international challenges, and cooperate on common issues. President Xi Jinping stated that Japan-China relations have a wide range of common interests as well as possibilities for cooperation and that the importance of Japan-China relations will not change. President Xi Jinping went on to express his desire to work with Prime Minister Kishida to build a Japan-China relationship that is commensurate with the demands of the new era. Prime Minister Kishida expressed grave concern about the situation in the East China Sea, including the situation surrounding the Senkaku Islands, as well as about military activities by China around Japan, such as the landing ballistic missiles within the waters near Japan including its EEZ in August 2022. At the same time, the two leaders agreed on the early launch of a hotline under the Maritime and Aerial Communication Mechanism between the Japan-China defense authorities, as well as the strengthening of communication through the Japan-China Security Dialogue and other channels. Prime Minister Kishida reiterated the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, once again called on China to respond to Japan's position on human rights and the detention of Japanese nationals, and strongly called for the prompt lifting of import restrictions on Japanese food products. Prime Minister Kishida expressed his expectation that China will make positive contributions to the international community under established international rules. The two leaders shared the view that mutually beneficial cooperation is possible in the specific areas of economy and people-to-people exchanges, and agreed that they will encourage cooperation in areas such as the green economy, including environment and energy conservation, as well as medical care, nursing care and healthcare. At the same time, Prime Minister Kishida



Japan-China Summit Meeting (November 17, Thailand, Bangkok; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

stated that it is important that China guarantees the legitimate business activities of Japanese companies by ensuring a transparent, predictable, and fair business environment. The two leaders also agreed to revitalize bilateral people-to-people exchanges, including between the youth who will lead the future of the two countries. The two leaders agreed to hold the Japan-China High-Level Economic Dialogue and the Japan-China High-Level People-to-People and Cultural Exchange Dialogue at an early date. Prime Minister Kishida stressed the need for both countries to act as responsible nations under the global rules on international issues, such as climate change and development finance. Regarding the situation over Ukraine, Prime Minister Kishida called on China to play a responsible role in maintaining international peace and security. Furthermore, the two leaders shared the concern that Russia's indication of the use of nuclear weapons in Ukraine is extremely alarming, and agreed on the view that nuclear weapons must never be used and that nuclear war must never be waged. Regarding North Korea, Prime Minister Kishida expressed his expectation that China will fulfill its role, including in the UN Security Council, while referring to his serious concern about North Korea's increased nuclear and missile activities. He also requested understanding and support toward the immediate resolution of the abductions issue and the two leaders confirmed that they would continue to work closely together on this issue. Finally, the two leaders agreed to maintain close communications at all levels including at the leaders' level.

Furthermore, even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, in November the Japan-China High-Level Consultation on Maritime Affairs was held, and Japan

and China continued to exchange their views, such as on a variety of issues related to the East China Sea and other areas.

In addition, on the occasion of the IISS Shangri-La Dialogue on June 12, a face-to-face Japan-China Minister of Defense Meeting was held between Defense Minister KISHI Nobuo and State Councilor and Defense Minister Wei Fenghe.

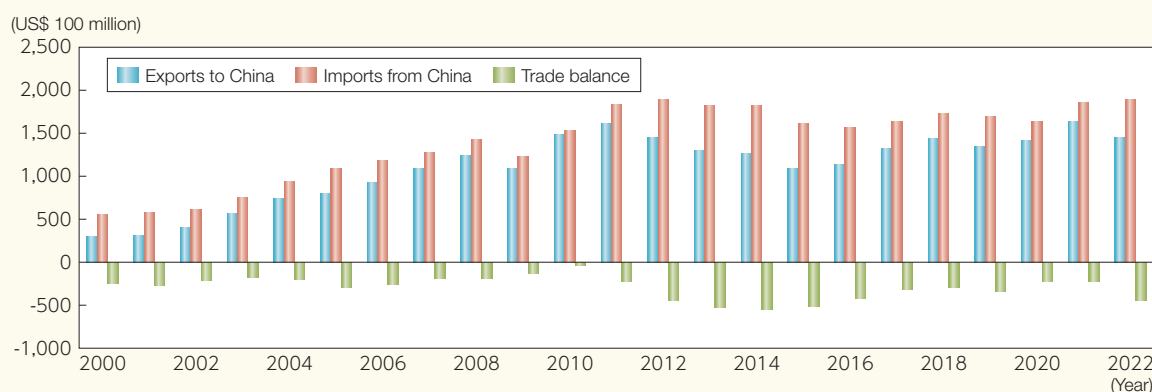
On February 21, a member of the Japanese Embassy in China was temporarily detained by the Chinese authorities against the person's will in Beijing. This case is a clear violation of the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations and is inadmissible and completely unacceptable, and, as such, Japan lodged a severe protest with China, and strongly requested an apology and measures to prevent a recurrence.

(B) Japan-China Economic Relations

Economic relations between Japan and China, including trade and investment, are very close. The global spread of COVID-19 has had a major impact on Japan-China economic relations since 2020, and travel between Japan and China continues to be significantly restricted. However, even under such circumstances, economic activities between Japan and China in 2022 showed a greater recovery than in the previous year, and the total trade between Japan and China (excluding Hong Kong) amounted to about 43.8 trillion yen in 2022 (14.3% increase year on year), and China has been the largest trading partner for Japan for 16 consecutive years. Moreover, according to Chinese statistics, Japan's direct investment in China was about 3.913 billion US dollars (16.0% increase year on year, as estimated from officially published information on investment) in 2021. Japan ranks third in terms of the amount of direct investment to China (Singapore ranks first, the ROK second, the U.S. fourth, and Germany fifth).

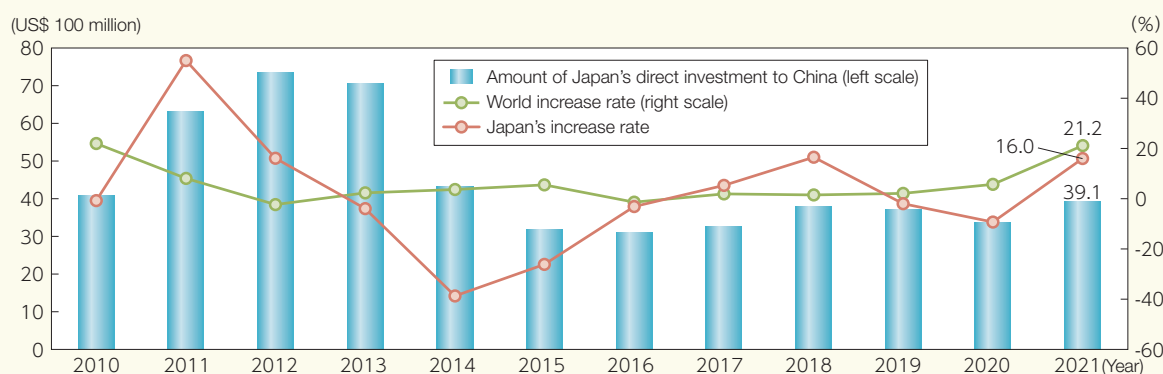
Economic dialogue between Japan and China continued, even as visits, including at high levels, were restricted due to the spread of COVID-19. At the Japan-China Foreign Ministers' Video Conference held in May, both Ministers confirmed to promote dialogue and cooperation related to Japan-China economic relations in a variety of areas and at a variety of levels in an appropriate manner, and stressed the importance of

Japan's Value of Trade with China



Source: Ministry of Finance and Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)

Japan's direct investment to China



Source: Ministry of Commerce of China

Note: Increase rate is estimated based on published amounts of investment.

pushing forward the people-to-people and economic exchanges between the two countries through efforts on both sides. At the Japan-China Summit Meeting held in November, the two leaders shared the view that mutually beneficial cooperation is possible in specific areas of economy and exchanges of people, and agreed that they will encourage cooperation in areas such as green economy including environment and energy conservation, as well as medical care, nursing care and healthcare. Additionally, as private-sector level economic exchanges, in September Premier Li Keqiang held a high-level online dialogue with the Japanese business community, and in November the eighth Japan-China Business Leader and Former High-Level Government Official Dialogue (Japan-China CEO Summit) was held online.

(C) Promotion of Mutual Understanding Between Japanese and Chinese People

(Current situation of people-to-people exchanges between Japan and China)

Since November 2020, China has restricted the scope of visa applications to business people who have already obtained a letter of invitation issued by a local government, but from June 2022, a letter of invitation was no longer required for visa applications. Since August, border measures have gradually been eased, such as resuming the issuance of long-term study visa. However, China is not allowing the new entry of foreign nationals for the purpose of tourism or short-term study in China, and strict border measures, such as continuing quarantine measures after entering China, are still in place (as of the end of January 2023).

The number of visitors to Japan from China was approximately 189,000 in 2022 (as of the end of February 2023, provisional value from the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO)). Although

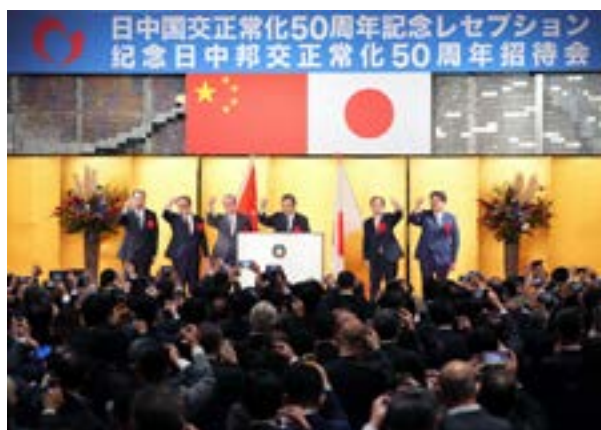
this value has significantly grown when compared to the previous year (finalized value from JNTO), the flow of people between Japan and China has not yet fully recovered to pre-COVID-19 levels.

(Exchanges in various fields)

2022 marks the 50th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China relations, and in cooperation with the 50th Anniversary of the Normalization of Japan-China relations Executive Committee for Promotion of Japan-China Exchange chaired by KEIDANREN (Japan Business Federation) Chairman TOKURA Masakazu, more than 220 exchange projects were certified for the 50th anniversary in a variety of fields such as cultural, economic, educational, tourism, and local areas. These exchanges were held in person between Japan and China, as well as through online formats. On September 29th,



Opening ceremony for Japan Festival Shenyang, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China relations (June 11, Shenyang, China)



Reception to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China relations, hosted by the 50th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China relations Executive Committee for Promotion of Japan-China Exchange (September 29, Tokyo)

the actual day of the 50th anniversary, a commemorative reception hosted by the 50th Anniversary Executive Committee was held in Tokyo, where messages commemorating the 50th anniversary exchanged between Prime Minister Kishida and President Xi Jinping were introduced. On the same day, a commemorative reception was also held in Beijing by the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the China-Japan Friendship Association.

As for Japan-China youth exchanges, in 2022, as in 2021, even though face-to-face exchange projects could not be implemented due to cross-border travel restrictions caused by COVID-19, youth exchanges such as the "JENESYS" Friendship Ties Program were achieved online, for the purpose of promoting mutual understanding and understanding of Japan between students and researchers from both countries.

(D) Specific Pending Issues

(Situation Surrounding the East China Sea)

In the East China Sea, China Coast Guard vessels continue to intrude into the Japanese territorial sea around the Senkaku Islands. The Chinese military has also been rapidly expanding and increasing its activities in quality and quantity at sea and in the airspace over the East China Sea.

The Senkaku Islands are indisputably an inherent territory of Japan in light of historical facts and based upon international law. Indeed, the Senkaku Islands are under the valid control of Japan. Thus, there exists no issue of territorial sovereignty to be resolved concerning the Senkaku Islands. From 1895, when the Senkaku Islands were incorporated into Japanese territory by lawful means under international law, until the 1970s, when the islands became the focus of attention after it was suggested that there might be oil reserves in the East China Sea, China had not raised any objections to Japan's sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands. Moreover, China has never explained why it had not expressed objections until then. Subsequently, in 2008, Marine Surveillance vessels first intruded into Japanese territorial sea surrounding the Senkaku Islands.⁷

⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs website detailing the position of the Government of Japan on the Senkaku Islands:
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/index.html>



During 2022, 28 incidents were recorded in which China Coast Guard vessels intruded into the Japanese territorial sea surrounding the Senkaku Islands (the numbers were 34 in 2021 and 24 in 2020). Since May 2020, Chinese Coast Guard vessels have intruded into the Japanese territorial sea of the Senkaku Islands and there have been incidents in which China Coast Guard vessels frequently attempt to approach Japanese fishing boats in those waters. The number of confirmed days in 2022 in which China Coast Guard vessels navigated in the contiguous zone around the Senkaku Islands reached a record high of 336 days, and the situation remains severe, as evidenced by an incident in December 2022 in which an intrusion into Japan's territorial sea lasted more than 72 hours, the longest ever recorded. The activities of the China Coast Guard vessels, which make their own assertions in Japan's territorial sea around the Senkaku Islands, are in violation of international law to begin with, and, in response to China's such unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force, through diplomatic routes the Government of Japan has repeatedly lodged strong protests, has called for the prompt withdrawal of Chinese vessels from Japan's territorial waters, and has demanded that such incidents be prevented from reoccurring. With the determination to defend Japan's territory as well as territorial sea and airspace, Japan will continue to take a calm and resolute approach to the situation.

Additionally, in June 2020, the "Law of the People's Republic of China on the People's Armed Police Force," which regulates the authority and duties of the People's Armed Police Force, was amended and "protection of interests at sea and law enforcement" was stipulated as a duty of the People's Armed Police Force. The Government of China is proceeding with the development of legal systems for securing maritime rights and protecting interests, such as by enacting, in February 2021, the "Coast Guard Law of the People's Republic of China," which stipulated enforcement of the Maritime Rights and Interests Protection Act as a duty of the China Coast Guard. In particular, the China Coast Guard Law contains provisions that have problems from the viewpoint of consistency with international law, such as ambiguities in the maritime areas where it can be applied and in the authority to use

weapons. Japan believes that the China Coast Guard Law should not undermine the legitimate interests of relevant countries, including Japan, and is conveying these serious concerns to China. Japan will continue to pay close attention to trends related to legislation in China.

Chinese naval vessels and aircraft have also been accelerating their activities in the sea and airspace around Japan, including in the East China Sea. In 2022, continuing on from the previous year, Japan confirmed multiple instances in which Chinese Navy survey ships navigated in Japanese territorial waters south of Yakushima. Joint flights by Chinese and Russian strategic bombers were confirmed in May and November, and continuing on from the previous year, joint navigation by Chinese and Russian vessels was confirmed in September. In July, a Chinese naval vessel entered the contiguous zone around the Senkaku Islands. Based on past movements of Chinese naval vessels in the waters surrounding Japan, the Government of Japan has strong concerns about the navigation of Chinese naval vessels in Japanese territorial waters. Furthermore, because the joint actions of Chinese and Russian militaries in the vicinity of Japan are a serious concern for Japan's security, Japan has appropriately communicated Japan's position to the Chinese side regarding each incident.

In August, in a series of military activities around Taiwan, China launched multiple ballistic missiles, five of which landed within Japan's EEZ. This series of military activities by China is a serious issue that concerns the security of Japan and the safety of its people, and seriously affects the peace and stability of the region and the international community. This is a matter of serious concern, and the Government of Japan strongly condemned and protested against the actions taken by China.

Chinese aircraft activity, including by unmanned aerial vehicles, continues to occur, and the number of times the Air Self-Defense Force had to scramble jets in response to Chinese military aircraft since autumn 2012 has remained high. In response to these recent activities by the Chinese military, Japan has been raising the issues through diplomatic routes.

China has been continuing its unilateral activities to develop natural resources while the EEZ and the

continental shelf between Japan and China in the East China Sea remain pending delimitation. In addition to the four structures built by the Chinese side prior to the “2008 Agreement,” the Government of Japan has confirmed 12 new structures built between June 2013 and May 2016 that are west of the geographical equidistance line. Moreover, since May 2022, two new structures have been installed, and Japan has confirmed that a total of 18 structures have been installed in 16 locations so far (at two of the 16 locations, two structures have been integrated into a single structure). Such unilateral development activities are extremely regrettable, and every time such moves by China are detected, Japan has strongly requested China to cease its unilateral development and to immediately resume negotiations for the conclusion of international agreements based on the implementation of the “2008 Agreement” regarding the cooperation between Japan and China on the development of natural resources in the East China Sea. At the summit meeting between Prime Minister Abe and President Xi Jinping in June 2019, the two leaders shared the view of promoting and implementing the “2008 Agreement” regarding resource development in order to achieve the goal of making the East China Sea a “Sea of Peace, Cooperation and Friendship.”

In recent years numerous activities by China to carry out maritime scientific surveys in the waters around Japan, including in Japan's EEZ in the East China Sea, without obtaining Japan's approval, have also continued, and each time this happens Japan raises objections

with the Chinese side through diplomatic routes.

In order to deal with these concerns appropriately, both Japan and China have been promoting dialogue and exchanges between the authorities concerned. Additionally, the Maritime and Aerial Communication Mechanism was concluded during the visit to Japan by Premier Li Keqiang in May 2018, and in June 2018 the defense authorities of Japan and China began operation of the Mechanism, which is highly significant for promoting mutual understanding between both countries and avoiding and preventing accidental collisions. At the Japan-China Summit Meeting in November 2022, it was agreed that the “hotline between the defense authorities of Japan and China” under this mechanism would be put into operation as soon as possible, and work is underway to establish it (as of the end of January 2023). Furthermore, the Japan-China Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) Agreement was signed during Prime Minister Abe's visit to China in October 2018, which creates a legal framework regarding Japan-China cooperation for the maritime search and rescue field, and it enables smoother and more efficient search and rescue activities.

As Japan has stated on repeated occasions, including at Japan-China Summit Meetings, true improvement in Japan-China relations cannot be achieved without stability in the East China Sea. It is highly meaningful from the perspective of building trust and bolstering cooperation for diplomats from both countries to directly and frankly exchange opinions, such as at the Japan-China High-Level Consultation on Maritime



Chinese maritime structures confirmed to have been built near the geographical equidistant line between Japan and China (Photo: Ministry of Defense)
For details, see https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/c_m1/page3e_000356.html



Affairs or other discussions between related authorities of both countries. The Government of Japan will assert Japan's position on individual issues through steady dialogue and continued bolstering of communication.

(Yamato Bank)

In the waters around the Yamato Bank in the Sea of Japan, the number of warnings to Chinese fishing vessels to leave is on the decline, but illegal fishing by Chinese fishing vessels was still confirmed in 2022. Utilizing opportunities such as Japan-China High-Level Consultation on Maritime Affairs, Japan has, at various levels, repeatedly conveyed its concerns and has strongly urged China to take effective steps, including strengthening measures such as providing guidance to those engaged in fishing.

(Japanese Food Import Restrictions Issue)

Regarding the import restrictions placed on food and agricultural products from Japan by China, Japan continues to strongly push at all levels for the removal of these restrictions, including at the Japan-China Foreign Ministers' Video Conference in May between Foreign Minister Hayashi and State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi, and at the Japan-China Summit Meeting in November between Prime Minister Kishida and President Xi Jinping. Japan will continue to take every opportunity to urge the Chinese side for the prompt removal of these restrictions.

(Cases of Detainment of Japanese Nationals)

In regard to successive cases of detainment of Japanese nationals, the Government of Japan has urged early release of Japanese detainees on various occasions between Japan and China, including summit and Foreign Ministers' meetings, and, so far, five Japanese nationals have been released before prosecution and three Japanese nationals have returned to Japan after serving their sentences. In addition to these individuals, three more individuals have returned to Japan after serving their sentences, in October 2022, December 2022, and January 2023, respectively. The Government of Japan has been strongly requesting, at all levels and at every occasion, that the Government of China provide early releases, transparency in law enforcement and judicial processes, and proper safeguards for the

rights of Japanese nationals, as well as ensuring impartial justice and humane treatment. Additionally, from the perspective of protecting Japanese nationals, the Government of Japan is providing as much support as possible, including consular visits and contact with family members.

(Overseas Chinese Police Outposts)

In September and December, Spanish NGO Safeguard Defenders released a report stating that regional police authorities in China had established outposts called "service stations" in more than 50 countries, including Japan, and pointed out the possibility that these outposts were being used to strengthen crackdowns outside of China and to monitor and threaten overseas Chinese nationals. With regard to this matter, Japan lodged a protest to China through diplomatic channels, stating that it would be absolutely unacceptable if activities that infringe upon Japan's sovereignty are taking place. Japan will continue to cooperate with relevant ministries and agencies, as well as with the G7 and other relevant countries, and strive to collect and analyze information, and take appropriate measures.

(Abandoned Chemical Weapons Issue)

The Government of Japan, in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), has been working on the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan in China. In 2022, amidst the impacts of COVID-19, Japan carried out projects such as the destruction of chemical weapons in Haerbaling District in Dunhua, Jilin Province and field surveys for and excavation/collection of abandoned chemical weapons shells in various parts of China (as of December, approximately 60,000 abandoned chemical weapons have been destroyed).

(2) Taiwan

A Domestic Affairs and Economy

From the end of March when the outbreak of the Omicron COVID-19 variant caused a significant increase in community transmission of COVID-19, Taiwan gradually shifted to a "with-COVID-19" policy, and from September 29, visa exemption measures were fully resumed, including for Japan.

On November 26, Taiwan's quadrennial local

elections were held, and in addition to the opposition Kuomintang (KMT) maintaining control of numerous local leader positions, the KMT also secured major victories by recapturing major special municipalities, and the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) suffered a heavy defeat in which its number of local leader positions was reduced. Following the election results, President Tsai Ing-wen resigned as Chair of the DPP.

Taiwan's economy in 2022 is forecast to have real annual GDP growth of plus 2.43% against a backdrop of continued growth in external demand, centered around semiconductors and other IT products, as well as a gradual recovery in private consumption.

B Cross-strait Relations and External Relations

From August 2 to 3, U.S. Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan, met with President Tsai Ing-wen, and held a joint press conference with her. China announced on August 2 that it would hold military exercises, including live-fire exercises, around Taiwan from August 4 to 7. On August 4, multiple ballistic missiles landed in the waters near Japan including its EEZ, and numerous Chinese military aircraft flew over the Taiwan Strait median line on consecutive days. During this time, the websites of public institutions in Taiwan were hit by cyberattacks, and Foreign Minister Jaushieh Joseph Wu said that the cyberattacks were confirmed to have originated from Chinese and Russian IP addresses. China also temporarily suspended imports of Taiwanese citrus fruits and other products from August 3, and announced economic sanctions against "Taiwan independence elements" on August 16.

On August 4, the G7 issued an urgent Foreign Ministers' Statement⁸ calling on China not to unilaterally change the status quo by force, and Japan urged China to immediately suspend its military exercises. That evening, President Tsai Ing-wen stated to the international community that Taiwan is committed to maintaining the status quo of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, that peace across the Taiwan Strait is

a joint regional responsibility, and that Taiwan is open to constructive dialogue.

On August 10, China announced its third white paper on Taiwan entitled "The Taiwan Question and China's Reunification in the New Era," which followed the 1993 and 2000 white papers on Taiwan by the Government of China, with the new white paper stating that "the Taiwan authorities, led by DPP, have redoubled their efforts to divide the country." At the CPC National Congress in October, General Secretary Xi Jinping stated in his report that "We will continue to strive for peaceful reunification with the greatest sincerity and the utmost effort, but we will never promise to renounce the use of force, and we reserve the option of taking all measures necessary."

Active visits to Taiwan by parliamentarians and legislators, etc. from various countries' legislatures have continued, including by parliamentarians and legislators from Japan, the U.S., European countries, as well as from Indonesia and Ukraine.

Taiwan was an observer at the World Health Organization (WHO) General Assembly from 2009 to 2016, but has not been able to participate since 2017. Japan has consistently asserted that there should be no geographical gap in responding to international health issues. From this perspective, Japan has consistently supported Taiwan's participation as an observer to the WHO General Assembly.

C Japan-Taiwan Relations

In December 2022, the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association and the Taiwan-Japan Relations Association, which are private-sector contact organizations between Japan and Taiwan, celebrated their 50th anniversary. For Japan, Taiwan is an extremely crucial partner and an important friend, with which it shares fundamental values and principles such as freedom, democracy, basic human rights and the rule of law, and enjoys close economic relations and people-to-people exchanges. The relations between Japan and Taiwan are maintained on the basis of working relations at the non-governmental level in accordance with the 1972 Joint Communiqué

⁸ G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement on Preserving Peace and Stability Across the Taiwan Strait
https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press3e_000433.html



between Japan and China. The sentiments of Japanese and Taiwanese citizens toward each other are generally favorable. In a survey conducted in January 2022 by the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association, 77% of Taiwanese respondents said they “felt close to Japan” or “relatively felt close to Japan,” and, according to a survey conducted in November 2021 by the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Japan, 76% of Japanese respondents said that they “felt close to Taiwan” or “relatively felt close to Taiwan.”

On February 21, Taiwan eased the import restrictions that it had imposed after the Great East Japan Earthquake on agricultural and marine products and foods produced or processed in Fukushima, Gunma, Tochigi, Ibaraki, and Chiba prefectures. Japan will continue to persistently urge Taiwan to lift the remaining import restrictions as soon as possible based on scientific evidence.

In March, the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association and the Taiwan-Japan Relations Association signed a Memorandum of Understanding on Food Safety and Food Imports, bringing the total number of agreements between the two associations to 59.

In September, Taiwan-Japan Relations Association Chairman Su Jia-chyuan, former legislative speaker Wang Jin-pyng, and Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Japan representative Frank CT Hsieh from Taiwan attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo.

(3) Mongolia

A Domestic Affairs

At the end of 2021, the Oyun-Erdene Administration made efforts toward realizing the “New Recovery Policy” it announced in late 2021, which is for economic self-reliance after COVID-19 (policies aimed at recovery of border ports, energy, industry, urban and rural development, green development, and public sector efficiency).

In March, the Government of Mongolia practically abolished quarantine measures against individuals entering Mongolia, and greatly eased infection control measures and restrictions in the country.

In August, following a ruling of unconstitutionality by the Constitutional Court of Mongolia that invalidated a provision in the 2020 constitutional

amendment that restricted the number of State Great Hural (Parliament of Mongolia) members who could serve as Cabinet Ministers (the provision stipulated that no more than four State Great Hural members, in addition to the Prime Minister, could serve as Cabinet Ministers), the Cabinet was reshuffled and a number of State Great Hural members were appointed as Cabinet Ministers (Foreign Minister B. Battsetseg, who is not a member of the State Great Hural, remains as a Cabinet minister).

In order to contribute to solving the problem of climate change, President U. Khurelsukh vigorously promoted the “One Billion Trees” initiative, which he announced at the General Debate of the UN General Assembly in 2021. Also, he encouraged efforts to improve domestic food self-sufficiency, in response to recent sharp rises in the prices of daily necessities, including food, due to external factors.

B Foreign Policy

Mongolia, which is dependent on China and Russia for its economy and energy, has been seeking to maintain relations with both neighboring countries as well as to further strengthen ties with “third neighbors” in the wake of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. Starting with Foreign Minister Hayashi’s visit to Mongolia from late April to early May, numerous foreign dignitaries have visited Mongolia, including Foreign Minister of Russia Sergei Lavrov (July), State Councilor and Foreign Minister of China Wang Yi (August), UN Secretary-General António Guterres (August), and Foreign Minister of Republic of Korea Park Jin. Furthermore, when President Khurelsukh attended the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit in September, he held a trilateral meeting with the leaders of China and Russia, and also held meetings with the leaders of other participating countries. Prime Minister L. Oyun-Erdene also actively visited other countries, including Singapore, Russia, and Germany.

C Economy

China had closed the major border checkpoints between Mongolia and China since November 2021 in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and border restrictions had been prolonged even into 2022 (the border restrictions were relaxed in May 2022), which caused

Column

A Promise Fulfilled: Reunited After 28 Years

“When you grow up, I will invite you to Mongolia.”

One day, a young man from Mongolia made this promise to a little Japanese girl in his host family in Japan. It was the summer of 1994.

At the time, the Government of Japan and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) were conducting a variety of invitation programs for training in Japan to support Mongolia building a new country in its transition to democracy and a market economy in 1990. As part of these initiatives, the young man came to Japan for a little over a month and spent several days with a Japanese family. He sipped *sake* (*Japanese alcohol*) together with the family almost every night, and, while they didn't understand each other's language, he felt that they had a real connection. In the house where three generations lived together, there was a little girl who was about the same age as the daughter he had left back in Mongolia. He was particularly fond of this little girl, and he made her the promise when it was time for him to go back to Mongolia.

After returning to Mongolia, he was unable to fulfill his promise, and time passed quickly. In October 2019, he represented Mongolia at the Ceremony of the Enthronement of His Majesty the Emperor. Then, he requested the liaison official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, “Please find my host family from back then.”

He did not remember the name of the place or even the family members, and the only clues he had were a few photos that were pasted in an album, so the search got off to a rocky start. At last, however, the person was found, who said that “Khurlee (a common name for “Khurelsukh”) stayed at our house.” It was the family of TAKAMURA Mitoshi in Aomori Prefecture, and the little girl had grown up and become a mother.

Khurlee, who had become the Prime Minister of Mongolia, immediately sent an invitation to the family. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the family was unable to visit Mongolia.

In June 2021, Khurlee ran for President and won a complete victory to become the President of Mongolia. However, even as President, he never forgot his promise. In 2022, the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Mongolia, he once again invited his family to Mongolia. Then finally, in July, during the “Naadam,” Mongolia's largest festival, the four generations of the TAKAMURA family finally visited Mongolia and reunited with President Khurelsukh. The President and his family extended a warm welcome to the TAKAMURA family. After 28 years, the promise between the young Mongolian man, Khurlee, and the little Japanese girl was finally fulfilled.

In September, a grandchild of the TAKAMURA family was among the participants of the “Aomori Youth Speech Contest” held in Gonohe Town, Aomori Prefecture. He spoke about his family's visit to Mongolia and their exchanges there over the summer.

This story, originating from an encounter 28 years ago, continues to be passed on to the next generation.



Photo from the photo album of President Khurelsukh (called “Khurlee”). President Khurelsukh is in the center of the front row (1994, Aomori Prefecture)



President Khurelsukh and members of the TAKAMURA family reunited in Mongolia (Photo: TAKAMURA family)

trade with China to stagnate as well as soaring import prices. In addition to this, due to factors such as external shocks (stagnant trade with Russia and Europe, and soaring prices) caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Mongolia's growth rate in 2022 is expected to be 3.71% (forecast as of September 2022). On the other hand, domestic demand was revitalized with the relaxation of domestic COVID-19 restrictions from February. According to government economic statistics for 2022, exports increased by 35.7% and imports increased by 27.2% year on year. In the statistics for September, Mongolia recorded a 25.4% increase in tax revenue and a 52.0% increase in industrial production.

D Japan-Mongolia Relations

The year of 2022, the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Mongolia, turned out to be a year with various events including visits by dignitaries of the two countries, dialogues and cooperation, and other exchanges, in order to overcome the COVID-19 pandemic and make it a year of restoration of people-to-people exchanges, as well as to make it a year to look back on the past 50 years and create the foundation and bonds for the next 50 years.

From late April to early May, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Mongolia, held a Japan-Mongolia Foreign Ministers' Meeting, paid a courtesy call to the President and Prime Minister, and exchanged views on bilateral relations and regional situations including on Ukraine and North Korea. Then, Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene, Foreign Minister Battsetseg, and Minister of Energy B. Chojilsuren attended the state funeral for

the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September, and a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Kishida and a working lunch with Foreign Minister Hayashi were held. Furthermore, in November President Khurelsukh made an official visit to Japan, held a Japan-Mongolia Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Kishida, and Japan and Mongolia announced that they would upgrade their relationship to a "special strategic partnership for peace and prosperity," and released a joint statement, and the annex to the joint statement outlining the content of the cooperation that the two countries will undertake over the next 10 years.

In 2022, a variety of projects to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Mongolia, as well as youth exchange promotion projects, were implemented in both countries throughout the year. As part of this, in late August, the 50th Anniversary Delegation headed by HAYASHI Motoo, Chairman of the 50th Anniversary Executive Committee for the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations, visited Mongolia and, in addition to meeting with dignitaries such as the President, Chairman of the State Great Hural, and Prime Minister, they participated in "Ikh Khuralдай," symposium that was organized by private organizations, and the "White Road" dance festival held in Sukhbaatar Square. Also, from July to September, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan hosted the Japan-Mongolia Student Forum (three-day online study session and two-night, three-day exchange camp), where students from both countries deepened mutual understanding and exchanges.

3 Korean Peninsula

(1) North Korea (including the abductions issue)

The Government of Japan has been taking various initiatives to realize its basic policy of seeking to normalize its relations with North Korea through comprehensively resolving outstanding issues of concern, such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues, as well as settlement of the unfortunate past in accordance with the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration

of September 2002. In 2022, North Korea launched ballistic missiles with an unprecedented frequency and in unprecedented manners, launching ballistic missiles 31 times (at least 59 launches) including missiles that flew over Japan and multiple intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)-class ballistic missiles. The series of actions by North Korea, including ballistic missile launches that exacerbate the situation, constitutes a

grave and imminent threat to Japan's national security and poses a clear and serious challenge to the international community. It is totally unacceptable. Japan will continue to fully implement relevant UN Security Council resolutions and aim for the denuclearization of North Korea, coordinating closely with the U.S. and the Republic of Korea (ROK) while cooperating with the international community. With regard to the abductions issue, Japan continues to call on North Korea to implement the May 2014 Japan-North Korea agreement (the agreement in Stockholm)⁹ and will continue to make utmost efforts to realize the return of all abductees at the earliest possible date, while working closely with relevant countries, including the U.S.

A North Korea Nuclear and Missile Issues

(A) Recent Trends in North Korea Nuclear and Missile Issues

North Korea has not carried out the dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner, in accordance with the series of relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

In April, a military parade was held to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the founding of the Korean People's Revolutionary Army, and in his speech, President of the State Affairs Commission Kim Jong Un is reported to have said "we will continue to take measures for further developing the nuclear forces of our state at the fastest possible speed." At the military parade, it was also reported that the columns of the latest tactical missile units, a column of super-large Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS), columns of strategic missiles, and a Hwasong-17 intercontinental ballistic missile were on display. In September, the 7th Session of the 14th Supreme People's Assembly was held, and a decree "On the DPRK's Policy on the Nuclear Forces" was discussed and adopted. At the 7th session, it was also reported that President Kim stated that, with regard to North Korea's nuclear weapons, "we have drawn the line of no retreat regarding our nuclear weapons," and "herein lies the great importance of the legalization of the policy of the nuclear forces," as well as "even

a moment around the difficulties we are experiencing now; we can never give up the nuclear weapons," "we will make the nuclear combat posture consolidated in every way," and that "it is also necessary to steadily step up the deployment of cutting-edge strategic and tactical weapon systems."

In 2022, North Korea launched ballistic missiles with an unprecedented frequency and in unprecedented manners, launching ballistic missiles 31 times (at least 59 launches). On January 5 and 11, it launched ballistic missiles that it called "hypersonic missiles." Additionally, North Korea announced that it had launched ballistic missiles as "a firing drill for checking and judging the proficiency in the action procedures of the railway-borne missile regiment of North Phyongan Province" on January 14, "tactical guided missiles" on January 17 and 27, and a "long-range cruise missile" on January 25. On January 30, North Korea launched what appeared to be an intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) "Hwasong-12," and launched an ICBM-class ballistic missile on February 27 and March 5 for what they claimed as important tests for developing a "reconnaissance satellite." Furthermore, approximately one week after the launch of a ballistic missile on March 16, which was assumed to have not flown successfully, on March 24 North Korea launched an apparently new type of ICBM-class ballistic missile. It was estimated that this missile had a flight distance of approximately 1,100 kilometers, with a maximum altitude that exceeded 6,000 kilometers, and that it fell into Japan's EEZ, approximately 150 kilometers west of the Oshima Peninsula in Hokkaido. In response to North Korea's provocative actions, on April 1, the Government of Japan announced further measures against North Korea and additionally designated four entities and nine individuals as subject to asset freezes and other measures.

Following these launches, North Korea launched a ballistic missile on May 4, a submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) on May 7, three ballistic missiles on May 12, and on May 25 launched an ICBM-class ballistic missile and a ballistic missile. On May 27, following the launch of a series of ballistic missiles,

⁹ In May 2014, Japan-North Korea Intergovernmental Consultations were held in Stockholm, Sweden. North Korea promised to conduct a comprehensive and full-scale investigation on all Japanese nationals, including abductees.

which included ICBM-class ballistic missiles, the U.S. proposed a new UN Security Council resolution that included tougher sanctions. Although the resolution received the support of the 13 Security Council Member States other than China and Russia, it was rejected due to the veto exercised by China and Russia. On the other hand, at the UN General Assembly held on June 8 and 10, numerous member states criticized North Korea's nuclear and missile activities and its violation of the Security Council's resolutions. During this period, on June 5, North Korea launched eight ballistic missiles from multiple locations.

North Korea also launched a cruise missile on August 17, and then launched a series of ballistic missiles on September 25, 28, and 29 in a short period of time. On October 1, 4, 6, 9, and 14, North Korea launched ballistic missiles and, on October 4, a ballistic missile flew over Japan. On October 18, the Government of Japan, as further measures against North Korea, additionally designated five entities involved in North Korea's nuclear and missile development as subject to asset freezes and other measures.

North Korea launched ballistic missiles on November 2, 3, 9, and 18, including the launch of a possible ICBM-class ballistic missile. The ICBM-class ballistic missile on November 18 was estimated to fly a distance of approximately 1,000 kilometers, with a maximum altitude that exceeding 6,000 kilometers and fall within Japan's EEZ, approximately 200 kilometers west of Oshima-Oshima Island in Hokkaido. On December 2, the Government of Japan, as further measures against North Korea, additionally designated three entities and one individual involved in North Korea's nuclear and missile development as subject to asset freezes and other measures.

On December 18, North Korea launched two ballistic missiles claiming as a crucial test of final stage for the development of "reconnaissance satellite," and five days later, on December 23, it launched another ballistic missile. Furthermore, on December 31, 2022, and January 1, 2023, North Korea launched ballistic missiles that it termed "super-large MLRS."

As a result of the measures taken against North Korea so far, the Government of Japan has designated 137 entities and 121 individuals in total as subject to asset freezes and other measures.

Regarding North Korea's nuclear activities, the U.S. State Department released their assessment in May that North Korea could be ready to conduct a nuclear test at the Punggye-ri test site in the northeastern part of North Korea in the same month. Additionally, in May it was also reported that the ROK's National Intelligence Service (NIS) revealed that North Korea had completed all preparations for its seventh nuclear test and was waiting on the timing to conduct the test. In June, the U.S. State Department also indicated that North Korea had completed preparations for a nuclear test. In September, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General's report pointed out that there were indications that North Korea had reopened Adit 3 and constructed several new support buildings at the nuclear test site located near the settlement of Punggye-ri.

(B) Initiatives by Japan and Cooperation with the International Community

The repeated launches of ballistic missiles and others by North Korea are serious challenges not only to Japan, but also to the international community, and are completely unacceptable. It is crucial that the international community makes concerted efforts to fully implement the UN Security Council resolutions for the dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner by North Korea. Japan has confirmed these points at meetings with the leaders and foreign ministers of various countries.

Recognizing that the collaboration among Japan, the U.S., and the ROK is essential for regional peace and stability beyond issues related to North Korea, Japan, the U.S., and the ROK have been enhancing collaboration at multiple levels, through holding Summit Meetings, Foreign Ministers' Meetings, Vice-Ministerial Meetings, and Heads of Delegation Meetings for the Six-Party Talks. On June 29, on the occasion of the NATO Summit Meeting in Madrid, Spain, a Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting was held for the first time in about four years and nine months. On November 13, Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, on the occasion of the ASEAN-related Summit Meetings. The three leaders shared the recognition that bilateral and trilateral

cooperation among Japan, the U.S., and the ROK is becoming increasingly important in the face of North Korea's provocations, which are unprecedented both in their frequency and their manner, and a looming possibility of further provocations. They concurred to work together to take resolute actions toward the complete denuclearization of North Korea. After the meeting, the "Phnom Penh Statement on Trilateral Partnership for the Indo-Pacific" was released. Following this, in response to North Korea's launch of an ICBM-class ballistic missile on November 18, an emergency meeting was held by the leaders of Japan, the U.S., the ROK, Australia, Canada, and New Zealand who were attending the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, at which the leaders condemned the ballistic missile launch in the strongest possible terms and concurred that it is absolutely unacceptable. At the Foreign Minister level, a Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in Honolulu, the U.S., on February 12, and in Bali, Indonesia, on July 8, on the occasion of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting. On September 22, a Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in New York, the U.S., on the occasion of the UN General Assembly. The three Foreign Ministers aligned their views on how to respond to further provocations by North Korea, including another nuclear test, and on future measures toward the complete denuclearization of North Korea. The three Foreign Ministers also concurred to further enhance the collaboration among Japan, the U.S., and the ROK at multiple levels. After the meeting, a joint statement on the Japan-U.S.-ROK Trilateral Ministers' Meeting was released. On November 21, following North Korea's launch of an ICBM-class ballistic missile on November 18, the "G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement on the Launch of an Intercontinental Ballistic Missile by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)" was released.

As part of the Japan Coast Guard's patrolling activities and the Self-Defense Forces' surveillance operations, Japan has also been conducting information gathering on the activities of vessels suspected to be violating the UN Security Council resolutions. When the Government of Japan finds activities strongly

suspected to be violating the UN Security Council resolutions, including ship-to-ship transfers¹⁰ with North Korean vessels, measures have been taken such as notification to the UN Security Council 1718 Sanctions Committee and other bodies, sharing of information with related countries, and releasing of information to the public. Aircraft of Canada, Australia, and France, in addition to U.S. aircraft, have, based on the UN Status of Forces Agreement, used U.S. military facilities and areas in Japan to engage in surveillance operations against illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers. Furthermore, monitoring and surveillance activities were conducted in the waters surrounding Japan, including the East China Sea, by naval vessels such as multiple vessels of the U.S. Navy, the French Navy frigate *VENDÉMIAIRE*, the Royal Australian Navy frigates HMAS *PARRAMATTA* and HMAS *ARUNTA*, the Royal Canadian Navy frigate HMCS *VANCOUVER*, and the UK Royal Navy frigate HMS *TAMAR*. From the perspective of further deepening the multinational cooperation, Japan considers it significant that concerned countries are sharing information and coordinating efforts to ensure that UN Security Council resolutions are implemented fully and effectively.

B The Abductions Issue and Japan-North Korea Relations

(A) Basic Position on the Abductions Issue

To date, the Government of Japan has identified 12 separate incidents, involving a total of 17 Japanese abductees, 12 of whom have not yet returned home. North Korea claims that 8 of these 12 abductees have died and that it is unable to confirm that the other 4 ever entered its territory, but as no convincing explanation of this claim has been provided, Japan continues to work toward the resolution of this issue on the assumption that all of the abductees whose whereabouts are unknown are still alive. As well as being a critical issue concerning the sovereignty of Japan and the lives and safety of Japanese citizens, abductions by North Korea constitute a universal issue among the international community as a violation of basic human

¹⁰ In this context, "ship-to-ship transfers" refers to the transfers to or from North Korea-flagged vessels of any goods or items at sea, which UN Security Council resolution 2375 (adopted in September 2017) prohibits the UN member states from facilitating or engaging in.

rights. In addition, the abductions issue is a humanitarian issue with a time constraint. Not just the abductees themselves, but also their families having reached an advanced age, and they continue to work toward the resolution of this problem with a determination to “never give up.” Based on the basic recognition that the normalization of its relations with North Korea is impossible without resolving the abductions issue, Japan has positioned its resolution as the most important issue. Accordingly, Japan has strongly urged North Korea to provide a full account of all the abduction cases, to hand over the perpetrators to Japan, and to ensure the safety of all abductees and their immediate return to Japan, irrespective of whether the abductees are officially identified. In January 2023, Prime Minister Kishida gave a policy speech where he stated: “the abductions issue, one of our highest priorities, is a grave humanitarian issue and we have no time to lose in resolving it. I will resolutely make every possible effort to achieve the return of all the abductees to Japan at the earliest possible date, seizing every possible opportunity. I am determined to meet with President Kim Jong Un myself face to face, without any conditions.”

(B) Initiatives by Japan

Following the nuclear test by North Korea in January 2016 and the launch of the ballistic missile in the following month, which North Korea purported to be a “satellite,” Japan announced its autonomous measures against North Korea in February 2016. In response, North Korea unilaterally announced that it would completely stop the investigations on all Japanese abductees and dissolve the Special Investigation Committee. Japan lodged a serious protest against North Korea, conveyed its intention of not abandoning the agreement in Stockholm, and strongly demanded that North Korea implement the agreement and return all the abductees home at the earliest possible date.

(C) Japan-North Korea Relations

During the reception of the PyeongChang Olympic Winter Games Opening Ceremony hosted by President Moon Jae-in in February, 2018, Prime Minister Abe brought up the abductions, nuclear and missile issues and conveyed Japan’s basic position to Kim Yong Nam, President of the Presidium of the

Supreme People’s Assembly of North Korea. Prime Minister Abe strongly urged North Korea to resolve the abductions issue, especially the return of all abductees to Japan. In September, Foreign Minister KONO Taro held a meeting with the North Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs Ri Yong Ho at the UN headquarters. In September 2022, Prime Minister Kishida addressed the 77th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, declaring “I am determined to meet with President Kim Jong Un without any conditions.”

(D) Cooperation with the International Community

In order to resolve the abductions issue, it is essential for Japan not only to proactively urge North Korea, but also to gain understanding and support from other countries regarding the importance of resolving the abductions issue. Japan has taken all possible diplomatic opportunities to raise the abductions issue, including at summit meetings, foreign ministers’ meetings and international conferences such as the G7 Summit, the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Summit Meeting, the Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit, the Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting, ASEAN-related Summit Meetings, and UN meetings. With regard to the U.S., President Trump raised the abductions issue with President Kim at the U.S.-North Korea Summit in June 2018, at the request of Prime Minister Abe. At the second U.S.-North Korea Summit in February 2019, President Trump raised the abductions issue with President Kim at the tête-à-tête meeting, which was held first on the first day, and clearly stated Prime Minister Abe’s views regarding the abductions issue. Furthermore, at the small group dinner that followed, President Trump again raised the abductions issue, and a serious discussion was held between the leaders. Moreover, at the Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting on January 22, 2022, and at the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting on May 23, 2022, Prime Minister Kishida asked for full understanding and cooperation again for the immediate resolution of the abductions issue, and gained further support from President Biden. During his visit to Japan in May, President Biden met with the family members of the abductees, listened carefully and earnestly to the families’ sentiments and their requests for U.S. support in resolving the abductions issue as soon as possible,

and encouraged them. Furthermore, at the October 4 Japan-U.S. Summit Telephone Meeting, the November 13 Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting, and the January 13, 2023 Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting, Prime Minister Kishida asked for continued understanding and cooperation toward the resolution of the abductions issue, to which President Biden offered his full support. With regard to China, at the Japan-China Summit Meeting in June 2019, President Xi Jinping stated that he had conveyed Japan's position on Japan-North Korea relations and Prime Minister Abe's views to President Kim during the China-North Korea Summit held in the same month. Prime Minister Abe also gained the strong support of President Xi for the improvement of Japan-North Korea relations, including the abductions issue. During the Japan-China Summit Meeting on November 17, 2022, Prime Minister Kishida requested President Xi Jinping's understanding and support toward the immediate resolution of the abductions issue, and the two leaders confirmed that they would continue to work closely together on this issue. The ROK has also raised the abductions issue with North Korea at multiple opportunities, including the Inter-Korean Summit in April 2018. At the Japan-ROK Summit Meeting in December 2019, President Moon Jae-in of the ROK expressed his understanding for Japan's position regarding the importance of the abductions issue and stated that the ROK had repeatedly raised the abductions issue with North Korea. During the October 6, 2022 Japan-ROK Summit Telephone Meeting and the November 13 Japan-ROK Summit Meeting, Prime Minister Kishida asked for continued understanding and cooperation for the resolution of the abductions issue, and once again gained President Yoon Suk Yeol's support. At the UN Human Rights Council in April and at the UN General Assembly in December, the EU submitted the Joint Statement on DPRK Human Rights, which was co-sponsored by Japan, and it was adopted without a vote. Furthermore, in December, an informal UN Security Council consultation on the human rights situation in North Korea was held, and afterwards, like-minded countries, including Japan, issued a joint statement urging the resolution of the abductions issue, particularly the immediate return of the abductees. Japan will continue to closely coordinate and cooperate with relevant

countries, including the U.S., toward the immediate resolution of the abductions issue.

C North Korea's External Relations, etc.

(A) U.S.-North Korea Relations

From 2018 to 2019, the U.S. and North Korea held two summit meetings as well as a meeting between President Trump and President Kim in Panmunjom, and in October 2019, U.S.-North Korea working-level talks were convened in Stockholm, Sweden. However, after this, no concrete progress was made in dialogues between the U.S. and North Korea.

Through President Biden's North Korea policy review in April 2021, the U.S. has made it clear that its goal remains the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and that it is stepping up its efforts to ensure the security of its allies, including Japan. In October 2022, the U.S. released a new National Security Strategy (NSS), indicating that it would seek sustained diplomacy toward the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and that it would strengthen extended deterrence in the face of North Korean weapons of mass destruction and missile threats. At the Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting in November, the three leaders shared the recognition that bilateral and trilateral cooperation among Japan, the U.S., and the ROK is becoming increasingly important as North Korea continues its provocations, and in the Phnom Penh Statement on Trilateral Partnership for the Indo-Pacific that was released after the meeting, President Biden reiterated that the U.S. commitment to defend Japan and the ROK is ironclad and backed by the full range of capabilities, including nuclear. At the same time, the U.S. has also stated on various occasions that the U.S. has no hostile intentions toward North Korea and that it is prepared to meet with North Korea without any preconditions.

On the other hand, it was reported that President Kim said in his speech at the 7th Session of the 14th Supreme People's Assembly in September: "in direct proportion to the increase of the period of suffering imposed on our people by the U.S.'s brutal hostile policy against us, our absolute strength is continuing to be built up at exponential speed and the security threat they have to face is increasing in direct proportion;" "there will never be such a thing as our abandonment

of the nuclear weapons or denuclearization first, nor will there be any negotiations to this end or bargaining chip in these process;" and "our Republic's nuclear forces represent the destiny of the country and the people and their lasting prestige." From September 25 to October 9, President Kim directed the "military drills of the Korean People's Army units for the operation of tactical nukes," and, on October 10, he is reported to have said "the enemies have still talked about dialogue and negotiation while posing military threats to us, but we have no content for dialogue with the enemies and felt no necessity to do so."

Furthermore, at the 6th Enlarged Plenary Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the Workers Party of Korea (WPK), held from December 26 to 31, President Kim is reported to have said that the U.S. was "pushing forward the realization of triangular cooperation with Japan and South Korea on a full scale while working hard to establish a new military bloc like an Asian version of NATO," emphasized the need to strengthen military capabilities, and highlighted "the importance and necessity of mass-producing tactical nuclear weapons and calls for an exponential increase of the country's nuclear arsenal."

In response to a series of provocations by North Korea, including ballistic missile launches, the U.S. decided to additionally designate individuals and entities as subjects of its own sanctions in January, March, April, May, August, October, November, and December of 2022, respectively.

(B) Inter-Korean Relations

In May, President Yoon Suk Yeol's administration was inaugurated in the ROK with the goal of "normalizing inter-Korean relations." In his inaugural address, President Yoon stated; "if North Korea genuinely embarks on a process to complete denuclearization, we are prepared to work with the international community to present an audacious plan that will vastly strengthen North Korea's economy and improve the quality of life for its people." In August during the Liberation Day speech, he proposed "the audacious initiative"

on the condition of genuine and substantial progress on denuclearization of North Korea, and referred to the implementation of a large-scale food program; assistance for power generation, transmission and distribution infrastructure; projects to modernize ports and airports for international trade, as well as technical assistance program to enhance North Korea's agricultural productivity, assistance to modernize hospitals and medical infrastructure, international investment and financial support initiatives. In response to this, North Korea released a statement in August by Kim Yo Jong, Vice Department Director of the Central Committee of the WPK, describing the "audacious initiative" by the ROK as "the height of absurdity as it is an impracticable one" and commenting that it was not a new one, but a replica of 'denuclearization, opening and 3000' raised by their President Lee Myung Bak.

In October, using U.S.-ROK military exercises as a pretext, North Korea carried out provocative actions, including repeated ballistic missile launches, bombardments with multi-launch rockets, and demonstrations by military aircraft. The ROK criticized North Korea for repeatedly shelling the zone where all live-fire artillery drills and field training exercises were agreed to be ceased in the "Agreement on the Implementation of the Historic Panmunjom Declaration"¹¹ in the Military Domain"¹² that was adopted at the Inter-Korean Summit Meeting in 2018. Also in October, the Government of the ROK additionally designated subjects of its own sanctions against North Korea for the first time in about five years, citing a series of North Korea's missile launches and other reasons. When North Korea launched a number of missiles in November, one ballistic missile landed near the ROK's territorial waters, south of the Northern Limit Line (NLL), for the first time since the division of Korea. The ROK strongly denounced this action. In response to North Korea's launch of an ICBM-class ballistic missile in November, the ROK in December additionally designated subjects of its own further sanctions against North Korea. At the end of December, North Korean drones violated the ROK's airspace, and one flew as far as Seoul.

¹¹ "Panmunjom Declaration on Peace, Prosperity and Reunification of the Korean Peninsula" signed at the Inter-Korean Summit between President Moon and President Kim on April 28, 2018. President Kim's intention for the denuclearization of North Korea was affirmed in writing.

¹² Based on this agreement, which was adopted as a result of the Inter-Korean Summit in September 2018, measures were taken that include the suspension of military exercises around the Military Demarcation Line (MDL), the establishment of a no-fly zone over the MDL, and withdrawal of some guard posts in the demilitarized zone.

(C) China-North Korea and Russia-North Korea Relations

Since 2020, due to the spread of COVID-19, there was no travel by dignitaries between China and North Korea or between Russia and North Korea as before, but China and North Korea have exchanged congratulatory messages between President Kim and President Xi Jinping on occasions such as the anniversary of the founding of their “countries,” and in August the Central Committee of the WPK of North Korea expressed its full support for China’s Taiwan policy in a letter of solidarity that was addressed to the Central Committee of Communist Party of China (CPC). Between Russia and North Korea, in addition to sending congratulatory message on occasions such as the anniversary of the founding of their “countries,” in July 2022 it was reported that North Korea “recognized” the “independence” of the “Donetsk People’s Republic” and “Luhansk People’s Republic” in eastern Ukraine. Additionally, North Korea made moves to defend Russia’s position regarding its aggression against Ukraine, such as issuing a statement in October in support of purported “incorporation” of certain regions of Ukraine by Russia.

Trade between China and North Korea, which accounts for approximately 90% of North Korea’s entire external trade excluding inter-Korean trade, also significantly reduced when compared to pre-COVID-19 levels due to traffic restrictions following the global spread of COVID-19. Although it was announced in January that the cross-border rail freight between Dandong, China, and Sinuiju, North Korea, would be resumed, in April, it was announced again that this service would be temporarily suspended. However, later in September, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China said that it was decided to resume this service through friendly consultations. As a result, the China-North Korea trade volume in 2022 greatly exceeded that of the previous year, but has yet to recover to pre-COVID-19 levels.

(D) Other Issues

In 2022, a total of 49 drifting or wrecked wooden vessels presumed to be from North Korea were discovered (18 in 2021) on Japan’s coast with the Sea of Japan. The Government of Japan continues its effort

to gather and analyze information, with great interest on relevant developments. In September 2020, a vessel that appeared to be an official North Korean vessel in Japan’s EEZ in the west of the Yamatotai bank in the Sea of Japan was confirmed, and when this incident occurred the Ministry of Foreign Affairs conveyed Japan’s position to North Korea. Japan will continue to deal appropriately with these issues in close coordination among relevant ministries and agencies.

D Domestic Political Affairs and Economy

(A) Political Affairs

In January 2021, for the first time in approximately five years, North Korea held a Congress of the WPK, which is the highest decision-making institution in the WPK, and President Kim, while emphasizing “people-first politics,” gave an activity summary of achievements/reflections on the past five years and of future issues, mentioned the continuation of nuclear and missile development, external relations such as U.S.-North Korea relations, and inter-Korean relations. In December 2021, at the 4th Plenary Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the WPK, based on the principle of “people-first politics,” the economy, emergency anti-epidemic projects, and the strengthening of “national” defense capabilities were promoted as major issues for 2022.

Amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic, in August 2020 North Korea “shut the border tighter” and to date had not reported any COVID-19 infections, but in May 2022 the Omicron variant was confirmed and its “national” anti-epidemic work was shifted to “the maximum emergency epidemic prevention system,” and at its peak, nearly 400,000 “new fever cases” were reported to have occurred per day.

At the 5th Enlarged Plenary Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the WPK held in June, President Kim is reported to have said that the situation was a “harsh and difficult period unprecedented in the history” compounded by “the severe health crisis,” and then praised to strenuously push forward with the implementation of the economic policies and steadily directed great efforts to strengthen the “national” defense capability. Other personnel appointments were also reported, including the election of a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the

WPK and the appointment of Choe Son Hui as the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In August, “new fever cases” were no longer reported and President Kim declared victory in “the great anti-epidemic war” at the “National” Meeting of Reviewing the Emergency Anti-epidemic Work.

In September, the 7th Session of the 14th Supreme People’s Assembly was held. Continuing from 2021, President Kim made a policy speech in which he reiterated the success of measures to address COVID-19, stating that North Korea had “defended the security of the nation and the people,” advanced tasks including the farming work and construction projects as achievements to be proud of, and stated that North Korea was “laying foundations and assets for the country’s economic development and promotion of the people’s wellbeing.” Furthermore, he reportedly stated that “while administering vaccination in a responsible way, we should recommend all residents wear masks” from November to prepare for the influenza virus as well as COVID-19.

At the end of December, the 6th Enlarged Plenary Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the WPK was held, with President Kim reportedly evaluating that “2022 was a time which was by no means meaningless” and defined 2023 as a year of attaining key goals in “the improvement of the people’s living standard.” Additionally, based on the recognition that international relations have been shifted to a “new Cold War” system and a push for multipolarization is further expediated, the principles of external work, such as “the principle of struggle against the enemy - might for might, frontal match” were clarified.

At the ceremony of donating the “super-large multiple launch rocket system” that was held during the Enlarged Plenary Meeting, it was reported that President Kim delivered a speech in which he praised the contributions of the working class in the munitions industry in increasing the defense capabilities.

(B) Economy

It was reported that at the 8th Congress of the WPK in January 2021, President Kim presented the new “five-year plan for the national economic development” (2021 to 2025) centered around self-reliance and self-prosperity while referring to difficulties due to

sanctions, natural disasters and the global health crisis.

In particular, North Korea’s economic situation in 2022 may still be severe due to a series of UN Security Council resolutions and sanctions against North Korea by various countries, as well as natural disasters. President Kim himself has admitted that “the economic difficulties facing us now are severe” (administrative policy speech at the 7th Session of the 14th Supreme People’s Assembly in September).

Since February 2020, the amount of trade with China, North Korea’s largest trading partner, was significantly reduced due to the global spread of COVID-19. The China-North Korea trade volume in 2022 greatly exceeded that of the previous year, but has yet to recover to pre-COVID-19 levels.

E Other Issues

Defectors who have fled North Korea have to be kept in hiding to avoid being cracked down on by the authorities in the countries where they are staying or to avoid being forcibly repatriated to North Korea. The Government of Japan is addressing the protection of and support for these North Korean defectors, in line with the purpose of the North Korean Human Rights Violation Act, taking into account a comprehensive range of factors, including humanitarian considerations, the safety of those concerned, and relations with the countries in which these defectors reside. Relevant ministries and agencies in Japan are closely working together to promote measures aimed at helping the settlement of defectors accepted by Japan.

(2) Republic of Korea (ROK)

A Situation in the ROK

(A) Domestic Affairs

On March 9, the ROK presidential election was held, and former Prosecutor General Mr. Yoon Suk Yeol of the People Power Party, the largest opposition party at the time, was elected, defeating Mr. Lee Jae-myung of the Democratic Party of Korea. On May 10, former Prosecutor General Yoon took office as the 20th President of the ROK. In his inaugural address, he stressed the importance of universal values such as freedom, and international norms, also expressed his desire to build a nation that fulfills its responsibility as a trusted member of the international community.

The nationwide local elections and National Assembly by-elections were held on June 1. The ruling People Power Party won 12 out of 17 electoral districts for metropolitan mayors and governors, and won five out of seven electoral districts for the National Assembly by-elections. Meanwhile, the National Assembly continue to be divided with the opposition party, the Democratic Party of Korea, holding the majority number of seats. The ruling and opposition parties were bitterly divided over various issues including the Yoon administration's foreign and defense policies, the response of the former Moon Jae-in administration regarding the shooting of a ROK public official by North Korea's army, the investigation into the Democratic Party of Korea's leader Lee Jae-myung and his associates, and the Financial Year 2023 budget proposal.

On October 29, a crowd surge by citizens who had gathered for Halloween in Itaewon, Seoul, turned into a deadly stampede, and 159 people were killed, with two Japanese nationals among them. Criticism mounted over the inadequate response by the police and the authorities at the time of the accident, which later led to the arrest of senior police officers.

(B) Foreign Policy

With the inauguration of the Yoon administration in May, which advocated for the "normalization of North and South Korean relations," the ROK's policy toward North Korea changed dramatically. On August 15, during his speech for the Liberation Day, President Yoon proposed an "audacious initiative" to provide a variety of economic aid under the condition of substantial denuclearization by North Korea. However, North Korea rejected the proposal and still continues with a variety of military provocations (for more information on inter-Korean relations, see section 2, 3(1)C (B)).

As for relations with the U.S., President Joseph Biden visited the ROK in May shortly after President Yoon's inauguration ceremony, held his first U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting with President Yoon, and issued a Joint Statement. The Joint Statement recognized that the growing threat posed by North Korea is increasing, and emphasized the importance of the rules based international order and economic security. The statement also reaffirmed extended deterrence and referred

to the expansion of the scope and scale of joint military exercises between the U.S. and the ROK, including the deployment of strategic assets. Furthermore, U.S.-ROK combined command exercises were conducted in April. Additionally, in August, U.S.-ROK joint exercises, including field maneuver trainings, were conducted, with the exercises being evaluated for the transition of wartime operational control.

In terms of relations with China, Chinese Vice President Wang Qishan attended the presidential inauguration ceremony in May. In August, ROK Foreign Minister Park Jin visited Qingdao, China, to meet with Minister of Foreign Affairs Wang Yi and for a bilateral meeting. At the G20 Summit held in Indonesia in November, President Yoon held his first Summit Meeting with President Xi Jinping of China. After the meeting, the ROK announced that they had agreed to further mature and develop their bilateral relations based on mutual respect, mutual benefit, and common interests.

During his presidential campaign, President Yoon pledged that he would make the ROK into a "Global Pivotal State that contributes to freedom, peace, and prosperity." After the inauguration of the administration, Foreign Minister Park announced that the ROK would formulate an "Indo-Pacific Strategy" toward the realization of the plan. At the ASEAN-ROK Summit Meeting in November, President Yoon announced the outline of the ROK's "Strategy for a Free, Peaceful, and Prosperous Indo-Pacific Region," stating that, through solidarity and cooperation with ASEAN and other major countries, the strategy would be implemented based on three major visions of Freedom, Peace, and Prosperity, and under three major principles of cooperation: Inclusiveness, Trust, and Reciprocity. At the end of December, the Government of the ROK released the full text of the strategy.

(C) Economy

In 2022, the GDP growth rate in the ROK fell from 4.0% to 2.6% in comparison to the previous year. The total amount of exports increased by 6.1% year-on-year to a record high of 683.9 billion US dollars. However, since the total amount of imports increased by 18.9% in comparison to the previous year to approximately 731.2 billion US dollars due to the soaring global

energy and raw material prices, the ROK's trade balance turned into a deficit for the first time in 14 years, reaching a record high of approximately 47.2 billion US dollars (figures published by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy).

At the time of its inauguration in May, the Yoon administration announced economic policies based on four pillars: "A dynamic economy that puts the private sector at its core," "An economy that pushes toward economic leaps by addressing structural issues," "A leading economy that prepares for the future," and "An inclusive economy that moves forward together." Three new economic policies were released in July and August. In order to abolish the policy of abandoning nuclear power generation, the new Regime's Energy Policy was announced in July, and the "measures to achieve national housing stability" was released in August in order to normalize the real estate market. With regard to semiconductor policy, the "Semiconductor Superpower Strategy" was also released in July.

In recent years, the ROK has had a rapidly declining birthrate and aging population. In 2022, the total fertility rate was a record low of 0.78 children per woman, making the declining birthrate issue all the more serious.

B Japan-ROK Relations

(A) Bilateral Relations

The ROK is an important neighboring country with which Japan should cooperate in dealing with various issues of the international community. The two countries have built a close, friendly and cooperative relationship based on the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea, the Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea, and other relevant agreements that the two countries concluded when they normalized their relationship in 1965. However, in spite of the above, situations unacceptable to Japan have continued in the last few years, including the issue of former civilian workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs), moves that go against the spirit and intent of the Japan-ROK agreement on the issue of comfort women in 2015, and the Takeshima dispute. In the current international environment where the rules-based

international order is being threatened, there is no question as to the importance of promoting Japan-ROK and Japan-U.S.-ROK strategic coordination and as such, it is necessary to resolve issues of concern, and further advance sound Japan-ROK relations.

Based on this recognition, following the inauguration of a new administration in the ROK in 2022, there was active high-level contact between the two countries. In March, Prime Minister Kishida had a telephone call with President-elect Yoon, who had been elected as the 20th President of the ROK. Prime Minister Kishida extended his congratulations on Mr. Yoon's electoral victory, and both sides concurred to improve relations between the two countries. Following this, a delegation from the upcoming Yoon administration (ROK-Japan Delegation for Policy Consultation) visited Japan in April and exchanged views with Minister for Foreign Affairs Hayashi. In May, Foreign Minister Hayashi attended the inauguration of President Yoon as a Special Envoy of the Prime Minister. In June, Prime Minister Kishida and President Yoon met for the first time in Madrid, where the NATO Summit was held, through the occasions of Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit and NATO Asia-Pacific partners (AP4) Leaders' Meeting.

In July, Foreign Minister Park visited Japan, which was the first bilateral visit in four years and seven months by a ROK Foreign Minister. Foreign Minister Hayashi and Minister Park had a broad and candid exchange of views on the overall Japan-ROK relations, including on the issue of CWKs. Furthermore, President Yoon expressed his strong intention to improve Japan-ROK relations in his speeches on August 15 and on August 17, the 100th day of his inauguration, and the Government of Japan welcomed these statements. In September, informal talks were held between the leaders of Japan and the ROK in New York on the occasion of the UN General Assembly. The two leaders noted that Japan and the ROK are important neighbors who should cooperate with each other in the current strategic environment. They shared the view on the importance of promoting Japan-ROK and Japan-U.S.-ROK cooperation and decided to instruct their officials to accelerate ongoing consultations among the diplomatic authorities to resolve issues of concern. Furthermore, at the ASEAN-related Summit in November, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-ROK Summit Meeting



Japan-ROK Summit Meeting (November 13, Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

with President Yoon for the first time in three years. The two leaders confirmed that they will cooperate on issues with North Korea, and on the realization of “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).” Regarding the issue of CWKs, the two leaders reaffirmed that they would pursue an early resolution of this issue, building on the accelerated talks between the diplomatic authorities following the instructions given by the two leaders in September in New York. After close communication between the Foreign Ministers and other diplomatic authorities, on March 6, 2023, the Government of the ROK announced its position on the issues of CWKs. On the same day, the Government of Japan expressed its stance that it values the measures announced by the Government of the ROK, as a move toward restoring Japan-ROK relations, which had been severely strained due to the ROK Supreme Court ruling in 2018, to a sound footing.

Furthermore, throughout 2022, in response to North Korea’s repeated launches of ballistic missiles, there were a number of telephone conversations between the Foreign Ministers of Japan and the ROK. Close communication between the Governments of Japan and the ROK continued through consultations between Vice-Ministers and Director-Generals on numerous occasions.

The ROK’s marine research activities and military exercises around Takeshima continued in 2022. The Government of Japan lodged strong protests against them. The Government of Japan will continue to respond appropriately to this matter based on its consistent position.

(B) The Issue of Former Civilian Workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs)

The Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea, which is the core of the normalization of their relationship in 1965, stipulates that Japan shall supply to the ROK 300 million US dollars in grants and extend loans up to 200 million US dollars (Article I). Furthermore, the Agreement stipulates that the “problem concerning property, rights and interests of the two Contracting Parties and their nationals (including juridical persons) and concerning claims between the Contracting Parties and their nationals [abridged] is settled completely and finally” and that “no contention shall be made” with respect to such claims (Article II).

However, on October 30 and November 29, 2018, the Supreme Court of the ROK gave final judgments ordering Japanese companies to pay compensation for damages to ROK nationals who were said to have worked for the companies during the World War II.

These Supreme Court judgments and related judicial procedures clearly violate Article II of the Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea and inflict unjustifiable damages and costs on the Japanese companies. Above all, the judgments completely overthrow the legal foundation of the friendly and cooperative relationship that Japan and the ROK have developed since the normalization of diplomatic relations. Such judgments are extremely regrettable and totally unacceptable.

In January 2019, the Government of Japan requested a diplomatic consultation with the Government of the ROK pursuant to Article III-1 in order to settle this issue in accordance with the dispute settlement procedures under the Agreement. However, the Government of the ROK failed to respond to the request. Additionally, the Government of Japan gave notice to the Government of the ROK in May 2019 that it would refer the dispute to arbitration in accordance with Article III-2 of the Agreement, but, although requested to comply with this, the Government of the ROK did not fulfill its obligations regarding the arbitration procedure stipulated in the Agreement, and, as a result, the arbitration

board could not be constituted.¹³

In the meantime, based on the plaintiffs' petitions, the ROK courts have steadily advanced the procedures for seizing and liquidating the assets of the Japanese companies, including September 27 and December 30, 2021 orders to sell the assets of Japanese corporations (special liquidation orders). The Government of Japan has repeatedly emphasized to the Government of the ROK that if the seized assets of Japanese companies were to be liquidated, it would lead to a serious situation for Japan-ROK relations and must be avoided, and renewed its call for the ROK to urgently provide a solution that is acceptable to Japan, including remedying the status of its breaches of international law.

Since the inauguration of the Yoon administration in May 2022, there has been close communication between the diplomatic authorities of Japan and ROK on this issue. Foreign Minister Park, who visited Japan in July, stated that the Government of the ROK would work to come up with a desirable solution before the assets of Japanese companies were liquidated, and the two Foreign Ministers agreed to resolve the issue as soon as possible. At the Japan-ROK Summit Meeting in November, the two leaders reaffirmed to pursue an early resolution of this issue, building on the accelerated talks between the diplomatic authorities following the instructions of the two leaders during the leaders' talks held in New York in September. Subsequently, after further close communication between the Foreign Ministers and other diplomatic officials, on March 6, 2023, the Government of the ROK announced its position on the issue of CWKs. In response, on the same day, Foreign Minister Hayashi expressed the Japanese government's stance, stating that it values the measures announced by the ROK government as a move toward restoring Japan-ROK relations, which had been severely strained due to the ROK Supreme Court ruling in 2018, to a sound footing, and that the Government of Japan hopes to see a robust expansion of political, economic and cultural exchanges between the two countries, together with the implementation of the announced measures.¹⁴



Japan-ROK Summit Meeting (March 16, 2023, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

The below Ministry of Foreign Affairs website details Japan's Efforts on the Issue of CWKs.

https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/page4e_000947.html



(C) The Issue of Comfort Women

Japan has sincerely dealt with the issue of comfort women as it has been a major diplomatic issue between Japan and the ROK since the 1990s. The issue concerning property and claims between Japan and the ROK was settled “completely and finally” in 1965 through the Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea. However, from the perspective of facilitating feasible remedies for the former comfort women, in 1995, the people and the Government of Japan cooperated to establish the Asian Women's Fund in 1995, through which they carried out medical and welfare projects and provided “atonement money” to each former comfort woman in Asian and other countries, including the ROK. Furthermore, successive Prime Ministers have sent letters expressing their “apology and remorse” to former comfort women.

Furthermore, as a result of great diplomatic efforts, the Governments of Japan and the ROK confirmed that the issue of comfort women was “resolved finally and irreversibly” with the agreement reached at the Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting in December

¹³ See References on the Issue of Former Civilian Workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs)

¹⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs website explaining President Yoon's visit to Japan on March 16 and 17, 2023: https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/page1e_000593.html



2015. Directly after this Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting, the Japanese and ROK leaders also confirmed that they would take responsibility as leaders to implement this agreement and that they would deal with various issues based on the spirit of this agreement, and that the Government of the ROK committed to the agreement. This agreement was welcomed by the international community, including UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the U.S. Government. In accordance with the agreement, in August 2016, the Government of Japan contributed 1 billion Japanese yen to "the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation" established by the Government of the ROK. As of December 31, 2022, the fund provided financial support to 35 out of 47 former comfort women who were alive at the time of the agreement, and to the bereaved families of 64 out of 199 former comfort women who were deceased at the time. The agreement has been received positively by many former comfort women.

However, in December 2016, a comfort woman statue¹⁵ was installed on the sidewalk facing the Consulate-General of Japan in Busan by a civic group in the ROK. Later, the Moon Jae-in administration was newly inaugurated in May 2017. Based on the results of the assessment made by the Taskforce to Review the Agreement on Comfort Women Issue under the direct supervision of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the ROK, Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha announced the position of the Government of the ROK on January 9, 2018, as follows: i) it will not ask for a renegotiation with Japan; and ii) the 2015 agreement, which fails to properly reflect the wishes of the victims, does not constitute a true resolution of the issue. In July 2018, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of the ROK announced that it would arrange a reserve budget to "appropriate the full amount" of the 1 billion Japanese yen contributed by the Government of Japan and contribute this amount to "the Gender Equality Fund." In November 2018, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family announced that it would proceed with its dissolution of "the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation" and has since moved ahead with the dissolution procedures. While the Government of the ROK, including

President Moon Jae-in, repeatedly stated in public that it "will not abandon the agreement" and "will not ask for a renegotiation with Japan," the moves to dissolve the Foundation are totally unacceptable for Japan in light of the 2015 Japan-ROK Agreement.

Moreover, on January 8, 2021, in the lawsuit filed by former comfort women and others against the Government of Japan, the Seoul Central District Court of the Republic of Korea rendered a judgment which ordered the Government of Japan, *inter alia*, to pay compensation to the plaintiffs, denying the application of the principle of State immunity under international law. On January 23, 2021, this judgment was confirmed.¹⁶ On April 21, in a similar lawsuit filed by former comfort women and others, the Seoul Central District Court dismissed the case, taking into account the principle of State immunity under international law, but on May 6, the plaintiffs appealed against the court's decision. Japan has repeatedly expressed its position that this lawsuit must be dismissed because it is not acceptable for the Government of Japan to be subject to the jurisdiction of the ROK in accordance with the principle of State immunity in international law. As mentioned above, the issue concerning property and claims between Japan and the ROK, including the issue of comfort women, was "settled completely and finally," with the Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea of 1965. Furthermore, it was confirmed that the issue of comfort women was "resolved finally and irreversibly" with the agreement between Japan and the ROK in 2015. Therefore, the judgment is extremely regrettable and absolutely unacceptable, as it is clearly contrary to international law and agreements between the two countries. Japan has strongly urged the ROK to immediately take appropriate measures to remedy the status of its breaches of international law on its own responsibility as a country.

The Japan-ROK agreement in 2015 is an agreement between two countries, and abiding by promises made between two countries is the foundation of bilateral relations. The ROK has a responsibility to steadily implement the agreement not only to Japan but also

15 For the sake of practical convenience, they are referred to as "comfort woman statues." However, the use of this term is not a reflection of the recognition that these statues correctly embody the reality of those women at that time.

16 See References on the Issue of Comfort Women

to the international community. As stated above, the Government of Japan has implemented all measures it committed to under the Japan-ROK agreement. The Government of the ROK itself also acknowledges that this agreement is an official agreement between the two governments and the international community is closely following the ROK's implementation of the agreement. The Government of Japan will continue to strongly urge the ROK to steadily implement the Japan-ROK Agreement (see page 40 for the comfort women issue in the international community).

The below Ministry of Foreign Affairs website details Japan's Efforts on the Issue of Comfort Women.

https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/page22e_000883.html



(D) Takeshima

Regarding the dispute between Japan and the ROK concerning the territorial sovereignty over Takeshima, Takeshima is indisputably an inherent territory of Japan both in light of historical facts and based on international law. The ROK has continued its illegal occupation of Takeshima with no legal basis in international law, including stationing permanent security personnel. Japan has been keeping the world informed about Japan's position on the issue through various media platforms.¹⁷ Japan has also repeatedly lodged strong protests against the ROK over matters such as South Korean citizens including members of the ROK's National Assembly landing on the island, and the ROK's military exercises and marine surveys in and around Takeshima.¹⁸ In 2022, military exercises and maritime surveys also conducted on the island or its vicinity. The Government of Japan considers these activities unacceptable in view of Japan's position and lodged strong protests.

For a peaceful settlement of the Takeshima dispute, Japan proposed to the ROK that the issue be referred to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 1954, 1962 and 2012. However, the ROK rejected the proposal in all instances. Japan is determined to continue to engage in persistent diplomatic efforts to settle the Takeshima dispute in a peaceful manner in accordance with international law.

(E) Update of Licensing Policies and Procedures on Exports of Controlled Items to the ROK

On September 11, 2019, the Government of the ROK requested bilateral consultations with Japan under the World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement procedures, claiming the update by the Government of Japan of the operation of measures related to Japan's export to the ROK of three items for semiconductors (fluorinated polyimide, resist and hydrogen fluoride), and the system for requiring individual export licenses,¹⁹ is in breach of the WTO Agreements. The Government of the ROK announced on November 22, 2019, that it suspended the effect of the notification of termination of the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Korea on the Protection of Classified Military Information (GSOMIA), and in doing so said that it would also suspend its WTO dispute settlement procedures while the Japan-ROK Export Control Policy Dialogue would be held as normal. Subsequently Export Control Policy Dialogues were held in December 2019 and March 2020. Despite the fact that the export control authorities of Japan and the ROK shared the view to resolve the issue through dialogue and communication, the Government of the ROK resumed WTO dispute settlement procedures on June 18, 2020, and the WTO Dispute Settlement Body decided to establish a panel on July 29, 2020.

17 In February 2008, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a pamphlet entitled "Takeshima: 10 points to understand the Takeshima Dispute." It is available on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website in 11 languages: Japanese, English, Korean, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Russian, Chinese and Italian. Furthermore, since October 2013, videos and flyers about Takeshima have been available on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website, and they are currently available in the above 11 languages. Furthermore, Japan has taken initiatives such as distributing a smartphone app that aims to increase awareness of the Takeshima issue. Further details are available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/index.html>

18 In May, July, and August 2022, the activities of ROK marine research vessels were spotted in Japanese territorial waters around Takeshima and within Japan's EEZ. ROK armed forces conducted military training related to Takeshima in July and December 2022. The Government of Japan immediately conveyed to the Government of the ROK that such an act was unacceptable and extremely regrettable in light of Japan's position on sovereignty over Takeshima, and strongly protested against the act.

19 The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry announced the following updates on July 1, 2019: (1) the amendment of the Export Trade Control Order of the ROK (Note: The ROK was excluded from "Group A." A revised Cabinet ordinance entered into force on August 28 to effect this change) and (2) switching from bulk licenses to individual export licenses for Fluorinated polyimide, Resist and Hydrogen fluoride.



(F) Exchanges and Travel

In 2018, the number of people making visits between the two countries was approximately 10.49 million people, but since early 2020, travel between Japan and the ROK significantly decreased due to the strengthening of border measures related to COVID-19, and in 2021, approximately only 30,000 people made trips between the two countries. In 2022, due to visa exemption measures resuming in both countries and the resumption of flights between Japan and the ROK including the Haneda-Gimpo route, the number of travelers has gone up with the number of visitors between Japan and the ROK reaching about 1.31 million people.

The Governments of Japan and the ROK share the view that, notwithstanding the challenging situation of the bilateral relations, exchanges between Japan and the ROK are important. In Japan, K-POP and related content is widely accepted mainly among younger generations, and Korean dramas and movies have become widely popular amongst people of all ages. In 2022, the major Japan-ROK grassroots exchange program “Japan-Korea Exchange Festival” (Nikkan Koryu Omatsuri) was held as an in-person event in Seoul for the first time in three years (held online in Tokyo). The Government of Japan works on promoting mutual understanding, primarily between young people, and building a friendly and cooperative relationship for the future through Japan's Friendship Ties Programs (JENESYS 2022). After online exchanges were held in FY2020 and FY2021, in-person exchanges have partially resumed in 2022.

(G) Other Issues

The Governments of Japan and the ROK concluded the GSOMIA in November 2016 in order to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the

two countries in the field of security and contribute to regional peace and stability. Afterwards, the agreement was automatically extended in 2017 and 2018. However, the Government of the ROK announced on August 22, 2019, its decision to terminate the GSOMIA in connection with Japan's update of licensing policies and procedures on exports (see (E) above) and notified the termination on the following day, August 23. Following this and after exchanges between Japan and the ROK, on November 22, the Government of the ROK announced that it would suspend the effect of the notification of termination of August 23. In view of the current regional security environment, the Government of Japan still considers it important for the Agreement to continue operating in a stable manner.

Sea of Japan is the only internationally established name for the sea area concerned, and the UN and governments of major countries such as the U.S. adopt Sea of Japan as the official name. Objections to this name, however, were first raised by the ROK and North Korea in 1992. Since then, the ROK and North Korea have been objecting to the name at the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN),²⁰ the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and other international conferences. These assertions however are groundless, and Japan has firmly refuted these assertions each time they arise.²¹

Furthermore, Japan has strongly requested the Government of the ROK through its diplomatic channels to return cultural properties that were stolen and are currently in the ROK²² to Japan as soon as possible, and Japan will continue to call on the ROK to take appropriate steps.

Japan has provided support and taken measures as much as possible from a humanitarian perspective in various fields, including responses for ethnic Koreans

20 A UN conference where experts on place names and geospatial information from each country discuss, from a technical point of view, the definitions of terms related to place names and the notion methods for place names. In 2017, the UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Name, which had been held every five years, and the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names, which had been held every two years, were integrated into the United Nations Group of Experts on Place Names (UNGEGN).

21 Ministry of Foreign Affairs website detailing the issue of the name of the “Sea of Japan”: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/maritime/japan/index.html>

22 After being stolen in Tsushima City, Nagasaki Prefecture in 1912 and shipped to the ROK, the “Kanzeon Bosatsu Statue” was collected and stored by the Government of the ROK. A Korean temple asserting ownership of the statue has filed a claim with the Daejeon District Court seeking to have the Government of the ROK hand over the statue, and in January 2017 the court issued a verdict of the first hearing to the plaintiff's side (the Korean temple). In response to this, the Government of the ROK appealed, and in February 2023 the Daejeon High Court reversed the initial ruling and dismissed the plaintiff's claim, but the plaintiff filed an appeal. The “Kanzeon Bosatsu Statue” is still being held by the Government of the ROK and has not been returned to Japan (as of the end of February 2023).



in Sakhalin²³ addressing the issue of atomic bomb survivors living in the ROK,²⁴ and helping Hansen's disease patients admitted to sanitariums in the ROK.²⁵

C Economy

The total value of trade between the two countries amounted to approximately 11.52 trillion Japanese yen in 2022. Japan is the ROK's fourth largest trading partner, and the ROK is Japan's fifth largest trading partner. The ROK's trade deficit with Japan increased by approximately 19.7% from a year earlier, reaching approximately 2.69 trillion Japanese yen (Trade Statistics of Japan, Ministry of Finance). Japanese direct investment in the ROK totaled approximately 1.53 billion US dollars (up 26.3% from the previous year) (figures published by the ROK Ministry of Trade,

Industry and Energy), making Japan the ROK's fourth largest source of foreign direct investment (excluding the Cayman Islands from the ranking).

In November 2020, 15 countries, including Japan and the ROK, signed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement, which is also the first Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) between Japan and the ROK. On December 3, 2021, the ROK deposited the ratification of the agreement with the depositary, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, and for the ROK the agreement entered into force on February 1, 2022.

As for import restrictions on Japanese food products by the Government of the ROK, Japan is taking various opportunities to urge the ROK to remove the restrictions as soon as possible.

4 Southeast Asia

(1) Indonesia

Indonesia is a major country in the Southeast Asia region with the fourth largest population in the world (at approximately 270 million people) and situated in a strategic location on sea lanes such as the Strait of Malacca. Indonesia plays a leading role in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and has often been taking the initiative in efforts to address various challenges in the regional and international community while serving as the sole G20 member from ASEAN.

President Joko's second administration, which started in October 2019, is a stable administration where the ruling parties coalition occupies approximately 82% of the seats in the House of Representatives. This administration's priorities are (1) infrastructure development, (2) human resources development, (3) investment promotion, (4) bureaucratic reforms, and (5) appropriate

execution of the state budget. Indonesia's economic growth rate, which had consistently been maintained at around 5% in recent years, recorded negative growth in 2020 due to the impacts of COVID-19, but returned to positive growth of 3.6% in 2021. As a strategic partner, Japan is actively promoting cooperation in infrastructure development and human resources development, which are priorities of the second Joko administration.

Prime Minister Kishida visited Indonesia in April for the first time after assuming the office of Prime Minister, President Joko Widodo also visited Japan in July to hold a face-to-face summit meeting, and another bilateral summit meeting took place in November on the sidelines of the G20 Bali Summit. At the summit meeting in July, President Joko stated, regarding the import restriction imposed by Indonesia on Japanese food products after the Tokyo Electric Power Company

²³ For various reasons, before the end of World War II, people from the Korean Peninsula traveled to what was then known as Minami Karafuto (South Sakhalin) and were compelled to remain there for a long time after the war ended under the de facto rule of the Soviet Union, without being given the opportunity to return to the ROK. The Government of Japan is providing such people with support, such as to enable them to return home temporarily and to visit Sakhalin.

²⁴ This is the issue of provision of support to those who were exposed to the atomic bombs while living in Hiroshima or Nagasaki during World War II and subsequently went to live overseas. To date, Japan has provided support in the form of the Atomic Bomb Victim Health Handbook and allowances based on the Atomic Bombs Survivors' Assistance Act.

²⁵ In February 2006, the "Act on Payment of Compensation to Inmates of Hansen's Disease Sanatorium" was amended, and former residents of Hansen's disease sanatoriums outside of Japan, which were established by Japan before the end of World War II, were made eligible for compensation, similar to former residents of domestic sanatoriums. Additionally, in November 2019, the "Act on Payment of Compensation to Families of Former Patients of Hansen's Disease" was enacted, and the families of former inmates were also made eligible for compensation.



Japan-Indonesia Summit Meeting (April 29, Bogor, Indonesia; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

(TEPCO)'s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station Accident, that all import restrictions on Japanese food products had been lifted, thereby resulting in the complete elimination of the restrictions. Prime Minister Kishida also had a telephone call with President Joko in March and October. Foreign Minister Hayashi had a telephone call with Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi in February and November and had a face-to-face meeting in July. Given that Indonesia played an important role as the holder of the G20 presidency in 2022 and will chair ASEAN in 2023, the two countries closely exchanged views at these respective meetings on strengthening bilateral relations and working together to address various issues in the region and the international community.

(2) Cambodia

Cambodia, located in the Mekong region, is a key country in strengthening connectivity and narrowing the development gap in the region. Cambodia had been averaging approximately 7% growth for the past 20 years, and, although GDP growth in 2020 was negative due to the impacts of COVID-19, in 2021 it returned to positive growth at 3.0%

Japan has cooperated with Cambodia's peace, reconstruction, and development efforts, including in the first full-scale deployment of UN peacekeeping operations (PKO) in 1992. In recent years, Japan has also developed its economic ties with Cambodia as Japanese companies have expanded their operations within the country

At the Japan-Cambodia Summit Meeting in March, Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Hun Sen released a Joint Statement indicating the direction of

cooperation between Japan and Cambodia, and also confirmed that they would cooperate in regional and international arenas. At the Japan-Cambodia Summit Meeting in November, based on the progress in cooperation between the two countries, the two leaders concurred to upgrade their bilateral relationship to a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership" on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Cambodia in 2023.

Regarding domestic affairs, the Cambodia National Rescue Party, the largest opposition party, was dissolved in 2017, and the ruling Cambodian People's Party monopolized all seats in the 2018 National Assembly elections. 17 political parties participated in the commune elections in June 2022, with the ruling party winning approximately 80% of the seats. As part of its efforts to boost Cambodia's democratic development, Japan has been supporting legal reform and implementing projects to promote dialogue between the government and civil society.

The Khmer Rouge Tribunal, which Japan has supported for many years, completed its judicial process in November 2022 with a ruling in appeals court case 002/02 (in which the former heads of state were the defendants).

(3) Singapore

Singapore is the most economically advanced country within ASEAN. Based on its omnidirectional foreign policy, the country maintains friendly relations with major countries including the U.S. and China.

In Singapore, the People's Action Party (PAP), led by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, holds more than 90% of the seats from the 2020 general elections, and, with the basis of a stable political situation, is working to balance COVID-19 countermeasures and the economy, such as through rapid COVID-19 measures, economic measures, and the promotion of policies aimed at post-COVID-19 growth. In April, the PAP chose Minister of Finance Lawrence Wong as a candidate for the next Prime Minister.

In 2022, there were reciprocal visits at the summit and foreign ministers' level. Prime Minister Kishida visited Singapore in June and Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Singapore in October, while Prime Minister Lee

Hsien Loong visited Japan in May and September and Foreign Minister Vivian Balakrishnan visited Japan in May. On these occasions, summit meetings and foreign ministers' meetings were held, and there were exchanges of views on further strengthening bilateral relations and on the various issues facing both the region and the international community. During Prime Minister Kishida's visit to Singapore in June, it was announced that negotiations would commence on the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Singapore.

The two countries have worked together to provide developing countries with technical assistance through the "Japan-Singapore Partnership Program for the 21st Century (JSPP21)," which was signed in 1997. To date they have provided approximately 400 training courses with roughly 7,300 participants from ASEAN countries and other regions (as of the end of December 2022). The Japan Creative Centre (JCC), which was opened in Singapore in 2009 as a platform to promote Japanese culture, distributed a variety of information and held events while taking measures against COVID-19 infections.

(4) Thailand

Thailand is one of the original member states of ASEAN, which was born from the "Bangkok Declaration" in 1967. It is located in the center of the Mekong region and is a geopolitically important country. Thailand has become a major production center for Japanese companies, including the automobile industry, and today Thailand is an indispensable part of the Japanese economy as a part of the global supply chain, with close to 6,000 Japanese companies operating in Thailand and approximately 80,000 Japanese nationals living in Thailand.

2022 marked the 135th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and Thailand. Since the formulation of the "Strategic Partnership" between Japan and Thailand in 2012, the two countries have deepened bilateral ties in a wide range of areas, and there were active high-level exchanges in 2022. Prime Minister Kishida visited Thailand in May, met with Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha for the Japan-Thailand Summit Meeting, and signed the Agreement between



Welcome ceremony during Prime Minister Kishida's visit to Thailand (May 2, Bangkok, Thailand; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

the Government of Japan and the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology. Furthermore, Prime Minister Prayut visited Japan in May and met with Prime Minister Kishida for the Japan-Thailand Summit Meeting. In November, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Thailand for the APEC Ministerial Meeting, held a Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Don Pramudwinai, and signed a "Five-Year Joint Action Plan on Japan-Thailand Strategic Economic Partnership" that charts out bilateral economic cooperation in the next 5 years. Based on the further expansion of bilateral relations like this, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-Thailand Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Prayut in November, and the two leaders concurred to elevate the bilateral relationship to a "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership."

Because of the implementation of border restriction measures due to the spread of COVID-19, Thailand's economy declined in 2020 and 2021 due to the decrease in the number of overseas tourists, etc. However, with the gradual easing of border restrictions in 2022, the number of tourists has steadily recovered, and in the second quarter (April to June) of 2022, Thailand's GDP level recovered to about 99% of its pre-COVID-19 level.

(5) Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste, the first country that achieved independence in the 21st century (in 2002), is strategically important in the Indo-Pacific region, and is situated in a critical sea lane between Australia and Indonesia. In 2022 the country celebrated the 20th anniversary of its

independence, has realized peace and stability with the support of the international community, and has been building the nation based on democracy. Presidential elections were held in March and April, and President Ramos-Horta was elected. As its economy is highly dependent on natural resources such as petroleum and natural gas, the country has been working on industrial diversification as a matter of the highest national priority. On the diplomatic side, Timor-Leste is continuing to work in coordination with the relevant countries toward joining ASEAN and the WTO, and in November an agreement was reached in principle on Timor-Leste's ASEAN membership.

Japan established diplomatic relations with Timor-Leste upon its independence, and 2022 marks the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Timor-Leste. In 2022, Japan also conducted active face-to-face diplomacy with Timor-Leste. In May, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAKE Shingo attended the inauguration ceremony for President Ramos-Horta as a Special Envoy of Prime Minister Kishida, and made courtesy calls to and met with President Ramos-Horta, Prime Minister Taur Matan Ruak, and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Adaljíza Magno. In August and September, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-Timor-Leste Foreign Ministers' Meetings with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Magno, and the two Ministers exchanged views on bilateral relations and on various issues facing the region and the international community. Japan has continued to support Timor-Leste since even before its independence, and maintained good relations with the country. In



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Miyake paying a courtesy call to President-elect Ramos-Horta as a Special Envoy of Prime Minister Kishida (May 18, Dili, Timor-Leste)

2022, Japan supported the restoration of infrastructure damaged by flooding and landslides in 2021, and has supported the training of young government officials. Furthermore, National Road No.1, which Japan supported via loan aid, was opened, with the inauguration ceremony being held in August.

(6) The Philippines

The Philippines is a maritime nation on Japan's sea lanes, and shares strategic interests with Japan. Although the Philippines' economy experienced negative growth in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19, it achieved a V-shaped recovery with 5.6% growth in 2021, and it aims to achieve 6.5% to 8% annual growth going forward, and to become a middle-income country by 2024. President Ferdinand Marcos, who took office in June, won a landslide victory with the largest share of the vote in history, and is aiming for economic development and poverty reduction through agricultural development, tourism promotion, education reform, digital transformation, proactive infrastructure development, and energy security. As for the Mindanao Peace Process, despite the delays seen in the decommissioning and disarmament work with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) due to COVID-19, based on the amended Bangsamoro Organic Law, the effort to conceive an autonomous government is continuing toward 2025.

Japan and the Philippines resumed visits by dignitaries, which had been interrupted due to the impact of COVID-19, beginning with visits by the Philippines' Foreign and Defense Ministers to Japan for the first Japan-Philippines Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2") in April. The two countries are further strengthening their Strategic Partnership, which marks its 11th year. As for relations with the Marcos administration, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with President-elect Marcos in May, and Foreign Minister Hayashi attended President Marcos' inauguration ceremony in June as a Special Envoy of Prime Minister Kishida and paid a courtesy call to the President. Since then, a Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting was held in September, and Foreign Ministers' telephone calls were held in July and August, with active discussions on strengthening bilateral cooperation and on the regional situation. Vice President Rodrigo Duterte visited Japan



Foreign Minister Hayashi paying a courtesy call to President Marcos as a Special Envoy of Prime Minister Kishida (June 30, Manila, Philippines)

for the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September. In terms of economics, the 12th and 13th meetings of the Japan-Philippines High Level Joint Committee on Infrastructure Development and Economic Cooperation were held in February and November respectively, and discussions were held to render dynamic support for the Philippines to become a middle-income country and for its “Build Better More” infrastructure policy. Additionally, the deployment of Japanese personnel for the decommissioning and disarmament of the Mindanao Peace Process began in March, and the Subic Bay Regional Development Master Plan, which Japan helped formulate, was released in April.

(7) Brunei

Its abundance in natural resources has enabled Brunei to realize a high economic standard and generous social welfare. As such, the country enjoys political and economic stability. Although it is a constitutional monarchy and has a Legislative Council, the Sultan concurrently serves as the Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economy, Minister of Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and therefore holds an impressively strong authority. Located in the center of Southeast Asia, the country is one of the claimant countries in the South China Sea and has adopted a balanced diplomacy built on the pillar of promoting ASEAN unity and centrality.

Although it recorded an economic growth rate of 1.1% in 2020, Brunei had a negative economic growth rate in 2021 due to the impact of COVID-19. Brunei’s economy is supported by rising oil prices and

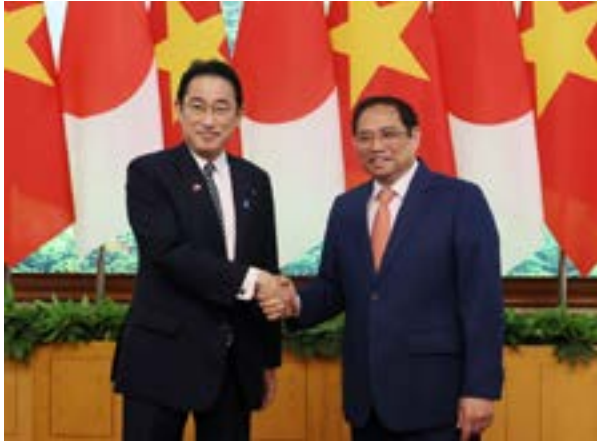
operations via a joint oil refining venture with China, but the Government of Brunei is aiming for economic diversification to avoid overreliance on energy resources.

Japan and Brunei established diplomatic relations in 1984, and the two countries have developed excellent bilateral relations in various areas. In 2022, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-Brunei Foreign Ministers’ Meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs II Dato Erywan, and the two Ministers exchanged views on bilateral cooperation and on various issues facing the region and the international community. Moreover, Japan and Brunei are continuing to build a close relationship between the imperial and royal families, as His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah attended the Ceremony of the Enthronement of His Majesty the Emperor in 2019 and Her Royal Highness Princess Hajah Masna (Ambassador-at-Large at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs) attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September, 2022. Brunei is an important country for the stable energy supply to Japan. Around 70% of Brunei’s liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports are bound for Japan, and LNG from Brunei makes up around 5% of the total LNG import to Japan.

(8) Viet Nam

Located next to sea lanes in the South China Sea and sharing a long border with China, Viet Nam is a geopolitically important country. Given that the country embraces the third largest population in Southeast Asia, and is experiencing a surge in the number of people in middle-income brackets, Viet Nam is a promising market. The country is currently striving to achieve stable economic growth through the stabilization of the macroeconomy including control of inflation, the promotion of foreign investment by the development of infrastructure and the improvement of the investment environment. Viet Nam’s economic growth rate from 2020 to 2021 fell to around the 2% level due to severe lockdowns caused by the spread of COVID-19, but, in 2022, achieved an economic growth rate of 8.02% due to the shift to a “living with COVID-19” policy.

Japan and Viet Nam have been advancing cooperation in a variety of areas under the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia. In May,



Japan-Viet Nam Summit Meeting (May 1, Hanoi, Viet Nam; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

Prime Minister Kishida visited Viet Nam and held a Japan-Viet Nam Summit Meeting. At the meeting, the two leaders affirmed to (a) promote cooperation in the security field through capacity building assistance to the Vietnamese military in the area of cyber security, among others, (b) promote economic cooperation including the diversification of supply chains, digital transformation, and technological innovation, (c) establish a platform for dispatching technical intern trainees, and (d) cooperate to support enhancing disaster prevention capacity through the launch of an earth observation satellite. There have also been active high-level exchanges between the two countries, such as the September visit to Japan by President Nguyen Xuan Phuc and Ms. Truong Thi Mai, Chairwoman of the Viet Nam – Japan Parliamentary Friendship Association. The number of Vietnamese residing in Japan, primarily technical intern trainees, is also increasing, from approximately 40,000 in 2011 to over 430,000 by the end of December 2021, making Vietnamese nationals the second largest number of foreign residents in Japan by country after China. The Treaty between Japan and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters also took effect in August 2022, and it is expected that more substantial legal assistance will be implemented in the future.

(9) Malaysia

Comprised of the Peninsular Malaysia of the Malay Peninsula and the East Malaysia of Borneo, Malaysia is a geopolitically important country facing the South China Sea and the Strait of Malacca that is situated in a crucial spot in the Indian and Pacific Ocean.

Furthermore, it is a federal state comprised of 13 states and three federal territories, and also a multiethnic state comprised of Bumiputra (Malay including indigenous peoples) (70%), Chinese (22%) and Indian people (7%), among others.

The Ismail Sabri administration, which was inaugurated in August 2021, focused on post-COVID-19 economic recovery while stabilizing domestic affairs, but as a result of the general election held in November 2022, the Anwar administration took office.

On the occasion of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Malaysia and the 40th anniversary of the Look East Policy in 2022, former Prime Minister ABE Shinzo visited Malaysia in March as a Special Envoy of Prime Minister Kishida. The two countries have strengthened bilateral relations through the May visit to Japan by Prime Minister Ismail Sabri and five of his Cabinet Ministers, including Foreign Minister Saifuddin Abdullah, and the October visit to Malaysia by Foreign Minister Hayashi, and during these visits there were exchanges of views on cooperation between the two countries and on various issues facing the region and the international community.

In the field of human resources development, through the Look East Policy, which serves as a foundation for the good bilateral relationship between Japan and Malaysia and was begun by Prime Minister Mahathir in 1982, more than 26,000 Malaysian people have studied or have been trained in Japan so far. In 2022, numerous events were held to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the policy, and discussions and initiatives were held to ensure that the policy continues to develop to effectively meet the needs of the times. The



Official logo for the 40th anniversary of the Look East Policy

two countries have been cooperating in making the Malaysia Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIIIT), which was opened in September 2011, a base for Japanese-style engineering education in ASEAN countries. In addition, discussions are being held to establish a branch campus of the University of Tsukuba in Malaysia, and, if realized, it will be the first overseas branch campus to be established by a Japanese university. On the economic front, roughly 1,600 Japanese companies have been operating in Malaysia, which demonstrates a continued close relationship between the two countries.

(10) Myanmar

Since the coup d'état by the Myanmar military on February 1, 2021, many civilians have died as a result of armed suppression by the Myanmar security authorities, and in some areas, there have been intermittent clashes between the Myanmar military and ethnic armed organizations, the People's Defense Forces (PDF) and others. On the political front, there have been executions of Myanmar citizens, including pro-democracy activists in July, and Aung San Suu Kyi was convicted for a total of 33 years in prison, while on the economic front, there was turmoil caused by the forced conversion of foreign currency in April, and as such, the situation is deteriorating. On February 1, 2022, one year after the coup d'état, the Government of Japan released a statement by Foreign Minister Hayashi that expressed concern about the continued lack of action to improve the situation, and once again strongly urged the Myanmar military to take concrete actions to (1) immediately stop the violence, (2) release those who are detained, and (3) swiftly restore Myanmar's democratic political system. In addition, when the aforementioned executions were carried out, the Government of Japan released a statement by Foreign Minister Hayashi, stating that Japan seriously deplores these actions by the Myanmar military to completely go against the "release of the detainees," which Japan has consistently called for. Furthermore, a joint statement with like-minded countries and a G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement were also issued. In order

to break out of the current situation, Japan has been cooperating with the international community and giving maximum support to ASEAN's efforts, including Cambodia, as ASEAN Chair, based on the belief that it is important to achieve concrete results, especially ASEAN's "Five-Point Consensus."²⁶

At the UN, Japan has been cooperating with the international community joining each consensus on Human Rights Council resolutions (on the situation in Myanmar) in April and July, participating as a co-sponsor of the resolution in April, and co-sponsoring a resolution in November at the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee.

In terms of humanitarian assistance, on January 30 the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) in Myanmar announced the Myanmar Humanitarian Response Plan 2022, which aims to support 6.2 million people in urgent need among 14.4 million in humanitarian need, out of the population of 54 million people in Myanmar. In response to this, on February 8, the Government of Japan announced that, through international organizations and the ASEAN Secretariat, it would provide humanitarian assistance totaling approximately 18.5 million US dollars to provide food, daily necessities, and medical supplies, etc., to people in Myanmar in need, and on April 1, Japan announced emergency grant aid totally 8.3 million US dollars to support internally displaced persons, mainly in the southeast and northwest of the country. So far, in order to improve the humanitarian situation in Myanmar, which continues to deteriorate, the Government of Japan has provided a total of more than 47 million US dollars in humanitarian assistance through international organizations and the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA Centre) since the coup d'état on February 1, 2021. Japan will continue to actively provide humanitarian assistance in order to stand by the people of Myanmar who are facing difficulties.

26 The Five-Point Consensus was announced at the ASEAN Leaders' Meeting held on April 24, 2021. It calls for (1) immediate cessation of violence, (2) commencement of constructive dialogue among all parties concerned, (3) mediation of the dialogue process by a special envoy of the ASEAN Chair, (4) providing humanitarian assistance through the AHA Centre, and (5) visiting Myanmar to meet with all parties concerned by the special envoy and delegation.

(11) Laos

Laos is a landlocked country bordering all of the countries in the Mekong region, and therefore is a key country for Mekong connectivity. In domestic affairs in 2022, one year has passed since the 11th Congress of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP) and election of members for the 9th National Assembly. In addition to changes such as the promotion of Minister of Foreign Affairs Saleumxay Kommasith to Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, as well as changes in Cabinet Ministers, Prime Minister Phankham Viphavanh retired in December due to health problems, and Deputy Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone was appointed as the new Prime Minister. Economically, Laos' economic growth rate, which fell to 0.5% in 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19, recovered to 2.5% in 2021, but in 2022 sharp inflation, fuel shortages, and price hikes due to the international situation were major stumbling blocks that affected the people's lives. Efforts to stabilize public finances, which is the top priority for the Government of Laos, include implementing a national agenda on economic and fiscal issues, and will continue to be required.

Prime Minister Phankham visited Japan in April for a Japan-Laos Summit Meeting, and in August a Japan-Laos Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. At both meetings, it was confirmed that the two countries would further expand their

Strategic Partnership in the lead up to the 50th anniversary of ASEAN-Japan friendship and cooperation in 2023 and the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Laos in 2025.

In July, Japan's Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, and National Police Agency and Laos' Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare exchanged a memorandum of cooperation regarding residence status for "Specified Skilled Workers." Furthermore, in August, a handover ceremony was held for the Nam Ngum 1 Hydropower Station Expansion Project, leaving an impression of Japan's long-standing contributions to the power plant, which is depicted on the national emblem of Laos. In response to both countries easing border measures, Deputy Prime Minister Sonexay, Head of Central Committee for Organization and Personnel Sysay Leudetmounsone, Minister of Energy and Mines Daovong Phonekeo, and Minister of Planning and Investment Khamjane Vongphosy successively visited Japan, and from Japan, in December State Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKEI Shunsuke visited Laos. Furthermore, momentum for the promotion of trade and investment between the two countries has increased through the holding of Laos investment promotion seminars and the dispatch of business missions from both sides.

Reference

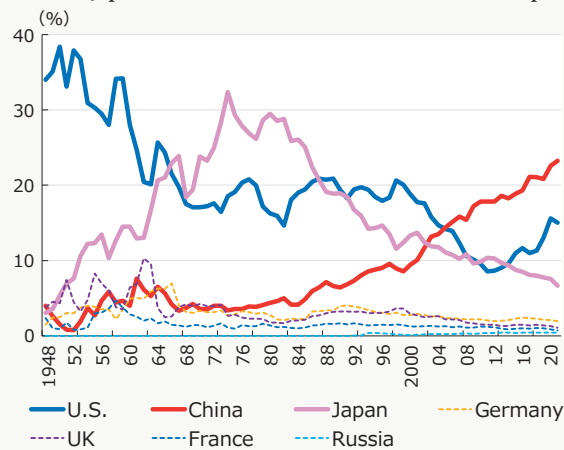
 Relations between Southeast Asia and Japan, the U.S., China, etc., Seen Through Economic Data¹

Trade: Since 2001, Trade between Southeast Asia and China has dramatically increased. In the mid-2000s, China overtook the U.S. as an export destination for the region, but in recent years exports to the U.S., primarily from Viet Nam, have increased again. On the other hand, although Japan was once the primary export destination for the region, its share has continued to decline over the long term. In 2021, Japan ranked third in terms of its share in the region's exports, and second in terms of imports.²

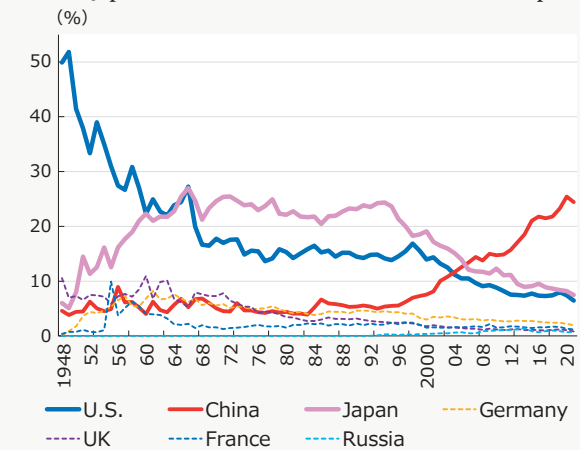
Investment: The U.S. has the largest share of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the region, mainly due to investment in Singapore. Japan's share of FDI in the region has been declining slightly in recent years, but it has maintained its presence primarily through investment in Thailand and the Philippines. Over the past few years China's share of FDI in the region has increased. Singapore, a high-income country in the region, has also been heavily investing in neighboring countries.

Finance: Although in recent years some countries in Southeast Asia have increased the amount of external debt that they owe to China, Japan has a significantly large presence in the region as a whole and is the largest bilateral creditor country.

Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in Southeast Asia's exports



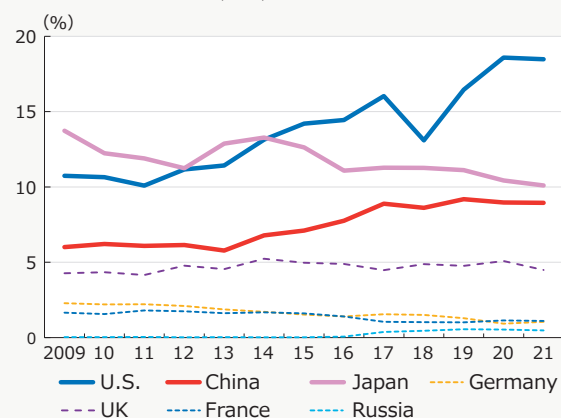
Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in Southeast Asia's imports



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (DOTS) data.

Note 2: Figures for China are the sum of Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau. Graphs for past figures may be skewed due to missing data, etc.

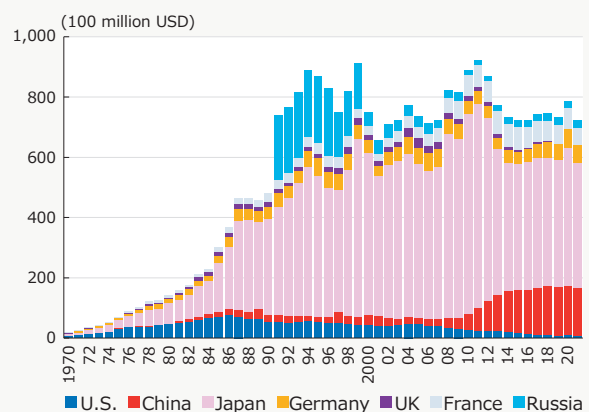
Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock in Southeast Asia



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (CDIS) data.

Note 2: Singapore alone accounts for about 70% of the inward FDI stock in the region.

Bilateral External Debt in Southeast Asia



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on data from the World Bank (IDS).

Note 2: The graph illustrates the sum of bilateral external debt in the public sector and in the private sector (private sector external debt guaranteed by the public sector).

1. See page 193 for notes regarding this data.

2. While only a limited number of countries such as Japan, the U.S., and China are illustrated in the chart, the rankings in the text are for all countries/regions for which data is available (including countries, etc., in the relevant region).

5 South Asia

(1) India²⁷

Geopolitically, India is an extremely important country as it is positioned at the center of sea lanes in the Indian Ocean that connect Asia and Africa. Additionally, India is the third largest economy in Asia, with the world's second largest population and a huge middle-income group. In recent years, India has been implementing a variety of economic initiatives, including "Make in India," and has been realizing steady economic growth. Although India's economy has substantially contracted due to the spread of COVID-19, it is aiming for an economic recovery through the promotion of its manufacturing industry with the new "Self-reliant India" campaign, and in 2021 real GDP recovered to pre-COVID-19 levels. In diplomatic relations, the "Act East" policy has been laid down in implementing active diplomacy to promote concrete cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, thereby enabling India to gain more influence in the international arena as a global power.

Japan and India are the two largest democratic countries in Asia, sharing common fundamental values and principles, such as democracy and the rule of law, as well as strategic interests, and under the "Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership," have broadly deepened cooperation in their economies, security, people-to-people exchanges, etc. The Japan-India relationship is blessed with the greatest potential for development of any bilateral relationship in the world, and its importance is increasing as the uncertainty of the existing international order increases. Additionally, India is an important partner in realizing a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)," and multilateral cooperation, such as between Japan, Australia, India and the U.S., is steadily progressing. The deepening of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between Japan, which faces the Pacific Ocean, and India, which is located in the center of the Indian Ocean, will greatly contribute to the peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific



Second Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting (September 8, Tokyo)

region. India is also an indispensable player in building the economic order in the Indo-Pacific region, and in that sense, it is expected that India will return to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement in the future.

2022 marks the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and India, and high-level exchanges of views, including summit meetings, have continued. At the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Australia in February, a Japan-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting was also held. In March, Prime Minister Kishida visited India as his first bilateral visit after assuming the office of Prime Minister, and at the Japan-India Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the two leaders confirmed that they would put the annual mutual visit back on track, and also reaffirmed the importance of further promoting efforts among Japan, Australia, India, and the U.S. toward the realization of FOIP. At the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders' Meeting held in May and the Japan-India Summit Meeting held in September when Prime Minister Modi visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, the two leaders agreed to develop the Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership. In September, the Second

²⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs website detailing Prime Minister Kishida's visit to India in March 2023:
https://www.mofa.go.jp/s_sa/sw/in/page1e_000582.html



Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting and the 14th Japan-India Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue were held, reaffirming that any attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force are unacceptable, not only in the Indo-Pacific, but also in any region, and that a peaceful resolution based on international law needs to be sought. Furthermore, a number of working-level discussions have been held between Japan and India, and in June the Joint Committee Meeting on Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Railway and the Japan-India Cyber Dialogue were held.

(2) Pakistan

Pakistan is situated in a strategic location connecting Asia and the Middle East, and its political stability and economic development are essential for the stability and growth of the region. The country has a population of more than 200 million, and approximately 65% of the total population is under 30 years old, thus making its economic potential high. In 2022, heavy rains from mid-June to September caused flood damage in the province of Sindh and other parts of Pakistan, resulting in enormous human and property damage. It was also a major blow to the economy, which was on a recovery trend.

In foreign relations, the India-Pakistan relationship has remained tense since August 2019 when the Government of India decided to revoke Article 370 of the Constitution, which recognized the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. Under the "All Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership," Pakistan's relationship with China has been enhanced in a wide range of fields toward the construction of an economic corridor between China and Pakistan (CPEC), which is an important constituent element of China's "Belt and Road" initiative. In domestic affairs, Prime Minister Imran Khan resigned in April due to the passage of a no-confidence motion in Parliament, and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was newly appointed after a nomination election.

In 2022, Japan and Pakistan celebrated the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, and in April, Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Sharif sent congratulatory messages. In August, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs

HONDA Taro visited Pakistan, and a Japan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meetings. In September, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-Pakistan Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Sharif at the UN General Assembly, and the two leaders concurred to further strengthen bilateral relations. A Government Business Joint Dialogue was also held in September, and there was an exchange of views on ways to promote bilateral trade and to improve the investment environment.

In addition to the grant aid that Japan has so far provided to Pakistan in the fields of health, water and sanitation, and disaster prevention, etc., as a measure to address the flood disaster, Japan also provided tents and plastic sheets as emergency relief supplies, as well as deciding on and extending emergency grant aid of 7 million US dollars through international organizations. In light of the worsening humanitarian and security situation caused by the flood disaster, Japan provided emergency assistance of approximately 38.98 million US dollars in the areas of health and medical care, water and sanitation, food and nutrition, and seeds and fertilizers through contributions to international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), etc., in order to ensure stability in the country. Furthermore, in January 2023, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs AKIMOTO Masatoshi attended the International Conference on Climate Resilient Pakistan that was held in Geneva, and announced that, subject to domestic procedures, Japan would continue to provide approximately 77 million US dollars in additional assistance in 2023 and beyond, including in the areas of disaster prevention, health and medical care, and agriculture.

(3) Bangladesh

Bangladesh, in which Muslims account for around 90% of the population, is a democratic country located in the Bay of Bengal and is geopolitically very important as an intersection between India and ASEAN. In

terms of diplomacy, with the deterioration in peace and order in Rakhine State of Myanmar since August 2017, more than 700,000 displaced persons have flooded into Bangladesh (as of the end of December 2022), but their return has not yet been realized. There are concerns that their prolonged displacement will put a growing burden on the host community and that local peace and order will deteriorate. On the economic front, Bangladesh has been steadily growing, and in 2021, achieved an economic growth rate of 6.9%. With a population of around 166 million people, Bangladesh has a production base with abundant high-quality labor, and the high potential of its market from considerable infrastructure demand is attracting attention. The number of Japanese affiliated companies developing business in the country has increased from 61 in 2005 to 324 in 2021. However, the securing of a stable supply of electric power as well as infrastructure improvement remain as challenges for foreign companies investing in the country.

In 2022, Japan and Bangladesh celebrated the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, and in February Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina sent congratulatory video messages. Foreign Minister Abdul Momen visited Japan in April and September and held Japan-Bangladesh Foreign Ministers' Meetings with Foreign Minister Hayashi, and during his visit in September, he attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda visited Bangladesh in July, and State Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKEI Shunsuke visited Bangladesh in November.

(4) Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is situated in a strategic location on the sea lanes in the Indian Ocean. The country is traditionally a friendly country to Japan and its geopolitical and economic importance is note-worthy. With regard to domestic politics, domestic and external debt increased due to major policy changes, including large-scale tax cuts from 2019 and the stagnation of the domestic economy due to the spread of COVID-19. The economic crisis, including shortages of fuel, food, and medicine, along with prolonged power outages and record inflation caused by a severe shortage of foreign

currency against the backdrop of deficits in the international balance of payments and the budget balance, has led to a public outcry, and since March there have been frequent demonstrations demanding the resignation of President Gotabaya Rajapaksa. On July 9, there were large-scale protests demanding the President's resignation, and in response to some of the protestors who occupied the presidential palace, the presidential office, and the prime minister's office, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa fled the country on July 13 and resigned on July 14. Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe was then inaugurated as the new President on July 21.

On April 12, Sri Lanka's Ministry of Finance announced measures to temporarily suspend payments on its external debt pending a debt restructuring in line with the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) economic adjustment program. On May 18, the grace period for interest payments on 78 million US dollars' worth of long-term foreign currency denominated government bonds expired, triggering the country's first sovereign debt default. As a result of discussions with the IMF, the Government of Sri Lanka reached a staff-level agreement on September 1 for an Extended Credit Facility (EFF) worth 2.9 billion US dollars for a 48-month period. In addition to measures to address the country's current inflation and to secure essential goods, efforts are being made toward the approval of the IMF Executive Board for the agreement, including revenue and expenditure reform, formulation of the 2023 budget, state-owned enterprise reforms, and debt restructuring. With a negative economic growth of 8% to 9% expected in 2022, the country is working to restore economic stability and sustainability through a series of policy reviews.

In response to the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka due to the economic crisis, Japan, in cooperation with international organizations, has provided a total of 22.7 million US dollars in grant assistance, including 6.5 million US dollars in humanitarian aid to provide medicines and food to the country.

Japan and Sri Lanka celebrated the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2022, and related events were held in both countries. In August, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Ali Sabry held a Japan-Sri Lanka Foreign Ministers' Meeting at the ASEAN-related Foreign

Ministers' Meetings; in September, when President Wickremesinghe visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, Prime Minister Kishida and President Wickremesinghe held a Japan-Sri Lanka Summit Meeting and Foreign Minister Hayashi paid a courtesy call to President Wickremesinghe; and in October, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Sabry had a Foreign Ministers' telephone call.

(5) Nepal

Nepal has geopolitical importance as an inland state in South Asia between the great powers of China and India. In domestic affairs, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal was newly appointed in December following the results of federal elections in November for the House of Representatives.

For many years, Japan has been a major donor to Nepal and the two countries have traditionally built friendly relations through people-to-people exchanges such as mountaineering.

Japan has continued to support Nepal, where transition from a monarchy to a federal democracy took place in 2008, for the consolidation of democratization and the strengthening of governance, by dispatching experts to assist in the improvement of legal system and capacity of the media sector, among others. In November, an election observer team headed by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei visited Nepal and inspected polling and vote counting stations for the House of Representatives election, confirmed that the elections were being held in a free, transparent, and fair manner, interviewed election managers on the operational status of polling and vote counting stations and future improvements, and met with the electoral commissioner.

In 2022, Japan and Nepal celebrated the 120th anniversary of student exchanges, and events were held in both countries.

(6) Bhutan

Bhutan sets Gross National Happiness (GNH) as a guideline of the administration and is working on the priority issues of reducing poverty, improving the quality of healthcare and education, gender equality, the preservation of the environment, culture and



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei paying a courtesy call to Princess Wangchuck of Bhutan (November 22, Thimphu, Bhutan)

traditions, stabilization of the macroeconomy, etc., under the 12th Five-Year Plan (from July 2018 until June 2023).

Bhutan has traditionally been friendly toward Japan, and there is a rich history of exchanges between the Japanese Imperial and Bhutanese Royal families. In September, Princess Ashi Euphelma Choden Wangchuck visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo and met with Prime Minister Kishida. Prime Minister Kishida expressed his intention to continue to strengthen bilateral relations including in the agricultural sector. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei also visited Bhutan in November.

(7) The Maldives

Situated in a strategically important location in the Indian Ocean, the Maldives is an important partner to Japan in realizing a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).” Economic growth in the Maldives is mainly led by fishery and tourism, which account for about 30% of its GDP, and the country’s per-capita GDP has reached the highest level in South Asia region. The Maldives’ tourism industry was hit hard by the spread of COVID-19, but the number of tourists is currently returning to pre-COVID-19 levels, led by the recovery of those from Western countries (as of December 2022). Since his inauguration, President Solih has been promoting a foreign policy of strengthening cooperation with every country that hopes to build mutually

beneficial relations, and of advancing cooperation with other countries in the region including India.

2022 was the 55th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Maldives, and Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid sent congratulatory messages in November. In May, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAKE Shingo attended the 78th General Assembly of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) and

met with Foreign Minister Shahid. In September, in addition to a Foreign Ministers' telephone call between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Shahid, a Japan-Maldives Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held when Foreign Minister Shahid came to Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, and the two Ministers agreed to cooperate even more closely toward the realization of FOIP. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei also visited the Maldives in December.

Column

Japan-Southwest Asia Exchange Year 2022

What do you think of when you hear the words “Southwest Asia”? Is it curry? Curry is, of course, the region’s signature dish, but it is by no means the only one. The seven countries of Southwest Asia – Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka – are rich in individuality and blessed with ancient civilizations, abundant nature and rich cultures. But did you also know that they have long and deep relationships with Japan?

The countries of Southwest Asia have great affinity toward Japan and have long built friendly relations with Japan. In 2022, Japan celebrated commemorative milestones^(Note) with each of these countries and, in order to further deepen exchanges with the region, Japan designated 2022 as “Japan-Southwest Asia Exchange Year” and held a variety of related events in Japan and throughout Southwest Asia.

At the kickoff event held in January, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs HONDA Taro invited the Ambassadors of Southwest Asian countries to Japan, as well as other participants, for a “*Kakizome* Party” (*kakizome* is a traditional event in Japan when people write calligraphy for the first time at the beginning of a new year). The participants expressed their hopes and wishes for the Exchange Year by writing New Year’s calligraphy to celebrate the beginning of the Japan-Southwest Asia Exchange Year and to wish for the further deepening of friendly relations between Japan and each country. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda wrote “交友知香” (“*Ko Yu Chi Ka*” in *kanji* characters) and expressed his wish for the deepening of friendship amid the rich mellow spice aroma of the Southwest Asian countries and the traditional Japanese ink aroma hanging in the air while writing calligraphy.

In October, MOFA participated in one of the largest curry festivals in Japan, held in Shimokitazawa, Tokyo, in order to promote exchanges between Japan and Southwest Asian countries through curry, a food culture that is common to both Japan and Southwest Asia.

Additionally, during this Exchange Year, a variety of organizations in Japan and Southwest Asian countries applied for their events to be endorsed as commemorative events, and the official logo was used to make the anniversary year even more exciting.

Furthermore, “an official of MOFA, MINAMI Asiako” @southasiako2022, an official Twitter account of MOFA, provided updates on events held by Japanese embassies in Southwest Asian countries, interesting information about Southwest Asia, and stories from officials of MOFA that are involved with the region to bring Southwest Asia closer to many people. These posts helped to familiarize about 3,000 followers with Southwest Asia.

The long-standing bonds between Japan and Southwest Asia, which have continued from time immemorial to the present, were further deepened through the Japan-Southwest Asia Exchange Year 2022 and have begun to take their next step into the future as steadfast partners.



Ambassadors to Japan and other representatives of each country showing their thoughts in calligraphy at the “*Kakizome* Party” kickoff event for the Exchange Year (January 27, Tokyo)



Exchange Year banner set up on the main road at the Shimokitazawa Curry Festival (October, Tokyo)



The official logo for “Japan-Southwest Asia Exchange Year 2022”

This logo, illustrated with origami pigeons, symbols of peace and friendship, expresses hope for the further development of friendly ties between Japan and the Southwest Asian countries.

Note: Anniversaries between Japan and Southwest Asian countries in 2022

- 50th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Bangladesh
- 35th Anniversary of the conclusion of the JOCV Agreement between Japan and Bhutan
- 70th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and India
- 55th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and the Maldives
- 120th Anniversary of International Student Exchanges between Japan and Nepal
- 70th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Pakistan
- 70th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Sri Lanka

Reference

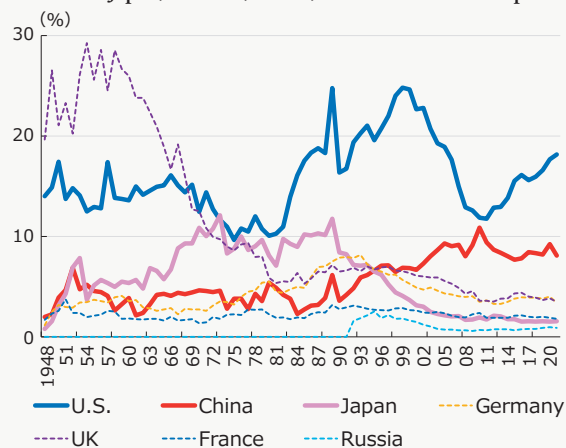
Relations between South Asia and Japan, the U.S., China, etc., Seen Through Economic Data¹

Trade: In recent years, the U.S. has become the top destination for the region's exports. The U.S.'s share had been declining since around 2000, but in the 2010s exports from India increased and the U.S.'s share as an export destination began rising again. In terms of imports, China's share of the region's import has increased in recent years. In 2021, Japan ranked 19th in terms of its share in the region's exports and was 11th in terms of imports.²

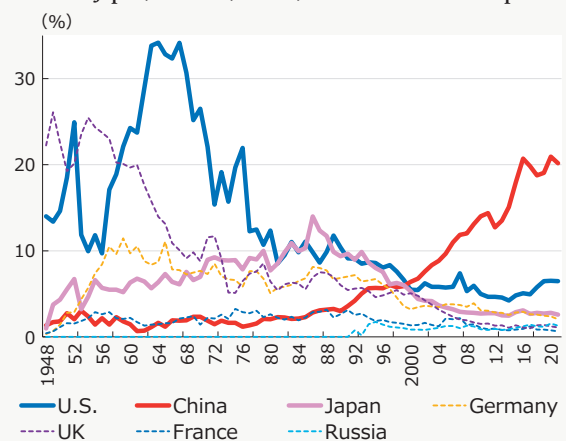
Investment: The FDI to India alone accounts for approximately 90% of the total inward FDI stock in the region. The U.S. and the U.K. make up a large portion through large investment in India, and Japan also has a certain share. Mauritius is the top investor in India. China has a strong investment presence in Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Nepal, while India, a regional power, has heavily invested in Nepal and Bhutan.

Finance: In the 2010s, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka increased their debt to China, making China the largest bilateral creditor country as of 2021. Japan ranks second after China.

Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in South Asia's exports



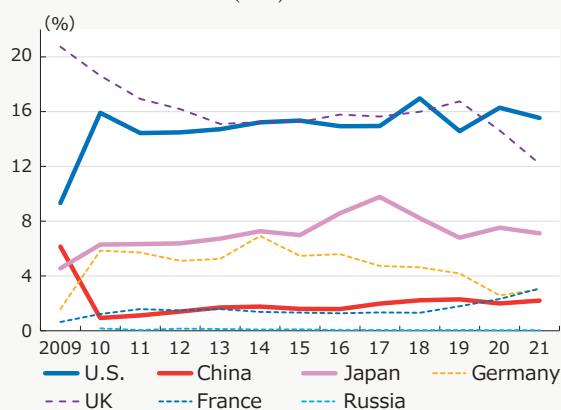
Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in South Asia's imports



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (DOTS) data.

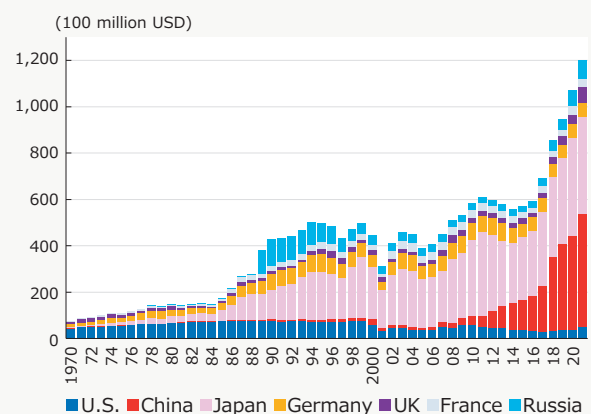
Note 2: Figures for China are the sum of Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau. Graphs for past figures may be skewed due to missing data, etc.

Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock in South Asia



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (CDIS) data.

Bilateral External Debt in South Asia



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on data from the World Bank (IDS).

Note 2: The graph illustrates the sum of bilateral external debt in the public sector and in the private sector (private sector external debt guaranteed by the public sector).

1. See page 193 for notes regarding this data.

2. While only a limited number of countries such as Japan, the U.S., and China are illustrated in the chart the rankings in the text are the rankings for all countries/regions for which data is available (including the countries, etc., in the relevant region).

6 Oceania

(1) Australia

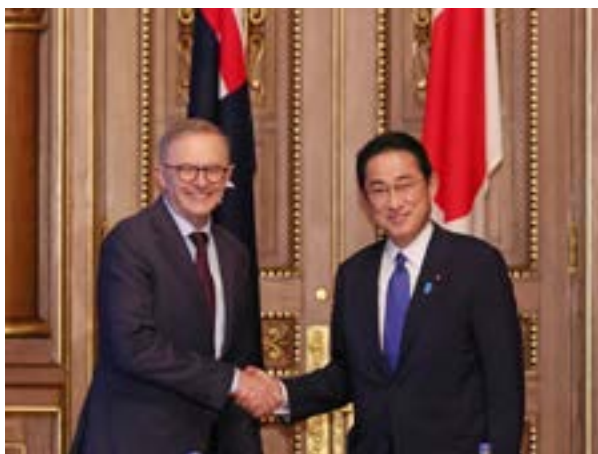
A Brief Summary and Overview

In the Foreign Policy White Paper issued by the Australian Government in November 2017, it was announced that as the guidelines for foreign policy of the next 10 years, Australia will, among others, promote an open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific region, oppose protectionism, promote and protect international rules, while also strengthening cooperation with partners including Japan. This foreign policy basically has continued to be upheld even after Prime Minister Anthony Albanese (Labor Party) replaced Prime Minister Scott Morrison (Coalition) in May 2022.

With the region facing a variety of issues, the “Special Strategic Partnership” between Japan and Australia, which share fundamental values and strategic interests, is more important than ever. The two countries’ strategic visions toward maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order based on the rule of law in the Indo-Pacific region are aligned in wide-ranging areas. With the Prime Ministers’ annual mutual visits and close coordination between the Foreign Ministers serving as the basis, the two countries have been further deepening multi-layered cooperation and collaboration in all areas toward stability and prosperity of the international community. Furthermore, multilateral coordination and partnerships such as the Japan-U.S.-Australia, and Japan-U.S.-Australia-India relations are being steadily strengthened.

The two countries are exercising leadership in promoting free trade, including the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement. Australia is the fifth largest trading partner for Japan, and Japan is the second largest trading partner for Australia. The two countries are further developing mutually complementary economic relations based on the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), which marks the eighth anniversary of its effectuation, the CPTPP that entered into force at the end of 2018, and the RCEP Agreement that entered into force in January 2022.

At the Japan-Australia Leaders Video Teleconference Meeting in January, Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Morrison welcomed the signing of the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA), and Prime Minister Kishida showed his recognition that security and defense cooperation between Japan and Australia would continue to be a model case for Japan to strengthen security and defense cooperation with other countries. The two leaders also exchanged views on security and defense cooperation, regional affairs, cooperation with allies and like-minded countries, disarmament and non-proliferation, and the economy, and concurred to further strengthen the Japan-Australia relationship and embody their commitment toward the realization of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).” At the Japan-Australia Leaders Meeting in May, Prime Minister Kishida and newly inaugurated Prime Minister Albanese, affirmed that Japan and Australia will continue to work closely together on the basis of three pillars: (1) deepening cooperation in the areas of security and defense and economy; (2) further coordination with allies and like-minded countries, including cooperation between Japan, Australia, India and the U.S., to contribute to peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region; and (3) cooperation on global issues such as climate change. Following the passing of former Prime Minister Abe, a Japan-Australia Summit Telephone Meeting was held in July, and at the state funeral in September, a delegation consisting of incumbent Prime Minister Albanese and three former Prime Ministers (namely, former Prime Ministers John Howard, Tony Abbot, and Malcolm Turnbull) visited Japan to show respect for former Prime Minister Abe and Japan, and Prime Minister Albanese met with Prime Minister Kishida. In October, Prime Minister Kishida visited Perth, Australia, and held a Japan-Australia Leaders’ Meeting with Prime Minister Albanese. The two leaders shared the view that given the deepening of cooperation, particularly in the areas of security and defense cooperation, FOIP, and resources and energy, the Special Strategic Partnership between Japan and Australia had been elevated to a new level.



Japan-Australia Leaders Meeting (May 24, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

Foreign Minister Hayashi held an in-person Japan-Australia Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Marise Payne in February and then via a telephone call in April, and the two Ministers confirmed the further strengthening of Japan-Australia relations. In May, Foreign Minister Hayashi had an informal talk with new Foreign Minister Penny Wong, and Foreign Minister Hayashi further mentioned that he hoped to continue to work closely for the realization of FOIP, as well as to further strengthen the Special Strategic Partnership between Japan and Australia. In July, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Wong held a Japan-Australia Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and Foreign Minister Hayashi expressed his willingness to work closely as the security environment in the Indo-Pacific region becomes more challenging. Furthermore, in December, at the Tenth Japan-Australia 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations ("2+2"), a Japan-Australia Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held with Foreign Minister Wong, and Foreign Minister Hayashi stated that Japan and Australia have become central pillars of coordination among like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific region, and that the Special Strategic Partnership between Japan and Australia has been elevated to a new dimension.

Through such frequent high-level dialogues, Japan and Australia have communicated and contributed as the core of cooperation among like-minded countries in various fields as described below.

B Cooperation in the Security Field

To ensure peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region, Japan and Australia have continued to steadily

strengthen and expand cooperation in the field of security.

In January, at the Japan-Australia Leaders Video Teleconference Meeting, Japan and Australia signed the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA). This Agreement establishes procedures between Japan and Australia for the cooperative activities conducted by the defense force of one country while visiting the other country, and defines the status of the visiting force. It also facilitates the implementation of cooperative activities between the defence forces of both countries, further promotes security and defense cooperation between the two countries, and enables both Japan and Australia to further contribute to the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region. In October, at the Japan-Australia Leaders' Meeting, the two leaders signed the Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation. The Declaration not only includes enhancing interoperability through joint exercises, defense equipment and technology cooperation, and cooperation in new areas such as cyberspace, and outer space, but it also includes content that reflects the unparalleled closeness of the Japan-Australia relationship, with the two sides aligning their strategic assessments and consulting on contingencies that may affect regional security interests. In December, the Tenth Japan-Australia 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations ("2+2") were held, shortly after the Leaders' Meeting in October, and the four Ministers followed up on the outcomes of the Leaders' Meeting. The four Ministers discussed regional and global issues based on the common understanding among the leaders and confirmed that the strategic assessment of both sides is very close, and decided on bilateral cooperation that should be implemented as soon as possible based on the Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation. In terms of diplomacy, the four Ministers confirmed that they would promote cooperation in the Pacific Island countries and cooperation in economic security and in the cyber and space fields, and, in terms of defense, that they would promote various forms of cooperation, including building stronger interoperability.

C Economic Relations

As shown by Japan and Australia spearheading the CPTPP, which entered into force in December 2018,

the two countries are working closely and demonstrating leadership in promoting the regional free trade order, including the RCEP Agreement. Mainly industrial products such as automobiles are being exported from Japan to Australia, while mainly energy resources such as coal and natural gas, and agricultural products such as beef are being imported into Japan from Australia, in mutually complementary economic relations that have been developed steadily over the years. In recent years new cooperation efforts have been progressing, such as hydrogen-related efforts.

D Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges

There exists a foundation for affinity toward Japan in Australia cultivated over many years, as shown by the fact that approximately 415,000 people in Australia learn the Japanese language (the fourth largest group in the world), and that there are over 100 sister city relations. Until travel restrictions were enforced due to the spread of COVID-19, a variety of initiatives had been implemented in order to strengthen the foundation of Japan-Australia relations, including the promotion of mutual understanding through JENESYS, an exchange program to promote understanding of Japan that includes young people, and the “New Colombo Plan” as well as the Young Political Leaders Exchange. Both Japan and Australia will continue to work on the appropriate and steady operation of the Japan-Australia Working Holiday Program.

E Cooperation in the International Community

In order to make an active contribution to peace and stability in the international community, the two countries have been strengthening cooperation in wide-ranging areas. In particular, cooperation has been deepened in addressing various issues facing the Indo-Pacific region such as maritime security and nuclear and missile development by North Korea. Australia deployed the Royal Australian Navy frigate HMAS *PARRAMATTA* in late June and the frigate HMAS *ARUNTA* in late October to undertake surveillance operations in the adjacent ocean areas around Japan. By doing so, for the seventh and eighth times since 2018, Australia has engaged in surveillance operations against illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean flagged vessels, which are prohibited by

UN Security Council resolutions. Furthermore, from late February to late March, Australia engaged in surveillance operations for the 10th time since 2018 by aircraft, using Kadena Air Base.

(2) New Zealand

A Brief Summary and Overview

Japan and New Zealand share fundamental values, such as democracy and a market economy. The two countries have been maintaining good relations over the years. In recent years, under the “Strategic Cooperative Partnership,” the two countries have been strengthening bilateral cooperation in areas including the economy, security, defense cooperation and people-to-people exchanges, as well as cooperative relations on issues facing the region and the international community.

B High-Level Consultations

Amidst the complicated regional situation, Japan has been closely exchanging views with New Zealand, which is located in the Asia-Pacific region and which shares fundamental values with Japan. 2022 marked the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and New Zealand, and in April, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-New Zealand Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Jacinda Arden, who visited Japan as one of her first destinations after resuming overseas visits. The two leaders discussed bilateral relations and cooperation in the international arena, and concurred to further strengthen the “Strategic Cooperative Partnership” between Japan and New Zealand to realize FOIP. In September, at the UN General Assembly, informal talks were held between the two leaders, and they affirmed that they will continue coordination between the two countries on the regional situations, the CPTPP, and others.

C Economic Relations

The two countries enjoy complementary economic relations and have closely cooperated on the steady implementation of the CPTPP and RCEP Agreement, and the promotion of free trade structures including the RCEP Agreement, WTO reforms, and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF). In July, economic consultations were held amongst

high-level officials to share information on the economic situation in both countries, and a meaningful exchange of views took place on a wide range of areas, including bilateral trade and investment relations, cooperation in the environmental and renewable energy fields, and close cooperation in international economic frameworks, including the CPTPP. At the Japan-New Zealand Summit Meeting that was held in April, the two leaders affirmed to continue cooperation in the economic field, including on hydrogen-related cooperation toward decarbonization as well as space cooperation.

D Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges

People-to-people exchanges between Japan and New Zealand, such as for youths, take place through exchange programs like JENESYS, and a cumulative total of 1,100 people had participated by 2022. By 2022, more than 3,300 people have also participated in the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program, which invites foreign youth (on average approximately 100 people annually), and active exchanges are continuing. Additionally, the 44 sister city relations that have been cultivated between Japan and New Zealand over many years are fertile ground for people-to-people exchanges, and exchanges between sister cities with the aim of promoting mutual understanding among youth have resumed following the easing of border measures in both countries.

E Cooperation in the International Community

The two countries are cooperating closely for the peace and stability of the international community in the international arena, including the UN. The two countries are playing a proactive role for regional stability and development, for example by cooperating in regional cooperation frameworks such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) and by strengthening cooperation in the Pacific Islands region.

(3) Pacific Island Countries²⁸

A Brief Summary and Overview

Pacific Island countries and Japan are bound by the Pacific Ocean, have deep historical ties, and are important partners in such areas as cooperation in the international arena and the supply of fishery and mineral resources. They are becoming increasingly important as a cornerstone of FOIP, as they are located at the heart of the Pacific Ocean. As one of Japan's important policies in diplomacy with Pacific Island countries, Japan has been holding the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) once every three years since 1997, and in July 2021 the Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) was held via video-conference. Under the Pacific Bond (KIZUNA) Policy, a policy announced at PALM9 to further strengthen cooperation between Japan and the Pacific Island countries, Japan is working to further strengthen relations with the Pacific Island countries, centered on the five priority areas of (a) COVID-19 Response and Recovery, (b) Sustainable Oceans based on the Rule of Law, (c) Climate Change and Disaster Resilience, (d) Strengthening the Foundation for Sustainable and Resilient Economic Development, and (e) People-to-People Exchanges and Human Resource Development. Furthermore, in response to volcanic eruptions and the tsunami disaster in Tonga in January 2022, Japan promptly provided emergency relief goods via the Japan Disaster Relief (Self-Defense Forces) Unit and extended emergency grant aid, and emergency goods for drought damage were also provided to Kiribati in July and to Tuvalu in October.

B Partners in the Blue Pacific (PBP)

At a meeting of senior officials from like-minded countries (Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the U.S., and the UK) held in Washington D.C., the U.S., on June 23 and 24, participating countries concurred to launch the Partners in the Blue Pacific (PBP) framework for cooperation among like-minded countries that support prosperity, resilience, and security in the Pacific region. The participating countries also confirmed that they would cooperate in a variety of ways, including

²⁸ Pacific Island countries: Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Samoa, Cook Islands, Niue, Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea

information sharing, based on the needs of Pacific Island countries. In September, the first Partners in the Blue Pacific Ministerial Meeting was held in New York, the U.S., and in addition to Foreign Minister Hayashi, the Foreign Ministers of Australia, New Zealand, the UK and the U.S. were present, as well as representatives of the Pacific Island countries and regions, including Fiji Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs Bainimarama (the Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)). At the meeting, a joint statement was adopted. The PBP members emphasized that they will promote close dialogue and cooperation with the Pacific Island countries, and the representatives of Pacific Islands region welcomed the PBP's intention for close dialogue and cooperation, and expressed their expectations for concrete cooperation in the future.

C Meetings with Dignitaries

In April, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-Tuvalu Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Kausea Natano, who was visiting Japan for the 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit. Additionally, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs UESUGI Kentaro visited Solomon Islands and paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Manasseh Sogavare and Foreign Minister Jeremiah Manele. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Uesugi conveyed Prime Minister Kishida's message that Japan is concerned about the security cooperation agreement between China and Solomon Islands.

In May, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Fiji and Palau, the first visit by a Japanese Foreign Minister in three years, paid courtesy calls to the Prime Minister of Fiji and the President of Palau, held a meeting with PIF Secretary General Henry Puna in Fiji, and a Japan-Palau Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Palau.

In August, Prime Minister Kishida, who was visiting the U.S. to attend the Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), had a short informal talk with Fiji Prime Minister Bainimarama.

In September, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-Palau Summit Meeting and a working lunch with Palau President Surangel Whipps, who was visiting Japan for



Japan-Palau Summit Meeting (September 9, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

the first time since assuming the office of President.

Furthermore, on September 27, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-Papua New Guinea Summit Meeting with Prime Minister James Marape, who had visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo.

Through these and other meetings, Japan has reiterated that it will continue to provide strong support to the Pacific Island countries under the Pacific Bond (KIZUNA) Policy, has exchanged views on international and regional situations, and has confirmed that it will continue to closely work together with the Pacific Island countries.

D People-to-People Exchanges and Human Resource Development

At PALM9, "People-to-People Exchanges and Human Resource Development" were positioned as one of the five priority areas, and Japan announced that it would actively engage in human exchanges and human resource development for more than 5,500 people at various levels and in various fields from 2021 to 2024. As part of those efforts, Japan promotes people-to-people exchanges among university students through JENESYS. Furthermore, from FY2016 Japan commenced the Pacific Leaders' Educational Assistance for Development of State (Pacific-LEADS) for young government administrators of Pacific Island countries. Currently renamed the SDGs Global Leader Program, the program accepts young government officials and private human resources from Pacific Island countries to universities and graduate schools in Japan.

Reference

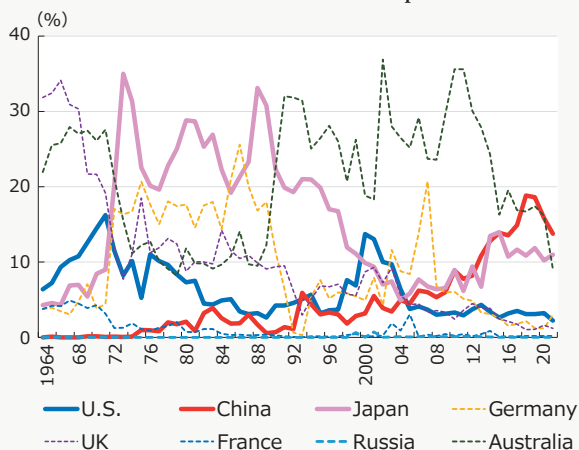
Relations between Pacific Island Countries and Japan, the U.S., China, etc., Seen Through Economic Data¹

Trade: Until the 1990s, the Pacific Island countries primarily traded with Japan and Australia, a regional power. However, in recent years China's share of both import and export has increased, surpassing Australia to take the top spot (especially in terms of import). In 2021, Japan ranked second in terms of its share in the region's export, and fifth in terms of the region's import.²

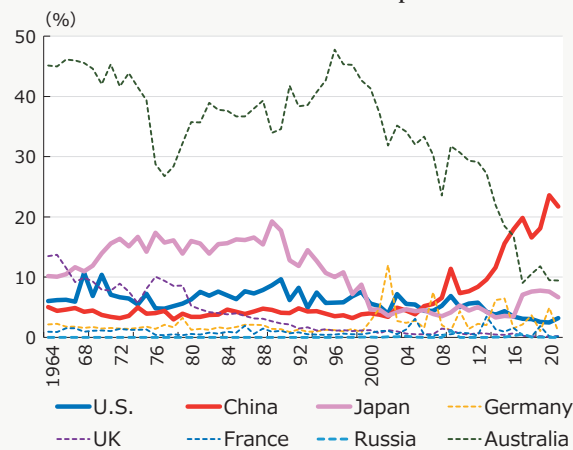
Investment: Regional power Australia's share of FDI stock in the region is extremely large at 40% (Much of the FDI in the region is directed to Fiji. Australia appears large as it is the top investor to Fiji). The share of FDI from other countries is less than 10%.

Finance: China has an extremely large presence in bilateral external debt, with Papua New Guinea accounting for approximately 60% of the region's external debt to China. In 2021, Japan was the third largest bilateral creditor country after China and Australia.

Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in Pacific Island Countries' Exports



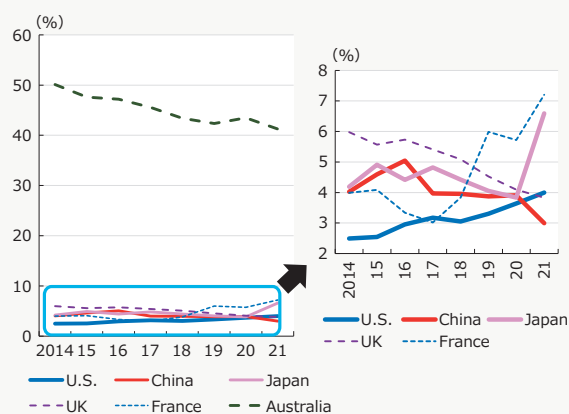
Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in Pacific Island Countries' Imports



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (DOTS) data.

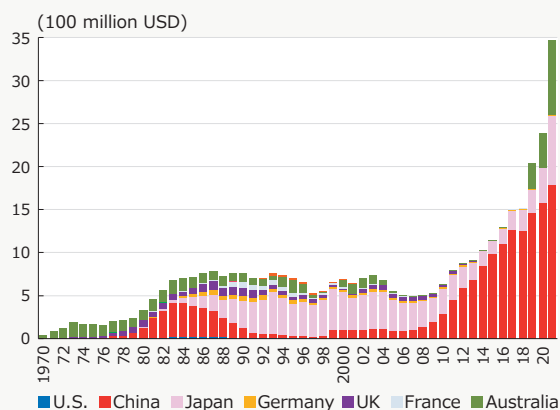
Note 2: Figures for China are the sum of Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau. Graphs for past figures may be skewed due to missing data, etc.

Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock in Pacific Island Countries.



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (CDIS) data.

Bilateral External Debt in Pacific Island Countries



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on data from the World Bank (IDS).

Note 2: The graph illustrates the sum of bilateral external debt in the public sector and in the private sector (private sector external debt guaranteed by the public sector).

1. See page 193 for notes regarding this data.

2. While only a limited number of countries such as Japan, the U.S., and China are illustrated in the chart, the rankings in the text are for all countries/regions for which data are available (including the countries, etc. in the relevant region).

7 Regional and Inter-Regional Cooperation

In the Indo-Pacific region, the world's growth center, it is important to ensure peace and prosperity for the entire region, and by extension for the world, by realizing a free and open order based on the rule of law. From this perspective, Japan strategically advances initiatives toward realizing a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" through various regional cooperative frameworks, including cooperation with like-minded countries such as Australia, India, ASEAN countries, and Europe, Japan-ASEAN, Japan-Mekong cooperation, ASEAN Plus Three (Japan, China and the Republic of Korea (ROK)), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), while maintaining the Japan-U.S. Alliance as the cornerstone of its foreign policy. In particular, the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP),"²⁹ adopted by ASEAN in 2019, shares fundamental principles with FOIP, such as the rule of law, freedom and openness. While respecting the ASEAN centrality and unity, Japan will further expand the support of the international community for AOIP, and intends to implement concrete Japan-ASEAN cooperation conducive to the principles of AOIP, and, as an "Indo-Pacific State," contribute to the stability and prosperity of the entire Indo-Pacific region.

(1) The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

Located in the heart of the vast Indo-Pacific, ASEAN is key to the realization of FOIP. At the ASEAN-related Summit Meetings held in November 2015, ASEAN declared to establish three communities; "ASEAN Political-Security Community," the "ASEAN Economic Community" and the "ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community" within 2015 (2015 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the Establishment of the ASEAN Community). Moreover, "ASEAN2025:

Forging Ahead Together" was adopted as a guiding policy for the ASEAN Community for the 10 years from 2016 to 2025. In June 2019, the AOIP was adopted.

In East Asia where ASEAN plays an important role as a center of regional cooperation, multi-layered regional cooperation, such as ASEAN Plus Three (Japan, China and the ROK), EAS and ARF, is operating with ASEAN at its center, and cooperative relationships in a wide range of areas including politics, security and the economy have been established.

On the economic front, ASEAN has concluded the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) as well as other EPAs and FTAs with various countries including Japan, China, the ROK and India, thereby expanding the ASEAN centered free trade zone. In November 2020, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement was signed by 15 countries, including Japan and 10 ASEAN countries, and it entered into force on January 1, 2022. While working closely with participating countries to ensure the full implementation of the RCEP Agreement, Japan will continue to play a leading role for the future participation of India in the Agreement, as India declined signing.

(2) Issue of the South China Sea

The issue with regard to the South China Sea is directly related to the peace and stability of the region and is a legitimate concern of the international community. As a stakeholder that makes use of the South China Sea, the issue is also an important matter of interest for Japan, which depends on sea transport for most of its resources and energy.

China has been continuing and strengthening its actions to unilaterally change the status quo and increase regional tensions against the rule of law and openness, such as with further militarization of disputed features (see Chapter 3, Section 1, 3 (4)). Furthermore, China has not changed its position of not accepting

²⁹ AOIP was adopted at the ASEAN Summit Meeting in June 2019. In addition to strengthening ASEAN centrality in the Indo-Pacific region, AOIP sets out to promote cooperation in areas such as maritime cooperation, connectivity, SDGs, and the economy based on the principles of openness, transparency, inclusiveness, rules-based frameworks, good governance, respect for sovereignty, non-interference, complementarity with existing cooperation frameworks, equality, mutual respect, mutual trust, mutual benefit, and respect for international laws including the UN Charter, the UNCLOS, and other relevant UN conventions.

the Arbitral Tribunal's award³⁰ to the Philippines and China, and has continued to assert maritime claims that are inconsistent with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The international community, including Japan, has expressed serious concerns about China's unilateral attempts to change the status quo and render them *faits accomplis*, as well as actions that increase regional tensions. Japan also strongly opposes unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion and from the standpoint that the three principles of the rule of law at sea should be consistently adhered (see Chapter 3, Section 1, 6 (2)), has also consistently emphasized the importance of all the concerned parties related to the South China Sea to work toward peaceful settlement of disputes based on international law, in particular UNCLOS. Additionally, Japan has pointed out that China's assertions regarding baselines in the South China Sea are not based on relevant provisions of UNCLOS and that it is important to protect the freedom of navigation and overflight, including in the sea and airspace surrounding and above maritime features found to be low-tide elevations that do not have territorial sea and territorial airspace of their own according to the award of the Arbitral Tribunal. Japan has also pointed out that the basis of the "historical rights" claimed by China is not clear under international law, and the Arbitral Tribunal ruled that the "historical rights" based on the "nine-dash line" claimed by China were found to be contrary to UNCLOS and were clearly denied. Foreign Minister Hayashi issued a statement reiterating Japan's position on the importance of the rule of law and on the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law in July 2022, in addition to the statement issued in July 2021, which marked five years since the Arbitral Tribunal's award as to the disputes between the Philippines and China.

In 2018, negotiations on the Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea commenced between China and ASEAN. Japan considers that the COC should be effective, substantive, and consistent with UNCLOS and respect the legitimate rights and

interests of all stakeholders who use the South China Sea, and has advocated for the importance of such efforts leading to demilitarization of the area and to the realization of a peaceful and open South China Sea.

(3) Japan-ASEAN Relations

Realizing a more stable and prosperous ASEAN, the key to the realization of FOIP, is absolutely essential to the stability and prosperity of the region as a whole. Japan is actively supporting ASEAN's efforts in accordance with "ASEAN Community Vision 2025" for further integration even after the establishment of the ASEAN Community, while steadily implementing the "Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation" adopted at the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit to commemorate the 40th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation in 2013. Furthermore, based on the "Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific", adopted in 2020, Japan has been building up concrete cooperation in line with AOIP's priority areas of maritime cooperation, connectivity, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and economic and other possible areas of cooperation. The Statement was the first joint statement on AOIP adopted by ASEAN with external partners, and has been followed by similar joint statements between ASEAN and other dialogue partners. In 2023, Japan and ASEAN



Official logo for the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation
The catchphrase is "Golden Friendship, Golden Opportunities."

³⁰ In January 2013, the Government of the Philippines instituted arbitral proceedings under UNCLOS as to the disputes between the Philippines and China regarding the South China Sea. The Arbitral Tribunal organized by these proceedings rendered the final award on July 12, 2016. Japan issued a statement by the Foreign Minister on the same day, stating, "As the Tribunal's award is final and legally binding on the parties to the dispute under the provisions of UNCLOS, the parties to this case are required to comply with the award. Japan strongly hopes that the parties' compliance with the award will eventually lead to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea."

will also celebrate the 50th Year of Friendship and Cooperation. In the lead up to the 50th anniversary year, the official logo and catchphrase of “Golden Friendship, Golden Opportunities,” selected from a large number of entries by the general public, were jointly announced at the ASEAN-Japan Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in August 2022. Furthermore, the ASEAN-Japan Summit held in November agreed, with the support of many countries, that a Commemorative Summit to be held in Tokyo around December 2023. At this Commemorative Summit meeting, Japan and ASEAN will announce a new vision for ASEAN-Japan relations.

At the ASEAN-Japan Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in August and at the ASEAN-Japan Summit in December, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Prime Minister Kishida, respectively, reiterated Japan’s strong and consistent support for ASEAN centrality and unity, and introduced concrete cooperation in line with AOIP. In particular, at the Summit Meeting, a Progress Report on AOIP cooperation was released, introducing the fact that, since the 2020 Joint Statement, there have been a total of 89 concrete cooperation projects in total. Regarding economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, Prime Minister Kishida introduced Japan’s financial support loans of approximately 295 billion yen in total to ASEAN countries as part of Japan’s support to the ASEAN Comprehensive Recovery Framework (ACRF), and reaffirmed Japan’s continued commitment to assisting the sustainable growth of ASEAN countries. He also expressed Japan’s intention to continue supporting the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED) including through the dispatch of Japanese health experts.

Heading toward the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation next year, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan would enhance cooperation in the areas of maritime cooperation such as maritime traffic safety, assistance for connectivity such as quality infrastructure investment, healthcare including universal health coverage, measures to address climate change and disaster prevention, and also cooperation in a wide range of economic areas such as supply chain resilience, digital technology and food security. He additionally stated that Japan would like to realize the Asia Zero Emissions Community initiative by fully mobilizing its know-how and experience.



25th ASEAN-Japan Summit (November 11, Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

In response to this, ASEAN countries expressed appreciation and gratitude to the various efforts mentioned above, such as assistance for the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and for the establishment of the ACPHEED. They also highly valued Japan’s cooperation on the AOIP and expressed high expectation for continued close cooperation.

Prime Minister Kishida also stated that Japan and ASEAN share the view on many points regarding regional and international issues. He addressed issues such as Myanmar, Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, the East China Sea and the South China Sea, and North Korea, clearly stating Japan’s position.

In response, some ASEAN countries mentioned the importance of the freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea, and of the respect for international law, in particular UNCLOS, among other matters. Furthermore, some ASEAN countries expressed concern over tensions caused by North Korea’s ballistic missile launches, and mentioned the importance of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the full implementation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions as well as their support for the immediate resolution of the abductions issue.

(4) Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting (Participating Countries: Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam and Japan)

The Mekong region (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam) is the core of the Indo-Pacific and is Japan’s Strategic Partner with strong economic growth and potential. Peace and prosperity in the Mekong region are extremely important to Asia as a whole, including Japan, since it contributes to

narrowing the development gap in the region and promoting regional integration within ASEAN. From this perspective, Japan has been holding the Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting every year since 2009. Although the 2021 and 2022 Mekong-Japan Summit Meetings were postponed due to circumstances such as the COVID-19 pandemic and the situation in Myanmar, Japan will continue to steadily implement Mekong-Japan cooperation and to maintain its steadfast commitment to the region. Japan will continue to contribute to the prosperity and development of the region as a reliable partner for Mekong region countries.

(5) ASEAN Plus Three (Participating Countries: 10 ASEAN countries and Japan, China and the ROK)

The ASEAN Plus Three was established in 1997, when the Asian financial crisis triggered the addition of three countries (China, Japan, and the ROK) to ASEAN. ASEAN Plus Three has developed with a focus on areas such as finance and food security. Today, it covers cooperation in 24 areas, including finance, agriculture and food, education, culture, tourism, health, energy and the environment. Under the “ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan (2018-2022),” further cooperation has developed in each area.

At the ASEAN Plus Three Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in August, the new “ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan (2023-2027)” was adopted. There, Foreign Minister Hayashi introduced Japan's



23rd ASEAN Plus Three Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 4, Phnom Penh, Cambodia)

initiatives in support of COVID-19 countermeasures, food security, regional financial cooperation, and maritime cooperation as examples of Japan's active contributions to ASEAN Plus Three. He also stressed that Japan supports ASEAN unity and centrality and that Japan values cooperation in line with the AOIP. Furthermore, China asserted its position on the situation in Taiwan, and Foreign Minister Hayashi stated that Japan expects the peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues through dialogue.

At the 25th ASEAN Plus Three Summit Meeting held in November, with regard to ASEAN Plus Three cooperation, Prime Minister Kishida expressed Japan's intention to steadily promote initiatives, including in new areas such as the digital economy and resilient agriculture, based on the new ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan starting from 2023. Furthermore, he also stated that Japan would also promote the following specific cooperation in line with the four priority areas of the AOIP within the ASEAN Plus Three framework: (a) regarding maritime cooperation, Japan will support the training of Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) operators and will provide support for the formulation of National Action Plans and ocean monitoring on marine plastic litter; (b) regarding connectivity, Japan will facilitate quality infrastructure investment and will support soft connectivity such as Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), development of legal systems, fostering of people-to-people exchanges; (c) toward achieving SDGs, Japan will support the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) and the ASEAN Food Security Information System (AFSIS), support the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHED) for its expeditious operationalization, support balanced decarbonization, and assist ASEAN in formulating an ASEAN Climate Change Strategic Action Plan toward 2030; and (d) regarding economy and finance, Japan will invest in innovation and start-ups, enhance the resiliency of supply chains, further strengthen the functions of the Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM)³¹,

31 Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM) is a framework that was agreed upon at the 2nd ASEAN Plus Three Finance Ministers' Meeting in Chiang Mai, Thailand in May 2000, in response to the Asian currency crisis of 1997-98, with the aim of preventing a recurrence of the currency crisis within the East Asian region. In order to prevent a regional chain reaction and the spread of financial crises, short-term US dollar funds are provided in local currencies through currency swaps (exchanges) to countries that have experienced difficulties in making foreign currency payments.

and contribute to initiatives that improve financial resiliency against the impacts of financial digitalization and natural disaster risks, etc.

Regarding regional and international affairs, Prime Minister Kishida clearly stated Japan's position on the situations over Ukraine, North Korea, and Myanmar. He also asked for continued understanding and cooperation toward the immediate resolution of the abductions issue. Finally, he expressed his intention to deepen cooperation under ASEAN Plus Three framework in order to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order based on the rule of law, not force, in the region.

(6) East Asia Summit (EAS) (Participating

Countries: 10 ASEAN countries and Japan, China, the ROK, Australia, New Zealand, India, the U.S. and Russia)

Launched in 2005, the EAS is the premier forum of the region, which aims to facilitate candid dialogue among leaders on issues of importance to the region and the international community, and to promote leaders-led cooperation in politics, security and the economy. Moreover, many democratic nations take part in the EAS, and it is expected that the EAS will contribute to the sharing of fundamental values and principles in the region, including democracy and the rule of law, as well as to strengthening international rules and norms concerning trade and investment.

At the EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in August, Foreign Minister Hayashi strongly condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine. He also strongly condemned that the ballistic missiles launched by China landed in the sea close to Japan, including its Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and reiterated the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait. He also clearly stated Japan's position on the situation in North Korea, including the abductions issue, the situation in the East China Sea and South China Sea, Hong Kong, the human rights situation in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR), and the situation in Myanmar.

At the 17th East Asia Summit held in November, with regard to regional cooperation, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan consistently supports ASEAN centrality and unity, and reiterated that Japan values

implementing cooperation in line with the priority areas of the AOIP.

Regarding regional and international affairs, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Russia's aggression against Ukraine violates international law and any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force should never be tolerated anywhere in the world, and stressed that Russia's threat to use nuclear weapons is absolutely unacceptable, let alone their actual use. Russia's aggression against Ukraine was also condemned by other participating countries.

Prime Minister Kishida pointed out that China's activities that infringe upon Japan's sovereignty had been continuing and intensifying in the East China Sea and that actions, such as militarization and coercive actions, that escalate tensions in the region continue in the South China Sea. Referring to ballistic missiles that landed in the waters near Japan including its EEZ in August this year, he stated that the peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait is an important issue which directly impacts regional security as well. Prime Minister Kishida also expressed serious concerns about the situation in Hong Kong and the human rights situation in the XUAR. Furthermore, he expressed his strong opposition to any economic coercion in the region. The importance of freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea and of the peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law, in particular UNCLOS, was also mentioned, and the importance of peace and stability of the Taiwan Strait was emphasized by other participating countries. Some countries also expressed concerns on the situation in Hong Kong and mentioned the human rights situation in the XUAR, and economic coercion.

Regarding North Korea, Prime Minister Kishida stated that North Korea had been launching the spate of ballistic missiles with extremely high frequency, and that these missile launches constitute a clear and serious challenge to the international community and cannot be tolerated. He then reiterated that it is essential for the international community to come together and fully implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions for achieving the CVID (complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement) of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges of North Korea. Furthermore, Prime Minister Kishida asked



17th EAS (November 13, Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

for continued understanding and cooperation toward the immediate resolution of the abductions issue. Concerns about North Korea's extremely high frequency of ballistic missile launches were also expressed by other participating countries, and the importance of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and the full implementation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions as well as the early resolution of the abductions issue were also addressed.

As for Myanmar, Prime Minister Kishida expressed that Japan seriously deplores the deteriorating situation in Myanmar and provides its utmost support for ASEAN's efforts for the implementation of Five-Point Consensus. He also called for the immediate cessation of violence as well as safe and unhindered humanitarian access. Other participating countries also expressed serious concerns over the situation in Myanmar and emphasized the importance of implementing the Five-Point Consensus.

(7) Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Cooperation

Trilateral cooperation among Japan, China and the ROK continues to be vital from the perspective of promoting exchanges and mutual understanding among the three countries that enjoy geographical proximity and share deep historical ties. Furthermore, as economies that play a major role in the world economy and serve as the force driving prosperity of the East Asian region, trilateral cooperation among Japan, China and the ROK is one of the areas of cooperation that has huge potential in efforts to tackle various issues in the international community.

In order to continue and promote practical cooperation in a variety of fields while also paying close

attention to the situation with COVID-19, the 13th Japan-China-ROK Culture Ministers' Meeting in August, and the 23rd Tripartite Environment Ministers Meeting among China, Japan, and the ROK and the Fifteenth Tripartite Health Ministers Meeting in December were held online, where the Ministers of the three countries exchanged views and released Joint Statements. In October, the 15th Trilateral Cultural Content Industry Forum was held face-to-face in the ROK, and working-level consultations were also conducted.

(8) Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) (See Chapter 3, Section 3, 3 (3))

Consisting of 21 economies (countries and regions) in the Asia-Pacific region, APEC promotes regional economic integration and cooperation across the region among the member economies on a voluntary basis. As the Asia-Pacific region is positioned as the "world's growth center," strengthening economic cooperation and trust in economic aspects in this region is crucial in pursuing Japan's further economic development.

At the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, which was held face-to-face in November in Bangkok, Thailand for the first time in four years, the Bangkok Goals on the Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy, which describes efforts for sustainable growth in the APEC region after COVID-19 pandemic, was endorsed, in addition to the 2022 Leaders' Declaration. Prime Minister Kishida, who attended the meeting, expressed his determination to put the Japanese economy on a new growth trajectory and to contribute to inclusive and sustainable growth of the Asia-Pacific region by aiming to realize a new form of capitalism.

(9) South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)

SAARC was officially inaugurated in 1985 with multiple objectives such as enhancing the welfare of citizens of the South Asian countries, and cooperation and collaboration in economic and social development and cultural areas. As of 2022, SAARC has eight member states (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, the Maldives and Afghanistan) and nine observer countries and institutions including Japan. As a relatively loose framework of regional cooperation,

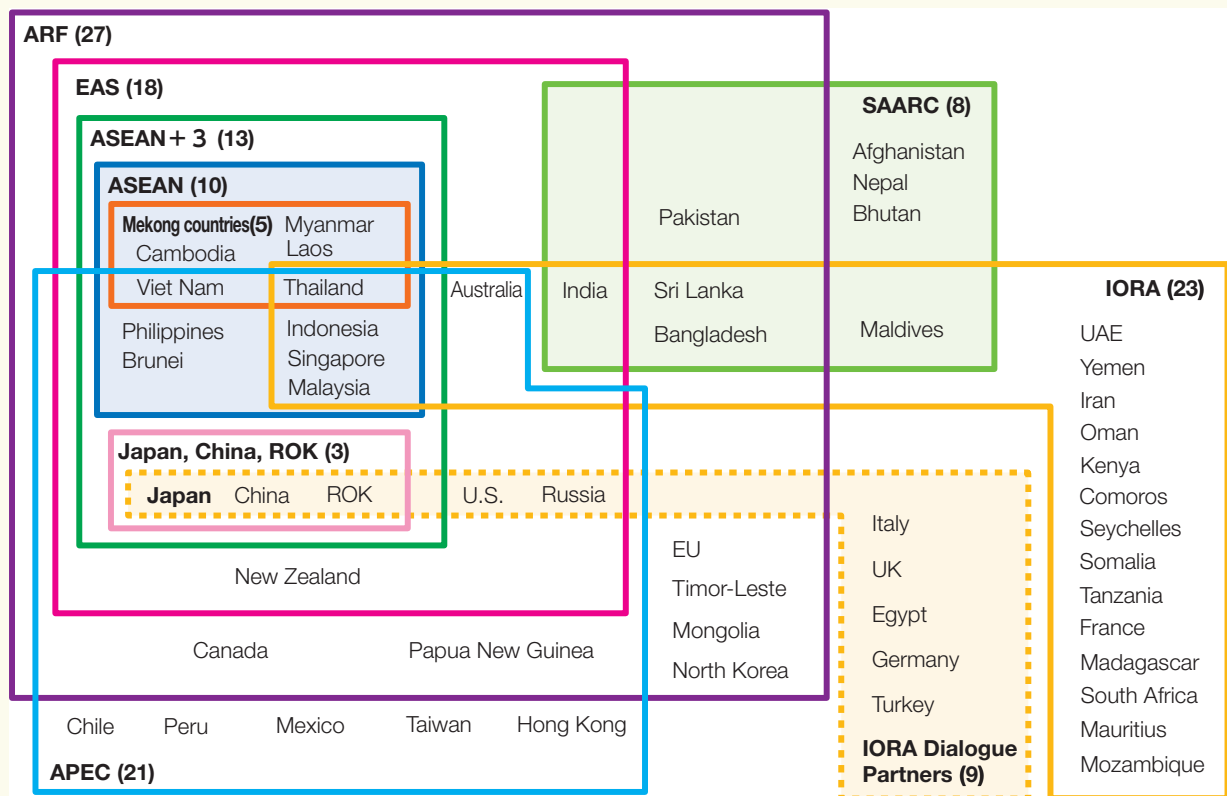
SAARC has worked primarily on economic, social and cultural areas, through summit meetings and meetings of the Council at the ministerial level (Foreign Ministers' meetings). As part of the youth exchange between Japan and SAARC, Japan has invited 3,615 people as of the end of 2022.

(10) Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)

IORA is a regional organization whose main purpose is to promote economic cooperation in the Indian

Ocean rim region, and Japan has been participating as a dialogue partner country since 1999. State Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKEI Shunsuke attended the 22nd Meeting of the IORA Council of Ministers, and introduced Japan's support for IORA member countries in strengthening maritime security capabilities and climate change measures as part of Japan's efforts to realize FOIP. He also explained the importance of transparent and fair development finance.

Major Frameworks of the Asia-Pacific Region



The numbers within () indicate the number of participating countries, regions, or organizations

<Abbreviations>

ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations)

EAS (East Asia Summit)

ARF (ASEAN Regional Forum)

APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation)

SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation)

IORA (Indian Ocean Rim Association)

Section 3 | North America

1 Overview

<The Importance of Cooperation with the North American Region, Which Shares Fundamental Values and Principles>

The security environment in the region and the international community is becoming increasingly severe at a rapid pace due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, North Korea's repeated ballistic missile launches with an unprecedented frequency and in unprecedented manners, and the continuation and strengthening of unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in the East China Sea and the South China Sea. 2022 was a year in which the international community reached a great historic turning point. As the international order is facing challenges and gravely shaken now, there has never been a time when it has been more necessary to have cooperation with our allies and like-minded countries.

The United States is Japan's sole ally. The strong Japan-U.S. Alliance is the linchpin of Japan's foreign and security policy, and the foundation of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. It is also essential to have cooperation with Canada, a member of the G7 and Japan's important partner in the Indo-Pacific region that shares universal values.

<The Diplomatic Strategies of the U.S. and Canada>

In light of the increasingly severe international situation, 2022 was a year of changes in the diplomatic strategies of the U.S. and Canada. The U.S. announced its Indo-Pacific Strategy in February and its National Security Strategy in October. In the Indo-Pacific Strategy, the U.S. positions itself as an Indo-Pacific nation, states its determination to strengthen its long-term position and commitment to the Indo-Pacific, and pledged to achieve an "Indo-Pacific that is free and open, connected, prosperous, secure, and resilient." Furthermore, in October, the first National Security Strategy under the administration of President

Joseph Biden was released. The Strategy outlines how the U.S. will respond to strategic competition and other challenges facing the international community in cooperation with its allies and like-minded countries, including Japan, while taking a leadership role. Furthermore, the Strategy clearly specifies promotion of Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP) and reaffirms unwavering commitment to the defense of Japan, including the Senkaku Islands.

Canada also released its first-ever Indo-Pacific Strategy in November. The Strategy is positioned as a comprehensive road map for deepening Canada's engagement in the Indo-Pacific region over the next decade, and is based on a strategy of strengthening the free, open, sustainable, and inclusive order in the region. This was a move that symbolized Canada's growing engagement in the region, in addition to the fields it has conventionally emphasized.

<Japan's Diplomatic Relations with North America>

Against the abovementioned backdrop, 2022 was a year of deepening relations between Japan and the U.S. and Canada. Amid signs of the resumption of people-to-people exchanges in various fields toward the post-COVID-19 era, there was frequent high-level policy coordination between Japan and the U.S. in 2022, such as eight summit meetings (including one video teleconference meeting and two telephone calls) and 13 foreign ministers' meetings (including six telephone calls). In particular, the Japan-U.S. Alliance has been increasingly strengthened under the deep relationships of trust between the leaders and foreign ministers, including the Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting in January, the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting during President Biden's visit to Japan in May, and the Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting during Foreign Minister Hayashi's visit to the U.S. in July. The two countries are closely cooperating in responding to regional situations in Ukraine, North

Korea, and China, as well as global challenges such as COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, nuclear disarmament, and non-proliferation.

In particular, during President Biden's visit to Japan in May, the Japan-U.S. Joint Leaders' Statement "Strengthening the Free and Open International Order" was released as the outcome of the summit meeting. This Statement indicates the joint Japan-U.S. strategy aiming for the maintenance and development of the free and open international order based on the rule of law, taking into account the current international affairs and the strategic importance of the Indo-Pacific region. Based on the direction indicated at the summit meeting, the Japan-U.S. Alliance was strengthened in all fields, including politics, security, economic, and people-to-people exchanges, including the visit to the U.S. by Foreign Minister Hayashi in July and the visit

to Japan by Vice President Kamala Harris to attend the state funeral of the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo.

Furthermore, Japan and Canada held three summit meetings (including two telephone calls) and four foreign ministers' meetings in 2022. Amidst the severe security environment, cooperation between the two countries is essential for regional peace and prosperity. In October, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly, who visited Japan as a guest of honor of MOFA, announced the "Japan-Canada Action Plan for contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region." The Action Plan summarizes specific initiatives in six priority areas of cooperation shared by Japan and Canada, and will serve as a compass for concrete steps forward in Japan-Canada cooperation toward realizing FOIP.

2 United States

(1) Situation in the U.S.

A Politics

With regard to U.S. domestic affairs in 2022, from the perspective of predicting trends for the November mid-term elections, attention was focused on whether the Biden administration would be able to stably manage the political situation by steadily implementing measures to combat COVID-19 and achieve economic recovery. Furthermore, as many hold the opinion that the U.S. public is becoming increasingly divided and partisan, attention was also focused on whether President Biden would be able to make progress in his efforts to achieve national reconciliation.

In January 2022 at a time when new COVID-19 infections surpassed one million per day in the U.S., President Biden held a press conference on January 19, which was the first anniversary of his inauguration. In the press conference, he emphasized the success of the COVID-19 countermeasures and appealed for support for the Build Back Better Act, citing the urgent need for recovery of the economy, which had been hit hard by COVID-19, and inflation countermeasures. While promoting consideration of the Build Back Better Act, a major spending bill that included social security,

climate change measures, and other items, President Biden also needed to demonstrate his leadership to bring together the Democratic and Republican parties as well as those within the Democratic Party in order to pass the 2022 spending bill. Meanwhile, the Freedom to Vote Act, which was debated in the Senate to protect voting rights, including the expansion of voting by mail, was rejected with opposition from some Democrats. The act, which was initiated by the Biden administration in response to former President Donald Trump's rejection of the electoral system in the 2020 presidential election and his refusal to admit his own defeat, was an attempt led by the Biden administration to counter movements by the Republican Party to amend state laws, including making stricter voting systems, mainly in states where the Republican Party is strong. This act ultimately revealed how difficult it is to coordinate within the Democratic Party.

Following Russia's aggression against Ukraine that began in February, the U.S. swiftly imposed large-scale economic sanctions and military pressure on Russia, while at the same time deciding to provide 13.6 billion US dollars in new assistance to Ukraine in its FY2022 budget, in an effort to strengthen unity among

like-minded countries. On March 1, President Biden delivered his State of the Union address to Congress, in which he strongly condemned President Vladimir Putin for the situation in Ukraine and emphasized cooperation with other countries. Furthermore, with regard to economic issues, he placed the highest priority on fighting inflation, while emphasizing the need to increase investment and employment. The Ukrainian Ambassador to the U.S., who sat beside the First Lady of Ukraine, was cheered by the Congress members in attendance. In May, President Biden decided to provide an additional 40 billion US dollars in assistance to Ukraine, and emphasized both domestically and internationally that he would continue this support.

In terms of domestic affairs, the movement for gun control also attracted attention. In May, the shootings at a grocery store in Buffalo, New York and at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, which were both committed by 18-year-old boys, increased public opinion calling for gun control and led to demonstrations across the U.S. President Biden called for action in Congress, and in June, the Senate and House of Representatives passed the first major gun control bill in 28 years on a bipartisan basis. Upon signing the bill, President Biden stated, "I know there's much more work to do, and I'm never going to give up," emphasizing the need for further action. Meanwhile, in the same month, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a ruling declaring New York State's gun control law restricting concealed carry of handguns outside the home to be unconstitutional, to which President Biden issued a statement that he was "deeply disappointed."

The year 2022 was also a year of heightened debate over the ethics of abortion. In June, the U.S. Supreme Court issued a ruling in a case over the constitutionality of a Mississippi law restricting abortion, overturning the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision which recognized the right of women to abortion under the U.S. Constitution. While the side that advocates for abortion rights (known as "pro-choice," which respects a woman's right to choose) strongly opposed the ruling and held protests across the U.S., the anti-abortion side (known as "pro-life," which respects the life of the unborn) held rallies to celebrate the decision, thus revealing the division in the country. The composition of the Supreme Court justices is generally considered

to be conservative as former President Trump nominated three justices who are considered conservative when he was in office, although Justice Ketanji Brown Jackson, a liberal nominated by President Biden, was confirmed by the U.S. Senate in April.

On the economic front, inflation had been rising in part due to various economic measures that had begun to take effect after the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as factors such as supply chain disruptions following the recovery in demand. However, inflation was further spurred by rising energy and food prices worldwide due to the situation in Ukraine. In June, the price of regular gasoline remained above 5 US dollars per gallon, and the Biden administration responded to the sharp price rise by releasing the U.S. Strategic Petroleum Reserve to the market. But due to dissatisfaction with inflation and other factors, President Biden's approval rating, which had been in the 50% range when he took office in 2021, dropped to the low 40% range in 2022. In July, it dropped below 40%. Inflation has had a serious impact on the household finances of the American people, and was expected to be a major issue in the midterm elections. In response to this situation, President Biden himself made efforts to coordinate with Congress. August saw the passage of the CHIPS and Science Act (CHIPS stands for "Creating Helpful Incentives to Produce Semiconductors"), which had been under discussion for the purpose of strengthening domestic industrial competitiveness in view of competition with China, as well as the Inflation Reduction Act, which reduced the scale of spending based on the Build Back Better Act mentioned before. The American people responded favorably to these economic policies, and there was a turnaround in President Biden's approval rating, which had been on a downward trend until then.

On the other hand, with regard to the Republican Party, former President Trump's actions were believed to be key to the party's success in the November midterm elections and the 2024 presidential election. In January 2021, supporters of former President Trump attacked the U.S. Capitol, alleging fraud in the 2020 presidential election. With the allegation that former President Trump incited the attack, the House Select Committee was established under the leadership of the Democrats and conducted various investigations to learn the truth of the matter. Public hearings were

held from June 2022, in which many former Trump administration officials and others testified. In August, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) conducted a search of former President Trump's private residence named Mar-a-Lago in Florida on charges that he illegally removed documents from the White House when he left office, and concealed and hid official documents. The former President claimed that the search was an attack by radical leftists who wanted to prevent him from running in the 2024 presidential election, and he continued to be backed by many Republican supporters, including for his policy stances. With his popularity, the former President stepped up his political activities, denouncing at political rallies members of Congress who were critical of him and supporting his favored candidates in the Republican primaries for the midterm elections.

On November 8, the midterm elections were held amidst talk on a variety of issues, including inflation, abortion, public safety and gun control, and the debate over election fraud involving former President Trump. Historically, the party of presidents in their first term has often fared poorly in U.S. midterm elections. Additionally, with the severe inflation situation facing the entire country, there were expectations immediately before the election of a "red wave" (red is the symbolic color of the Republican Party), with the Republicans winning both the Senate and the House of Representatives. However, although the Republicans acquired a narrow majority in the House of Representatives with 222 out of 435 seats, the Democrats maintained their majority in the Senate with 51 seats. In the gubernatorial elections, the Democrats gained two more states, with the Democrats and Republicans each winning 18 of the 36 states that were up for election. Overall, it is generally believed that the "red wave" predicted before the election did not occur, and that the aforementioned backlash against the abortion ban and the rejection of those who denied the 2020 presidential election expanded among younger people, women, independents, and some Republican supporters more than previously expected. In particular, there was a high percentage of young people who voted for Democrats in four states (Arizona, Georgia, Nevada, and Pennsylvania), where close Senate races were predicted in advance, and it is

strongly believed that the Democrats put up a good fight. In fact, in these four states, all of the Republican candidates who were supported by former President Trump were defeated, indicating a decline in the former President's popularity.

As a result of the midterm elections, the Democrats maintained their majority in the Senate, but lost their majority in the House of Representatives to the Republicans, leading to debate in the administration, Senate, and House with a "divided Congress" in 2023. This has led some to believe that President Biden will utilize executive orders to realize his policies. On November 15, the week following the midterm elections, moves toward the presidential election had already begun, including former President Trump announcing his candidacy for the 2024 presidential election. On the other hand, it has been pointed out that the aforementioned election results indicate a decline in the former President's influence. Amidst attention going to the movements of Republican Governor Ron DeSantis, who won the Florida gubernatorial election by a landslide, developments toward the presidential election are expected to be increasingly active. Attention will be focused on the leadership of the Biden administration under the "divided Congress" in 2023 as well as the future movements of both parties for the 2024 presidential election.

B Economy

(A) Current Economic Situation

2022 was a year of economic challenges for the Biden administration, including persistent inflation and concerns of a recession due to tighter monetary policy. Continuing on from 2021, there was accelerated inflation due to supply shortages caused by global supply chain disruptions and labor shortages that arose during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although growth gradually slowed through the second half of 2022, at one point the U.S. consumer price index (CPI) rose at a 9% rate year-on-year (June 2022, 9.1%) for the first time in nearly 40 years. Persistent inflation threatened the daily lives of the American people and was the primary concern of voters in the midterm elections held in November 2022.

Real GDP grew 5.7% year-on-year in 2021, the highest level in almost 40 years. Although real GDP

growth rate was negative from January to March and from April to June in 2022, it turned positive from July to September at a year-on-year rate of 3.2%, and there was also a 2.3% increase in consumer spending, which accounts for 70% of GDP.

In terms of employment, the unemployment rate remained stable at the 3% level throughout the year, and the number of employed people increased steadily. However, the labor force participation rate (the ratio of the labor force (either working or actively looking for work) to the working-age population (population aged 16 and over)) remained at 62.2% (as of October 2022), compared to 63.4% before the COVID-19 pandemic (in February 2020, and was still on the road to recovery. While labor demand has stabilized, the pressure on the labor market is still a challenge due to the labor shortage.

(B) Economic Policy

In 2021, the Biden administration passed large-scale fiscal laws such as the American Rescue Plan as a COVID-19-related economic measure and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that focused on investment in the infrastructure sector. These acts faced opposition not only from Republicans but also from within the Democrats, and the passage of bills incorporating climate change measures and human investment was stalled. However, as a result of continued intra-party coordination, the parties agreed to reduce the scale of spending from the Build Back Better Act announced in 2021, and on August 16, 2022, the Inflation Reduction Act was enacted with an emphasis on climate change measures.

The Inflation Reduction Act includes a total of 499 billion US dollars in spending, including 391 billion US dollars in climate change investments, such as tax credits for the introduction of clean energy. It also aims to contribute to inflation control by including more revenue than expenditure, with a 15% minimum corporate tax rate for large corporations, the right for the government to negotiate prescription drug prices with pharmaceutical companies, and a 1% tax on stock buybacks. Agreement was also reached on a bill involving funding for the semiconductor industry, and the CHIPS and Science Act was passed on August 9. In response to this act that allocates 52.7 billion US

dollars in the budget for the semiconductor industry, many companies in the U.S. and abroad have announced investment plans, such as the construction of semiconductor manufacturing plants in the country.

With regard to monetary policy, the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) decided to raise interest rates sharply by 0.5% to 0.75% at each subsequent meeting, beginning with a 0.25% increase at its March 2022 meeting, in order to normalize the high inflation that has persisted since 2021. In May, the Federal Reserve Board (FRB) also made a decision on monetary tightening by reducing its asset holdings, and is further strengthening monetary tightening.

(2) Japan-U.S. Political Relations

From January 2022 to the end of January 2023, frequent policy coordination at high levels has continued between Japan and the U.S., including nine summit meetings (of which two were telephone calls and one was a teleconference meeting) and 14 foreign ministers' meetings (of which six were telephone calls), as mutual visits by dignitaries resumed in earnest toward the post-COVID-19 era. Under the deep relationship of trust between the leaders and foreign ministers, the Japan-U.S. Alliance is stronger than ever before. The two countries are closely cooperating on regional affairs, including China, North Korea, and Ukraine, and in addressing global challenges such as COVID-19, climate change, nuclear disarmament, and nonproliferation.

On January 6, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-U.S. foreign ministers' telephone call with Secretary of State Antony Blinken. The two ministers reaffirmed that Japan and the U.S. would work together to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to realize FOIP. They also exchanged views on the COVID-19 situation of the U.S. Forces in Japan as well as the regional issues in North Korea, Russia, and Ukraine.

On January 21, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting with President Biden. The two leaders shared the intention to coordinate closely under the strong Japan-U.S. Alliance and to deepen cooperation with like-minded countries such as Australia, India, ASEAN countries, and European countries, toward realizing FOIP. The two leaders also exchanged views on regional issues,

including China, North Korea, Russia, and Ukraine. Furthermore, the two leaders shared the intention to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance in light of the increasingly severe security environment in the region. Prime Minister Kishida expressed his determination to fundamentally reinforce Japan's defense capabilities by newly formulating the National Security Strategy, the National Defense Program Guidelines, and the Mid-Term Defense Program, and President Biden expressed his support to it and underscored the importance of sustaining vital investments in defense over time. Prime Minister Kishida explained the idea of a "New Form of Capitalism," and the two leaders shared the view to deepen discussions on new policy initiatives toward realizing a sustainable and inclusive economy and society. Furthermore, the two leaders concurred on the launch of the ministerial Japan-U.S. Economic Policy Consultative Committee (the Economic "2+2"), and shared the intention to expand and deepen bilateral economic cooperation and mutual exchanges based on the "Japan-U.S. Competitiveness and Resilience (CoRe) Partnership" among others. In addition, the two leaders confirmed their intention to work together toward a world without nuclear weapons, and underscored the significance of the Japan-U.S. Joint Statement on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) released on the same day.

On February 2, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-U.S. foreign ministers' telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken. The two Ministers exchanged views on North Korea's nuclear and missile activities, and concurred that in light of the increasingly severe regional security environment, it is essential to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to continue close coordination between Japan and the U.S. The two Ministers also exchanged views on the situation in Russia and Ukraine.

On February 11, Foreign Minister Hayashi, who was visiting Australia, to attend the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting, held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. The two Ministers concurred to continue close coordination between Japan and the U.S. and to deepen cooperation with like-minded countries such

as Australia, India, ASEAN countries, and European countries toward realizing FOIP. They also exchanged views on regional issues, including China, North Korea, Russia, and Ukraine. In light of the increasingly severe regional security environment, they concurred that it is essential to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to continue close coordination between Japan and the U.S. Furthermore, they exchanged views on "New Form of Capitalism" and "Build Back Better" that Prime Minister Kishida and President Biden promote respectively, and concurred that they will deepen discussion on economic policies of both in the future, utilizing the Economic "2+2." In addition, Foreign Minister Hayashi urged the U.S. to return to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

On February 26, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-U.S. foreign ministers' telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken. The two Ministers exchanged views on the situation in Russia and Ukraine, and concurred to continue close coordination between Japan and the U.S. as well as with the international community, including the G7. Furthermore, the two Ministers reaffirmed the necessity to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and concurred to continue close coordination toward realizing FOIP.

On March 24, Prime Minister Kishida, who was visiting Belgium to attend the G7 Summit Meeting, held a meeting with President Biden. The two leaders exchanged views on the situation in Russia and Ukraine, condemned North Korea's nuclear and missile activities, and confirmed to continue close coordination between Japan and the U.S. on the response to North Korea. Furthermore, the two leaders concurred to continue discussion about further strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

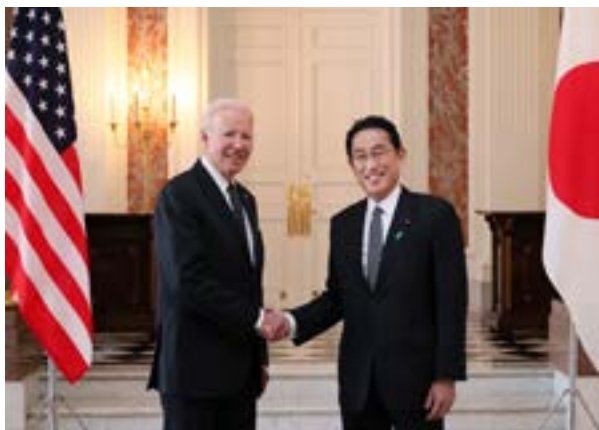
On March 24, in response to the ballistic missile launch by North Korea, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-U.S. foreign ministers' telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken and exchanged views on North Korea's nuclear and missile activities. The two Ministers concurred that they must not allow North Korea to be misled into believing that a window of opportunity has opened to proceed with provocative actions, especially as the international community

focuses its attention on responding to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. In this way, in light of such an increasingly severe regional security environment, they reaffirmed the necessity to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and concurred to continue close coordination between Japan and the U.S.

On April 7, Foreign Minister Hayashi, who was visiting Belgium to attend the NATO Foreign Ministers' Meeting and the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. The two Ministers exchanged views on international affairs, including Russia, Ukraine, China, and North Korea. Furthermore, in light of the increasingly severe regional security environment, the two Ministers confirmed that it is essential to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and that Japan and the U.S. would strengthen their commitment to the region in all aspects, including politics, security, and economics. Furthermore, the two Ministers exchanged views on ensuring stable energy supply.

From May 22 to 24, President Biden visited Japan for the first time since assuming the presidency and held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Kishida. The two leaders reaffirmed the need to resolutely defend the free and open international order based on the rule of law, amidst Russia's aggression against Ukraine that shakes the very foundation of the international order. Additionally, under the recognition that the Indo-Pacific is a region of vital importance to global peace, security and prosperity, the two leaders concurred that Japan and the U.S. will continue to lead the international community and closely

cooperate with like-minded countries toward the realization of FOIP. The two leaders also exchanged views on the regional issues in Russia, Ukraine, and North Korea. In addressing various issues related to China, the two leaders concurred to continue to work closely together. Furthermore, the two leaders confirmed that their basic position on Taiwan remains unchanged, reiterated the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, and encouraged the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues. President Biden reiterated the U.S. commitment to the defense of Japan, and the two leaders concurred to communicate more closely between Japan and the U.S. to ensure that extended deterrence remains unwavering, including at the ministerial level. Furthermore, sharing the recognition that the U.S. engagement in the regional economic order is becoming increasingly important, President Biden announced the launch of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF), and Prime Minister Kishida appreciated the IPEF as well as President Biden's leadership on its launch, and stated that Japan would participate in and cooperate on the initiative. Prime Minister Kishida also urged the U.S. to return to the TPP from a strategic perspective. In addition, in order to enhance the competitiveness and resilience of Japan and the U.S., the two leaders concurred to continue to work together under the CoRe Partnership, in areas such as cancer research and the space domain, to strengthen the competitiveness and resilience of both countries, and to strengthen cooperation in ensuring economic security. The two leaders also exchanged views on global challenges such as energy and food issues, reform and strengthening of the United Nations (UN), nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation,



Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting (May 23, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

global health, and climate change. In addition, the two leaders concurred to resume various exchange programs, looking ahead to the post-COVID-19 era, and to promote multi-layered people-to-people exchanges. As the outcome of the Summit Meeting, the two leaders issued the “Japan-U.S. Joint Leaders’ Statement: Strengthening the Free and Open International Order.”

On May 23, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers’ Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken, who was also visiting Japan. The two ministers exchanged views on international affairs including Russia, Ukraine, China, and North Korea, and concurred to swiftly strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance in the face of the increasingly severe security environment in the region. The two ministers also exchanged views on the Economic “2+2,” and concurred to accelerate concrete discussions toward its July.

On May 25, in response to North Korea’s ballistic missile launch immediately following the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting, the U.S.-Republic of Korea (ROK) Summit Meeting, and the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders’ Meeting, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-U.S. foreign ministers’ telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken. The two Ministers exchanged views on North Korea’s nuclear and missile activities.

On June 27, Prime Minister Kishida, who was visiting Germany to attend the G7 Elmau Summit, held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with President Biden. The two leaders confirmed their commitment to continue close coordination toward further strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance and realizing FOIP. They also exchanged views on the Economic “2+2” and the situation in Russia and Ukraine.

On July 9, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-U.S. Summit telephone meeting with President Biden following the passing of former Prime Minister Abe. President Biden expressed condolences on the passing of late Prime Minister Abe, and stated that he stands with the Prime Minister and the people of Japan. In response, Prime Minister Kishida expressed his gratitude for President Biden’s remarks and stated that the despicable act that took place in the midst of an election, the very foundation of democracy, is absolutely unacceptable. Prime Minister Kishida also stated that

as the incumbent Prime Minister, he would not give in to violence and would defend democracy, and strive to further strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance, carrying on the legacy of former Prime Minister Abe who lifted the Japan-U.S. Alliance to new heights.

On July 11, Secretary of State Blinken, who was visiting Southeast Asia, made an impromptu visit to Japan and paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Kishida. Secretary of State Blinken expressed condolences on the passing of former Prime Minister Abe. He also noted that the late Prime Minister was an unwavering champion of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and made great achievements in strengthening ties with the U.S. and other like-minded countries, promoting the foresighted vision of FOIP. In response, Prime Minister Kishida expressed his gratitude for the warm feelings from the U.S. and reiterated his desire to further strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance, carrying on the legacy of former Prime Minister Abe who lifted the Japan-U.S. Alliance to new heights.

From July 28 to 31, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Washington D.C. to attend the Economic “2+2.” He also held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers’ Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. The two ministers reconfirmed their commitment to expand and deepen security and defense cooperation between Japan and the U.S., and to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. The two ministers also welcomed the recent Japan-U.S. Extended Deterrence Dialogue and concurred to continue close communication at various levels, from the perspective of ensuring that U.S. extended deterrence remains credible and resilient. The two ministers also exchanged views on the realignment plan of the U.S. Forces in Japan and regional issues in Russia, Ukraine, China, and North Korea. Furthermore, the two ministers shared the recognition that engagement of the U.S. in the economic order of the Indo-Pacific region is becoming increasingly important, and Minister Hayashi urged the U.S. to return to the TPP at an early time, while also expressing support for the IPEF.

On August 4, Foreign Minister Hayashi, who was visiting Cambodia for the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers’ Meetings, held an informal talk with Secretary of State Blinken. The two ministers strongly condemned the ballistic missile launch by China that

Column

Sentiments Incorporated into the Dinner

- Visit to Japan by President Biden of the United States

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In May, President Joseph Biden of the U.S. visited Japan, and a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting and other events were held. This was the first visit to Japan by a U.S. President in three years, since President Trump's visit in May 2019. It was President Biden's first visit to Japan since becoming President.

In welcoming President Biden, MOFA officials of course focused on achieving the maximum outcomes of the summit meeting, but also considered how to make the visit deeply memorable for President Biden. In order to build strong Japan-U.S. relations, it was extremely important to make this visit to Japan filled with good memories for President Biden, with the two leaders spending close time together and building a personal relationship of trust.

The informal dinner was held at a historic facility famous for its beautiful Japanese garden, and followed the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held at the State Guest House. It was truly the ideal opportunity for the two leaders to deepen their friendship.

Prior to the dinner, Mrs. KISHIDA Yuko, spouse of the Prime Minister, arranged a tea ceremony serving *usucha* (matcha green tea) which she had personally prepared to welcome President Biden to Japan. The *tokonoma* (alcove) was decorated with a *kakejiku* (hanging scroll) that read "*Senri Dofu*" (which means that the same winds blow and there is harmony even in distant lands). There was also a vase with wildflowers, including mountain laurels (the state flower of Pennsylvania, the home state of President Biden), Japanese maple (the prefectural flower of Hiroshima Prefecture, the home prefecture of Prime Minister Kishida), and *sasayuri* (*yuri*, the Japanese word for lilies, which incorporate the desire for the thoughts of both countries be in harmony). Furthermore, a tea bowl with a phoenix pattern was chosen for President Biden, which is considered auspicious as the phoenix is said to only appear in a peaceful world. As President Biden relished the matcha tea, it looked like this spirit of hospitality had been well conveyed to him.



Tea ceremony hosted by Mrs. KISHIDA, spouse of Prime Minister Kishida (May, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

For the dinner that followed, a carefully-considered meal was prepared based on President Biden's preferences. The menu featured special dishes that incorporated Western cuisine elements into traditional Japanese cuisine. In fact, the dessert was the only dish on the menu that was decided from the very beginning: gelato, President Biden's favorite dessert.

However, this gelato was not ordinary one. In fact, President Biden visited Japan in August 2011 just after the Great East Japan Earthquake, and went to Natori City in Miyagi Prefecture, which was affected by the disaster. President Biden, who was Vice President at the time, gave a thoughtful speech at Sendai Airport praising the reconstruction efforts in the disaster-affected areas and describing the supportive stance of the U.S. toward Japan. He personally visited temporary housing facilities and directly interacted with the residents.

For the dinner, MOFA ordered gelato from Natori City. Details could not be provided in advance for security reasons, so the store could only be told the date and amount of gelato to prepare. However, the gelato store, which was suddenly contacted, did its utmost to send freshly made gelato. The warm hospitality of the store must have been conveyed to President Biden, as he savored the gelato down to the last spoonful.

Over the meal, the two leaders talked candidly about not only Japan-U.S. relations, but also about their own personal histories, their political careers, and their families. It was an evening that further deepened the bond between Japan and the U.S.

occurred after the visit to Taiwan by U.S. Speaker of the House of Representative Nancy Pelosi, and confirmed that Japan and the U.S. would continue to closely cooperate for regional peace and stability.

On September 21, Prime Minister Kishida, who was visiting New York to attend the UN General

Assembly, held a talk briefly with President Biden. The two leaders reaffirmed their commitment to continue strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance in the face of an increasingly severe regional security environment. They also exchanged views on UN Security Council reform and the Global Fund.

On the occasion of the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, the U.S. delegation headed by Vice President Harris visited Japan to attend the funeral. On September 26, Prime Minister Kishida received a courtesy call from Vice President Harris, who once again offered her condolences on the passing of the former Prime Minister Abe. In response, Prime Minister Kishida expressed his gratitude for the sympathies from Vice President Harris, including her attendance to the state funeral. The two sides concurred to continue close cooperation between Japan and the U.S. toward further strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance and realizing FOIP. They also exchanged views on regional affairs, including Russia, Ukraine, China, and North Korea, and agreed on Japan-U.S. cooperation and coordination in various fields, including the IPEF, the space field, UN Security Council reform, and the G7 Hiroshima Summit.

On October 4, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone meeting with President Biden, and Foreign Minister Hayashi held a telephone meeting with Secretary of State Blinken following North Korea's missile launch, that flew over Japan for the first time in approximately five years, which took place in the wake of an unprecedented frequency of four launches in a week the previous week. During both telephone meetings, the two leaders strongly condemned North Korea's actions and concurred to continue close coordination between Japan and the U.S. as well as among Japan, the U.S. and the ROK toward the complete denuclearization of North Korea in accordance with the UN Security Council resolutions, including further responses in the UN Security Council.



Courtesy call on Prime Minister Kishida by Vice President Harris of the U.S. (September 26, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office) *Created by digitally processing the website of the Prime Minister's Office of Japan

On November 3, in response to the series of ballistic missile launches by North Korea on November 2 and 3, Foreign Minister Hayashi, who was visiting Münster, Germany to attend the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, held an informal talk with Secretary of State Blinken. The Ministers strongly condemned North Korea's actions and exchanged views on nuclear and missile activities.

On November 4 the following day, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. Foreign Minister Hayashi expressed his high appreciation for the U.S. National Security Strategy, which reiterated the promotion of FOIP and the unwavering U.S. commitment to the defense of Japan, including the Senkaku Islands. In response, Secretary of State Blinken stated that the U.S. would continue close coordination with its allies and partners to defend the free and open international order. The two Ministers also exchanged views on regional issues, including China, North Korea, Russia, and Ukraine.

On November 13, Prime Minister Kishida, who was visiting Phnom Penh, Cambodia to attend the ASEAN-related Summit Meetings, held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with President Biden. The two leaders shared the recognition that the strong Japan-U.S. relationship has a significant role to play in regional peace and stability and beyond, by further strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Furthermore, they concurred to promote efforts to realize FOIP and that Japan and the U.S. would closely cooperate to ensure peace and prosperity in the region and the international community.



Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting (November 4, Munich, Germany)

They also exchanged views on regional issues, including China, North Korea, Russia, and Ukraine, and discussed strengthening Japan's defense capabilities and the regional economic order.

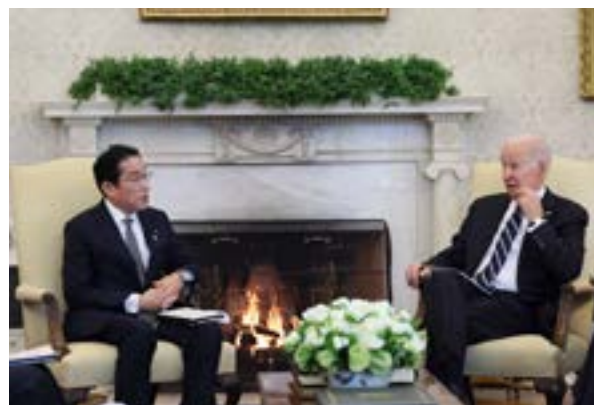
On January 11, 2023, Foreign Minister Hayashi, who was visiting Washington, D.C. to attend the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee ("2+2"), held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. Building up on the discussions held at the Japan-U.S. "2+2" before this meeting, the two Ministers reaffirmed to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance as a whole including by linking the reinforcement of Japan's defense capabilities to making the capabilities of the U.S. more effective. The two Ministers also concurred that Japan and the U.S. will continue to closely cooperate to address issues related to China and to ensure the success of the G7 Hiroshima Summit and the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

On January 13, Prime Minister Kishida, who was visiting Washington, D.C., held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with President Biden. As Japan and the U.S. are facing their most severe and complex security environment in recent years, the two leaders welcomed that the national security strategies announced by the two countries in 2022 are aligned with each other, and renewed their determination to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, including by seeking to create synergies in the implementation of strategies. The two leaders instructed that concrete consultations regarding Japan-U.S. cooperation on the security front is further deepened. The two leaders also exchanged views on regional affairs, and concurred on continuing to work closely together

in addressing issues related to China. Furthermore, the two leaders reiterated the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and encouraged the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues. Furthermore, they exchanged views on North Korea as well as Russia and Ukraine. Prime Minister Kishida also explained that, at the G7 Hiroshima Summit, he would like to demonstrate the G7's vision and determination to uphold the international order based on the rule of law, and also discuss the Indo-Pacific substantially. The leaders reaffirmed their commitment that Japan and the U.S. will work closely together toward the success of the G7 Hiroshima Summit. Furthermore, Prime Minister Kishida stated that he will strengthen efforts to realize FOIP, to which President Biden reiterated the unwavering U.S. commitment to the region. The two leaders concurred that Japan and the U.S. will continue to promote endeavors to realize FOIP. The two leaders reconfirmed unprecedented Japan-U.S. cooperation, rooted in the shared vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific and a peaceful and prosperous world, and guided by the shared values and principles including the rule of law, and issued the Joint Statement of the U.S. and Japan.

(3) Japan-U.S. Economic Relations

Japan-U.S. economic relations are one of the three pillars of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, together with security and people-to-people exchanges. For example, Japan has been the world's largest investor in the U.S. for three consecutive years in terms of outstanding direct investment in the U.S. (721 billion US dollars in 2021), and helped create approximately 930,000 jobs in 2020 (second only to the United Kingdom). In addition



Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting (January 13, 2023, Washington, D.C. the U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

to such multifaceted efforts to strengthen Japan-U.S. bilateral relations through vigorous investment and employment creation, 2022 was a year of further development of the two countries' economic relations, as a new framework was launched to expand and deepen cooperation in the economic field, encouraged by the resumption of in-person diplomacy.

With regard to the CoRe launched in April 2021, approximately one year after the launch of the Partnership in May 2022, a fact sheet was issued on the occasion of President Biden's visit to Japan showing progress on 61 items under the pillars of (1) Competitiveness and Innovation; (2) COVID-19 Response, Global Health, and Health Security, and (3) Climate Change, Clean Energy, and Green Growth and Recovery.

Furthermore, for the Japan-U.S. Economic Policy Consultative Committee (the Economic "2+2") established in January 2022, a Vice-Ministerial Meeting was held in May. The two sides shared recognition of the strategic environment surrounding Japan and the U.S., and discussed ensuring economic security, strengthening the rules-based economic order of the international community including the Indo-Pacific region, and other such matters. In July, the four ministers held the first in-person meeting of the Economic "2+2," and held discussions on (1) Realizing Peace and Prosperity through the Rules-Based Economic Order, (2) Countering Economic Coercion and Unfair and Opaque Lending Practices, (3) Promoting and Securing Critical and Emerging Technologies and Critical Infrastructure, and (4) Strengthening Supply Chain Resilience. Furthermore, they released a joint statement containing a concrete action plan, and showed to the international community, including the Indo-Pacific region, a U.S.-Japan Alliance that is both strong and able to flexibly respond to the needs of the times.

In the field of trade, within the Japan-U.S. Partnership on Trade, which was launched in November 2021, there was discussion on matters such as strengthening Japan-U.S. cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region and Japan-U.S. cooperation on the global agenda. The first meeting was held in March 2022 and the second meeting was held in August 2022 to discuss Japan-U.S. cooperation on trade practices in third countries, the



Economic "2+2" (July 29, Washington, D.C. the U.S.)

digital field, the environment, labor, trade facilitation, multilateral cooperation, and other such issues.

Furthermore, on March 25, following the March 18, 2021 invocation of the safeguard measures on U.S. beef stipulated in the Japan-U.S. Trade Agreement, consultations were begun to modify the conditions for the application of the measures in accordance with the obligations under the exchange of notes prepared in connection with the Agreement. The Protocol Amending the Trade Agreement Between Japan and the United States of America based on the agreement content was signed in Washington D.C. by Japanese Ambassador to the U.S. TOMITA Koji and U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai, and entered into force on January 1, 2023.

Furthermore, Japan and the U.S. are strengthening their cooperation in a wide range of fields together with regional partners with the aim of achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth in the Indo-Pacific region. On May 23, the summit-level meeting on the launch of the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) was held in Tokyo, and Prime Minister Kishida and President Biden both attended the meeting in-person. At the IPEF Ministerial held in September in Los Angeles, the 14 IPEF member countries discussed four fields: trade, supply chains, clean economy, and fair economy. They issued ministerial statements outlining the target areas for negotiations. Japan will continue to contribute to the concrete implementation of the IPEF from the strategic perspective of maintaining and strengthening the free and open economic order.

Close bilateral cooperation continues in the sectors focused upon in the IPEF. For example, in the digital



Summit-level meeting on the launch of the IPEF (May 23, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

sector, there have been efforts to strengthen cooperation through various frameworks concerning the expansion of reliable telecommunications infrastructure and innovative technologies such as 5G. During the fourth expert-level working group meeting of the Japan-U.S. Global Digital Connectivity Partnership (GDGP) held in August as well as the 13th U.S.-Japan Policy Cooperation Dialogue on the Internet Economy (U.S.-Japan IED) held in March 2023, government officials and private sector businesspeople exchanged views on Open RAN, 5G, smart cities, Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT), AI, cyber security, and other such matters.

Furthermore, with regard to the infrastructure sector, the Fifth Japan-U.S. Infrastructure Investment Forum was held in August in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation and the State of California. During the Forum, the Japanese and U.S. governments and private companies introduced their initiatives in the decarbonization and digital sectors.

In the energy sector, based on the Japan-U.S. Clean Energy Partnership (JUCEP) launched by the two countries in April 2021, ongoing discussions are being conducted on supporting the Indo-Pacific region's decarbonization and transition to clean, affordable and secure energy sources.

Along with the federal government, building closer ties with the unique individual states of the U.S. will help deepen Japan-U.S. economic ties at an even closer

level. In 2022, for the first time in three years, in-person meetings were held for the Japan-Midwest U.S. Association's annual joint meeting, the Japan-U.S. Southeast Association's annual joint meeting, and the U.S.-Japan Business Conference. Furthermore, the governors of the states of North Dakota, Maryland, and Nebraska, as well as the mayors of Seattle and Houston, visited Japan while leading an economic and trade delegation. Furthermore, Japan renewed its memorandums of cooperation concerning economic and trade relations with the governments of the states of California, Washington, and Maryland. Furthermore, Japan established a memorandum concerning reciprocal partial exemptions of the examination for driver licenses with the state of Oregon in November¹.

Moreover, in order to strengthen the foundation of Japan-U.S. economic relations from the grassroots level, the Government of Japan is also working as one on efforts to promote understanding of Japan. Since the launch of the Government Taskforce on Strengthening Japan-U.S. Ties at the Grass Roots in 2017, the Government of Japan has undertaken efforts to build tailor-made relations in accordance with the characteristics of each region and the level of interest in Japan within the target regions. As an example, events and webinars were held to promote Japan-U.S. joint cancer research and to share know-how in the field of disaster risk reduction. Furthermore, efforts have been implemented with the cooperation of various ministries, agencies, and organizations, including holding various seminars to introduce Japanese policies, such as the Vision for a Digital Garden City Nation, and technologies of Japanese companies, as well as networking and business matching events. Going forward, toward further progress in Japan-U.S. economic relations, various initiatives will continue to be carried out in an all-Japan manner, not only on a government-to-government basis, but also at a grassroots level that appeals to each and every individual.

¹ In order to reduce the burden associated with acquiring a driver's license for local Japanese nationals, Japan promotes establishment of memorandums concerning reciprocal partial exemptions of driver's license tests with various states. Memorandums have been signed with six states: Maryland, Washington, Hawaii, Virginia, Ohio, and Indiana.

3 Canada

(1) Situation in Canada

As a result of the September 2021 general election for the House of Commons of the Parliament of Canada, all parties, including the ruling Liberal Party led by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the largest opposition party, the Conservative Party, won roughly the same number of seats as before the dissolution, and Prime Minister Trudeau stayed in power with a minority government (The Liberal Party had fewer than half the seats, but won the most seats of any party). In March, the ruling Liberal Party and the New Democratic Party (NDP) concluded “*A Supply and Confidence Agreement*” (non-coalition government) until June 2025, and succeeded in securing a stable power base despite the minority government. On the other hand, the opposition Conservative Party held a party leader election in September following the no-confidence vote on former leader Erin O’Toole. Member of Parliament Pierre Poilievre, who is the successor of former Prime Minister Stephen Harper, won a landslide victory and has shown a stance of accusing the Liberal Party administration, focusing on economic policies.

The Canadian economy was robust in 2022, maintaining the momentum of vigorous GDP growth (6.7%) from October to December 2021, with real GDP growth remaining an annual rate of around 3% through September 2022. According to the Economic Statement issued by the Canadian Department of Finance, real GDP growth in 2022 was 3.2%, the unemployment rate was near a record low of 5.4%, and 400,000 new jobs were created, more than before the COVID-19 pandemic.

On the other hand, the global oil and food price spikes and supply chain disruptions caused by the situation over Ukraine resulted in constant excess demand, and the Consumer Price Index (CPI), which was in the 1% to 4% range in 2021, rose to the 5% to 8% range at the beginning of 2022. In light of this situation, the Bank of Canada raised its policy interest rate seven times. Attention will continue to be focused on inflation trends.

On the diplomatic aspect, at the end of November, the Government of Canada announced the country’s

first Indo-Pacific Strategy. In addition to fields that Canada has traditionally attached importance to, including U.S.-Canada relations, the UN, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the G7, the G20, and the Organization of American States, this is a symbolized move that demonstrated Canada’s strengthening engagement in the Indo-Pacific region. The strategy has five strategic objectives: security, including strengthening the presence of Canadian military forces in the region; economy and trade, including building a resilient supply chain and maintaining the high standards of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP); people-to-people exchanges; climate change; and strengthening diplomacy. In response to the situation over Ukraine, Canada actively implemented sanctions against Russia and support for Ukraine, given that Canada has the world’s second largest Ukrainian immigrant population and close ties to Ukraine.

On the economic front, Canada announced an agreement in January to begin preliminary talks on an investment agreement with Taiwan. In March, Canada announced an agreement to begin negotiations on a comprehensive bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the UK.

(2) Japan-Canada Relations

From January 2022 to January 2023, four summit meetings (including two telephone calls) and four foreign ministers’ meetings were held between Japan and Canada.

In June, Prime Minister Kishida, who was visiting Germany to attend the G7 Elmau Summit, held a meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau. The two leaders welcomed the close cooperation between the two countries, including in responding to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, and agreed to promote concrete, strong cooperation toward realizing FOIP, and to closely cooperate on the CPTPP. They also agreed to closely cooperate toward the success of the G7 Hiroshima Summit in 2023.

In October, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Mélanie Joly, who was visiting Japan as a



Japan-Canada Summit Meeting (January 12, 2023, Ottawa, Canada; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



Japan-Canada Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Working Dinner (October 11, Tokyo)

guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, announced the Japan-Canada Action Plan for contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region. The Action Plan compiles specific initiatives in the Six Shared Priorities² of Japan and Canada, and includes the start of formal negotiations for a General Security of Information Agreement (GSOIA) and energy cooperation. Canada's abovementioned Indo-Pacific Strategy also mentions implementation of cooperation with Japan in the Six Shared Priorities, and calls for further Japan-Canada cooperation.

In January 2023, Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau during his visit to Ottawa, the first visit in four years by a Prime Minister of Japan. Prime Minister Kishida spoke about Japan's new National Security Strategy and cooperation toward the G7 Hiroshima Summit, and received full support. The two leaders also confirmed cooperation toward realizing FOIP through steady implementation

of the Japan-Canada Action Plan. Furthermore, they concurred on cooperation for regional affairs, economic fields such as energy and food, the CPTPP, and economic security.

Although trade between Japan and Canada declined in 2020 because of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has been a steady recovery throughout 2021 and in 2022 as well. Trade and investment relations have further deepened, with the two countries marking four years since the entry into force of the CPTPP, the first economic partnership agreement between Canada and Japan. In December, the 32nd Meeting of the Japan-Canada Joint Economic Committee (JEC) was held in an online format. In addition to exchanges of views on recent international economic developments, such as the CPTPP and the WTO, and the realization of FOIP, among other areas of Japan-Canada cooperation, there were discussions on six priority areas of cooperation³, including energy and infrastructure.

Special Feature

The 50th Anniversary of the Reversion of Okinawa to Japan

"Citizens, Okinawa has been reverted to Japan today." This was the declaration of the reversion made by Prime Minister SATO Eisaku on stage in front of the crowd gathered at the *Nippon Budokan* at the commemoration ceremony of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan on May 15, 1972. Okinawa experienced fierce ground battles in World War II. It remained under U.S. administration for 27 years following the end of the war, even after the Allied occupation of Japan ended. Overcoming this history of hardship, the reversion of Okinawa to Japan was achieved as the long-cherished wish of the people of Okinawa and all of Japan based on the dedicated efforts of the people of Okinawa and the friendship and trust between Japan and the U.S.

- 2 Six Priority Areas of Cooperation: (1) The Rule of Law; (2) Peacekeeping Operations, Peacebuilding, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief; (3) Health Security and Responding to COVID-19; (4) Energy Security; (5) Free Trade Promotion and Trade Agreement Implementation; (6) Environment and Climate Change
- 3 Priority areas of cooperation: (1) Energy; (2) Infrastructure; (3) Science and technology cooperation and innovation; (4) Tourism and youth exchange; (5) Improving the business environment and promoting investment; (6) Agriculture, etc.

The year 2022, which marked the 50th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, was a year in which many people reflected anew on the way Okinawa has come through, and present situation and future possibilities of Okinawa, as the Government of Japan and various organizations conducted commemorative projects and the Diet adopted a resolution on the 50th anniversary of Okinawa's reversion to Japan.

On May 15, exactly 50 years after the reversion, the ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan was held. Although the ceremony was held at two venues in Okinawa and Tokyo simultaneously like 50 years ago, it was also held in a manner that reflected the Reiwa era, in part due to the impact of COVID-19, with the two venues being connected in a virtual format and the online attendance by Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress. Furthermore, at the ceremony, President Biden of the U.S. gave a message expressing admiration for the current strong Japan-U.S. relationship built on the foundation of the reversion of Okinawa, stating, "the relationship between the United States and Japan has transformed from one of battlefield foes to allies united in common purpose, now the closest of friends. Reversion represented an end to one chapter of our relationship and the beginning of another."

In his congratulatory address at the ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, Prime Minister Kishida stated, "I would like to again reflect on the history of Okinawa and express my deep respect for the dedicated efforts of the people of Okinawa." Needless to say, Okinawa's development to date has been the result of the tireless efforts of the people of Okinawa. Additionally, Okinawa's geographical characteristics due to its location in the center of East Asia, its rich natural environment, and its mild climate have made it an area where a unique cosmopolitan culture has blossomed and developed to date. The culture and traditions that have been nurtured throughout its history since the era when Okinawa was known as the *Ryukyu* Kingdom have captivated tourists from around the world, and Okinawa has great potential to continue to develop as a center for international exchange.

MOFA is taking various initiatives to contribute to the internationalization of Okinawa. With regard to the overseas expansion of Okinawa's specialty products, MOFA is working with the Cabinet Office, Cabinet Secretariat, National Tax Agency, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), and others in the *Ryukyu Awamori* Overseas Export Project to make the attractiveness of *Awamori* known to the world through diplomatic missions overseas. MOFA has also sent a number of high school and university students in Okinawa to the U.S. through the "Think of Okinawa's Future in the U.S." (TOFU) program. This program aims to develop future leaders of Okinawa, who will also play an active role in the international society, hoping that this will lead to further development of Japan-U.S. relations. Furthermore, in 2022, the Project to Promote Exchanges and Enhance Mutual Understanding between Japan and the U.S. (Youth Exchange Program) was conducted for the first time in Okinawa Prefecture. Held in communities that host facilities and areas of U.S. Forces Japan, this program provides opportunities for local Japanese junior and high school students and American children of U.S. Forces personnel, to deepen mutual understanding through cultural and educational exchanges (see the Column on page 204). The U.S. is also working to strengthen its ties with Okinawa through efforts such as launching an English language scholarship program for high school students in Okinawa, as announced by U.S. Ambassador to Japan Rahm Emanuel at the ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan. Such human resources development through the promotion of people-to-people exchanges between Okinawa and the U.S. is expected to further solidify the ties between Japan, including Okinawa, and the U.S.



Prime Minister Kishida delivering a commemorative address at the ceremony commemorating the 50th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan (May 15, Okinawa; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

Section 4 | Latin America and the Caribbean

1 Overview

(1) Situations in Latin America and the Caribbean

Most of the countries in the Latin American and the Caribbean (hereafter referred to as “LAC”) region share fundamental values and principles with Japan such as freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. The region has great economic potential with a population of about 660 million and a gross regional product of approximately 5.5 trillion US dollars. It also has abundant mineral and energy resources that are important for decarbonization, as well as food resources. As such, the region is becoming increasingly important from the perspective of supply chain resiliency and economic security of the international community, including Japan.

The economy of the LAC region was severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, but subsequently, its GDP growth rate turned positive and the recovery trend was maintained in 2022 as well. On the political front, stable order was generally maintained, and democratic elections were held peacefully in many countries.

On the other hand, COVID-19 as well as global price increases caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine have further highlighted social problems such as the disparity between rich and poor people. In addition, in Venezuela, although dialogue between Venezuelan parties resumed in November, the number of Venezuelans who had fled to neighboring countries as refugees and migrants due to the worsening political, economic, and social domestic situation exceeded 7.1 million as of September 2022, which continues to be a regional challenge.

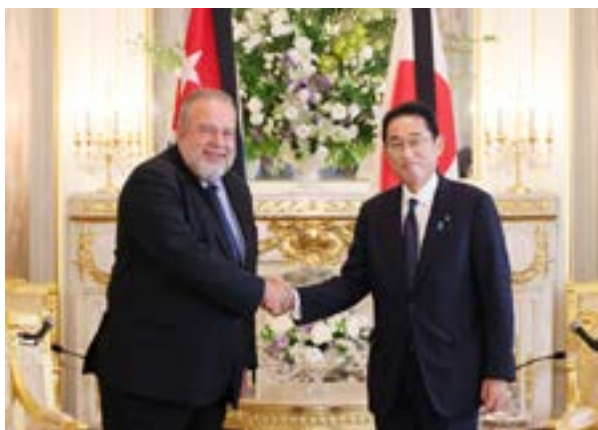
Furthermore, in the LAC region, there are the Nikkei (Japanese immigrants and their descendants) communities numbering approximately 2.3 million, or about 60% of the world's Nikkei population. The Nikkei communities have fostered a sense of affinity towards Japan in LAC countries through contributions to the local communities for more than 100 years. On

the other hand, generations have transitioned over 100 years since the Japanese migration began, and the challenge is how to deepen ties between Japan and the communities, including among the younger generation.

(2) Japanese Diplomacy towards Latin America and the Caribbean Countries

Japan's diplomacy towards the LAC region has developed under the guiding principle of the three “Juntos!!” (meaning “together,” namely “progress together,” “lead together,” and “inspire together”) announced by Prime Minister Abe in 2014. In December 2018, Prime Minister Abe summarized the results under this principle for the entire region, and announced the concept of the Initiative to Enhance Connectivity between Japan and Latin America and the Caribbean as the guideline for further cooperation. Japan has been aiming to deepen cooperative relations with LAC countries based on this concept.

Although international travel was restricted due to the influence of COVID-19 at the beginning of 2022, in-person diplomatic activities were gradually resumed thereafter. Exchanges of views were held on cooperation to maintain and strengthen “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” and a free and open international order based on the rule of law, cooperation in the international arena, measures to address global challenges including COVID-19, the strengthening of economic relations, and others. Prime Minister Kishida took opportunities of multilateral meetings such as the G7, G20, APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, and the United Nations (UN) General Assembly to meet with counterparts from LAC countries. He also held a Japan-Cuba Summit Meeting in September and a Japan-Uruguay Summit Meeting in October. In addition, Foreign Minister Hayashi held Foreign Ministers' video conferences and telephone meetings with six countries, as well as in-person bilateral meetings with



Japan-Cuba Summit Meeting (September 28, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

a total of 11 countries. Furthermore, ministers, state ministers, and parliamentary vice-ministers from Japan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and other relevant ministries and agencies visited LAC countries. In October, State Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKEI Shunsuke attended the session of the UN's Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) held in Argentina and gave a speech emphasizing cooperation between Japan and LAC countries as partners that grow together. Furthermore, he held meetings with ECLAC Executive Secretary José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs as well as Foreign Ministers and others from Guatemala, Costa Rica, Panama, Honduras, Haiti, the Bahamas, Argentina, Ecuador, and Paraguay. In January 2023, Foreign Minister Hayashi made his first visit to the LAC region since assuming the position of Foreign Minister. He visited Mexico, Ecuador, Brazil, and Argentina, and held meetings with counterparts from each country.

On the economic front, supply chain connections are strengthening, as shown in the nearly doubling of the number of Japanese companies operating in the LAC region since 2011. Japan is working on promoting free trade together with LAC countries including through



Japan-Panama Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September 26, Tokyo)

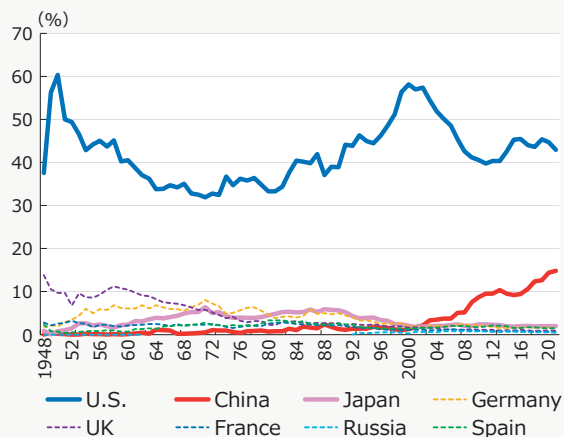
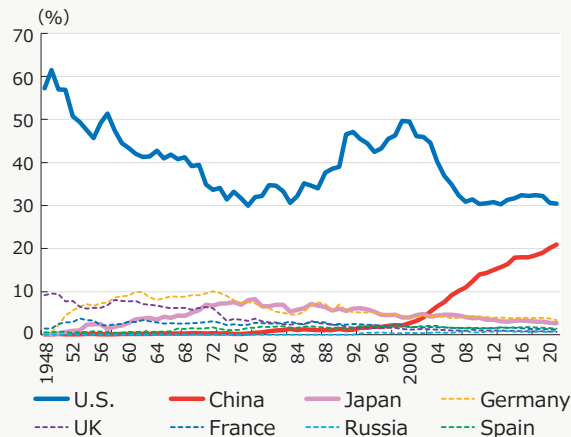
the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), in which Mexico, Peru, and Chile participate.

In the field of development cooperation, for some areas of the LAC region that have achieved economic growth, South-South cooperation is being accelerated by countries that have already “graduated” or will “graduate” from the status of recipient countries on the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) List of ODA Recipients by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Japan is promoting triangular cooperation with these countries. Moreover, given that, in addition to the serious damages caused by COVID-19, many countries have vulnerable medical systems, Japan is also cooperating with the region on COVID-19 countermeasures. In 2022, Japan provided 10 million US dollars in cold chain development and other assistance through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) to Ecuador, El Salvador, Colombia, the Dominican Republic, Belize, Bolivia, and Honduras. Furthermore, Japan is providing assistance to Nikkei communities in the LAC region affected by COVID-19.

Reference

Relations between the LAC region and Japan, the U.S., China, etc., Seen Through Economic Data¹

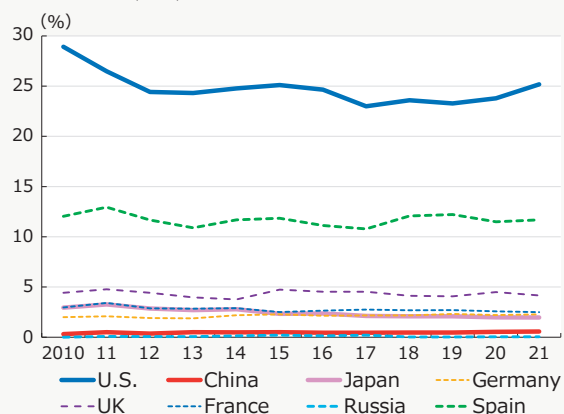
- **Trade:** The U.S. maintains the largest share of trade with the LAC region, but China has been increasing its share in recent years. Exports to China are increasing from Brazil, Chile, Peru, and other countries. Imports from China are increasing in a wide range of countries, including Mexico and Brazil. In 2021, Japan ranked seventh in terms of its share of exports from the region, and fifth in terms of imports.²
- **Investment:** The U.S. is in the top position with the largest share of investment in many countries, including Mexico and Brazil. Spain also has a strong presence in the region, ranking high in Mexico and Brazil, among other countries. Japan has a small share, centered on Mexico and Brazil. The balance of investment from China is much smaller than trade, accounting for a less than 1% share for the region.
- **Finance:** In addition to Japan, the U.S., and Europe, the LAC region's debt to China has been increasing since the 2010s and is second only to that of the U.S.. Japan was the seventh largest bilateral creditor country in 2021.

Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc.
in Latin America and the Caribbean's exportsShare of Japan, the U.S., China, etc.
in Latin America and the Caribbean's imports

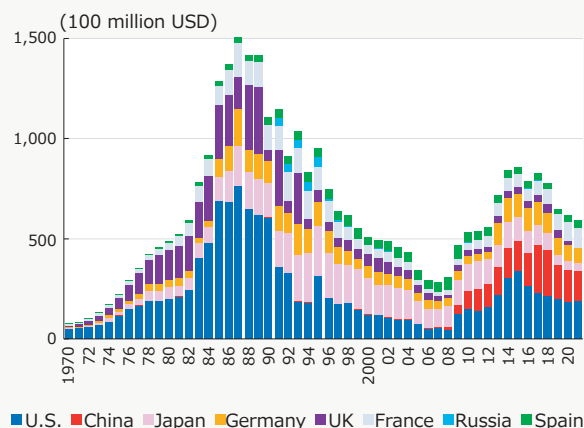
Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (DOT) data.

Note 2: Figures for China are the sum of Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau. Graphs for past figures may be skewed due to missing data, etc.

Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock in Latin America and the Caribbean



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (CDIS) data.

Bilateral External Debt in Latin America
and the Caribbean

Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on data from the World Bank (IDS).

Note 2: The graph illustrates the sum of bilateral external debt in the public sector and in the private sector (private sector external debt guaranteed by the public sector).

1 See page 193 for notes regarding this data.

2 Although only some countries such as Japan, the U.S. and China are shown in this graph, the rankings in the text are for all countries and regions for which data is available (including countries, etc. in the LAC region).

2 Regional Organizations

In addition to the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) and the Organization of American States (OAS), the following regional organizations in the LAC region conduct policy coordination on various issues. There is also the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC), which consists of 36 member states. In February, Japan invited 30 young officials from FEALAC member countries to an online program on the theme of “Application of Science and Technology for Disaster Risk Reduction.” Moreover, in September, Japan invited five young administrative officials from FEALAC member countries to Japan to exchange views on the “Application of Science and Technology for Decarbonization.”

(1) Pacific Alliance

The Pacific Alliance (composed of Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru; hereafter referred to as “PA”) is currently conducting negotiations with Ecuador, Costa Rica, and Honduras toward these countries becoming member states. In addition, Singapore signed on as an Associate State at the Summit of the PA held in Colombia in January. Furthermore, negotiations are underway for Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the Republic of Korea (ROK) to join as Associate States.

Japan is an observer country of the PA, and places importance on cooperation with it as a group with which Japan shares fundamental values. At a relevant meeting of the PA held in Mexico City in November, Foreign Minister Hayashi participated in a video message and spoke about the promotion of specific cooperation with the PA in the field of disaster risk reduction and other areas.

(2) Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR)¹

MERCOSUR is a customs union composed of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. With a few exceptions, tariffs have been eliminated for all goods traded within the region since January 1995. In 2019,

negotiations were concluded on Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with the European Union (EU) and European Free Trade Association (EFTA). In 2022, negotiations were concluded on an FTA with Singapore, and negotiations are underway with the ROK, Canada, and others. Meanwhile, Venezuela’s participation has been suspended² and Bolivia is an Associated State³.

(3) Caribbean Community (CARICOM)⁴

CARICOM was founded by 14 Caribbean nations for economic integration and foreign policy coordination. It has a large presence in the international arena due to its coordinated actions. Although CARICOM countries include many countries with relatively high incomes, they are threatened by natural disasters such as catastrophic hurricanes almost every year, and also face vulnerabilities particular to small island states due to the small size of their populations and economies. The situation in Haiti remains unstable: the political instability continues as the president was assassinated in 2021, followed by armed groups (gangs) disrupting the distribution of petroleum products, which has led to fuel shortages and severe paralysis of the country’s infrastructure necessary for daily life.

Japan is leading its diplomacy in accordance with the three pillars for Japan-CARICOM cooperation ((1) Cooperation towards sustainable development, including overcoming the vulnerabilities particular to small island states; (2) Deepening and expanding fraternal bonds of cooperation and friendship; and (3) Cooperation in addressing challenges of the international community). Japan is also providing support to high-income level countries based on their development needs and economic capabilities. For example, in February, Japan signed an agreement to provide grant aid to five CARICOM countries to combat damage caused by sargassum seaweed, which is seriously affecting the fishing and tourism industries.

Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs

¹ MERCOSUR: Mercado Común del Sur (Southern Common Market)

² Venezuela’s participation qualifications have been suspended as of December 2021

³ Bolivia signed the participation protocol in December 2012, and is awaiting approval by the National Congress of Brazil

⁴ CARICOM: Caribbean Community (Member countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Guyana, Grenada, Jamaica, Suriname, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Haiti, Bahamas, Barbados, and Belize)



Japan-Suriname Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September 21, New York, the U.S.)

UESUGI Kentaro and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs AKIMOTO Masatoshi respectively visited Belize and Antigua and Barbuda, which both marked the 40th anniversary of their establishment of diplomatic relations with Japan. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Uesugi also visited Trinidad and Tobago, and Parliamentary Vice-Minister



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Akimoto meeting with Prime Minister Browne (October 4, Antigua and Barbuda)

for Foreign Affairs Akimoto visited Jamaica. In addition, at the UN General Assembly in September, Japan and Suriname, which was the CARICOM chair at the time, held a Foreign Ministers' Meeting. On these occasions, Japan and the CARICOM countries exchanged views to strengthen bilateral relations as well as Japan's relations with CARICOM.

3 LAC Countries

(1) Mexico

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who was inaugurated in December 2018, has promoted policies emphasizing domestic affairs such as combating corruption, correcting disparities, and improving security, while continuing free trade since his administration took office. By minimizing restrictions on movement and economic activities during the spread of COVID-19, the economy began to recover relatively quickly, which helped maintain President López Obrador's continued high approval rating entering 2022.

In regard to relations with Japan, economic relations have been strengthened in recent years, and approximately 1,300 Japanese companies, the largest number in the LAC region, have established operations in Mexico. In February, the 12th meeting of the Committee for the Improvement of the Business Environment, which was established under the Japan-Mexico Economic Partnership Agreement, was held to discuss and exchange views on issues and concerns related to the business environment. In May, State Minister of Foreign Affairs ODAWARA Kiyoshi visited

Mexico to attend the ceremony commemorating the 125th anniversary of Japanese immigration to Mexico and the opening ceremony of the National Convention of Nikkei. He also held discussions with people related to the Government of Mexico on strengthening bilateral political and economic relations, cooperation on various issues of the international community including the situation in Ukraine, and other such matters, and confirmed close cooperation.

In September, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-Mexico Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of Foreign Affairs Marcelo Ebrard, who was visiting Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo. During the meeting, the ministers confirmed further strengthening of strategic ties with Mexico, as well as close collaboration in the international arena, such as strengthening the functions of the UN as a whole, including Security Council reform. The ministers also confirmed the importance of improving the business environment as well as legal stability and maintaining the high standards of the CPTPP, and concurred to promote cooperation

Column

A Bridge with a Half Century of Tradition

- The Mexico-Japan Exchange Program for the Strategic Global Partnership

Did you know that there is a training program that has been building bridges between Japan and Mexico for half a century? The Cooperation Program for the Training of Human Resources for the Strategic Global Partnership between Japan and Mexico. While there are people-to-people exchanges between various countries, this is a unique exchange that has supported ties between Japan and Mexico for over 50 years.

The training program was proposed by then President Luis Echeverría of Mexico, with the aim of actually conducting a people-to-people exchange that would go beyond the mutual exchange of trainees from both countries and the acquisition of knowledge in a wide range of areas, including language and culture. In response, in 1971, the Government of Japan responded launching the “Japan-Mexico Young Technician Exchange Program,” the predecessor of the current exchange program between the governments of the two countries. Since then, the program has been implemented not only to promote mutual interest in each other’s country and exchange at the grassroots level, but also as a symbolic program of friendship. More than 4,800 Japanese and Mexican people have participated in the training programs through 49 dispatches to date.

The participants have diverse backgrounds, including students, public officials, organization officials, and sister city residents. They also have a wide range of interests, from language acquisition to politics and economics, history, culture, engineering, public health, IT, and education. By learning about a variety of matters beyond their respective fields of expertise, cooperating with other trainees, and building relationships with the local people, trainees continue their exchanges while deepening their understanding of each other’s cultures from generation to generation. They greatly contribute to the strengthening of Japan-Mexico relations, as representatives of their respective countries during the program, as well as by being people with a great affinity toward Mexico and Japan, as people who encourage and lead efforts to strengthen the bilateral relationships in all fields after returning to their countries..

Furthermore, by learning language, the trainees have been able to expand their activities beyond just Japan and Mexico to Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) countries, where Spanish is the official language like Mexico. Many of the former trainees are now working at the forefront of various industries by leveraging the language skills, expertise, and overseas experience they gained through the program.

The implementation of the program was suspended due to the spread of COVID-19 that began in 2019, but trainee dispatches were resumed in FY2022 after approximately three years. In FY2023, the program marks the 50th dispatch since its launch. It is expected that more people will experience this training program with a long-established tradition going forward, and that the activities of the trainees will further activate exchanges between Japan and Mexico and other LAC countries, thereby building even stronger and closer relations between Japan and Mexico as partners that share fundamental values.



Mexican trainees studying in a Japanese laboratory



Japanese trainees posing for a commemorative photo on the campus of the National Autonomous University of Mexico



Japan-Mexico Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September 26, Tokyo)

between Japan and the PA, which was chaired by Mexico at the time.

In regard to relations with the United States (U.S.), the President of Mexico did not attend the Summit of the Americas hosted by the U.S. in June, criticizing the fact that some countries were not invited. On the other hand, a U.S.-Mexico Summit Meeting was held in July to discuss the economy, border and migration issues, climate change, and other matters. The U.S.-Mexico High-Level Economic Dialogue and the U.S.-Mexico High-Level Security Dialogue (ministerial level) were respectively held in September and October, and the 10th North American Leaders' Summit was held in January 2023. In addition, the Government of Mexico amended the Electricity Industry Law in the energy and power generation field, which is of great domestic interest. The Government also attempted to amend the Constitution to strengthen state authority, but this was rejected by Congress. Meanwhile, the U.S. and Canada are holding talks with Mexico based on the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), claiming that Mexico's policies unfairly harm the U.S. and Canadian companies and violate the agreement.

(2) Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Panama, Belize, and Honduras)

In addition to the Japan-Honduras Foreign Ministers' Meeting held during the visit to Japan in July by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Honduras, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-El Salvador Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Japan-Panama Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and Japan-Honduras Foreign Ministers' Meeting in September

with his counterparts from each country who visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo. Moreover, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-Costa Rica Foreign Ministers' Meeting in November during the visit to Japan by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship as well as the Minister of Foreign Trade of Costa Rica. Through these meetings, Foreign Minister Hayashi exchanged views with Central American countries, with which Japan has traditionally had friendly relations, regarding cooperation for the maintenance and strengthening of a free and open international order based on the rule of law as well as measures to address the challenges facing the international community, including COVID-19 countermeasures.

In addition, Ambassador on Special Mission UTO Takashi (member of the House of Councillors) attended the inauguration of the President of Honduras in January, and Ambassador on Special Mission NISHIMURA Yasutoshi (member of the House of Representatives) attended the inauguration of the President of Costa Rica in May. In June, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Uesugi



Japan-Honduras Foreign Ministers' Meeting (July 4, Tokyo)



Japan-El Salvador Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September 26, Tokyo)



Japan-Costa Rica Foreign Ministers' Meeting (November 8, Tokyo)

visited Belize, and held meetings with government dignitaries and attended a ceremony for the delivery of medical equipment provided through grant aid. In addition, in August, Costa Rica applied to join the CPTPP. Furthermore, Japan provided emergency relief supplies in October to Honduras to address the damage from prolonged rain and to Guatemala for the damage caused by Hurricane Julia, and in November to Belize for the damage caused by Hurricane Lisa.

(3) Cuba

Due to the global spread of COVID-19, Cuba's economy, including the major industry of tourism, continues to be damaged, and the lives of the people have become more difficult. In terms of relations with the U.S., although Cuba joined Nicaragua and Venezuela in not being invited to the 9th Summit of the Americas in June, the U.S. announced in May that some restrictions on entry into the country from Cuba had been eased. In September, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-Cuba Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Manuel Marrero Cruz, who was visiting Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, and discussed bilateral relations, initiatives in the international arena, and regional situations. Furthermore, Japan provided emergency relief supplies to Cuba in response to the damage caused by Hurricane Ian in October.

(4) Brazil

While President Jair Bolsonaro has been criticized for his COVID-19 countermeasures, he has not changed his stance of emphasizing the importance of the economy since taking office and has been advancing reform

such as deliberation on tax reform legislation and privatization. Presidential elections were held in October, and former President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva defeated President Bolsonaro in a run-off to become the new president in January 2023.

Regarding relations with Japan, Japan provided emergency relief supplies to Brazil in response to the flood disaster that occurred in the country in January. In May, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara visited Brazil and exchanged views with government officials on the situation in Ukraine, regional affairs, economic security, and other matters, and confirmed that the two countries will further promote strategic cooperation in the international arena. In addition, in September, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a meeting with Foreign Minister Carlos França on the occasion of the UN General Assembly and confirmed that Japan and Brazil, both of which serve as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council in 2023, will cooperate to strengthen the functions of the UN as a whole, including Security Council reform, as ensuring the rule of law becomes increasingly important. The two ministers also shared the view that Japan-Brazil economic relations have great potential, and concurred to discuss initiatives toward 5G and decarbonization. Furthermore, dialogue between Japan and Brazil has been reinvigorated through such meetings as the Wise Group for Strategic Economic Partnership between Japan and Brazil held in July, the meeting of the Brazil-Japan Business Council in September, the Japan-Brazil Consular Coordination Meeting in September, and the meeting of the Joint Committee on Cooperation in Science and Technology in September.



Japan-Brazil Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September 22, New York, the U.S.)

(5) Argentina

In March, the Alberto Fernández administration established a new program with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to provide immediate funding for the country's pending external debt restructuring, and in October, it reached an agreement with the Paris Club for the restructuring of overdue debt. Argentina continues to face the challenge of increasing foreign currency revenues and investment through export promotion, and it is important for the country to realize economic growth that its citizens can actually feel in their lives.

In regard to relations with Japan, Prime Minister Kishida held informal talks with the President of Argentina during the G7 Summit in June, in which the two leaders affirmed the importance of strengthening the relationship between the two countries including through the Nikkei communities, and concurred to work closely together as “Strategic Partners” that share fundamental values. In July, a Japan-Argentina Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held during the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, in which the ministers concurred to cooperate closely in various fields to further strengthen bilateral relations, and also confirmed cooperation on issues such as Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the situation in East Asia. In October, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei visited Argentina and paid a courtesy call to Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship Santiago Andrés Cafiero. In November, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-Argentina foreign ministers' telephone call with Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Trade and Worship Cafiero, while Prime Minister Kishida held informal talks with the President of Argentina during the G20 Summit, and the ministers and the leaders



Japan-Argentina Foreign Ministers' Meeting (July 7, Bali, Indonesia)

confirmed the strengthening of bilateral relations and cooperation in the international arena.

(6) Peru

The Pedro Castillo administration, which was inaugurated in July 2021, advocated, among other issues, socialist economic policies, convening of the Constitutional Assembly (constitutional reform), countermeasures against COVID-19, and the restoration of political stability. However, the Prime Minister and other cabinet members were replaced one after another, and in December President Castillo was removed from office and Vice President Dina Boluarte assumed the presidency.

Regarding relations with Japan, Foreign Minister Hayashi held informal talks with the Foreign Minister of Peru during the APEC Ministerial Meeting in November, in which the ministers confirmed the importance of bilateral relations supported by strong ties, given that 2023 is the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. The two ministers also shared the view to closely cooperate to further strengthen relations in the future.

(7) Chile

In March, leftist candidate Gabriel Boric assumed the presidency of Chile. Aiming to reduce disparities, the Boric administration has announced plans to work on tax reform such as strengthening taxation on the wealthy and introducing mining royalties, establishing a universal health care system, and creating a state-owned lithium company. On the diplomatic front, Chile has set forth its approach of placing importance on human rights, gender, the environment, multilateralism, and relations with the LAC and Asia-Pacific regions. Chile also completed its domestic procedure for the entry into force of the CPTPP in December.

The draft of a new constitution, which took a year to prepare by the Constitutional Convention, was not approved after a referendum was held in September. However, it was decided to initiate a new constitution-drafting process.

In regard to relations with Japan, 2022 marked the 125th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Chile. In February, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a video conference



Japan-Chile Summit Meeting (November 17, Bangkok, Thailand; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

with Minister-Designate of Foreign Affairs Antonia Urrejola Noguera. In March, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara attended the inauguration of President Boric as Ambassador on Special Mission. In addition, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAKE Shingo met with Undersecretary for International Economic Relations José Miguel Ahumada in May, and Undersecretary of Foreign Relations Ximena Carolina Fuentes Torrijo in June. A Japan-Chile Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in September during the UN General Assembly, and a Japan-Chile Summit Meeting was held during the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in November, in which the two leaders confirmed that the two countries would deepen bilateral relations, including in addressing various challenges of the international community, as important strategic partners that share fundamental values.

(8) Uruguay

The Luis Lacalle Pou administration, which was inaugurated in March 2020, has maintained a high approval rating since its inauguration due to factors such as the high vaccination rate achieved. In economic policy, the administration adheres to free trade principles and places importance on market expansion and liberalization. In December, Uruguay applied to join the CPTPP. As for foreign policy, it has developed diplomacy based on the values of democracy, the rule of law, and the protection of human rights.

Regarding relations with Japan, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-Uruguay Foreign Ministers' video conference in February, in which the two ministers concurred on cooperation to further strengthen



Japan-Uruguay Summit Meeting (October 28, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

bilateral relations in 2022, the dawn of a new century of relations, in light of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 2021.

In October, President Lacalle Pou paid an Official Working Visit to Japan and held a summit meeting. The two leaders shared the intention to establish the Joint Committee to discuss mainly bilateral economic relations and to promote public-private cooperation in the digital sector, and welcomed the introduction of the working holiday program. They also confirmed cooperation on the situations in Ukraine and East Asia. Furthermore, the two leaders issued a joint statement to strengthen bilateral relations for the next 100 years. Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-Uruguay Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Francisco Bustillo Bonasso, who accompanied President Lacalle Pou. The two ministers concurred to further strengthen cooperation.

(9) Paraguay

The Mario Abdo Benítez administration, which was inaugurated in August 2018, continues to promote its free and open economic policies and is working on poverty measures, security and drug countermeasures, and anti-corruption measures as key issues.

In regard to relations with Japan, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei, who visited Argentina in October to attend the ECLAC session, met with Foreign Minister Julio César Arriola Ramírez and concurred on continuation of close cooperation in maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order based on the rule of law as well as in regional situations.

(10) Colombia

Candidate Gustavo Francisco Petro Urrego, who won the presidential election runoff in June, assumed the presidency in August. The Petro administration has been advancing efforts to achieve “total peace” including for the armed groups that did not participate in the implementation of the 2016 peace agreement⁵, tax reform, and the normalization of relations with Venezuela.

In regard to relations with Japan, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister YAMAGUCHI Shunichi (member of the House of Representatives) attended the inauguration ceremony of President Petro and also held a meeting with him, in which the two sides confirmed that they would continue to strengthen bilateral relations. In September, the first Japan-Colombia Foreign Ministers' Meeting since the inauguration of the new administration took place during the UN General Assembly, and First Lady Verónica del Socorro Alcocer García visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo and held a meeting with KISHIDA Yuko, the spouse of Prime Minister Kishida. In addition, the Tax Convention between Japan and Colombia entered into force in September.



Japan-Colombia Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September 21, New York, the U.S.)

(11) Venezuela

The inauguration ceremony for President Nicolás Maduro was held in January 2019 amidst doubts about the legitimacy of the presidential election held in May 2018. In December 2020, the election for Venezuela's National Assembly was held without the participation

of the main opposition parties, and the Maduro administration's party was declared the winner. In response, people in Venezuela, including the main opposition party, as well as the international community reacted against the election, claiming that it lacked legitimacy. Similarly, Japan has been calling for the restoration of democracy in Venezuela through the early implementation of a free and fair election.

In August 2021, a dialogue between parties began in Mexico under the mediation of Norway, but it was temporarily suspended in October. The dialogue was resumed in November 2022.

Due to the worsening economic, social, and humanitarian situation in the country, Venezuelan nationals are continuing to flow into neighboring countries as refugees and migrants, and receiving them has become a regional challenge. Japan has been providing support to the Venezuelan people, including people fleeing from Venezuela, as well as to affected neighboring countries.

(12) Bolivia

The Luis Alberto Arce administration, which was inaugurated in November 2020, is focusing on COVID-19 countermeasures and judicial reform. In addition, on the economic front, the administration is making efforts for investment in public works projects, particularly aiming to strengthen import-substitution industries, including energy, lithium, and biodiesel plant construction. On the other hand, Bolivia faces challenges in dealing with corruption and various social issues, as well as the implementation of fair general elections scheduled for 2025.

(13) Ecuador

The Guillermo Lasso administration, which was inaugurated in May 2021, is working to strengthen relations with the U.S., the EU, and other Western countries, as well as with the IMF and other international financial institutions. It also aims to stimulate the economy through the promotion of free trade and the attraction of foreign investment. On the other hand, the ruling Creating Opportunities Party has only 12 out of 137 seats in the unicameral National Assembly, and smooth

⁵ Then-President Santos started the peace talks with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the largest guerilla organization in Colombia, in 2012 in order to end the domestic strife that had lasted for over half a century. The peace agreement was announced in 2016.

legislative management continues to be an issue as a coalition and cooperation have not been achieved.

In regard to relations with Japan, a Japan-Ecuador Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in June, and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei, who visited Argentina in October to attend the ECLAC session, held a meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility Juan Carlos Holguín Maldonado, in which both sides concurred to further develop bilateral relations and to closely cooperate in the international arena.

(14) Collaboration with the Nikkei Community

The Nikkei community has fostered a sense of affinity toward Japan in LAC countries. Nevertheless, generations have transitioned over 100 years since Japanese immigration to LAC countries began, and thus, how to deepen ties to Japan among the community, including among the younger generation, has become a challenge. Amid this situation, in addition to inviting young Nikkei people to visit Japan, Japan also implements measures towards strengthening collaboration with the Nikkei community, through supporting events by young Nikkei people in various LAC countries and creating networks among them.

In March, the International Conference of Young LAC Nikkei was jointly held online by the Former MOFA Trainees Association Latin America, which is made up of former MOFA invitees, and Junior Chamber International Brasil-Japão (JCI Brasil-Japão). Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Uesugi gave a video message at the conference. In October, seven next-generation Nikkei leaders from four LAC countries visited Japan and paid a courtesy call to Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary KIHARA Seiji. In the same month, a meeting of the Former MOFA Trainees Association Latin America was held in Paraguay, where Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Akimoto delivered a message, promoting collaboration among the Nikkei community beyond national borders. Japan is making such efforts for collaboration of the Nikkei community that transcends national borders. In December, Japan allocated 640 million Japanese yen in the supplementary budget to subsidize the costs of support for projects through JICA to realize the idea of a "New Form of Capitalism" in cooperation with the LAC Nikkei community, and aims to contribute to sustainable economic development in Japan and the fostering of affinity toward Japan.

Section 5 | Europe

1 Overview

<The Importance of Cooperation with Europe, with which Japan Shares Fundamental Values and Principles>

The European Union (EU) and European countries are important partners for Japan, and share fundamental values and principles such as freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. The importance of cooperation with the EU and European countries is further increasing as the existing international order is threatened and geopolitical competition intensifies, including with Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and as international cooperation is required in addressing global issues such as countermeasures against the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change.

European countries pursue common policies across a wide range of fields such as diplomacy, security, economy, and state finance, through various frameworks including the EU. They also play an important role in formulating standards in the international community. The countries also influence international opinion benefiting from their language, history, cultural and artistic activities, and through communication activities utilizing major media organizations and think tanks. Cooperation with Europe is important in enhancing Japan's presence and influence in the international community.

<Russia's Aggression Against Ukraine and Europe>

In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine that began in February 2022, sanctions against Russia and support for Ukraine became one of the most important issues for Europe. The EU and NATO member countries unanimously and strongly condemned Russia and imposed severe sanctions in rapid succession, including financial sanctions, travel bans on individuals and entities, and restrictions on imports and exports. The member countries have also expressed their unlimited solidarity with Ukraine, indicated their stance on spearheading international assistance ranging from military

and humanitarian support to financial assistance, and have been implementing their assistance as necessary. In addition, in response to the large influx of Ukrainian evacuees mainly into Eastern European countries, assistance has also been provided to the countries surrounding Ukraine that are directly affected. Moreover, European leaders made declarations of solidarity one after the other, beginning with the visit to Kyiv by the prime ministers of Poland, the Czech Republic, and Slovenia (in March).

European countries hitherto had deeply interdependent relations with Russia centered on energy and economic aspects. However, European countries have changed direction toward reducing their dependence on Russia for energy, including Germany's decision to suspend the approval process for the completed Russian natural gas pipeline "Nord Stream 2," and many European companies have announced their withdrawal from Russian business.

EU and NATO member countries have been continuously implementing military support to Ukraine, which has lower military capabilities than Russia, while acting carefully to avoid becoming a direct party to the conflict. Such support has included modern equipment such as anti-tank missiles and multiple rocket launchers. Moves have been observed to further strengthen such support, including Germany's decision on a policy of providing its Leopard 2 battle tanks to Ukraine at the end of January 2023.

<Multilayered, Attentive Diplomacy with Europe>

In Europe, the importance of fundamental values and principles such as freedom, democracy, and human rights, as well as the rule of law and compliance with international law, is being further recognized amidst the response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. On the other hand, a fine-tuned approach is required that takes into account the diversity of European countries and their respective circumstances. Japan

supports a strongly united Europe and conducts multi-layered and tailored diplomacy for it. In 2022, despite the constraints of COVID-19, Japan has confirmed close cooperation with European countries through increased in-person visits by dignitaries and the use of teleconference meetings and telephone calls.

In particular, Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi respectively held summit meetings and foreign ministers' meetings with various European countries by taking the opportunity of their in-person attendance at the Munich Security Conference (February), the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs (April), and the NATO Summit (June), as well as the G7 Elmau Summit (June) and the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meetings (May and November) held under the German presidency. They confirmed cooperation in responding to the situation in Ukraine, and exchanged views on global issues such as the realization of "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP), climate change, and responding to COVID-19, as well as on the situation in East Asia. In addition, due to the increasingly complex international situation, 2022 was also a year of further deepening security and defense cooperation with European countries. The Sixth Japan-France Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") was held online in January, an agreement in principle was reached on the Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) in May, Eurofighter Typhoons and other German military aircrafts visited Japan in September, the second Japan-Germany Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") was held in November, the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology was signed in December, and a mutual understanding on the joint development of next-generation fighter aircraft was reached by Japan, the United Kingdom, and

Italy in December as well. In addition, during Prime Minister Kishida's visit to Europe in January 2023, the Japan-UK RAA was signed, Japan-Italy relations were upgraded to "Strategic Partners," and the Japan-Italy Political-Military Dialogue was launched.

During the year 2022, Prime Minister Kishida held in-person meetings with the leaders of Poland (March); Switzerland (April); Italy, Vatican, the UK, and Finland (May); Spain and Sweden (June); Ireland (July); the UK (September); and Lithuania and Luxembourg (October). He confirmed specific cooperation with the European countries during the meetings. With the Baltic States, Japan held the 3rd Japan-Baltic Cooperation Dialogue in October, the first time in three years. With the V4¹, Japan held the 11th "V4+Japan" Policy Dialogue in Tokyo in May, which was the first in-person meeting in four years. With the Western Balkan countries², Japan held the Inter-regional Conference "Promote culture of tolerance and mutual respect within the region" with participants from the Western Balkan countries in March, as well as summit meetings and ministerial meetings with North Macedonia, Albania, Kosovo, and Serbia.

Furthermore, Japan conducts public diplomacy activities including dispatch of experts, cooperation with European think tanks, and Japan's Friendship Ties Programs "MIRAI" for intellectual and people-to-people exchange that allows young people from Europe to visit Japan. These activities are aimed to promote the accurate picture of Japan and Asia and mutual understanding. By utilizing online exchanges, Japan is working on strengthening relations with Europe by conducting information-sharing and exchanges of views with European countries, organizations, and experts in a wide range of fields such as politics, security, economy, business, science and technology, education, culture and art.

1 V4: Slovakia, Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary. For more information, see "Other European Regions" on page 146

2 Western Balkans: Albania, Northern Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro

2 Regional Situations in Europe

(1) The European Union (EU)

The EU is a political and economic union consisting of 27 member states with a total population of about 447 million. Sharing fundamental values and principles, the EU is an important partner for Japan in addressing global issues.

<Recent Developments of the EU>

For the EU, 2022 was a year in which it had to respond to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. In December 2021, following the escalation of tensions due to the buildup of Russian troops on the Russian-Ukrainian border, the EU began talks on a response, including sanctions against Russia. On February 22, an informal meeting of EU foreign ministers on sanctions against Russia was held, and the EU sanctions package against Russia was unanimously approved. The EU had been implementing economic sanctions against Russia since the annexation of Crimea in 2014, and had continued to impose sanctions due to insufficient implementation of the Minsk agreements, which are peace agreements concerning the conflict in eastern Ukraine. However, following Russia's recognition of the "Donetsk People's Republic" and the "Luhansk People's Republic" as "independent states" on February 21 and the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine on February 24, the EU implemented several rounds of sanctions from February, and announced the 9th sanctions package in December. As a result, the EU has implemented its most large-scale and extensive sanctions against Russia to date, including economic sanctions, asset freezes and travel restrictions on individuals and entities, diplomatic measures, restrictions on economic relations, and restrictions on the media. In addition, as support for Ukraine, the EU and EU member states are providing macro financial assistance in the form of macro financial support, budgetary support, emergency assistance, and crisis response and humanitarian assistance totaling 19.7 billion euros (of which approximately 12.4

billion euros is support from the EU)³. Besides this, the EU approved a macro financial assistance package totaling up to 18 billion euros for 2023, and began disbursement in January 2023. Furthermore, as its first military assistance, the EU decided to contribute a total of 3.6 billion euros to the European Peace Facility⁴ by January 2023. In solidarity with Ukraine, the EU has accepted and provided support to a considerable number of displaced Ukrainians in the EU region, including more than one million Ukrainian evacuees in Poland alone. In addition, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine submitted an application for Ukraine's accession to the EU in February, and talks to begin accession negotiations are taking place at an unusually rapid pace, with Ukraine being granted candidate country status in June. From the perspective of building a multilayered European framework, the first European Political Community Summit was held in October under the concept of setting up a middle stage between EU member states and non-member states. It was hosted by the Czech Republic, which held the EU Presidency in the second half of 2022, and invited 44 countries, including EU member states, candidate countries such as Ukraine, and neighboring EU countries such as the UK, which left the EU. It was decided to hold the Summit regularly going forward, rotating the host country between EU member and non-member states.

<Japan-EU Relations>

Japan and the EU are strengthening their cooperation under the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), which entered into force in February 2019, and the Japan-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), of which provisional application started at the same time.

In May 2022, Prime Minister Kishida held the Japan-EU Summit with President Charles Michel of the European Council and President Ursula von der

³ As of December 16, 2022.

⁴ European Peace Facility: System established in March 2021 to enable the EU to finance military or defense activities under the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy and to enhance the EU's capacity for conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and strengthening international security. It is implemented outside the EU's regular budgetary framework.
<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/european-peace-facility/>



Leyen of the European Commission. During the Summit in Tokyo, which was held in-person for the first time in three years, they exchanged views regarding international and regional affairs centered on Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the situation in East Asia, and the situation in North Korea. They also exchanged views on global challenges such as FOIP, economic security, energy, and food security, as well as Japan-EU relations, and agreed on Japan-EU cooperation and collaboration in extensive fields. Furthermore, they issued a joint statement and decided to launch the Japan-EU Digital Partnership. In addition, Prime Minister Kishida also held summit meetings respectively with President Michel of the European Council and President von der Leyen of the European Commission on the occasion of the G7 Summit in Brussels, Belgium, in March and the G7 Summit in Elmau, Germany, in June. In November, Prime Minister Kishida held a summit meeting with President von der Leyen of the European Commission on the occasion of the G20 Summit in Bali, Indonesia. In September, President Michel of the European Commission visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, and held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Kishida on this occasion as well.

In February, Foreign Minister Hayashi virtually attended the Ministerial Forum for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific co-hosted by France, which held the EU Presidency for the first half of the year, and the EU. He gave a speech in which he referred to the severe security environment in the Indo-Pacific region and stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation with like-minded countries and partners. Foreign Minister Hayashi also held Japan-EU Foreign Ministers' Meetings with High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Josep Borrell on the occasion of the Munich Security Conference in Germany in February, the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs in Brussels, Belgium, in April, and the G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting in Munster, Germany, in November.

In addition, in March, the EU announced its Strategic Compass, a set of strategic guidelines for its security and defense policy for the next 10 years, which stipulates that the EU will further promote partnership with like-minded countries and strategic partners,

including Japan. As confirmed by Summit leaders at the Japan-EU Summit, Japan and the EU will aim to expand substantive cooperation in fields such as cyber security, countering disinformation, maritime security, and crisis management.

The EU, with its economic scale that follows the United States and China, is an important economic partner of Japan, ranking second among Japan's import partners, third among export partners, and first in terms of the balance of direct investment in Japan. Economic relations between Japan and the EU are further deepening on the basis of the Japan-EU EPA, which entered into force in 2019. Japan and the EU have been effectively implementing and utilizing the agreement through the Joint Committee (which met most recently in March 2022) and specialized committees and working groups as stipulated in the agreement. In October, formal negotiations were launched on the inclusion of "provisions on the free flow of data" into the Japan-EU EPA. In the same month, the Japan-EU High-Level Economic Dialogue was held, in which the two sides confirmed further cooperation on global economic issues, including economic security. Going forward, Japan will continue to aim to further develop Japan-EU economic relations, steadily implement the Japan-EU EPA, and conduct extensive Japan-EU cooperation.

Furthermore, the agreement in principle was reached for the Japan-EU Agreement on Bilateral Agreements between Japan and the Member States of the EU for Air Services during the fourth round of intergovernmental negotiations held on April 6. The Agreement will further strengthen cooperation between Japan and the EU in the field of aviation.

(2) United Kingdom

Following Prime Minister Boris Johnson's announcement of his resignation in July, a Conservative Party leadership election was held from July to September, and Elizabeth Truss, who served as Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs as well as Minister for Women and Equalities in the previous administration, became the new Prime Minister. However, Prime Minister Truss announced her resignation in October following market turmoil triggered by economic policies such as large-scale tax

cuts. In the same month, Rishi Sunak, who served as Chancellor of the Exchequer in the Johnson administration assumed the position of Prime Minister. While keeping economic stability as the top priority, he has been promoting initiatives that fulfill the Conservative Party's promises made during the 2019 general election, including strengthening the health system, better education, "levelling up" the economy for all regions of the United Kingdom, and an economy that will benefit from leaving the EU.

In September, His Majesty King Charles III acceded to the throne following the demise of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

There was active dialogue between the governments of Japan and the UK at various levels, including the summit and foreign minister level. In addition to their telephone calls in February and July, Prime Minister Kishida met with Prime Minister Johnson during the G7 Summit in March and June, and during his visit to the UK in May. Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with Prime Minister Truss during the UN General Assembly in September. With Prime Minister Sunak, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call in November, an informal talk during the G20 Bali Summit in the same month, and a meeting in January 2023. Foreign Minister Hayashi held a telephone call with then Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs as well as Minister for Women and Equalities Elizabeth Truss in April, and meetings with her on the margins of the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meetings in February and May. He also held a telephone call with Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs James Cleverly in September as well as an informal talk with him at the UN General Assembly in the same month. They also met at the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in the same month and at the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in November.

On each occasion, there was confirmation of further deepening of Japan-UK relations, which are closer than ever. There was also close communication on the G7's united response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine and on regional affairs, including East Asia.

During the January 2023 summit meeting between Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Sunak, the two leaders confirmed that they would continue to



Signing ceremony of the Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement (January 11, 2023, London, UK; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

promote bilateral cooperation toward realizing FOIP as the UK upholds its Indo-Pacific "tilt," and exchanged views on the G7 Hiroshima Summit, security, and regional affairs.

In the security field, Japan-UK cooperation has been raised to new heights, including the announcement of the joint development of next-generation fighter aircraft by the leaders of Japan, the UK, and Italy in December, and the signing of the Japan-UK RAA at the Japan-UK Summit Meeting in January 2023.

(3) France

President Emmanuel Macron entered the April presidential election with a high approval rating for an incumbent president due to his handling of COVID-19 and the situation in Ukraine. In the run-off (second round), which was the same face-off as the 2017 presidential election, President Macron was reelected despite the narrowing of the margin of votes between him and candidate Marine Le Pen of the National Rally, which is referred to as a far-right party. On the other hand, in the June National Assembly elections, the ruling coalition won less than a majority of seats.

With respect to external affairs, France held the EU Presidency in the first half of 2022, and continued to play a role in driving Europe's engagement in the Indo-Pacific, including co-hosting the EU Indo-Pacific Ministerial Forum with the EU in February (Foreign Minister Hayashi participated in the meeting online). With regard to the situation in Ukraine, France implemented sanctions against Russia and provided assistance for Ukraine. President Macron visited Kyiv in June and had a series of telephone calls with President Vladimir Putin.

With regard to Japan-France relations, dialogues were held at various levels, including at the summit and foreign minister levels. In January, the Sixth Japan-France Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") was held online, and a joint statement was issued confirming cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region and other such matters. In March, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with President Macron, and strongly condemned Russia due to its aggression against Ukraine. In May, Foreign Minister Hayashi met with Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian on the occasion of the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and they agreed to promote concrete cooperation between Japan and France through various frameworks. In June, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with President Macron, and Foreign Minister Hayashi held a telephone call with newly appointed Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Catherine Colonna, confirming cooperation with the new French administration. Furthermore, in the same month, Prime Minister Kishida held an in-person meeting with President Macron during the G7 Elmau Summit, and also held a telephone call with him in July. Foreign Minister Hayashi held a telephone call with European and Foreign Affairs Minister Colonna in August, as well as an in-person meeting with her on the occasion of the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in November. During the meeting, the two foreign ministers confirmed the need for a united G7 response to the situation in Ukraine.

On January 1, 2023, Japan opened a consular office in Nouméa in New Caledonia, a French territory which is an important geopolitical point in the Indo-Pacific



Prime Minister Kishida being welcomed by President Macron (January 9, 2023, Paris, France; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

region. Prime Minister Kishida visited France in the same month. At the summit meeting and working dinner with President Macron during his visit, they concurred to aim to create a new roadmap for Japan and France, and exchanged views on the G7 Hiroshima Summit, security cooperation, and regional affairs.

(4) Germany

The three-party coalition government (the so-called "traffic light coalition") consisting of the Social Democratic Party (SPD), the Green Party, and the Free Democratic Party (FDP) has worked intensively to respond to Russia's aggression against Ukraine since February 24. On February 27, Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz (SPD) announced the establishment of a 100 billion euros special fund to strengthen the German armed forces (Bundeswehr) and a policy of increasing defense spending to 2% of GDP in the future. Subsequently, he also made a major policy shift from the previous foreign and security policy, including the provision of lethal weapons to Ukraine, a country in the conflict zone. Furthermore, the administration decided to extend the operation of the remaining three nuclear power plants, which were scheduled to cease operation at the end of 2022 in accordance with its policy of decommissioning nuclear power plants, until April 15, 2023. Moreover, in holding the G7 Presidency for 2022, Germany held G7 leaders' meetings and foreign ministers' meetings more frequently than in average years, contributed to the strengthening of G7 cooperation, and played an active role in the response to the situation over Ukraine, including by co-hosting with the European Commission the "International Expert Conference on the Recovery, Reconstruction and Modernisation of Ukraine" in October in Berlin. On the other hand, the administration has been criticized domestically for its cautious stance on support for Ukraine, including the provision of arms. Furthermore, against the backdrop of rising concerns about people's lives due to soaring food and energy prices, the combined approval rating of the three ruling parties in public opinion polls has remained below 50% since the autumn of 2022. The future course of the administration operations will be a focus of attention.

With regard to Japan-Germany relations, in addition to the G7 process under Germany's Presidency

in 2022, there were close high-level exchanges at an unprecedented frequency due to the series of visits to Japan by German dignitaries. From Japan, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Germany in February as well as May and November on the occasion of the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meetings. Prime Minister Kishida also visited Germany in June for the G7 Elmau Summit, and held a summit meeting with Federal Chancellor Olaf Scholz on the occasion of the G20 Bali Summit in November. From Germany, Federal Chancellor Scholz visited Japan in April, Federal Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock visited Japan in July, and Federal President Frank-Walter Steinmeier visited Japan in November. They confirmed continued close cooperation on matters such as realizing FOIP and the response to the situation in Ukraine, further strengthening Japan-German relations as important partners that share fundamental values. Moreover, Japan and Germany are enhancing cooperation in the security field, including the visit of Eurofighter Typhoons and other German military aircrafts to Japan in September and the holding of the second Japan-Germany Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") in November.

(5) Italy

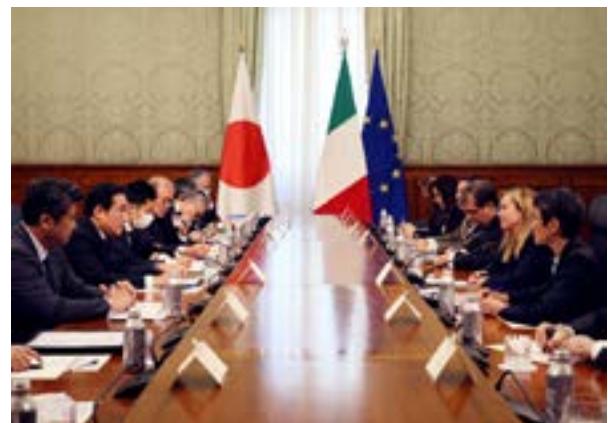
Concerning domestic economic support measures in response to the impact of the situation in Ukraine, in July, the Five Star Movement (M5S), one part of the ruling coalition party, opposed part of the draft decree on the support measures, and was absent from the vote in Parliament. President of the Council of Ministers Mario Draghi, who had taken the position that his administration could not survive if even one party in the ruling coalition was absent, submitted his resignation to President Sergio Mattarella in response. President Mattarella asked President of the Council of Ministers Draghi to report the situation to Parliament, and a vote of confidence was held. However, since the three main ruling coalition parties, including Lega Nord and Forza Italia (FI) in addition to M5S, did not participate in the vote, President of the Council of Ministers Draghi submitted his resignation again, and President Mattarella decided to dissolve both the upper and lower houses of Parliament and hold elections.

In September, elections were held for members of the upper and lower houses, and the "center-right

coalition" with the "Brothers of Italy (FdI)" as the leading party won a majority of seats. After consulting with the presidents of the upper and lower houses and representatives of the political parties, President Mattarella nominated FdI leader Giorgia Meloni to be President of the Council of Ministers, and she accepted. In October, Italy had its first ever female prime minister.

As for Japan-Italy relations, Prime Minister Kishida visited Italy in May and held a meeting with President of the Council of Ministers Draghi, in which they reaffirmed the unity of the international community, including the G7, with regard to international affairs, including the situation in Ukraine. In September, Prime Minister Kishida met with former President of the Council of Ministers Matteo Renzi, who visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo. Furthermore, in November, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with President of the Council of Ministers Meloni to congratulate her on her inauguration. Foreign Minister Hayashi held a meeting with newly appointed Vice President of the Council of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Antonio Tajani during the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in November.

As for the security field, in December, there was an announcement on the joint development of next-generation fighter aircraft by Japan, the UK, and Italy. In January 2023, Prime Minister Kishida and President of the Council of Ministers Meloni agreed to upgrade Japan-Italy relations to a "Strategic Partnership" and to launch the Japan-Italy Political-Military Dialogue at a summit meeting. They also welcomed the accord in principle on the negotiations of the Italian-Japanese film Co-Production Agreement.



Japan-Italy Summit Meeting (January 10, 2023, Rome, Italy; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

(6) Spain

The second administration of Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, inaugurated in January 2020, is governed by a minority ruling coalition government in cooperation with various parties outside the cabinet. The key issue is managing the economy under the impact of high resource and energy prices.

In regard to Japan-Spain relations, the two countries are strengthening their cooperation under the strategic partnership concurred upon at the summit level in 2018. In June, Prime Minister Kishida attended the NATO Summit held in Madrid, where he held a meeting with Prime Minister Sánchez. The two leaders exchanged views on cooperation between companies in renewable energy, digital, and other fields, as well as on regional affairs including Ukraine and the Indo-Pacific. In the same month, Foreign Minister Hayashi met with Minister for Foreign Affairs, European Union and Cooperation José Manuel Albares on the occasion of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Bali. In October, the 22nd Japan-Spain Symposium was held in Kyoto and the Japan-Spain Vice-Ministerial-level Political Consultations were also held, advancing cooperation in both the public and private sectors.



Japan-Spain Summit Meeting (June 29, Madrid, Spain; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

(7) Poland

The coalition government led by the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party continues to govern with relative stability against the backdrop of a strong economy and generous welfare policies. It has actively supported

neighboring Ukraine in the wake of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Since the start of that aggression, Poland has actively accepted Ukrainian evacuees.

In regard to Japan-Poland relations, in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Japan and Poland have been maintaining bilateral contact including a foreign ministers' telephone call in February as well as a summit telephone call and summit meeting in March. In April, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Poland as a Special Envoy of Prime Minister Kishida. During his Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Zbigniew Rau, the two ministers shared the view on continuing to maintain close cooperation as strategic partners to protect the free and open international order. Moreover, Foreign Minister Hayashi also paid courtesy calls to President Andrzej Duda and Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki. Foreign Minister Hayashi stated that Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a serious situation that shakes the very foundation of the entire international order, and shared the view with the leaders that it is important for like-minded democracies to continue resolutely imposing sanctions against Russia in unity and solidarity. Foreign Minister Hayashi also visited the sites of the acceptance of displaced people, and returned to Japan on a government airplane together with 20 evacuees who wished to evacuate to Japan.

(8) Ukraine⁵ (Reference: Special Feature "Russia's Aggression Against Ukraine and Japan's Response" on page 16)

Entering 2022, as the situation became even more tense with the buildup of Russian forces in the vicinity of the Ukrainian border, Japan continued its efforts to ease tensions together with the international community, including the Japan-Ukraine Summit Telephone Call on February 15, the Japan-Russia Summit Telephone Call on February 17, and the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting on February 19.

On February 24, President Putin of Russia announced the start of a "special military operation," and Russia's aggression against Ukraine began. On the

⁵ For Prime Minister Kishida's visit to Ukraine in March 2023, see the MOFA website: https://www.mofa.go.jp/erp/c_sec/page1e_000591.html



same day, Japan issued a Statement by Foreign Minister Hayashi condemning this in the strongest terms. Furthermore, Japan held a Japan-Ukraine Foreign Ministers' Telephone Call on February 25 and a Japan-Ukraine Summit Telephone Call on February 28, and conveyed that it would implement further sanctions against Russia and support for Ukraine. Moreover, in response to Russia's attack on a nuclear power plant in Ukraine, another summit telephone call was held on March 4, and Prime Minister Kishida stated that Russia's brutal actions are absolutely unacceptable to Japan, which experienced the accident at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station.

Japan and Ukraine have pursued close cooperation not only between their governments but also between their legislatures. On March 24, President Zelenskyy of Ukraine gave an online address to the Japanese Diet. Furthermore, on March 31, in order to show further solidarity with Ukraine, the Government of Japan announced that it would change its Japanese spelling of the Ukrainian capital to “キーウ” (in *katakana*, *equivalent to the change from Kiev to Kyiv in English*), based on the Ukrainian pronunciation, and that it would also change the spellings of place names other than the capital to match the Ukrainian pronunciations.

On April 2, Foreign Minister Hayashi, who was visiting Poland as a Special Envoy of Prime Minister Kishida, held an in-person foreign ministers' meeting with Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba of Ukraine. On April 4, in response to the revelation that Russia had committed atrocities in the vicinity of Kyiv, including the mass killing of many civilians, a Statement by Foreign Minister Hayashi was issued condemning these acts. On April 26, a summit telephone call was held and Prime Minister Kishida conveyed that Japan would provide further support based on Ukraine's request. On May 13, during the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (Weissenhaus, Germany), Foreign Minister Hayashi held an in-person foreign ministers' meeting once again, in which both countries confirmed the importance of the international community, including the G7, uniting to continue strong sanctions against

Russia. Moreover, Japan continued coordination for various responses based on the situation in close cooperation with the international community, including the G7, at meetings such as the G7 Elmau Summit in June.

On July 22, following the agreement among the UN, Turkey, Ukraine, and Russia to resume grain exports from Ukraine through the Black Sea, a Statement by Foreign Minister Hayashi was issued welcoming the agreement. Furthermore, on the following day, July 23, a Statement by Foreign Minister Hayashi was issued that strongly condemned the Russian attack on the port of Odesa. Moreover, on August 23, Prime Minister Kishida sent a video message at the Second Summit of Crimea Platform⁶ hosted by Ukraine.

During the UN General Assembly High-Level Week, Prime Minister Kishida held an in-person summit meeting with Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal of Ukraine on September 22. Furthermore, during a summit telephone call on September 30, Prime Minister Kishida stated that the purported “referenda” conducted in some areas of Ukraine as well as the purported “incorporation” of these areas by Russia shall never be recognized, and that Japan strongly condemns such moves. The Statement by Foreign Minister Hayashi with the same point was also issued on the same day.

Moreover, on October 5, the Embassy of Japan in Kyiv, which had been temporarily closed in March, was reopened with sufficient security measures in place. Since then, the Embassy has been actively gathering information and coordinating with various countries, including the Government of Ukraine.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a unilateral attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force. It is an outrageous act that shakes the very foundation of the international order, not only in Europe but also in Asia, a clear violation of international law, and completely unacceptable. Japan will act in solidarity with Ukraine and unity with the international community, including the G7, in order to resolutely defend the international order.

6 Ukraine announced an initiative in 2020 aimed at resolving various issues surrounding Crimea, which was illegally “annexed” by Russia in 2014, and held the first summit meeting (Kyiv, Ukraine) in August 2021.

3 Collaboration with European Regional Institutions, and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

(1) Cooperation with the North Atlantic

Treaty Organization (NATO)

NATO⁷ is an organization that aims at providing collective defense for its 30 member countries. In addition to defense for its 30 Western member countries, it provides engagement in cooperative security efforts with non-EU countries and organizations and in crisis management outside of the region that could pose a direct threat to the security of the territories and peoples of NATO member countries, including security management and counter-terrorism efforts.

The security environment in Europe has been changing as a result of Russia's aggression against Ukraine since February, as shown by the fact that Finland and Sweden, which had been pursuing a policy of neutrality, applied for NATO memberships. Furthermore, with the existing international order under serious challenge, NATO's interest in the Indo-Pacific region is growing based on the recognition that the security in Europe and the Indo-Pacific are inseparable, and cooperation between Japan and NATO has become even more important (see the Special Feature on page 140).

Amidst this situation, Foreign Minister Hayashi attended the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in April as the first Japanese Foreign Minister to ever do so. He stated that unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force will not be allowed in any region, and that he would like to strengthen cooperation between NATO and its partners in the Asia-Pacific, including Japan, toward realizing FOIP.

Moreover, Prime Minister Kishida attended the NATO Summit in June as the first Japanese Prime Minister to ever do so. During the Summit, he welcomed NATO's expanded engagement in the Indo-Pacific region and expressed his desire to make progress in cooperation in fields such as cyber, emerging technologies, and maritime security. The new NATO Strategic Concept adopted at the Summit clearly states that the Indo-Pacific is a region that can directly affect Euro-Atlantic security, and that NATO will strengthen

its dialogue to tackle cross-regional challenges and shared security interests.

In January 2023, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg visited Japan for the first time in six years and issued a joint statement with Prime Minister Kishida, confirming that Japan-NATO cooperation will be taken to further heights in light of the current security environment. Moreover, during his meeting with Foreign Minister Hayashi, they also exchanged views on the situation in the Indo-Pacific region and shared the view to ensure close collaboration between Japan and NATO.

Japan and NATO have been advancing specific cooperation based on the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP) (formulated in 2014, revised in May 2018 and June 2020). Japan has been contributing by participating in NATO's Cyber Coalition, dispatching a female Self-Defense Forces (SDF) official to the NATO headquarters, and making contributions to the Partnership for Peace (PfP) Trust Fund. At the June meeting between Prime Minister Kishida and NATO Secretary-General Stoltenberg, it was confirmed that the IPCP will be upgraded to be more suitable for the new era and that the work will be accelerated toward an early agreement on a new document for cooperation.

(2) Cooperation with the Organization for

Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

The OSCE is a regional security organization with 57 participating States across Europe, the Central Asia and Caucasus region, and North America, that works to bridge differences between member countries and foster trust through conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction in these regions through a comprehensive approach. Japan has cooperated with OSCE activities since 1992 as an Asian Partner for Co-operation. Japan provides support for preventing terrorism by means such as strengthening border controls in Afghanistan and

⁷ North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

For more information, see the MOFA website for details: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/nato/index.html>



Special Feature

Japan-NATO Relations Dramatically Growing in Importance

The year 2022 was a historic year that saw a dramatic increase in the importance of the relations between Japan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Russia's aggression against Ukraine that began in February showed anew that the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific cannot be considered separately.

NATO is a group of like-minded countries that share the fundamental values of freedom and democracy, which Japan places importance on, and seeks to uphold the international order based on the rule of law. It is precisely because of the aforementioned international situation that cooperation with NATO is very important. Foreign Minister Hayashi was invited to attend the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs held in Belgium in April, and became the first Japanese Foreign Minister in history to attend the meeting. In his speech, Foreign Minister Hayashi expressed that he would like to strengthen cooperation with NATO toward realizing a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" in order to establish an international order based on the rule of law, and received strong approval from NATO and its member countries.

Prime Minister Kishida became the first Japanese Prime Minister to attend the NATO Summit held in Spain in June. In his speech, he touched on the importance of the international community uniting against unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force. He also expressed that he would like to encourage NATO to strengthen its involvement in the Indo-Pacific region, and to develop cooperation in the fields of cyber, emerging technologies, and maritime security. He also spoke of the importance of further unity between Japan and NATO, which are geographically distant from each other. Furthermore, NATO's Strategic Concept was updated for the first time in about 12 years at this Summit, and for the first time clearly mentioned cooperation with the Indo-Pacific region. This was a sign that NATO itself recognizes the importance of cooperation with the Indo-Pacific region in ensuring the security of the North Atlantic and Europe. In addition to Prime Minister Kishida's attendance at the Summit, NATO's way of thinking has majorly changed, making the NATO Summit in June a historic meeting.



Prime Minister Kishida attending Partner Countries' Session in the NATO Summit (June 29, Madrid, Spain; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

Moreover, in January 2023, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg visited Japan for the first time in six years. He released a joint statement with Prime Minister Kishida, and confirmed that Japan-NATO cooperation will be taken to greater heights in light of the current security environment. Specifically, the leaders reaffirmed the importance of further advancing cooperation in cyber and other fields, as well as future cooperation in areas such as critical and emerging technologies, space, and disinformation, as the scope of security coverage expands. Furthermore, during the meeting with Foreign Minister Hayashi, NATO Secretary General exchanged views on the situation in the Indo-Pacific region and agreed on close cooperation between Japan and NATO.

Japan will continue to strengthen Japan-NATO relations, which are dramatically growing in importance within international situation, in order to realize FOIP and furthermore maintain and strengthen the international order based on the rule of law.



Foreign Minister Hayashi shaking hands with NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg at the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs (April 7, Brussels, Belgium)



Prime Minister Kishida shaking hands with NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg during his visit to Japan (January 2023, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

Central Asia, and also gives support for strengthening the capabilities of customs officials, conducting election monitoring, as well as to projects that promote women's social advancement. Furthermore, the OSCE has been playing an important role in improving the situation in Ukraine even before Russia's aggression began in February. Japan has been providing financial support and dispatching experts to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) (experts were dispatched intermittently since August 2015, and dispatches ended in February 2022).

The year 2022 marks 30 years of partnership between Japan and the OSCE, and the OSCE Asian Partners for Co-operation Group Meeting was held in July to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the Japan-OSCE partnership. At the meeting, State Minister for Foreign Affairs SUZUKI Takako sent a video message, in which she touched on the importance of the international community cooperating together to address the situation at a historic juncture, and stated that Japan will continue to make efforts for realizing peacebuilding. Furthermore, Japan has been attending the OSCE Ministerial Council meetings every year. State Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKEI Shunsuke participated in the OSCE Ministerial Council meeting held in Poland in December. At the Council meeting, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei stated that on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of Japan-OSCE partnership, Japan will communicate its contribution to the OSCE region, including Ukraine, and will continue to cooperate with the OSCE.

(3) Cooperation with the Council of Europe (CoE)

The CoE is an international organization comprising 46 member states in Europe, which has played a key role in establishing international standards in areas concerning democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. Russia, which joined in 1996, was excluded on March 16 following its aggression against Ukraine. As the CoE's sole observer country in Asia since 1996, Japan has contributed to the CoE by providing expertise and supporting the holding of meetings. In May, Japan signed the Second Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime elaborated by the CoE. Furthermore, Japan participated in the plenary meeting of the Committee on AI (CAI), which aims to draft

the world's first AI treaty, and made a policy statement at the World Forum for Democracy in November. Moreover, Secretary General Marija Pejčinović Burić visited Japan in December to participate in the World Assembly for Women (WAW! 2022).

(4) Cooperation through the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

ASEM was established in 1996 as the sole forum for deepening dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe. Its members currently comprise 51 countries and two institutions. It works through summit meetings, ministerial meetings including foreign ministers' meetings, seminars, and other activities focused on three pillars, namely (1) politics, (2) economy, and (3) society and culture.

The Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) is ASEM's only permanent institution. It is located in Singapore and is responsible for activities in the field of society and culture, one of the three pillars.

Japan has supported the ASEF with its project stockpiling medical personal protective equipment (PPE) and antiviral drugs to combat infectious diseases, and cooperated in the emergency transportation of stockpiled supplies to ASEM partners, and the implementation of capacity building workshops for emergency response and public health network projects. In September, ASEF stockpiles were provided to Mongolia, and in October, a high-level meeting on risk communication for public health emergencies was held in the UK. Furthermore, under the ASEF's Project for Strengthening Preparedness and Response to the COVID-19 and other Emerging Infectious Diseases, financially contributed to by Japan, drugs, PPE, medical devices and other items to combat infectious diseases were provided through the World Health Organization (WHO) to Ukraine and its neighboring countries accepting Ukrainian displaced persons (ASEM partners: Poland, Romania, Hungary, Slovakia, and Czech Republic; non-ASEM partner: Moldova).

In addition, Japan contributed to the ASEM's activities including through the implementation of ASEF Classroom Network online projects (September through December) as a co-host and its financial contributions to the ASEF.

Special Feature

Security and Defense Cooperation with European Countries

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The international community is now facing a historic shift in the power balance and intensifying geopolitical competition. As some countries can be seen attempting to change the existing international order based on their own historical views and values, it is important for Japan and European countries, which are closely connected with fundamental values and principles, to promote security and defense cooperation transcending the geographic distance between them.

In 2021, there was progress in concrete cooperation between Japan and European countries in the Indo-Pacific. This included port calls in Japan by the French training fleet *Jeanne d'Arc*, the UK carrier strike group centered on the UK's aircraft carrier HMS *Queen Elizabeth*, and the German naval frigate *Bayern*, and the implementation of bilateral and multilateral exercises.

In February 2022, the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine majorly shocked the international community. The clear violation of the principle of refraining from the use of force, which lies at the heart of the postwar international legal order, by Russia, which is one of the permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, shook confidence in the international order based on the rule of law to its very foundations.

In the face of unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force, Japan and European countries have again come to the strong recognition that the security of Europe and the Indo-Pacific are inseparable, and have taken a step toward further strengthening security cooperation. In April, Foreign Minister Hayashi became the first Japanese Foreign Minister to attend the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs, and in June, Prime Minister Kishida became the first Japanese Prime Minister in history to attend the NATO Summit Meeting. During the meetings, they shared global security perceptions with NATO and the partner countries and organizations, and concurred to promote concrete cooperation. In October, Japan and Lithuania issued the Joint Statement on Strategic Partnership between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania, and newly launched the Japan-Lithuania security policy dialogue. In November, Japan held the second Japan-Germany Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") and confirmed the direction of specific cooperation between the Japan Self-Defense Forces (SDF) and the German Federal Armed Forces. In December, Japan signed the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Kingdom of Sweden concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, and also reached a mutual understanding with Italy and the UK on the joint development of next-generation fighter aircraft. This joint development is significant for accelerating the advanced military capability and technological advantage of the three countries, deepening defense co-operation, science and technology collaboration, integrated supply chains, and further strengthening the defense industrial base among these countries.

The National Security Strategy formulated by the Government of Japan in December reiterated that Japan will enhance security cooperation with European countries, NATO, EU and others in order to build a multilayered network among its ally and like-minded countries, to expand it, and to strengthen deterrence.

In January 2023, Prime Minister Kishida visited France, Italy, and the UK and held meetings with the leaders of these countries. With the UK, Prime Minister Kishida signed the Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA), which facilitates cooperative activities such as joint exercises and disaster relief between the SDF and the UK Armed Forces. The Japan-UK RAA provides a new legal basis to contribute to more frequent, large-scale, and complex cooperative activities. Furthermore, at the Japan-France Summit Meeting, Prime Minister Kishida welcomed the progress in substantive cooperation, such as reciprocal visits of assets and joint exercises between the two countries, and concurred to deepen bilateral

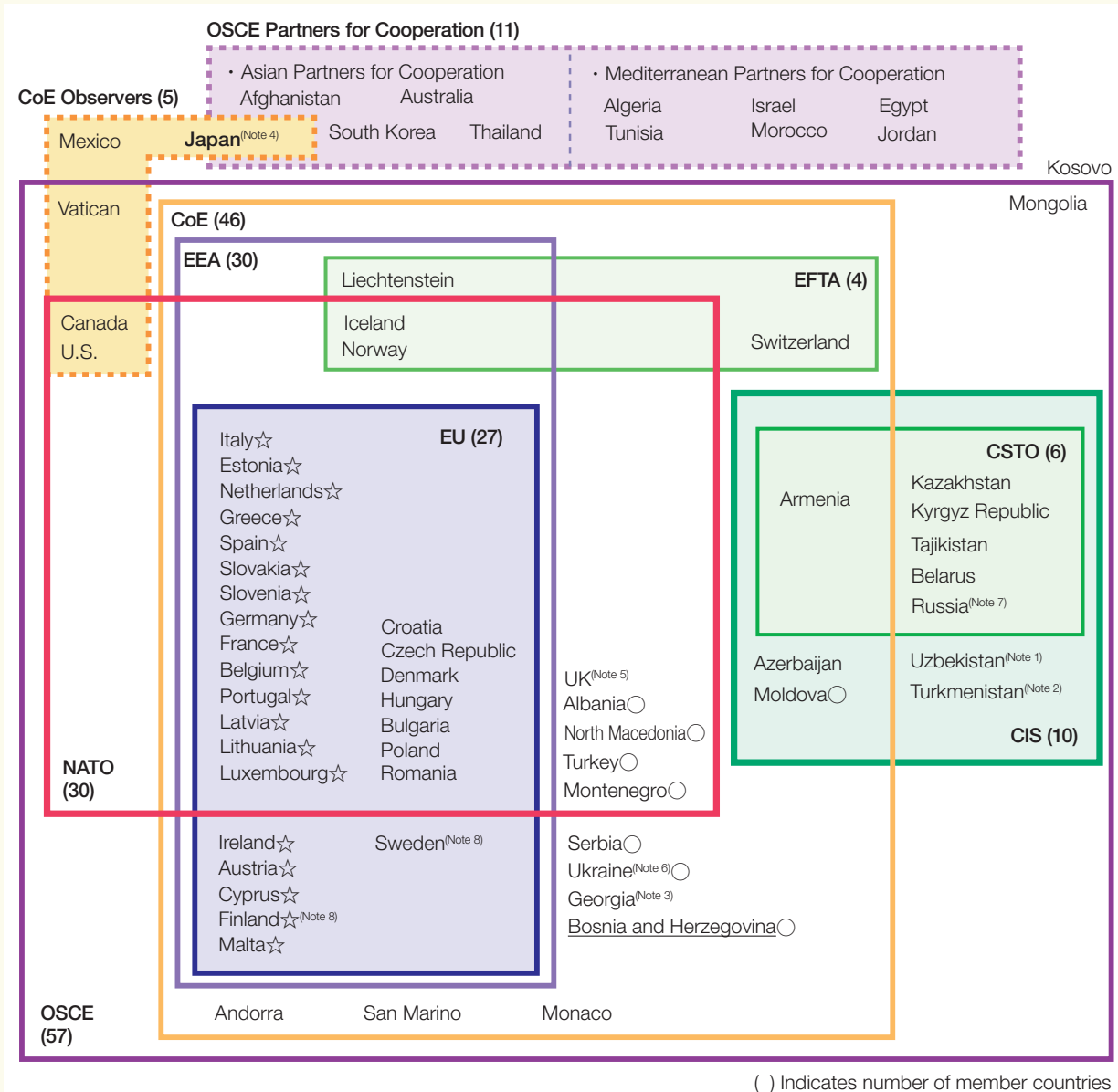


Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Sunak shaking hands at the signing of the Japan-UK RAA (January 11, 2023, London, the UK; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

cooperation. Furthermore, with Italy, the two leaders concurred to upgrade Japan-Italy relations to that of "Strategic Partners," and also confirmed promotion of further cooperation in the security field by launching consultations between the foreign affairs and defense authorities. At the end of the same month, NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg, who visited Japan for the first time in six years, and Prime Minister Kishida released a joint statement and concurred to elevate Japan-NATO relations to new heights.

As partners sharing fundamental values, Japan will continue to further strengthen security and defense cooperation with European countries in order to maintain and expand the free, open, and stable international order.

Major Frameworks of Europe



<Legend>

○: Candidate to be an EU member (8)

☆: Euro member states (19)

—: Member states of the NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) (1)

(Note 1) Uzbekistan ceased its membership in the CSTO in 2012.

(Note 2) Turkmenistan has been an associate member of the CIS since 2005.

(Note 3) Georgia notified the CIS of its decision to leave the organization in August 2008. It formally withdrew from the CIS in August 2009.

(Note 4) Japan is a partner country of NATO.

(Note 5) The UK withdrew from the EU on January 31, 2020.

(Note 6) Ukraine signed a presidential decree in April 2018 to withdraw from the CIS.

(Note 7) Russia was excluded from the CoE in March 2022.

(Note 8) Sweden and Finland applied for NATO membership in May 2022.

<Abbreviations>

CoE (Council of Europe): (46)

CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States): (10)

CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization): (6)

EEA (European Economic Area): (30)

EFTA (European Free Trade Association): (4)

EU (European Union): (27)

NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization): (30)

OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe): (57)

Other European Regions

Nordic countries

Iceland: In December, Prime Minister Kishida met with President Gudni Thorlacius Johannesson, who was visiting Japan to give a keynote speech at the World Assembly for Women (WAW! 2022), and both leaders affirmed they would continue to cooperate on the Arctic issues and on the sustainable use of marine living resources.

Sweden: In June, Prime Minister Kishida, who visited Spain to attend a NATO summit meeting, held a meeting with Prime Minister of Sweden Magdalena Andersson and affirmed to further strengthen relations with Sweden, a partner with which Japan shares fundamental values. In December, the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of Sweden concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology was signed and a Foreign Ministers' telephone call was held.

Denmark: In April, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Culture of the Faroe Islands Jenis av Rana, who was visiting Japan, and signed the Memorandum of Cooperation between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Faroe Islands.

Norway: Foreign Minister Hayashi held a video conference with Foreign Minister Anniken Huitfeldt in March, and another meeting in September during her visit to Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, where the two foreign ministers agreed to explore the possibility of cooperation for further development of the bilateral relations.

Finland: In May, Prime Minister Kishida held a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Sanna Marin, who was visiting Japan. At the meeting, the two leaders exchanged views on bilateral relations and regional affairs, and signed the Japan-Finland Working Holiday Agreement. In September, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs Pekka Haavisto, who was visiting Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo.

Benelux countries

The Netherlands: In February, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a telephone call with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Wopke Hoekstra. Furthermore, in July and November, Foreign Minister Hayashi also held a meeting with the same Dutch Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister, and the two Ministers affirmed to strengthen cooperation toward the realization of FOIP. In November, the Japan-Netherlands Peace Exchange Programme was held for the first time in three years.

Belgium: In December, Her Royal Highness Princess Astrid led the Belgium Economic Mission to Japan, where Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with her. Foreign Minister Hayashi held a meeting with Foreign Minister Sophie Wilmes in April, and held a telephone call and in-person meeting with newly appointed Foreign Minister Hadja Lahbib in September. Foreign Minister Hayashi also met with Foreign Minister Lahbib in December, where the two Ministers confirmed that they would cooperate on the realization of FOIP and the regional situation.

Luxembourg: Prime Minister Xavier Bettel visited Japan in October following his attendance at the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September. Prime Minister Kishida met with Prime Minister Bettel and reaffirmed that they would cooperate on the realization of FOIP and the regional situation.

Baltic countries

Estonia: In September, Prime Minister Kishida held talks with President Jüri Ratas of the Parliament, who was visiting Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo. In October, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs YOSHIKAWA Yuumi visited Estonia and paid a courtesy call to Foreign Minister Urmas Reinsalu. The Parliamentary Vice-Minister also attended the 3rd Japan-Baltic Cooperation Dialogue, where the heads of delegations shared the view to continue to promote cooperation between Japan and the three Baltic countries.

Latvia: In October, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Yoshikawa visited Latvia and met with Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkēvičs, where they shared the view to strengthen cooperation between Japan and NATO and bilateral economic relations. The Parliamentary Vice-Minister also signed the Agreement Between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Latvia Regarding a Working Holiday Scheme with Minister of the Interior Kristaps Eklons.

Lithuania: In June, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki held a meeting with Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis, who was visiting Japan. In August, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a telephone call with Foreign Minister Landsbergis. In October, Prime Minister Kishida met with Prime Minister Ingrida Šimonytė, who was visiting Japan, and the two leaders issued the Joint Statement on Strategic Partnership between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania. In December, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Japan-Lithuania friendship, Foreign Minister Hayashi exchanged letters with Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis to celebrate the 100th Anniversary of Friendship between the two countries.

Ireland: In July, Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with Prime Minister Micheál Martin, who was visiting Japan, and the two leaders shared the view to further develop bilateral relations, such as revitalizing economic relations in the green and digital sectors, and promoting people-to-people exchanges between the two countries. They also issued a joint leaders' statement.

Andorra: In January 2023, a cabinet reshuffle took place and Foreign Minister Maria Ubach Font remained in office.

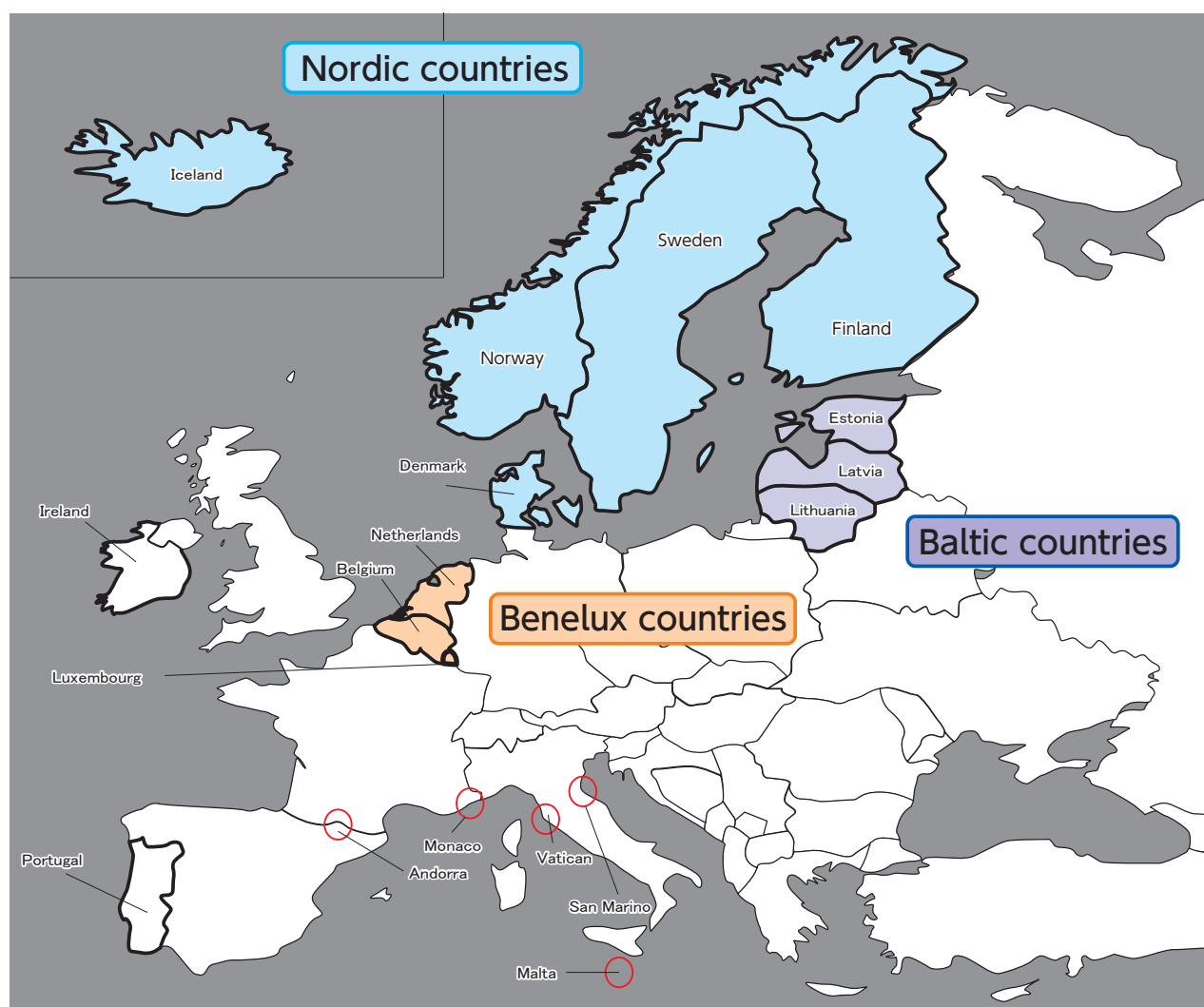
San Marino: As heads of state of San Marino, Captains Regent Oscar Mina and Paolo Rondelli took office in April, followed by Captains Regent Maria Luisa Berti and Manuel Ciavatta in October.

Vatican: In May, Prime Minister Kishida visited Vatican, had an audience with His Holiness Pope Francis, and held talks with Secretary of State Cardinal Pietro Parolin. On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Holy See, in addition to strengthening bilateral relations, the two leaders shared the view that they would cooperate to address various issues common to all humankind, including efforts toward "a world without nuclear weapons."

Portugal: In June, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki met with Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Francisco André, who was visiting Japan. In July, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAKE Shingo visited Portugal to attend the Second UN Ocean Conference and also met with Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation André.

Malta: In September, Foreign Minister Hayashi held talks with Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade Ian Borg during the UN General Assembly, where he shared the view to strengthen cooperation in a wider range of areas with Malta, which, along with Japan, serves as non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council from 2023. Also in the same month, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs and Trade Borg visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo. Furthermore, the Embassy of Japan in Malta is scheduled to be established in FY2023, and that will create an environment for building even closer relations and promoting cooperation between Japan and Malta.

Monaco: In September, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Monaco to Japan Didier Gamerding arrived in Japan and paid a courtesy call to Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Yoshikawa.



V4

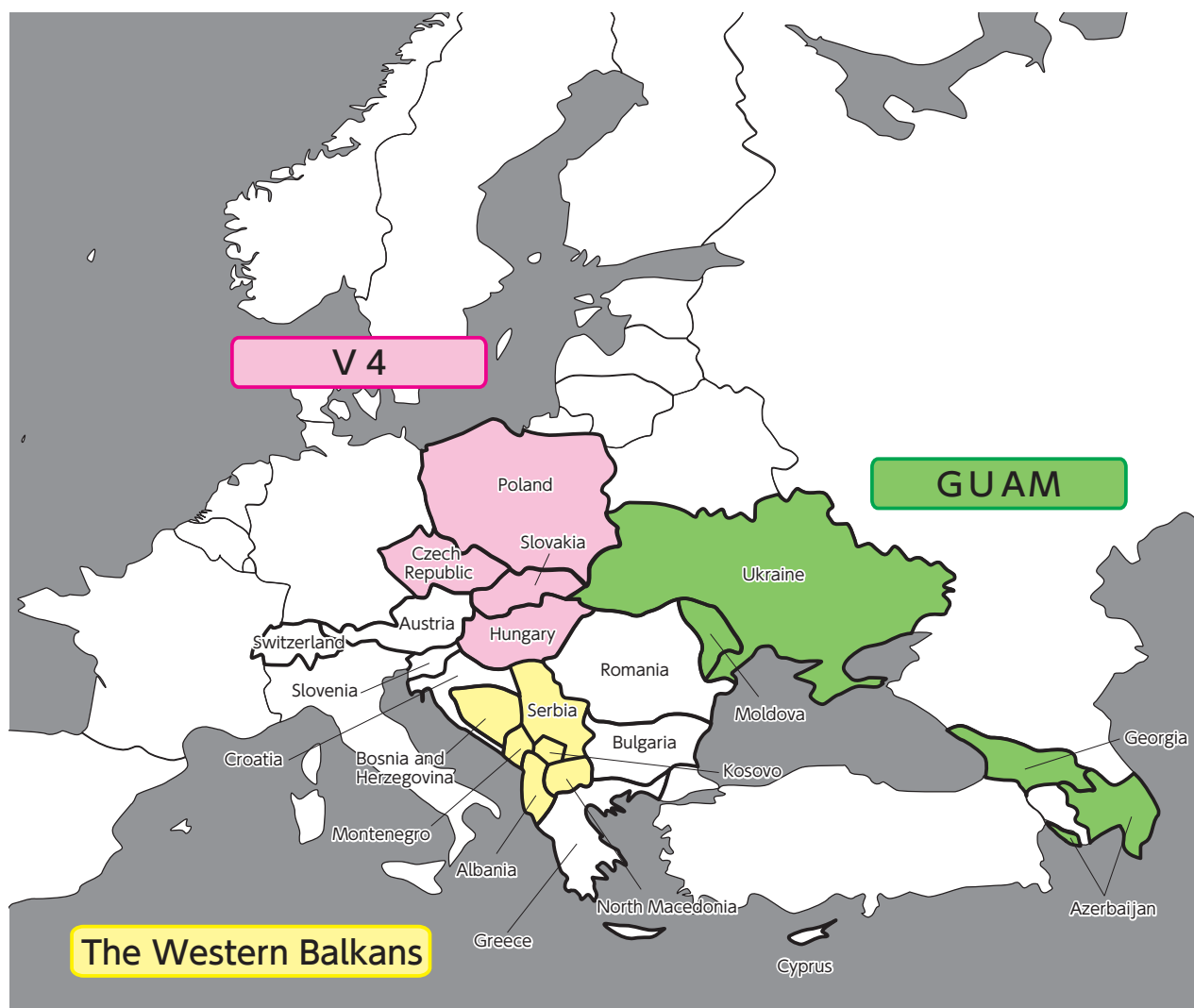
Bilateral relations between Japan and the V4 countries of Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland, and Hungary have a long history and are traditionally friendly. Cooperation with the V4, which are neighboring countries of Ukraine and share fundamental values and principles such as freedom, democracy, rule of law, and human rights, is important. The 11th "V4+Japan" policy dialogue was held in May, where leaders reaffirmed strengthening cooperation in a wide range of fields.

Slovakia (V4 chair from July): In July, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki and State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs Ingrid Brockova held talks in Switzerland to create a support framework for Ukrainian refugees and reconstruction, and confirmed cooperation in regional affairs.

Czech Republic: State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki held a meeting with Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Jiří Kozák in Switzerland in July, and Foreign Minister Hayashi met with Foreign Minister Jan Lipavský in September during High-Level Week of the UN General Assembly. Face-to-face diplomacy with the Czech Republic, which held the presidency of the EU during the second half of 2022, has become more active, with Jan Skopec, Deputy Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic attending the state funeral for late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Kozák visiting Japan in November.

Poland: *See Section 5 Europe 2 (7) Poland on page 137.

Hungary: In December, Minister of the Prime Minister's Office Gergely Gulyás, visited Japan and held talks with Chief Cabinet Secretary MATSUNO Hirokazu and Foreign Minister Hayashi. They exchanged views on the response to the situation in Ukraine and regional situations such as China and North Korea, and confirmed the importance of maintaining international order based on the rule of law.



The Western Balkans

Although there still remains ethnic conflicts in the Western Balkans region, such as lingering tensions between Serbia and Kosovo, overall progress can be seen for stability and development in the Western Balkan region as each country is engaging in reforms toward EU membership. As part of the “Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative” (Note), in March, as a collaborative project with the Western Balkan Fund established by the governments of the Western Balkans, an inter-regional conference entitled “Promote Culture of Tolerance and Mutual Respect within the Region” was held with participants from each West Balkan country. Moreover, an online youth exchange was held under the theme of peacebuilding as a cooperation project with the Western Balkans Regional Youth Cooperation Office (RYCO).

Active high-level dialogue was also realized under the same initiative. In May, Foreign Minister Hayashi held talks with Foreign Minister Bujar Osmani of North Macedonia during his visit to Japan and with Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Olta Xhaçka of Albania during the UN General Assembly High-Level Week in September. In September, Prime Minister Kishida held talks with both Prime Minister Albin Kurti of Kosovo and Prime Minister Ana Brnabic of Serbia, who visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo.

Note: In January 2018, Prime Minister Abe became the first Japanese Prime Minister to visit Serbia, where he announced the “Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative” to advance cooperation with the Western Balkan countries (Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia, and Montenegro) on their path to join the EU, and promoted cooperation with the entire Western Balkan region in areas such as youth exchanges and economic exchanges.

Slovenia: In March, Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi exchanged commemorative letters to celebrate the establishment of diplomatic relations with their respective counterparts, Prime Minister Janez Jansa and Foreign Minister Anze Logar. Foreign Minister Hayashi also held a telephone call with and Foreign Minister Logar.

Romania: In February, Foreign Minister Hayashi met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Bogdan Aurescu during the G7 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in Germany. In September, Prime Minister Kishida held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Nicolae-Ionel Ciuca, who visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo.

Bulgaria: Since 2018, when the first ever visit to Bulgaria by a Japanese Prime Minister was realized, bilateral cooperation has expanded into new areas under the “Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative,” and Japan promotes support to the Western Balkans in cooperation with Bulgaria in areas such as disaster prevention and the promotion of small- and medium-sized business.

Croatia: The Government of Japan and Croatia reached an agreement in principle on the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Croatia for Air Services in November with a view toward the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2023 and expectations of further progress in bilateral relations, including in the economic field.

Austria: In September, consultations between authorities toward concluding a social security agreement were upgraded to government-to-government consultations, and, in December, the 24th meeting of the “Japan-Austria Committee for Issues of the Future” was held in-person for the first time in three years.

Switzerland: In April, President and Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs Ignazio Cassis visited Japan, where he held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Kishida and a Foreign Ministers’ Meeting with Foreign Minister Hayashi. In October, an Honorary Consulate of Switzerland was established in Fukuoka, and in November, the “Protocol Amending the Convention between Japan and Switzerland for the Avoidance of Double Taxation with respect to Taxes on Income” entered into force.

Greece: Foreign Minister Nikos Dendias visited Japan in April and had a meeting with Foreign Minister Hayashi.

Cyprus: In 2022, Japan and Cyprus celebrated the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. President of the House of Representatives Annita Demetriou attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo. Japan-Cyprus political consultation was also held, and bilateral exchanges at various levels were vitalized.

Moldova: Prime Minister Natalia Gavrilita in September and President Maia Sandu visited Japan in December to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo and to participate in the World Assembly for Women (WAW! 2022) respectively, and they also held a separate summit meeting with Prime Minister Kishida.

Special Feature

Moldova's Progress Toward European Integration

Moldova is one of the countries of the former Soviet Union. It borders Ukraine to the east and Romania, a member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union, to the west. Although Russian, which was the official language during the Soviet era, is also widely spoken in Moldova, the national language is Romanian due to the strong historical ties with Romania. Moldova became an independent country with the collapse of the former Soviet Union, but since its independence in 1989, public opinion has been divided between pro-Russia and pro-EU groups. President Igor Dodon, who served as president until 2020, was in the pro-Russia group. However, candidate Maia Sandu, who is pro-EU and anti-corruption, won the presidential election in November of the same year. In the subsequent general election held in July 2021, the Action and Solidarity Party founded by President Sandu won a working majority.

President Sandu had once served as Prime Minister in 2019. However, the pro-EU party was not a monolith, and she resigned after only five months in office back then. Thus, the results of the presidential and general elections were a long-awaited achievement for the pro-EU group led by President Sandu.

However, President Sandu and her party have since suffered hardships. First, there was the increased burden on public finances caused by COVID-19. Russia's aggression against neighboring Ukraine, which was launched in February 2022, reduced migrant labor to Russia, which until then had been an important source of income, as well as exports to the Russian and Ukrainian markets. Furthermore, Moldova depends on Russia for almost 100% of its natural gas imports. Although a gas contract with Russia was concluded after difficult negotiations, gas prices were more than six times higher as of September than in the same period a year earlier, and supplies have also been declining. Moldova's main power plant is located in Transnistria, an area where Russian troops are stationed and where the Government of Moldova has no effective control, and the power supply from this plant has also been reduced. Furthermore, there has been a massive influx of Ukrainian displaced persons, who account for more than 20% of the population of Moldova. This has resulted in a year-on-year inflation rate of more than 30% following Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

Despite facing these domestic difficulties, the Government of Moldova has maintained its course of European integration, and the international community has announced its support for the country one after another. In addition to Ukraine, Japan has also announced a variety of emergency humanitarian aid to Ukraine's neighboring countries, such as Moldova, including via Japanese NGOs through Japan Platform (JPF). A survey team was dispatched to Moldova to coordinate activities among emergency medical teams of various countries, assist with medical data management, and assess needs in the healthcare sector and other fields. Subsequently, based on the survey team's report, Japan decided to provide grant aid of up to one billion Japanese yen in the field of healthcare to alleviate the burden on the healthcare system caused by the influx of displaced persons. Furthermore, to show solidarity with Moldova, Japan changed its spelling of the capital of Moldova in Japanese from "*Kishinev*," which is based on the Russian language, to "*Chişinău*," which is based on the Romanian language.

Moldova applied for EU membership in March 2022, after Ukraine, and was granted EU candidate status with Ukraine in June. However, the road to accession to the EU is not smooth, with some countries taking more than 10 years to actually join.

Moldova, a country that neighbors Ukraine and has been at the mercy of history, is now on its way to accession to the EU based on fundamental values such as democracy and peace. As a responsible member of the international community, Japan is expected to be involved in providing assistance to Moldova, which has suffered the effects of Russia's aggression against Ukraine in a striking way.



Japan-Moldova Summit Meeting (December 3, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)



Ceremony to hand over medical equipment through the World Health Organization (WHO) as part of the Government of Japan's support for displaced persons (November 1, Chişinău, Moldova)

Section 6 | Russia and Belarus, Central Asia and the Caucasus

1 Overview

The international community responded immediately to the outrageous act of Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

Protests were held around the world immediately after the aggression, and a draft resolution demanding the immediate, complete, and unconditional withdrawal of Russian troops was adopted by a majority of 141 countries at an emergency special session of the UN General Assembly on March 2. Severe sanctions against Russia were levied in quick succession, mainly by the G7 and EU countries, and support for Ukraine gradually strengthened. Furthermore, Europe, which imports many Russian energy resources, has been rapidly shrinking its economic ties with Russia, for example, by reducing its dependence on Russia. Foreign companies that had expanded into Russia also announced that they would suspend or withdraw their businesses. Direct flights between Russia, mainly from the G7 and EU countries, have been suspended, reducing the number of people traveling to and from Russia. Thus, in the wake of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, relations between the G7 and EU countries and Russia have reached a major turning point.

In response to this situation, Russia has taken a confrontational stance toward the G7 and EU countries and others that have imposed sanctions against it, while at the same time shifting its focus to maintaining and strengthening relations with China, India, Turkey, Central Asian and Caucasus countries (excluding Georgia, which has expressed support for Ukraine), and others that have friendly relations with Russia and have not imposed sanctions.

Regarding Belarus, the international community, led by the G7 and EU countries, strongly condemned it for supporting Russia's aggression against Ukraine through the use of its own territory, and adopted sanctions against Belarus, including sanctions against President Alexander Lukashenko and other individuals and entities, and export control measures. In addition, the General Assembly of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) adopted a resolution condemning the actions of the Belarusian government regarding the forced landing of a commercial aircraft flying over Belarus.

Regarding Central Asian and Caucasus countries, while they have close geopolitical and economic ties with Russia, they have maintained a neutral stance toward Russia's aggression against Ukraine (with the exception of Georgia). They are also struggling to cope with the impact on transportation routes for energy and other trade items and remittances from migrant workers in Russia.

This situation has drawn the attention of the international community to the Central Asian and Caucasus countries. Central Asia was on the agenda at the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Münster in November, and Japan, the United States, the EU, the Republic of Korea, and other countries held summit- and ministerial-level meetings with the five Central Asian countries. In addition, Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Central Asia as the destination of his first overseas trip in about two years. Russia is conducting active diplomacy to maintain its centripetal power, including holding the first Central Asia-Russia summit meeting in October.

2 Russia and Belarus

(1) Situation in Russia

A Internal Situation in Russia

When Russia announced the start of its “special military operation” against Ukraine in February, there were various forms of anti-war movements in Russia. Small-scale protests were held in various parts of Russia, and some journalists, business people, academics, lawmakers, and others sent out anti-war messages and collected signatures. However, the administration severely suppressed the anti-war movement by further tightening restrictions on the freedom of speech and press, and some domestic independent news organizations, foreign NGOs, think tanks, and other organizations active in Russia were forced to suspend their activities and leave for foreign countries.

In September, after the Ukrainian military had recaptured some of the occupied territories, Russian President Vladimir Putin issued a partial mobilization order, mobilizing some 300,000 people, according to the authorities. This triggered renewed anti-war activities in various parts of Russia, and at the same time, hundreds of thousands of people fled the country to escape the mobilization. There was also a growing outcry in support of the start of peace negotiations. Subsequently, these domestic movements died down.

In late September, the purported “referenda” on “incorporation” into Russia were held in Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson in Ukraine, and Russia illegally “annexed” these regions under the pretext of its results.

Given these circumstances, there are indications that Russia may transit to a wartime economy. In addition to implementing special economic measures to execute “military operations,” including a ban on the refusal of contracts for military supplies, the Government Coordination Council, chaired by Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin and responsible for responding quickly to the war situation and the needs of society, was established.

Since Russia's aggression against Ukraine, President Putin's approval rating has ranged between around 70 to 80%, up from the previous 60% range. Although

there was a slight drop in support after the partial mobilization order was issued, this remains high.

B Russian Foreign Policy

In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, while the G7, the EU, and others have announced a series of various supports, including military aid to Ukraine, and sanctions against Russia, Russia is strengthening its confrontational stance with the West.

Since the reported buildup of Russian forces in areas along the Ukrainian border in the fall of 2021, the U.S. has continued dialogue with Russia to reduce tensions, but since the aggression against Ukraine, high-level talks between the U.S. and Russia have been extremely limited. Moreover, in February 2023, President Putin announced in his Address to the Federal Assembly the suspension of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) between the U.S. and Russia.

Political and economic relations with the EU are in the process of cooling, with European companies suspending or withdrawing their operations in Russia, reduced dependence on Russian energy, and mutually expelling staff of embassies and consulate generals. Although there are minimal contacts between Russia and Germany and between Russia and France, including at the summit level, these kinds of dialogues have failed to reach an agreement, and cooperation between Europe and Russia in practical fields has been greatly reduced.

Meanwhile, Russia is developing its own narrative on its aggression against Ukraine and is working to maintain and deepen relations with China, India, Turkey, the Central Asian and Caucasus countries (excluding Georgia), and other countries that have not imposed sanctions against Russia, but each country's position on the aggression against Ukraine is not the same.

Regarding China, the joint statement issued at the China-Russia summit in February stated that “Friendship between the two States has no limits, there are no forbidden areas of cooperation.” Since the start of the Russia's aggression against Ukraine, China has never condemned Russia and has opposed “unilateral” sanctions, as stated in a 12-point document

entitled “China’s Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis,” released by the Chinese Foreign Ministry on February 24, 2023, one year after the aggression. Close contact between China and Russia has been strengthened at the leader’s and foreign minister’s levels, and coordination in the military field, such as joint navigation and joint flights in the vicinity of Japan, has been strengthened even after the start of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. In addition, the volume of trade between the two countries is increasing, including greater imports of crude oil and liquefied natural gas (LNG) from Russia.

India, which has traditionally maintained friendly relations with Russia, has not directly condemned Russia. However, at the Russia-India summit meeting in September, Prime Minister Narendra Modi told President Putin that “today’s era is not of war,” and publicly asserted the need for an early cessation of hostilities, dialogue, and diplomacy. However, India has been increasing its imports of crude oil and fertilizers from Russia, indicating the importance it attaches to maintaining economic relations with Russia.

Turkey, which maintains friendly relations with both Russia and Ukraine, supports the UN General Assembly resolutions related to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine and condemns Russia’s actions. At the same time, Turkey continues to engage in high-level talks with Russia and remains involved in the situation surrounding Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, including brokering the negotiations between Russia and Ukraine and working with the UN as a mediator on the Black Sea Grain Initiative.

Russia attaches importance to Belarus and the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus, and continues to engage with these countries. The Central Asia-Russia Summit was held in Kazakhstan in 2022 for the first time. The Central Asian and Caucasus countries, with a few exceptions, have been absent from or abstained from UN General Assembly resolutions related to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, and many countries have avoided making their positions clear publicly.

President Putin shifted the Russian Army’s deterrence forces to high combat alert immediately after the start of Russia’s aggression, and nuclear threats have been made through various forms of transmissions

from Russia. Thus, the possibility of Russia using nuclear weapons continues to be a concern.

In the Indo-Pacific region, the Russian military’s strategic command and staff exercise “Vostok 2022” in September marked the first time the Chinese military had three branches of the military (Army, Navy, and Air Force) participate in a Russian military exercise at once. Russia’s Armed Forces have been strengthening their military coordination with China by conducting joint flights of their bombers and joint navigation by their naval vessels in the vicinity of Japan. The fact that the militaries of China and Russia continue to engage in joint activities with increasing frequency in the vicinity of Japan should be closely monitored with serious concern from the perspective of Japan’s security.

C Russian Economy

GDP growth in Russia from January to March was +3.5%, but fell -4.1% from April to June and dropped another -3.7% from July to September due to the impact of sanctions against Russia and other factors. In addition, the 2022 budget fell from an expected budget surplus to a deficit, due in part to increased national defense spending, etc.. Significant increases in national defense and other spending are expected in the 2023 budget and beyond.

Following Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, the Russian central bank took a wide range of monetary measures, including a significant increase in the policy interest rate, to mitigate the effects of sanctions against Russia. The ruble depreciated significantly immediately after the aggression, but over time the currency’s value superficially recovered, and inflation peaked at the beginning of May and has trended downward since then.

On the other hand, the suspension and withdrawal of operations by foreign companies imposed restrictions on production as well as consumption behavior. Furthermore, the sanctions against Russia have reduced imports in the semiconductor and other high-tech sectors, disrupting supply chains and affecting production activities in the automotive and airline industries, among others. In response, Russia is attempting to address this by trying to produce substitutes domestically.

Russia has taken various “countermeasures” in the energy sector, such as forcing the transfer of underground resource development licenses from foreign companies to Russian corporations, and also restricting gas supplies to some countries.

(2) Japan-Russia Relations

A Overview of Japan-Russia Relations

At the Japan-Russia Summit telephone call held on February 17, just prior to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Prime Minister Kishida told President Putin that Japan is monitoring the situation around Ukraine with grave concern, and that a solution acceptable to the countries concerned should be pursued through diplomatic negotiations, rather than an unilateral change of the status quo by force.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which began on February 24, has had a serious impact on Japan-Russia relations. In response to this aggression, Japan has been implementing severe sanctions against Russia (For details, see the Special Feature “Russia's Aggression Against Ukraine and Japan's Response” on page 16). In May, in connection with Japan's sanctions against Russian individuals, the Russian government announced an indefinite ban on a total of 63 Japanese individuals, including Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi, from entering Russia. In July, it similarly announced an indefinite ban on 384 members of the House of Representatives from entering Russia.

Furthermore, In April, Japan demanded the expulsion of eight diplomats and officials from the Embassy of the Russian Federation and the Trade Representation of the Russian Federation in Japan, as a result of Japan's comprehensive assessment, given the situation over Ukraine. In response, Russia demanded the expulsion of eight diplomats of the Embassy of Japan in Russia later that month. Japan protested to Russia, saying that it was absolutely unacceptable for Russia to take these measures, despite the fact that it was the Russian side that resorted to military means and caused the current situation, and that Russian side was fully responsible for bringing Japan-Russia relations to this state.

In the area of cultural and people-to-people

exchanges, the opening ceremony of the “Japan-Russia Year of Regional Exchanges” was held in Sapporo in January. Subsequently, due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, cultural and people-to-people exchanges between Japan and Russia at the governmental level have basically been put on hold for the time being.

In April, the sightseeing boat KAZU I was involved in a maritime accident off the Shiretoko Peninsula in Hokkaido. Regarding the three bodies found on Kunashiri Island and Sakhalin Island, Japan coordinated arrangements with Russia for the early handover of the bodies after confirming with the Russian side that the DNA information matched that of the missing persons in the accident. As a result, the bodies were handed over in September.

In September, a consular officer of the Consulate-General of Japan in Vladivostok was detained by the Russian authorities on the account of conducting illegal information collection activities and was declared as *persona non grata* (an undesirable person) and the officer's expulsion was demanded. There is no fact that the consular officer conducted an illegal activity, and the detention and intimidating interrogation conducted by Russia are clear and serious violations of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations and the Japan-Soviet Consular Convention, and are absolutely unacceptable. The Government of Japan therefore lodged a strong protest and demanded a formal apology and prevention of recurrence from Russia. Furthermore, in October, as an appropriate measure in response to the measures taken by Russia, Japan declared a consul at the Consulate-General of the Russian Federation in Sapporo as *persona non grata*, and demanded the expulsion of the consul from Japan.

In the fisheries sector, the Government of Russia unilaterally announced in June it would suspend the Framework Agreement concerning operations of Japanese fishing vessels in waters around the Four Northern Islands¹ on the grounds of the Cooperative Project with the Sakhalin Oblast government, but operations began in September as a result of subsequent adjustments. However, Russia has rejected negotiations for operations for 2023 based on this agreement. Since the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the

1 Agreement on the Operation of Japanese Fishing Vessels in the Waters Surrounding the Northern Territories.

Government of Japan has been holding discussions to maintain and secure Japan's fishing rights and interests, including those under other Japan-Russia fisheries agreements.

B The Northern Territories and Negotiations on a Peace Treaty

The greatest concern between Japan and Russia is the Northern Territories issue. The Northern Territories are islands over which Japan has sovereignty. The islands are an inherent territory of Japan but currently illegally occupied by Russia. The issue is yet to be resolved even after 77 years have passed since the end of World War II, and the Government of Japan firmly worked on the negotiations under the policy of concluding a peace treaty through the resolution of the territorial issue².

However, in March, the Government of Russia, considering the measures taken by Japan in relation to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, announced measures such as discontinuing negotiations on a peace treaty, suspending free visits and the Four-island exchange program, and withdrawing from the dialogue on the joint economic activities on the Four Northern Islands. In September, the Government of Russia also announced a government decree suspending the validity of the agreement on free visits and the four-island exchange program.

The current situation is entirely the result of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and Russia's attempt to shift the responsibility to the Japanese side is extremely unjust and absolutely unacceptable. The Government of Japan has lodged a strong protest against the Russian side and has strongly urged Russia to stop the aggression and withdraw its forces immediately.

Although Japan-Russia relations are in a difficult situation due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and now is not a moment in which Japan can talk about the prospects for the peace treaty negotiations, the Government of Japan will firmly maintain its policy of concluding a peace treaty through the resolution of the territorial issue. In addition, under the current circumstances, the situation does not allow the

four-island exchange program and other programs³ to be conducted, and following on from 2020 and 2021, when Japan was unable to conduct these programs due to the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic, it was also unable to conduct them in 2022. The resumption of the programs, including visits to graves in the Four Northern Islands, is one of the highest priorities for Japan-Russia relations in the future. The Government of Japan strongly hopes that the situation will become such that the programs can be resumed as soon as possible, and will continue to take appropriate measures.

Furthermore, Japan lodged protests against Russia over Russia's moves to build up its military forces in the Four Northern Islands, including military exercises, on the grounds that such moves are contradictory to Japan's position regarding the territorial issue.

C Japan-Russia Economic Relations

From January to December 2022, trade between Japan and Russia increased by 6.2% year-on-year (total trade for the same period was approximately 2,563.7 billion Japanese yen (Source: Trade Statistics of Japan, Ministry of Finance)). This is believed to be due to the fact that while exports from Japan to Russia decreased due to Japan's sanctions against Russia, imports from Russia to Japan increased due to the effects of soaring global resource prices and the depreciation of the yen.

On February 15, prior to the Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the Co-chairs' meeting of the Japan-Russia Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Issues was held online, where Foreign Minister Hayashi informed Minister of Economic Development Maksim Gennadyevich Reshetnikov that Japan is closely monitoring the situation in Ukraine with serious concern. After conveying Japan's position that it seeks to reduce tensions and encourages the pursuit of a diplomatic solution under the principles of sovereignty and territorial integrity, the co-chairs discussed the current status of Japan-Russia cooperation in economic relations and exchanges.

2 Refer to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website for the position of the Government of Japan on the Northern Territories issue: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/russia/territory/index.html>

3 Refers to Visits to Graves in the Northern Territories, free visits, and exchange visits/receptions to the Four Northern Islands (including receiving patients and expert exchanges).



However, later that month, Russia started its aggression against Ukraine, making it difficult to continue bilateral relations as before, including in the economic sphere. For this reason, government projects related to economic cooperation with Russia, including the Eight-point Cooperation Plan for Innovative Reform in the Fields of Industry and Economy and a Favorable Living Environment of Russia proposed in 2016, are basically on hold for the time being.

In addition, in order to demonstrate that outrageous acts that shake the very foundation of the international order come with a high price, Japan, in cooperation with the G7 and the rest of the international community, is swiftly implementing severe sanctions against Russia, including sanctions against Russian individuals and organizations, sanctions in the financial sector such as freezing the assets of banks, and measures banning imports and exports. In the energy sector, in accordance with the G7 Leaders' Statement, Japan will phase out its dependence on Russian energy, including oil and coal, while maintaining its interests in the "Sakhalin 1" and "Sakhalin 2" oil and natural gas development projects in Russia, considering their importance for Japan's energy security.

(3) Situation in Belarus

Amidst increasing tensions in the region surrounding the Ukrainian border since the end of 2021 due to the buildup of Russian forces and other factors, Belarus started its engagement in a joint military exercise with Russia on February 10. In Russia's aggression against Ukraine that began on February 24, Belarus supported Russia by allowing the use of its own territory. In light of Belarus' obvious involvement in the aggression by Russia, Japan strongly condemned Belarus and imposed sanctions against the country, including sanctions against President Lukashenko and other individuals and entities, and export control measures. Since

then, Belarus has allowed Russian troops to remain in its territory, and the two countries have conducted joint military exercises and other activities.

A referendum on constitutional amendments was held in February, and the majority voted in favor of the amendments, which included the deletion of the provision that Belarus should be a denuclearized region and a neutral state, the reinstatement of the provision prohibiting the president from being elected three times, and the tightening of qualifications for presidential candidates.

In July 2022, the Council of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) adopted a decision that Belarus had violated the Convention on International Civil Aviation (Chicago Convention) regarding the forced landing of a civilian aircraft flying over Belarus that occurred in May 2021. In October, the ICAO General Assembly approved the decision and adopted a resolution condemning the actions of the Government of Belarus.

The Nobel Peace Prize for 2022 was awarded to Ales Bialiatski, founder of the Belarusian human rights organization Viasna (Spring), along with human rights organizations from Russia and Ukraine, for representing his country's civil society and promoting over the years things such as the right to criticize power and protect the fundamental rights of citizens, and other reasons.

Sviatlana Heorhiyeuna Tsikhanouskaya and other Belarusian political activists continued to appeal to the international community for support, from their bases in the countries surrounding Belarus. In August, they gathered in Lithuania for a meeting where they announced the creation of a "United Transition Cabinet" with the goals of restoring constitutionality and order, ensuring the transition from a dictatorship to a democratic government, and creating conditions for holding fair and free elections.

3 Countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus

(1) Overview

Countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus are situated in a location of geopolitical importance that connects East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and Russia, and have abundant natural resources such as oil, natural gas, uranium, and rare metals. Stability of the region as a whole, including the countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus, has significant importance in addressing key challenges that the international community faces such as fighting against terrorism and countering illicit drugs. Japan continues to work to strengthen bilateral ties with these countries through high level talks and will be continuing initiatives to promote regional cooperation using the framework of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue.

2022 marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Central Asia and Caucasus countries. Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi exchanged congratulatory messages with the leaders and foreign ministers of the respective countries, and actively implemented initiatives to strengthen relations, including high-level bilateral exchanges (see the Column on page 160). In light of the growing importance of the “Caspian Sea Route,” a transportation route that bypasses Russia and links Central Asia and Europe via the Caucasus region, following Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), together with relevant ministries, agencies, and Japanese companies, formed a study team to survey the route in Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan.



The Ninth Foreign Ministers’ Meeting of the “Central Asia plus Japan” (December 24, Tokyo)

The Central Asia and Caucasus countries, with a few exceptions, have been absent from or abstained from UN General Assembly resolutions related to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, and many of them have avoided making their positions clear publicly. Uzbekistan has consistently explained that the country’s position is “objective and neutral.” In June, President Jomart Tokaev of Kazakhstan refused to recognize the “Donetsk People’s Republic” and “Luhansk People’s Republic” in front of Russian President Putin at the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum. While Tajikistan has not made any external comments on Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, it drew public attention when President Emomali Rahmon of Tajikistan made remarks to Russian President Putin at the Central Asia-Russia Summit in October, that policies like those of the former Soviet Union were still in place in Central Asia and that he hoped they would be respected.

(2) Central Asian Countries

The countries of Central Asia are partners of Japan in maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order, and Japan is promoting diplomacy aimed at contributing to peace and stability in Central Asia.

In April, the Eighth Foreign Ministers’ Meeting of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue was held online, where foreign ministers exchanged opinions on regional affairs including Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. Foreign Minister Hayashi also visited Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. In December, the foreign ministers of the five Central Asian countries visited Japan for the first time together, where the Ninth Foreign Ministers’ Meeting of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue was held in Tokyo for the first time in 10 years. The foreign ministers decided to establish and promote a new development model focusing on “investment in people” and “quality of growth” to achieve sustainable development in Central Asia, and exchanged views on the “Caspian Sea Route.” They also candidly exchanged views on how to respond to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine and the situation in Afghanistan.

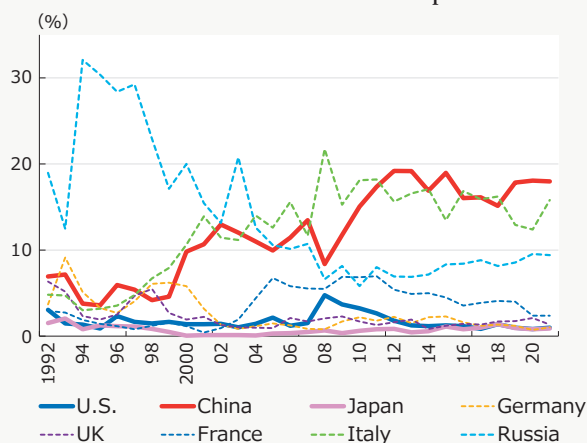
While there was continued progress in intra-regional cooperation among the Central Asian countries, with

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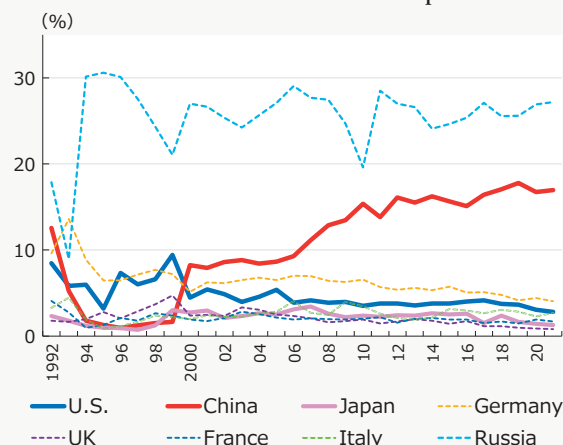
Relations between Central Asia and the Caucasus Region and Japan, the U.S., China, etc., Seen Through Economic Data¹

- Trade: China is the largest export destination, but exports to Italy (exports of natural resources from Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan) and Russia are also large. In terms of import, Russia is still exceeding China as it has large trade volumes with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan. In 2021, Japan ranked 25th in terms of its share in the region's export and 16th in terms of import.²
- Investment: The U.S. has the second largest presence in Kazakhstan, which accounts for about 70% of the region's FDI stock (the largest investor in Kazakhstan is the Netherlands). This is followed by France, the UK and China. In addition, Russia maintains a certain presence in the former Soviet Union bloc countries, as it is a major investor in Kyrgyz Republic, Armenia, and Tajikistan. Japan's FDI in the region is not particularly noticeable except in Kazakhstan and is below the U.S., the UK, China and Russia in scale.
- Finance: The region has the largest bilateral external debt to China, but this has been declining in recent years. Japan is a creditor mainly in Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, and ranks second as of 2021.

Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in Central Asia and the Caucasus' exports



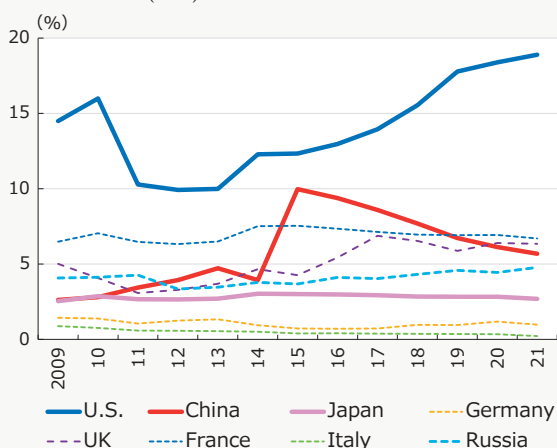
Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in Central Asia and the Caucasus' imports



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (DOT) data.

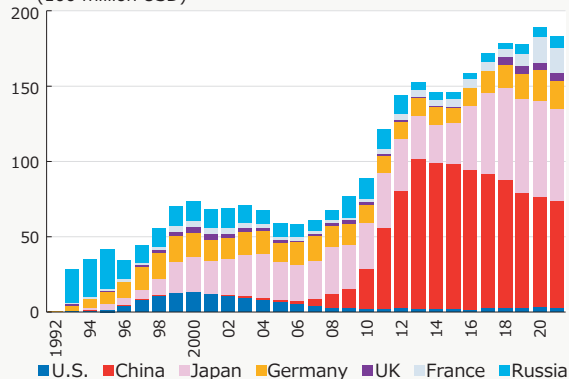
Note 2: Figures for China are the sum of Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau. Graphs for past figures may be skewed due to missing data, etc.

Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock in Central Asia and the Caucasus



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (CDIS) data.

Bilateral External Debt in Central Asia and the Caucasus (100 million USD)



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on data from the World Bank (IDS).

Note 2: The graph illustrates the sum of bilateral external debt in the public sector and in the private sector (private sector external debt guaranteed by the public sector).

¹ See page193 for notes regarding this data.

² While only limited number of countries such as Japan, the U.S., and China are illustrated in the chart the rankings in the text are for all countries/regions for which data are available (including countries, etc. in the relevant region).

the Fourth Consultative Meeting of the Heads of State of the Central Asian countries held in July, and an agreement on border demarcation was reached between Uzbekistan and the Kyrgyz Republic in November, military clashes broke out in September near the border between the Kyrgyz Republic and Tajikistan. A cease-fire agreement was reached within the same month, but on the Kyrgyz side, approximately 140,000 people were temporarily internally displaced. In response to the deterioration of the humanitarian situation in the Kyrgyz Republic, the Japanese government decided to provide emergency grant aid of 1 million US dollars through the UN World Food Programme (WFP) and the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

In Uzbekistan, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev continues to pursue a reform path. Japan has actively engaged in high-level political dialogue with Uzbekistan, including a visit to Japan by Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade Sardor Umurzakov in April, a visit to Uzbekistan by Foreign Minister Hayashi, a telephone call between Prime Minister Kishida and President Mirziyoyev in June, and a foreign ministers' meeting in December. Foreign Minister Hayashi met with Foreign Minister Vladimir Norov, who visited Japan in December for the Ninth Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, where the ministers exchanged views on cooperation in the areas of labor, environment, climate change and human resource development as well as on the regional situation.

In Kazakhstan, unrest broke out across the country in January, mainly in Almaty, but the situation was calmed by the deployment of Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) peacekeeping forces at the request of Kazakhstan. The Government of Kazakhstan has attributed the unrest to an attempted coup d'état by former Chair of the National Security Committee Karim Massimov and others. The upheaval led to the retirement of first President Nursultan Nazarbayev from the position of Chairman of the Security Council and strengthened President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's efforts at large-scale domestic reforms. In June, a referendum was held to amend the constitution, and in September, the name of the capital city was restored from Nur-Sultan to Astana. In November, President Tokayev was inaugurated after the reelection

in an early presidential election. In relations with Japan, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Kazakhstan in April and held talks with President Tokayev and Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Mukhtar Tileuberdi. In September and December, Foreign Minister Hayashi also met with the Foreign Minister of Kazakhstan and exchanged views on cooperation in the energy and decarbonization sectors, regional affairs, and other issues.

In relations with the Kyrgyz Republic, Foreign Minister Hayashi met with Minister of Foreign Affairs Zheenbek Kulubaev in September and December. During the December meeting, the two ministers signed a Cooperation Program between the ministries for 2023 to 2025, and shared the view to further promote bilateral relations and stimulate dialogue. In addition, Minister of Foreign Affairs Kulubaev expressed his gratitude for the support provided by Japan to date, including the emergency grant aid in October.

In relations with Tajikistan, First Deputy Prime Minister Davlati Said and Foreign Minister Sirojiddin Muhriddin each visited Japan in December. During his meeting with Foreign Minister Muhriddin, Foreign Minister Hayashi signed a cooperation program between the two countries' foreign ministries for 2023 to 2025, and confirmed that the two ministries would work closely together on bilateral cooperation, including human resource development and infrastructure development, as well as on the regional situation.

In Turkmenistan, Serdar Berdimuhamedov, the eldest son of President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov, was elected as the new president in March. In relations with Japan, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with President Berdimuhamedov in April, followed by a meeting between Prime Minister Kishida and Chairman of the Halk Maslakhaty, Milli Gengesh of Turkmenistan Berdimuhamedov (former President) in September. In December, Foreign Minister Hayashi met with Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs Rashid Meredov to strengthen economic ties, including in the area of decarbonization, and to strengthen cooperation in the areas of education and culture.

In recent years, efforts toward advancing regional cooperation have become active among Central

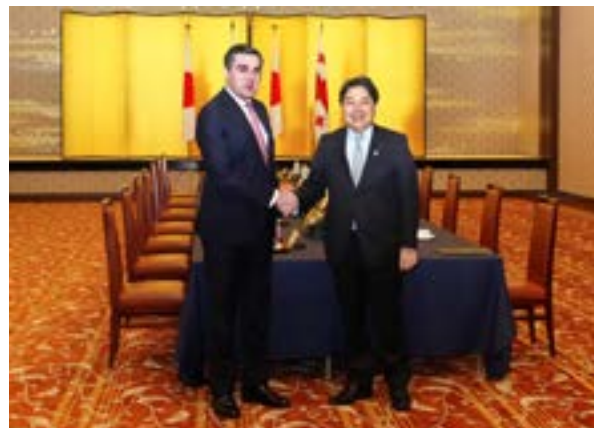
Asian and neighboring countries. In 2022, leaders of Central Asian countries attended a variety of meetings that included the meeting of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) in December, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Summit held in October, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit in September, and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Summit and the Summit of the Organization of Turkic States held in November.

In addition, there are active summits and foreign ministers' meetings in the format of the five Central Asian countries and another country. In 2022, Japan, the U.S., the EU, China, Russia, and the ROK each held a foreign ministers' meeting with the five Central Asian countries in this format, while the EU, China, India, and Russia held a summit meeting with them.

(3) Caucasus Countries

The Caucasus region has a potential to be a gateway connecting Asia, Europe and the Middle East, and geopolitical importance that directly affects the peace and stability of the international community. However, there are still outstanding issues such as in Georgia over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh. Japan announced the Caucasus Initiative in 2018, which is comprised of two pillars: (1) assistance for human resources development for state building (human resources development) and (2) assistance for paving the way to "Appealing Caucasus" (infrastructure development and business environment improvement), and develops its diplomacy in line with this initiative.

Regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, Japan has taken the position that it hopes the remaining issues related to the conflict between the two countries will be resolved peacefully based on the principles of international law through dialogue, including with the OSCE Minsk Group. In 2022, there were efforts toward dialogue mediated by the U.S., the EU, Russia, and other countries on the basis of the cease-fire agreement reached through a joint statement by the leaders of Russia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia in November 2020. Meanwhile, the largest armed clashes since the



Japan-Georgia Foreign Ministers' Meeting (December 15, Tokyo)

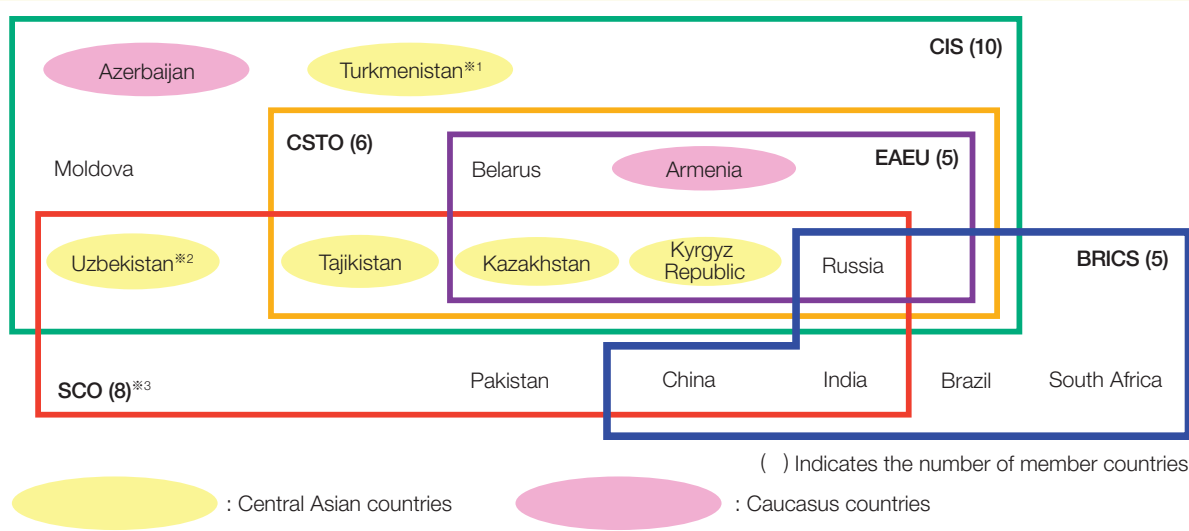
agreement occurred in the border region in September, and in December, a group claiming to be an environmental group on the Azerbaijan side staged a protest along the Lachin corridor, the only transportation route connecting the Nagorno-Karabakh region and Armenia. In response, the Armenian side complained that the corridor had been blocked, creating a humanitarian crisis.

In relations with Azerbaijan, Japan and Azerbaijan signed a new tax convention in December that wholly amends the previous tax convention, which was succeeded after dissolution of the Soviet Union. It is expected that this convention will further promote investment and economic exchange between the two countries.

Regarding relations with Armenia, Foreign Minister Hayashi met with Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan in New York in September, where they exchanged views on the regional situation and other issues. In Armenia, President Armen Sarkissian resigned before the end of his term in January 2022, and Vahagn Khachaturyan was elected president by the National Assembly in March.

In relations with Georgia, Foreign Minister Hayashi met with Foreign Minister Ilia Darchiashvili, who visited Japan in December. The two Ministers agreed to further strengthen bilateral relations, including strengthening regional connectivity with the "Caspian Sea Route" in mind and cooperation in the field of decarbonization based on the Memorandum of Cooperation on the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) signed in September.

Major Frameworks involving Russia, Central Asia, and Caucasus countries



<Note>

Turkmenistan has been an associate member of the CIS since 2005.

Uzbekistan ceased its membership in the CSTO in 2012.

Iran signed a memorandum of understanding for full SCO membership in 2022.

<Abbreviations>

CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States): 10

CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization): 6

EAEU (Eurasian Economic Union): 5

SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organization): 8

Column

30th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic relations between Japan and the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus

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The countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus are located almost in the central part of the vast Eurasian continent and had prospered as hubs of the Silk Road connecting Europe and Asia in ancient times. They were annexed by Russia in the 19th century but became independent after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. By September 1992, Japan had recognized these eight countries as states and established diplomatic relations. Japan and the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus have developed exchanges in various fields over the 30 years since their independence.

Date of Establishment of Diplomatic relations between Japan and the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus

	Country	Date
Central Asia	Uzbekistan	January 26, 1992
	Kazakhstan	January 26, 1992
	Kyrgyz Republic	January 26, 1992
	Tajikistan	February 2, 1992
	Turkmenistan	April 22, 1992
the Caucasus	Azerbaijan	September 7, 1992
	Armenia	September 7, 1992
	Georgia	August 3, 1992



Japan launched the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue in 2004 to promote regional cooperation for solving common regional issues. Such cooperation is indispensable for the stability and development of Central Asia. At present, other major countries are establishing frameworks for dialogue similar to Japan’s, but the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue is the pioneer of these. In 2015, Prime Minister Abe became the first Japanese Prime Minister to visit five Central Asian countries, and in 2018, Foreign Minister KONO Taro visited three Caucasus countries, furthering exchanges in various fields. Furthermore, in 2015, Japan opened the Embassy of Japan in Armenia, and today all eight countries have Japanese Embassies.

In 2022, the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, active exchanges were held, including visits by high-level dignitaries, such as the visit to Japan by Foreign Minister Ilia Darchiashvili of Georgia in December, and the visit to Japan by the foreign ministers from five Central Asian countries all together for the first time to participate in the 9th Foreign Ministers’ Meeting of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue. In addition, Prime Minister Kishida and the leaders of the countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus, along with Foreign Minister Hayashi and the foreign ministers of each country, celebrated the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, and exchanged letters with each country affirming they would strive to further develop bilateral relations.

An official logo for the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and the five Central Asian countries was created using the characters of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue by renown *manga* artist MORI Kaoru, whose famous pieces include the *manga* “*Otoyomegatari*” (The Bride’s Stories), the story of which was set in Central Asia. There were also many commemorative events held by local governments and private companies in various fields, such as politics, economy, tourism, and culture. Japan also actively disseminated Japanese culture through performances by “Japanese Drum (*Wadaiko*) Group Sai” in five Central Asian countries, *bonsai* workshops and “Japanese food and food sample exhibitions” in Uzbekistan, and “Japanese Culture Day” in Kazakhstan, among others.

Between Japan and the Caucasus countries, logos were created to commemorate the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Azerbaijan and Georgia, respectively, and various commemorative events were held, including a piano concert by NAKAMURA Tempei. The 15th Japanese Film Festival was held in four cities in Armenia.



The official logo for the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and five Central Asian countries



Concert by “Japanese Drum (*Wadaiko*) Group Sai” (November 20, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan)



Piano recital by NAKAMURA Tempei (July 18, Baku, Azerbaijan)



Logo for Japan-Azerbaijan Friendship Year 2022



Logo for the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Georgia

Section 7 | The Middle East and North Africa

1 Overview

The Middle East and North Africa (the Middle East) is located in a geopolitically important area: the crossroads of Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia and South Asia. The region is a vital supplier of energy, representing approximately 50% of the world's oil reserves and 40% of the world's natural gas reserves and also a market with high potential, pursuing the diversification of economy and decarbonization, especially in the Gulf countries, against a backdrop of a high population growth rate. In addition, Russia's aggression against Ukraine on February 24 caused energy prices to rise sharply, and attention was focused on the role of oil and gas-producing countries in the Gulf region in stabilizing energy markets.

Meanwhile, the region has gone through various conflicts and disputes along its history, and still faces a number of destabilizing factors and challenges. In recent years, regional tension is growing over Iran, and political turmoil continues in various regions since the "Arab Spring" in 2011. The civil war continues in Syria, resulting in a large number of refugees and internally displaced persons, and it has made a great impact on the stability of the entire region, including its neighboring countries. In Yemen, parties concerned, including the Government of Yemen and the Houthis agreed on a temporary truce in April, 2022, but this expired in October, and the severe security and humanitarian situation continues. The risk of the spread of violent extremism such as the "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant" (ISIL) also remains in some areas. Furthermore, in Afghanistan, there are concerns that the serious humanitarian situation since the Taliban's takeover of Kabul in August 2021 may further deteriorate.

On the other hand, since 2020, the situation in some countries and regions is shifting toward rapprochement.

In 2020, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Sudan, and Morocco agreed to normalize diplomatic relations with Israel, and in 2021, the Qatar diplomatic crisis¹ that had been ongoing since 2017 was resolved. Other developments that contribute to regional stability include Turkey's normalization of its diplomatic relations with Israel in 2022 for the first time in four years, and the demarcation of the maritime boundary between Israel and Lebanon, mediated by the United States.

The Biden administration of the U.S., inaugurated in January 2021, has announced that it will hold talks with Iran to return to the Iran nuclear deal, from which the previous administration had withdrawn. Regarding the Middle East Peace Process, the administration has worked on improving relations with Palestine. The impact of these policies on the Middle East continues to be the focus of attention. In July 2022, President Biden visited Israel, Palestine, and Saudi Arabia for his first visit to the Middle East since taking office. China is also strengthening its ties with the Middle East. In December, President Xi Jinping visited Saudi Arabia for his first trip to the Middle East since 2016, where he held the first China-Saudi Arabia summit, the first China-GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council) summit, and the first China-Arab summit.

Japan imports over 90% of its crude oil from the Middle East, and it is extremely important for Japan's peace and prosperity to promote peace and stability in the Middle East and to maintain and develop good relations with countries in the region. From this perspective, Japan in recent years has been striving to strengthen relations with countries in the Middle East in a wide range of fields that include economy, politics, security, culture, and people-to-people exchanges. In March, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Turkey

¹ In June 2017, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Egypt, and other countries announced they had severed diplomatic relations with Qatar, citing Qatar's support for the Muslim Brotherhood, which is designated a terrorist organization by these countries.

and the UAE, and in August, he visited Tunisia to attend the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8). In September, Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi held talks with the countries in the region, seizing the opportunity of the UN General Assembly and the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, and confirmed their close cooperation for regional stability with the respective countries. In addition, amid the instability in the energy market in the wake of the situation in Ukraine, Japan repeatedly conducted high-level outreach to the Gulf countries to help stabilization of the international crude oil market, including through telephone calls.

Following Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the Middle East, which depends on imports from Russia and Ukraine for much of its staple grain consumption, has been greatly affected by rising wheat import prices and other factors, and Japan is providing various assistance for these regions in cooperation with other relevant countries. For example, in July, Japan decided

to provide a total of approximately 200 million US dollars in food security assistance for Middle Eastern and African countries and others that are facing a food crisis due to the situation over Ukraine. Japan, at various levels including the political level at international conferences, has been sending a message about its support for the countries affected by Russia's aggression, as well as the importance of responding to the situation especially in vulnerable regions, based on the principle of human security.

In 2023, a large-scale earthquake occurred in southeastern Turkey in February, causing severe damage in Turkey and Syria. In response, Japan has been implementing various kinds of assistance, including dispatching Japan Disaster Relief (JDR) teams (rescue teams, medical teams, etc.), transporting medical team equipment and materials by Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF) aircraft, providing emergency relief supplies, and implementing emergency grant aid, based on the policy of promptly providing necessary support on the basis of local needs.

2 Situation in the Middle East

(1) Afghanistan

Located at the nexus of the Middle East, Central Asia, and South Asia, Afghanistan is a geopolitically important country that has historically been a crossroads of various religions, cultures, and ethnic groups.

In Afghanistan, the Taliban seized control of the capital, Kabul, in August 2021, and announced formation of a "transitional government" the following month, but a lack of ethnic and religious inclusiveness has been pointed out. The international community has also expressed its serious concern over reports of significant restrictions on the rights of women and girls, including the suspension of girls' secondary and higher education. There are also concerns about the deteriorating security situation, with terrorist attacks by groups affiliated with ISIL targeting educational institutions, mosques, and diplomatic missions in various parts of the country.

Against this backdrop, Japan continues to engage directly with Taliban officials on the concerns of the

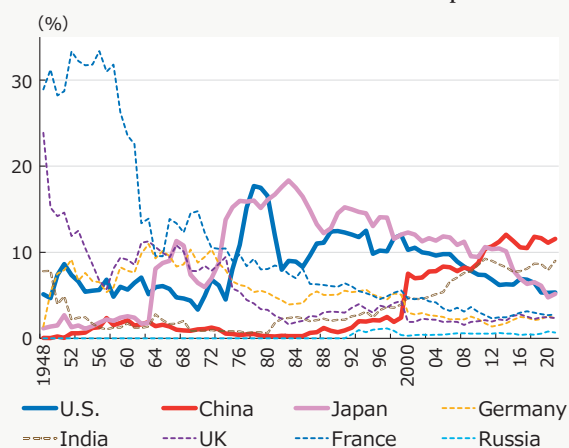
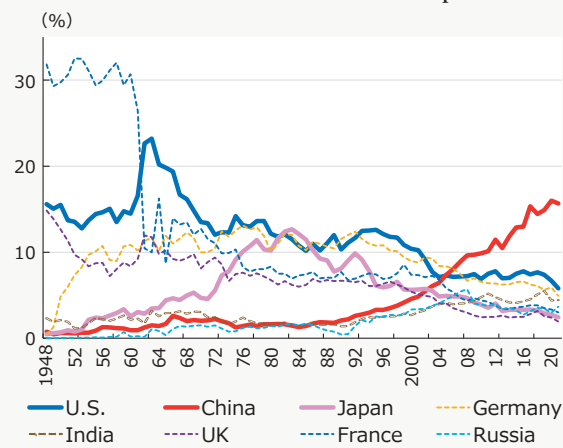
international community, including the establishment of an inclusive political system, respect for the rights of all Afghans, including women and minorities, and a break with terrorism.

According to the United Nations (UN), about two-thirds of Afghanistan's population is in need of humanitarian assistance, and the country is suffering from severe economic stagnation and food shortages due to a combination of natural disasters, including recent droughts, floods, and earthquakes. In light of this critical situation, Japan, in cooperation with other donor countries, has continued to provide humanitarian assistance and basic human needs (minimum requirements for a basic human life) through international organizations since the Taliban's overthrow of Kabul. In 2022, the Government of Japan provided emergency relief supplies and emergency grant aid of 3 million US dollars in response to the massive earthquake that struck the eastern part of the country in June. In December, the Government of Japan decided

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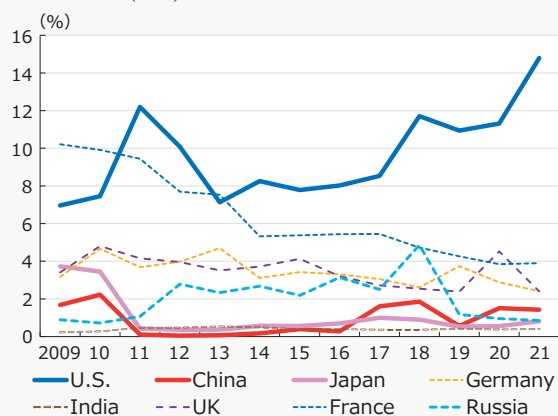
Relations between the Middle East and North Africa and Japan, the U.S., China, etc., Seen Through Economic Data¹

- Trade: China ranks first in terms of both import and export. The share of Japan and the U.S. has been on a long-term decline. Japan was the largest export destination until it was overtaken by China in the 2010s (Saudi Arabia and the UAE are main exporters to Japan. China has significant trade with Iraq and Turkey in addition to Saudi Arabia and the UAE). Not only European countries and the U.S., but also India has a certain presence in the region. In 2021, Japan ranked third in terms of its share in the region's exports, and 10th in terms of imports.²
- Investment: Israel, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey account for the majority of the region's inward FDI stock. Among these, the U.S., which is the largest foreign investor in Israel, has a large presence. Europe also has a certain share. In contrast, Japan and China have a limited share.
- Finance: External debts to various countries exist, mainly to Europe and Japan. Recently, external debts to China have been on the rise. Japan was the second largest bilateral creditor country in 2021.

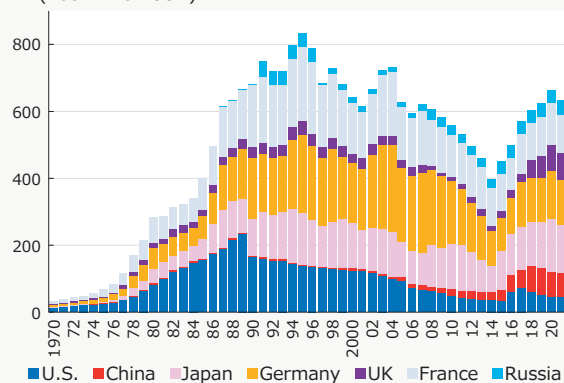
Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc.
in the Middle East and North Africa's exportsShare of Japan, the U.S., China, etc.
in the Middle East and North Africa's imports

Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (DOT) data.

Note 2: Figures for China are the sum of Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau. Graphs for past figures may be skewed due to missing data, etc.

Share of Japan, the U.S., China, etc. in the Foreign Direct
Investment (FDI) stock in the Middle East and North Africa

Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (CDIS) data.

Bilateral External Debt in the Middle East and North Africa
(100 million USD)

Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on data from the World Bank (IDS).

Note 2: The graph illustrates the sum of bilateral external debt in the public sector and in the private sector (private sector external debt guaranteed by the public sector)

¹ See page 193 for notes regarding this data.² While only limited number of countries such as Japan, the U.S., and China are illustrated in the chart, the rankings in the text are for all countries/regions for which data is available (including countries, etc. in the relevant region).

to provide additional assistance of approximately 98 million US dollars in its FY2022 supplementary budget to support humanitarian needs such as food, health, water and sanitation, and agriculture. Japan has provided a total amount of assistance of approximately 339 million US dollars since August 2021.

Japan intends to continue to provide assistance that aligns with the people of Afghanistan and to contribute to ensuring stability in the region surrounding Afghanistan.

(2) Middle East Peace Process

A Developments in the Middle East Peace Process

The Middle East Peace Process has stagnated since negotiations between Israel and Palestine faltered in April 2014. After the inauguration of the Biden administration in the U.S., there were momentary signs that indicate the resumption of cooperation between the parties, and there were some positive developments such as high-level contacts. However, since March 2022, an unstable and tense situation has been continuing, as seen in the deterioration of the security situation on the ground such as violent acts and clashes that occur intermittently in Israel and Palestine, including in Jerusalem, resulting in numerous casualties. In the Gaza Strip, tensions rose following the detention of a senior Palestinian militant by Israel on August 1, which developed into an exchange of attacks between the Israel Defense Forces (IDF) and the Palestinian armed groups since August 5. 43 Palestinians were killed and 300 of them injured in three days until the Egyptian-brokered ceasefire.

B The Government of Japan's Efforts

In working toward achieving a “two-state solution” that would enable Israel and Palestine to coexist in peace, Japan, in cooperation with the international community, has actively contributed through the three pillars of political dialogue with stakeholders, confidence building among the concerned parties, and economic assistance for the Palestinians.

As Japan's unique initiative, it has been promoting the “Corridor for Peace and Prosperity” initiative, aiming at facilitating economic self-reliance of Palestine over the mid- and long-term through regional cooperation among Japan, Palestine, Israel, and Jordan. As

of the end of 2022, 14 Palestinian private companies are operating in the flagship Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP) project, creating approximately 200 jobs. In addition, Japan is mobilizing the resources and economic development knowledge of East Asian countries to support Palestinian nation building through the Conference on the Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD).

(3) Israel

Israel excels in the development of advanced technology and innovation, and holds importance for the Japanese economy as well as for the stability of the Middle East.

In Israel, the government has reached an impasse due to a deepening confrontation within the coalition government led by Yamina party leader Naftali Bennett, with a number of lawmakers splitting from the government. Prime Minister Bennett stepped down in June after passing a bill to dissolve parliament and deciding to hold general elections on November 1. Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Yair Lapid took over as Prime Minister under the rotating prime ministerial system agreed upon when the government was formed. In November's general election—the fifth election in the three-and-a-half years since April 2019, the ruling coalition bloc and the right-wing bloc led by former Prime Minister Netanyahu competed, and the latter won a majority of 64 seats. Former Prime Minister Netanyahu was tasked with forming a new Cabinet, and a new government that included right-wing parties was inaugurated in December.

Regarding relations with Japan, the year 2022 marked the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, and many events took place in



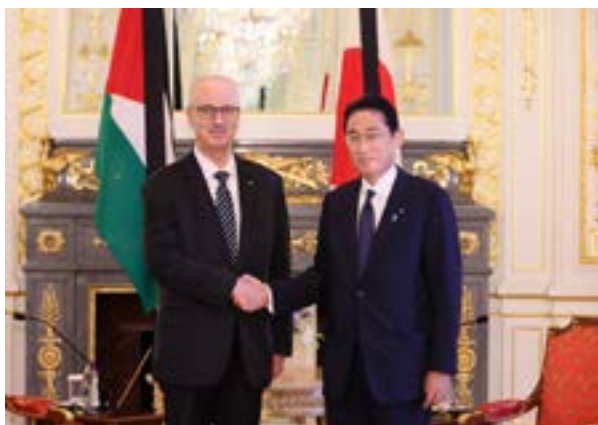
Meeting between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Israeli Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Benjamin Gantz (August 30, Tokyo)

Japan and Israel. Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Benjamin Gantz and Minister of Tourism Yoel Razvozov visited Japan in August and September respectively. In November, the launch of the Joint Study Group on the possibility of a Japan-Israel Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) was announced.

(4) Palestine

Based on the 1993 Oslo Accords and other agreements, the Palestinian Authority (PA) began self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip from 1995. Prime Minister Abbas assumed office as president after the presidential elections held in January 2005. Following this, however, relations between the Fatah led by President Abbas and Hamas deteriorated, and Hamas seized control of the Gaza Strip by military force. In October 2017, an agreement in principle was reached through Egyptian mediation to transfer authority in Gaza to the Palestinian Authority. In October 2022, through Algerian mediation, the Algiers Declaration, a reconciliation document between Palestinian factions, was signed, which includes the holding of Palestinian Legislative Council elections within one year, but as there is no concrete prospect for its implementation, the division remains, with the West Bank of the Jordan River still being held by Fatah and the Gaza Strip remaining under Hamas's de facto control.

In relations with Japan, former Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September on behalf of President Abbas and exchanged views with Prime Minister Kishida.



Meeting between Prime Minister Kishida and former Palestinian Prime Minister Rami Hamdallah (September 28, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

(5) Iran

Iran is a major Shiite regional power with a population of about 85 million that boasts abundant natural resources. Japan has developed a traditionally friendly relationship with Iran for more than 90 years.

In recent years, bilateral cooperation has been under way in fields such as medicine and health including the provision of COVID-19 vaccines, the environment, disaster preparedness, and consular affairs.

Regarding the Iranian nuclear issue, since July 2019, Iran has taken steps that undermine its commitment to the Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA: Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action), claiming that it has not received the expected economic benefits that would have been obtained by the JCPOA due to the U.S. withdrawal from the deal by the former Trump administration and the subsequent resumption of sanctions on Iran by the U.S. As of the end of 2022, Iran is producing up to 60% enriched uranium. Iran has also suspended implementation of the Additional Protocol, which allows for unannounced inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), among other things.

The Biden administration has announced that the U.S. is ready to return to the JCPOA, subject to Iran's strict compliance with the nuclear deal. Since April 2021, talks between the U.S. and Iran have been held intermittently in Vienna, mediated by the European Union and other relevant countries, with the aim of returning to the nuclear deal. However, negotiations have faced difficulties, and mutual return by the U.S. and Iran to compliance with their commitments under the JCPOA has not been realized.

Under these circumstances, in March 2022, Iran claimed that the Israeli attacks on Iran came from a base in northern Iraq and launched missile attacks on the city of Erbil in northern Iraq. In May, there was a series of incidents in Tehran, including the killing of an Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps colonel in Tehran and an accident at a research facility of the Iranian Defense and Armed Forces Logistics Ministry on the outskirts of Tehran. In the same month Iran captured two Greek-flagged oil tankers alleging they had committed violations in the Strait of Hormuz, located at the entrance to the Persian Gulf. Since September, there have been intermittent rocket and other attacks by Iran on northern Iraq. In October, there was also

a terrorist attack by ISIL at a Shiite holy temple in Shiraz, a southern city in Southern Iran. Thus, the situation surrounding Iran remains highly tense.

Meanwhile, since April 2021, Iran and Saudi Arabia, which severed diplomatic ties, have been holding talks, and in April 2022, the fifth round of talks between the two countries was held in Baghdad, Iraq. Talks are also taking place between Iran and its neighbors, including Qatar, Oman, and the UAE.

In September, a protest movement broke out in Iran, triggered by the death of Mahsa Amini, who was arrested by the police over how she wore her hijab (a scarf worn to hide her hair), and clashes between the protesters and security forces continued. In response, the G7 Foreign Ministers issued a statement, along with a joint statement from the UN Human Rights Council, calling on the Government of Iran to refrain from the use of force against peaceful protests. In addition, a resolution was adopted at a special session of the UN Human Rights Council in November to establish a fact-finding mission to investigate the deteriorating human rights situation in Iran, and in December, the UN Economic and Social Council also adopted a resolution to expel Iran from the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW).

The international community's condemnation of Iran's provision of unmanned aerial vehicles (drones) to Russia increased in the wake of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Subsequently, Iran revealed that it had provided drones to Russia prior to the start of the aggression against Ukraine.

Japan is an ally of the U.S. while maintaining good relations with Iran for many years. In February, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a telephone call with Foreign Minister Hossein Amir Abdollahian, while Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with President Seyyed Ebrahim Raisi. Furthermore, in September, Prime Minister Kishida held the first face-to-face meeting with President Raisi in New York during his visit to the U.S. Japan has taken every opportunity to directly convey to Iran its concerns about various issues related to Iran and has made unique diplomatic efforts to ease

tensions and stabilize the situation in the Middle East region.

(6) Turkey

Turkey is a geopolitically important regional power. As a member country of NATO, Turkey plays a significant role in regional security while proactively pursuing multifaceted diplomacy with Europe and the U.S., Russia, and countries in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. Turkey has traditionally been one of the friendliest countries with Japan, as typified by episodes such as the Ertuğrul Frigate incident in 1890².

After the transition from a parliamentary cabinet system to a new presidential system in 2018, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan showed strong leadership in the fight against COVID-19, which temporarily restored his approval rating. However, longtime weak economic indicators have not improved, and the lira has continued to hit market lows due to repeated policy rate cuts amid accelerating inflation. Accelerating inflation has squeezed the livelihoods of conservative workers and low and middle income groups that have supported President Erdoğan, and with the country's 100th anniversary and presidential and parliamentary elections 2023, President Erdoğan's approval rating has been stagnant.

On the diplomatic front, Turkey continued its efforts to resume dialogue and rebuild relations with countries in the region with which there had been concerns about deteriorating relations. President Erdoğan visited the UAE in February for the first time in nine years, Saudi Arabia in April for the first time in five years, and Armenia in October for the first time in 13 years, and held a summit meeting during each visit. In relation to Israel, with which Turkey held a Foreign Ministers' meeting in August, both countries sent ambassadors to each other for the first time in four years. Regarding Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Turkey has been actively engaged in mediating diplomacy, making the most of its good relations with both Russia and Ukraine, and has contributed greatly to the resumption of grain exports from Ukraine through the Black Sea.

2 For details of the Ertuğrul Frigate incident, please refer to https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/ms/da/page22_001052.html (Japanese only)





Japan-Turkey Summit Meeting (September 20, New York, the U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

Regarding relations with Japan, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Turkey in March and held talks with Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu. Foreign Minister Çavuşoğlu attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September, and also held a Foreign Ministers' meeting. At the summit level, Prime Minister Kishida held a summit meeting with President Erdoğan during the UN General Assembly in September.

(7) Iraq

After the Iraq War in 2003, Iraq enacted a new constitution in 2005, and a government formed through democratic elections is in charge of running the country.

On the diplomatic front, Iraq is located between the regional powers of Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Turkey, and is seeking to strengthen relations with neighboring countries and pursuing a balanced diplomacy. In particular, Iraq has made efforts to mediate between Saudi Arabia and Iran, holding the fifth round of Saudi-Iranian talks in Baghdad in April, with Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi visiting both countries in June.

On the domestic political front, the Sadrists (Shi'a), who won the largest number of seats in the fifth election for the Iraqi Council of Representatives in October 2021, had been aiming to form a new government, but were unable to do so due to a conflict with the main political coalition force, the Shi'a Coordination Framework (SCF), and a state of confusion continued. In June, lawmakers from the Sadrist bloc resigned from the Council, and in August, Shiite cleric Muqtada al-Sadr announced his resignation from politics. In

October, the Iraqi Council of Representatives elected Abdul Latif Rashid as the country's new President. After that, the Iraqi Council of Representatives approved the cabinet submitted by Prime Minister-designate Mohammed Al-Sudani, who was appointed by the President Rashid, and a new government was formed more than one year after the elections.

Japan has consistently provided assistance to Iraq since 2003. In November, immediately after the new government was formed, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKAGI Kei visited Baghdad and the southern province of Basrah to hold talks with Prime Minister Sudani and three key ministers (Minister of Commerce Atheer Daoud, Minister of Electricity Ziyad Fadhel, and Second Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Oil Hayan Abdul Ghanni) as the first foreign guest of the new government of Iraq. In addition to attending the Baghdad International Fair, Vice-Minister Takagi attended the completion ceremony of the "Hartha Thermal Power Station Rehabilitation Project" and the "Basrah Water Supply Improvement Project," both of which are symbolic yen loan projects of Japan's assistance to Iraq, and made an inspection tour of the "Basra Refinery Upgrading Project."

Regarding the security situation, armed clashes broke out in the International Zone in Baghdad in August due to confusion over the formation of a new government, and attacks against the Kurdistan Region (KR) in northern Iraq have become a problem. Turkish forces are continuing military operations, including ground combat, against the Kurdistan Workers'



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takagi delivers remarks at the completion ceremony of the "Hartha Thermal Power Station Rehabilitation Project" funded with yen loans (November 3, Basra, Iraq)

Party (PKK) in KR, and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard conducted missile and drone attacks against the Kurdistan Democratic Party of Iran (KDPI) of KR.

(8) Jordan

The situation in Jordan remains relatively stable compared to other parts of the continuously turbulent Middle East region. Jordan has, under the leadership of King Abdullah II, played an important role in promoting the peace and stability of the region, such as with countermeasures against extremists, its acceptance of a large number of Syrian and Palestinian refugees, and active involvement in peace in the Middle East. The country's role is highly regarded by the international community.

Regarding relations with Japan, the imperial and royal families of the two countries have traditionally enjoyed friendly relations, and in September King Abdullah II visited Japan for the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo.

At the summit level, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with His Majesty the King in January where they reaffirmed that the two countries would further develop their cooperative relationship under a strategic partnership. In September, Prime Minister Kishida held a summit meeting with His Majesty the King, who visited Japan for the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, and discussed the regional situation, including Middle East Peace, and reaffirmed that they would work closely together for the long-term stability of the region.

At the foreign ministerial level, Foreign Minister Hayashi held meetings with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Ayman

Al Safadi in New York in September, where they shared the importance of realizing Middle East Peace based on a “two-state solution” and supporting refugees. The two Ministers also agreed to further develop bilateral relations and various cooperative frameworks, including the holding of the Third Japan-Jordan Foreign Ministers’ Strategic Dialogue and the Japan-Egypt-Jordan Trilateral Consultations.

Furthermore, Japan and Jordan have also been collaborating on the security front, including FY2022 Noncombatant Evacuation Operation training of the Japan Self-Defense Forces conducted in Jordan by the Japanese Ministry of Defense in December and the Fourth Japan-Jordan Politico-Military (PM) Dialogue that was held in the same month. In addition, Japan provides economic and financial support via disbursement of 100 million US dollars of development policy loans in December.

(9) The Gulf States and Yemen

The Gulf States are important partners for Japan from the perspective of energy security and other factors. In 2022 in particular, energy prices rose due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine and other factors, and the role of the Gulf oil- and gas-producing countries in stabilizing the international energy market has become important. At the same time, the Gulf States have been working toward social and economic reforms, prioritizing issues such as departing from a dependence on oil and diversifying industry. Japan has been cooperating and supporting the realization of these reforms in order to contribute to the long-term stability and prosperity of the Middle East. As a framework for comprehensive bilateral cooperation, Japan has established the “Saudi-Japan Vision 2030” with Saudi Arabia and the “Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Initiative (CSPI)” with the UAE, and is promoting cooperation in a wide range of fields under these frameworks.

In Saudi Arabia, under “Saudi Vision 2030” formulated in 2016, the country is undertaking comprehensive socioeconomic reforms that include starting of tourist visa issuance, promotion of women's participation in society, and promotion of the entertainment industry, in addition to industrial diversification (developing domestic industrial human resources), human resources development, active investment through the Public



Japan-Jordan Summit Meeting (September 27, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

Investment Fund (PIF), and development of tourist attractions and infrastructure. To support these reform efforts of Saudi Arabia, Japan has confirmed cooperation in stabilizing the international crude oil market through three telephone calls in February, March, and September between Prime Minister Kishida and Saudi Crown Prince and Prime Minister Mohammed bin Salman, and three meetings between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Minister of Foreign Affairs Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud (by phone in February and face-to-face in July and September). They also confirmed they would further promote cooperation in various fields under the framework of the “Saudi-Japan Vision 2030” and strengthen the strategic partnership between the two countries.

The UAE, which celebrated the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Japan (see the Column on page 172), has been the focus of active high-level visits, with Foreign Minister Hayashi visiting the UAE in March and Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology and Special Envoy to Japan Sultan Al Jaber visiting Japan in June and September. Prime Minister Kishida held two telephone calls with President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (who assumed the presidency in May) in March and September to further strengthen the strategic partnership between the two countries and to confirm cooperation in stabilizing the international crude oil market. In May, following the passing of President Khalifa bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Special Envoy of the Prime Minister AMARI Akira paid a condolence visit to the UAE. In September, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology, Special Envoy for Japan Sultan Al Jaber signed the “Joint Declaration on the Implementation of the Comprehensive and Strategic Partnership Initiative (CSPI).” The two countries have made significant progress in cooperation, including a substantive agreement concerning the transfer of defense equipment and technology and the introduction of visa exemptions for UAE passport holders from November.

With regard to Oman and Bahrain, which also marked the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Japan, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs HONDA Taro visited both countries in June and held talks with foreign ministers

and others, and signed the Japan-Bahrain Investment Agreement. Regarding relations between Japan and Bahrain, bilateral cooperation in the political, economic, and business fields has progressed through two summit meetings (by phone in April and face-to-face in September) and a foreign ministers’ telephone call in September, as well as policy consultation between both foreign ministries in September, and coordination toward the early introduction of visa exemption measures for diplomatic and official passport holders. Regarding relations between Japan and Oman, the two countries confirmed further strengthening of bilateral relations, taking advantage of opportunities such as a telephone calls at the foreign minister level and the attendance of Adviser at the Diwan of the Royal Court of Oman Salim bin Mustahil bin Ahmed Al Maashani at the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September (see the Column on page 173).

Regarding Qatar, Prime Minister Kishida held two summit telephone calls with Amir of the State of Qatar Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, in April and September, where they confirmed that Japan would work closely with Qatar, one of the world’s largest gas producing countries, to stabilize the international energy market. In November and December, Qatar hosted the FIFA World Cup, the first FIFA World Cup to be held in the Middle East, in which the Japanese national team participated.

With Kuwait, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda visited the country in August, and Foreign Minister Hayashi held two meetings with Minister of Foreign Affairs Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohammed Al-Sabah (by phone in April and face-to-face in September). In addition, in December, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with Crown Prince Mishal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, confirming close cooperation to stabilize the international crude oil market.

Stability in Yemen is important not only for the peace and stability in the Middle East as a whole, but also from the perspective of securing sea lanes, which are directly related to Japan’s energy security. In Yemen, the Houthis have continued to fight against the Government of Yemen and the Arab Coalition, but international mediation efforts led by Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General, Hans Grundberg, resulted

in a nationwide truce for the first time in six years. Although the truce expired in October, no cross-border attacks by the Houthis occurred until the end of 2022. On the other hand, Yemen is facing a serious situation, considered to be the worst humanitarian crisis in the world” due to the impact of the prolonged conflict, and the risk of starvation is further increasing due to soaring grain prices in response to the situation in Ukraine and rising transportation costs caused by rising oil prices. Since 2015, Japan, as a major donor nation, has provided support of more than 400 million US dollars in total to Yemen through cooperation with international organizations and others. In May, Japan decided to provide 10 million US dollars in emergency grant aid (food aid) through the UN World Food Program (WFP) to support the truce.

(10) Syria

A Changes in the situation

The Syrian crisis, which began in March 2011, has spanned over a decade, sees neither prospects of stabilization nor political resolution, and discussions under the Constitutional Committee, which was established in 2019 through the mediation of the UN to bring together the Government and dissidents, are also in deadlock. In April, the Government of Syria issued a large-scale amnesty decree, showing steps toward national reconciliation, but concrete results remain unknown. Meanwhile, the number of people in need of humanitarian assistance in Syria will reach 14.6 million by the end of 2022 (increase by 1.2 million year-on-year), and the number of internally displaced persons will reach 6.9 million (increase by 200,000 year-on-year), indicating that humanitarian needs are the highest since the crisis began. Furthermore, the progress of the repatriation of refugees who have evacuated to countries surrounding Syria is also said to remain stagnant.

In foreign relations, Syria maintains cooperative relations with Russia and Iran, which support the Assad administration, its efforts to improve relations with Arab countries seen in 2021 have been weak in 2022, and the return of Syria to the Arab League was not discussed at its Summit meeting held in November. Meanwhile, European countries and the U.S. remain cautious about resuming relations with the Government

of Syria due to the Assad administration’s use of chemical weapons and human rights violations.

On the military and security front, security in the capital Damascus is generally maintained, while terrorist activities and operations to eliminate them continue, including an attack by ISIL on a prison in Syria (January) and multiple announcements of the deaths of ISIL leaders and others. In the north in particular, Turkey has stepped up air strikes against Kurdish militant groups in retaliation for an explosion in Istanbul in November, and has indicated that it will launch a large-scale ground operation. In addition, Israel, wary of the activities of pro-Iranian and other forces in Syria, has been conducting intermittent air-strikes on Damascus International Airport and other areas in Syria.

B The Government of Japan’s Efforts

Japan has consistently maintained its position that the crisis in Syria cannot be resolved by any military means, and a political solution is indispensable, while continuous assistance is important for the improvement of humanitarian situation. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda attended “the Supporting the future of Syria and the region, Brussels VI Conference” in May, and expressed Japan’s unwavering commitment to humanitarian assistance to Syria. Japan has provided total assistance worth approximately 3.3 billion US dollars to Syria and neighboring countries for humanitarian assistance.

(11) Lebanon

While Lebanon continues to face various challenges, including an economic crisis, there were positive developments, such as the parliamentary elections, held on May 15 as scheduled without major disruptions, and the demarcation of the maritime boundary with Israel and its registration to the UN Secretariat in October.

However, a new cabinet has not been formed after the parliamentary elections due to confrontation among political forces, and talks in the parliament to elect a successor to President Michel Aoun, whose term expired at the end of October, have not been concluded, creating a political vacuum without a president. This political turmoil has spurred further deterioration of the economic and humanitarian situation in Lebanon

(in October, a cholera outbreak was confirmed in the country for the first time in 30 years.) The depreciation of the currency, the resulting price hikes, as well as ongoing power outages and fuel shortages, have deepened frustration among citizens, leading to frequent attacks on banks and other incidents.

Since 2012, Japan has provided a total of more than 256.8 million US dollars in assistance for Lebanon, where the humanitarian situation is deteriorating. In addition, a technical cooperation agreement was signed between the two countries in March.

Column

50th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations

In 2022, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, and Bahrain, various initiatives and exchange activities were held in both Japan and each of the respective countries.

● 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

Relations between Japan and the UAE date back to before May 1972 (the UAE was founded in December 1971) when the two countries established official diplomatic relations. Active exchanges had taken place before the UAE was founded. Japanese companies had been involved in oil development in Abu Dhabi since the late 1960s, and the Emirate of Abu Dhabi participated in the Expo 1970 Osaka. 50 years have passed since then, and cooperation between the two countries is currently progressing not only in the energy sector but also in various other fields. More than 4,000 Japanese residents and more than 300 Japanese companies live and operate in the UAE, forming the largest Japanese community in the Middle East and Africa region.



Dubai hosted the first International Expo in the Middle East region from October 2021 to March 2022. More than 24 million visitors came to the Expo, with a large number of attendees visiting the Japan Pavilion. Minister for the World Expo 2025 WAKAMIYA Kenji attended the closing ceremony, and the UAE passed the torch to Japan for the next Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai.

Cooperation between the two countries has advanced based on the “Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Initiative (CSPI)” announced in April 2018. In September 2022, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology and Special Envoy to Japan Dr. Sultan Al Jaber signed the “Joint Declaration on the Implementation of the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Initiative (CSPI) (CSPI framework document).” Based on this declaration, the cooperative relationship between the two countries is expected to be further strengthened not only in the energy sector but also in a wide range of fields such as renewable energy, infrastructure, environment, science and technology, education, space, and defense. In addition, through active exchanges of dignitaries and meetings between the two



Foreign Minister Hayashi and Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology and Special Envoy to Japan Sultan Al Jaber of UAE holding up the signed Joint Declaration of the CSPI Framework Document signing ceremony (September 28, Tokyo)

countries, including the participation of Sheikh Khalid bin Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan (eldest son of Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, the President), Member of Abu Dhabi Executive Council and Chairman of Abu Dhabi Executive Office, at the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September, where the two sides affirmed they would continue to work closely together to strengthen bilateral relations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Furthermore, a new visa waiver measure that exempts prior registration for UAE ordinary passport holders started on November 1. This is expected to lead to further increases in the number of tourists from the UAE to Japan and make business activities more convenient.

● 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Oman

Oman has long prospered as a maritime nation, located between the Arabian Sea and the Sea of Oman, with the Strait of Hormuz, which leads to the Persian Gulf, within its territorial waters. It is an excellent geopolitical strategic location with access to the Gulf of Aden and the Indian Ocean, and is important not only for importing oil and natural gas, but also for realizing the vision of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).”

Japan and Oman established official diplomatic relations in 1972. In the 50 years since then, the two countries have strengthened their ties in various fields, particularly in the energy sector, including the participation of Japanese companies in Oman’s oil and LNG interests. The relationship between the two countries has deepened further, with

the issuance of the “Joint Communiqué on the Strengthening of the Comprehensive Partnership towards Stability and Prosperity Between Japan and the Sultanate of Oman” when Prime Minister Abe became the first Japanese Prime Minister to visit Oman in 2014.

The year 2022 became a commemorative year in which both countries confirmed the ties between them. In addition to a telephone call between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr in April, former Minister Responsible for Foreign Affairs Yousuf bin Alawi visited Japan in May to attend the conferment ceremony for the Grand Cordon of the Order of the Rising Sun. In September, the delegation of the Adviser at the Diwan of the Royal Court of the Sultanate of Oman Salim bin Mustahil bin Ahmed Al Maashani visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo.



Her Imperial Highness Princess Tsuguko, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Sultanate of Oman Al Busaidi and her spouse, and Governor of Yamanashi Prefecture NAGASAKI Kotaro, attending the Oman-Yamanashi Jewelry Exhibition hosted by the Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Japan (Photo: Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Tokyo)

● 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Bahrain

Bahrain is a small island nation, about the size of Japan’s Sado Island, in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Gulf. It was the center of the Dilmun civilization in the third millennium B.C. and has prospered as a pearl-producing region since ancient times.

Japan’s relations with Bahrain date back to before the establishment of official diplomatic relations in 1972. In 1932, the first oil field in the Gulf countries was discovered in Bahrain, and in 1934 Bahrain’s crude oil was exported to Japan as the first export destination. Thus, Japan and Bahrain have long had strong ties and have developed good relations in a wide range of areas, including energy, politics, economics, business, and security.

In addition, bilateral cooperation is progressing in new fields. In February, the artificial satellite “Light-1,” jointly developed by Bahrain and the UAE, was released from the Japanese Experiment Module “Kibo” on the International Space Station with the cooperation of the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), and was successfully put into Earth’s orbit. Furthermore, in Bahrain, the presence of Japanese technology and products, led by Japanese cars, remains high. Recently, Japanese *anime* and *manga* have become increasingly popular among the younger generation, and Japan is also gaining popularity as a honeymoon destination among the wealthy of Bahrain.

In 2022, there was an active exchange of dignitaries between the two countries. In April, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with Crown Prince and Prime Minister Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa, and in September, the first Japan-

Bahrain Foreign Ministry policy talks in six years was held in Tokyo, and Undersecretary for Political Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Shaikh Abdulla bin Ahmed bin Abdulla Al Khalifa visited Japan from Bahrain. Moreover, Crown Prince and Prime Minister Salman bin Hamad al Khalifa and Minister of Foreign Affairs Abdullatif bin Rashid Al Zayani attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo at the end of the month. In the meeting that followed, the two countries shared the view to further strengthen bilateral relations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.



Meeting between Prime Minister Kishida and Crown Prince and Prime Minister Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa (September 28, Tokyo Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

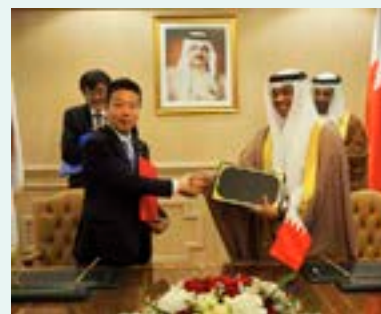


● Visit to Oman and Bahrain by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda visited Oman and Bahrain in June.

In Oman, he held meetings with Foreign Minister Badr, Minister of Energy and Minerals Salim bin Nasser bin Said al Aufi, and other members of the Omani cabinet. They exchanged opinions on bilateral cooperation toward the next 50 years, including in clean energy, and shared the view to continue deepening cooperation and working together.

In Bahrain, he held meetings with Minister of Foreign Affairs Zayani and Minister of Finance and National Economy Salman, and signed the Japan-Bahrain Investment Agreement in the presence of Minister of Finance and National Economy Salman. Economic exchanges with Bahrain have continued at various levels, including the establishment of the “Japan-Bahrain Business and Friendship Society” in 2008 and the “Japan-Bahrain Economic Cooperation Association” in 2012. Going forward, the Agreement is expected to further promote the development of an investment environment and further strengthen the economic relationship between the two countries.



Undersecretary for Financial Affairs of the Ministry of Finance and National Economy Yusuf Abdulla Humood and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda signed the Japan-Bahrain Investment Agreement in the presence of Minister of Finance and National Economy Salman

● Cultural activities

In the UAE, a seminar on the traditional craft “*Owari Shippo*” (a technique of cloisonne) was held, while in Bahrain, a lecture on *Wadaiko* (Japanese drums) was held. In Oman, the Japan Self-Defense Forces Band’s first Middle East performance (as part of the event known as Military Music: Oman and the World) was held in November at the Royal Opera House in the capital Muscat by the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Western Army Band and others.



Performance by the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Western Army Band and others at the Military Music: Oman and the World (Photo: Japan Ground Self-Defense Force Western Army Band, Ministry of Defense)

In Japan, a concert featuring the “oud,” a traditional Arabic musical instrument, was held as a commemorative event with the UAE. The Embassy of the Sultanate of Oman in Japan hosted the Oman-Yamanashi Jewelry Exhibition in the presence of Her Imperial Highness Princess Tsuguko, and the National Day Reception at the Embassy was attended by many guests, including State Minister for Foreign Affairs YAMADA Kenji and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKAGI Kei, and lively exchanges were conducted in both the public and private sectors. In addition, it was also an opportunity to further revitalize exchanges in the cultural and academic fields, such as through a symposium held to spread information on the cooperative relationship between Japan and Bahrain in the field of archeology.

3 The Situation in North Africa (Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco)

(1) Egypt

Egypt, located in the northeast of the African continent and bordering Europe across the Mediterranean Sea, is a major power in the region playing a significant role for the stability of the Middle East and North Africa. On the economic front, its gross domestic product (GDP) maintained positive growth despite the impact of COVID-19 (such as declining tourism revenues). Due to the soaring global food and resource prices in the wake of the deterioration of the situation in Ukraine, in December, the country received support from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) through a 46-month Extended Fund Facility (EFF) worth 3 billion US dollars.

Egypt's relations with Japan continues to be positive. Since President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi's visit to Japan in 2016, progress has been seen in areas of cooperation such as the introduction of Japanese-style education, strengthening support for the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST), the construction project of the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM), and the construction project of the Greater Cairo Metro Line No. 4. Following the Japan-Egypt Foreign Ministers' video conference meeting on the occasion of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Ministerial Meeting in March and the Japan-Egypt Summit video conference meeting on the occasion of TICAD 8 in August, a Japan Egypt Foreign Ministers' meeting was held during the UN General Assembly in September where

they discussed the international situation. They also reaffirmed to further strengthen bilateral relations. In September, Minister of Transport Kamel Elwazer attended the state funeral for late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo as a special envoy of the President and paid a courtesy call on Chief Cabinet Secretary MATSUNO Hirokazu. Environment Minister NISHIMURA Akihiro attended the Egypt-chaired 27th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) held in Sharm el-Sheikh in November.

Regarding the two SDF personnel who have been dispatched to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) stationed in the Sinai Peninsula since April 2019, a fourth rotation of personnel was conducted in June to continue to contribute to regional peace and stability.

(2) Libya

Although Libya is an energy powerhouse boasting the greatest oil reserves in Africa, after the collapse of the Qadhafi regime in 2011, the country remains unstable with political power split between the east and the west of the country. In April 2019, Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, powerful commander of the eastern "Libyan National Army (LNA)," ordered an advance on Tripoli, leading to armed clashes. The counterattack by the Turkish-backed Government of National Unity (GNA) since May 2020 resulted in a standoff along a line connecting the central coastal city of Sirte and the inland city of Jufra. Armed clashes between the eastern and western forces have decreased significantly following the signing of a permanent ceasefire agreement in October.

On the political front, the UN-led National Dialogue Forum was held in Tunis in November 2020 with 75 participants representing the Libyan people, and a basic agreement was reached to hold a series of elections on December 24 (Independence Day), 2021. While a provisional Government of National Unity (GNU) was established, an election-related law has not been enacted, and postponement of the elections was



Japan-Egypt Summit Video Conference Meeting (August 27, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

announced on December 22, 2021. In March 2022, the parliament based in the east approved a new cabinet, which again created a political power split between the east and the west of the country.

In relations with Japan, Prime Minister Kishida and President Mohammed Menfi of the Presidential Council of Libya held a summit video conference meeting on the occasion of TICAD 8 in August.

(3) Maghreb Countries

The Maghreb region is of great economic importance in Africa due to its geographical advantage of being located at the junction to Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, and its great potential thanks to its abundant young labor force. On the other hand, due to the impact of COVID-19 and the situation in Ukraine, Algeria, Morocco, and Tunisia are faced with the challenge of how to overcome increasing poverty, regional economic disparities, high unemployment rate, and soaring food prices. There are also concerns about the security implications of the flow of weapons and illegal immigrants from Libya and the Sahel region.

In Tunisia, where President Kais Saied has been conducting political reforms since July 2021, a referendum on whether to amend the constitution was held in July 2022, and a new constitution came into effect in August. A new election law was announced in September, and elections for the national assembly were held peacefully in December 2022 and in January 2023.

Regarding Tunisia's relations with Japan, TICAD 8 was held in the Tunisian capital of Tunis in August, and Foreign Minister Hayashi visited Tunisia as a special envoy of the Prime Minister and paid a courtesy



Foreign Minister Hayashi pays a courtesy call to Tunisian President Kais Saied as Special Envoy of the Prime Minister (August 26, Tunis, Tunisia)

call to President Saied and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Othman Jerandi. Prime Minister Kishida also held a summit video conference meeting with President Saied and confirmed that both countries would continue to work closely together to further strengthen bilateral cooperative relations.

In Algeria, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika stepped down in April 2019 following protracted protests against his long rule, and former Prime Minister Abdelmadjid Tebboune assumed the presidency in December that year following presidential elections. As part of political reforms aimed at realizing a “New Algeria,” the President amended the constitution and held elections for the People's National Assembly (lower house of parliament), and, in July 2021, appointed Prime Minister Aïmene Benabderrahmane to form a new cabinet.

2022 marked the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Algeria (see the Column on page 178), and various cultural and other events were held in Algeria, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. As the culmination of the anniversary, State Minister for Foreign Affairs YAMADA Kenji visited Algeria in December, as the first Japanese government official to visit the country at the political level in the last four years, and held meetings with Algerian government officials including Minister of Industry Afmad Zaghdar and Minister of Energy and Mines Mohamed Arkab.

In Morocco, the coalition cabinet led by the leader of the National Rally of Independents (RNI), Aziz Akhannouch, which was formed following the



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Yamada takes a commemorative photo after meeting with Minister of Industry Ahmed Zaghdar (December 18, Algiers, Algeria)

September 2021 lower house elections, is focusing on implementing the “New Development Model” proposed by King Mohammed VI, in addition to reforms in health, education, social security, and taxes. In particular, a special plan was announced in February in response to rising food and energy prices triggered by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine and aggravating water shortages.

Regarding Morocco’s relations with Japan, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a video conference meeting with Foreign Minister Nasser Bourita in September. Moreover, in the same month, Prime Minister Kishida held a summit meeting with Head of Government Akhannouch, who visited Japan to attend the state funeral of the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, where the two leaders confirmed they would further strengthen the cooperative relationship between the two countries in a broad range of fields. In December,



Prime Minister Kishida shakes hands with Prime Minister Aziz Akhannouch of Morocco (September 28, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Yamada visited Morocco and held talks with Foreign Minister Bourita and Minister Delegate to the Head of Government in charge of Investment, Convergence and Evaluation of Public Policies Mohcine Jazouli.

Column

60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Algeria

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For many Japanese, the name Algeria may evoke the classic Japanese pop song “Woman from the Kasbah,” and its lyrics “this is the very end of the Earth, Algeria.” Algeria is located in North Africa, far away from Japan, but it is a land of diverse and stunning scenic beauty that has the largest land area on the African continent, features traces of the Roman Empire, French colonial-era, and Arabic architecture, and embraces the contrast of the vast Sahara Desert and cities on the glittering Mediterranean Sea coast.

During Algeria's war of independence, the National Liberation Front (FLN), an organization that played a key role in Algeria's independence, opened a Far East office in Tokyo. Therefore, Japan and Algeria have had connections since even before Algeria's independence in 1962. The year 2022 marks the 60th anniversary of both Algeria's independence and the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Algeria.

In celebration of these milestones, a commemorative concert was held in Algiers on June 29 by Japanese harp (*koto*) musician MIYAZAKI Mieko, attended by representatives of the Government of Algeria, businesses, and journalists. Moreover, Japan was the guest of honor at the 14th edition of the Algiers International Comics Festival (Festival International de la Bande Dessinée d'Alger, FIBDA) in early October. A concert was also held featuring bamboo flute (*shakuhachi*) player CreaSion Katsura and three-stringed Japanese lute (*Tsugaru shamisen*) artist SAWADA Harugin (Sylvain Diony) playing together with an Algerian orchestra, enthralled large crowds with the beauty of their music. Japanese university professors and comic (*manga*) artists were also invited to FIBDA, engaging with local *manga* fans through symposiums and *manga* workshops. Finally, in November, two Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects and one Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Project were implemented, including support for the Algerian *Aikido* Federation.

For 60 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations, the two countries have developed a relationship in wide-ranging areas, including political, economic, and cultural spheres. We hope to further deepen this relationship toward the future. Please visit the official Facebook page of the Embassy of Japan in Algeria^(Note), which is updated periodically.



Koto performance by MIYAZAKI Mieko (June 29, Algiers, Algeria)



Around 1,300 *aikido* martial artists from across Algeria attended the signing ceremony for the Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Project and representatives of *aikido*, Japanese fencing (*kendo*), and the art of drawing the Japanese sword (*iaido*) demonstrated their performances.

Note: Facebook page of the Embassy of Japan in Algeria: <https://www.facebook.com/ambjpalger/>



Section 8 | Africa

1 Overview

Africa, with a population of over 1.4 billion in 54 countries, has been attracting the interest of the international community, owing to its high potential that can be a driving force for global growth and rich natural resources. Meanwhile, Africa, in which conflicts, political turmoil, terrorism, and the COVID-19 pandemic threaten peace and stability and hinder sustainable growth, still faces development challenges including serious poverty.

While COVID-19 continued to affect African economies and societies in 2022, progress was made to combat it, with the number of new daily infections falling from a peak of more than 280,000 (as of December 2021) to less than 5,000 (as of December 2022) and the overall vaccination coverage in Africa increasing from 11% in the same period in 2021 to 25% (as of December 2022).

2022 continued to be a year of unstable political and security situations in multiple parts of Africa. In the Sahel region, there were two military takeovers in Burkina Faso in 2022, following Mali in 2020 and Guinea in 2021. In the Great Lakes region, tensions between the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda are increasing. In the Horn of Africa region, the ongoing conflict between the Government of Ethiopia and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) is expected to be interrupted by a peace agreement announced in November, which is desired to be steadily implemented.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which started in February 2022, had a tremendous impact on the political and social situation in Africa. Africa had been facing food shortages due to climate change, COVID-19, and conflicts, and the situation in Ukraine further exacerbated food and fuel price hikes, creating a severe food crisis for some 350 million people.

With these challenges facing Africa in mind, the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8), held in Tunisia in August,

discussed ways for Japan, as “a partner growing together with Africa,” to realize a resilient Africa that Africa itself aims to achieve. TICAD 8 was attended by representatives from 48 African countries including 20 heads of state and government, representatives from the Japan-African Union (AU) Friendship Parliamentary League, international organizations, private companies, and civil society organizations, who discussed Africa's development under the three pillars of “economy,” “society,” and “peace and stability” (see the Special Feature on page 180). Japan also announced that it is going to invest 30 billion US dollars as the sum of public and private financial contributions over the next three years, with an emphasis on “investing in people” and “the quality of growth” to promote African development with approaches quintessentially Japanese that focuses on “people.” In the first pillar of “Economy,” for African economies and societies, which have been seriously affected by COVID-19 and the situation in Ukraine, Japan announced that it would contribute to the realization of a resilient African economy by promoting private investment, securing fair and transparent development finance, promoting green investment, and strengthening of food security. The participants shared the recognition that African development should not be impeded by unfair and opaque development finance.

In the second pillar, “Society,” Japan announced that the creation of high-quality living environments is essential to ensure a steady growth of Africa, and that Japan would focus particularly on health, education, and the environment. The participants reiterated the need for the international community to stand together in solidarity with African countries against issues commonly faced by all humankind, such as infectious diseases including COVID-19 and climate change.

In the third pillar, “Peace and Stability,” Japan announced that it would vigorously support the promotion of the rule of law through institution building

Special Feature

The Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8)

Over two days from August 27 to 28, the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) was held in Tunis, the capital of Tunisia. Participants included Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi, as well as representatives from 48 African countries, including 20 heads of state and government. Prime Minister Kishida provided remarks at each session via online and video messages, and Foreign Minister Hayashi participated in every session in person as the Special Envoy of the Prime Minister.

TICAD 8 featured plenary sessions based on three pillars: Economy, Society, and Peace and Stability, as well as the Business Forum and the Fourth Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize Award Ceremony (see Chapter 2, Section 8, for details of the three plenary sessions).

The Business Forum was attended by around 100 business persons from both Japanese and African companies, with approximately 300 participants, including African economy ministers, representatives of development financial institutions, and Japanese public organizations. They discussed ways to strengthen business interactions between Japan and Africa.



Group photo at the Fourth Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize Award Ceremony (August 28, Tunis, Tunisia)

The Business Forum was attended by around 100 business persons from both Japanese and African companies, with approximately 300 participants, including African economy ministers, representatives of development financial institutions, and Japanese public organizations. They discussed ways to strengthen business interactions between Japan and Africa.

The “TICAD 8 Tunis Declaration” was adopted between the leaders of Japan and Africa as the outcome document of TICAD 8, in which they confirmed to cooperate across a wide range of fields in the future. As well as expressing deep concern about the situation in Ukraine, the Declaration stresses their commitment to working together based on international law including the UN Charter, and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all countries. It also emphasizes that all countries must seek peaceful resolution of disputes in accordance with international law.

At TICAD 8, Prime Minister Kishida held bilateral talks with representatives of a total of 10 countries and international organizations, such as President Kais Saied of Tunisia, President Macky Sall of Senegal (Chairperson of the African Union (AU)), and Chairperson of the African Union Commission (AUC) Faki Mahamat (one of the TICAD 8 co-organizers). Foreign Minister Hayashi also held bilateral talks with representatives of a total of 21 countries including eight heads of state and government. Through these engagements, Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi discussed the issues affecting various countries in Africa and the complex international affairs relevant to Africa. Regarding Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Japan emphasized to African countries that Russia's action shakes the very foundation of the international order and the international community must unitedly respond against it. Japan also conveyed its strong commitment to strengthening food security in Africa and laid out specific support in order to do so. In terms of



Prime Minister Kishida delivering a speech at the TICAD 8 Opening Session (August 27, Tunis, Tunisia)

At the Fourth Hideyo Noguchi Africa Prize Award Ceremony, in the Medical Research Category, Dr. Salim S. Abdool Karim and Dr. Quarraisha Abdool Karim from South Africa won the Prize recognizing their contributions to the prevention and treatment of infectious diseases such as HIV/AIDS and COVID-19. In the Medical Services Category, the “Guinea Worm Eradication Program” (U.S.) won the Prize recognizing its contributions to the eradication of Guinea worm disease.

At TICAD 8, Japan stated that Japan is going to invest 30 billion US dollars as the sum of public and private financial contributions over the next three years in the following fields: green growth, pro-

development finance, Japan conveyed the importance of transparency and fairness, confirming that it would work to build greater shared awareness of concerns as well as work together to secure transparent and fair development finance.

The dynamic and interactive discussions between Japanese and African stakeholders during the two days of TICAD 8 spanned a wide range of fields, and painted a clear picture of the future direction of Africa's development. The next conference, TICAD 9, will be held in Japan in 2025. Looking ahead, Japan will build on the momentum generated at TICAD 8 to further promote diplomacy toward Africa.



Foreign Minister Hayashi presiding over the TICAD 8 Closing Ceremony (August 28, Tunis, Tunisia)

and the strengthening of governance in the judicial and administrative fields, and also support Africa's own efforts to return to constitutional order and consolidated democracy. Japan also announced its contribution to the initiatives to improve administrative services, including the contribution to enhancing community infrastructure.

With following up on TICAD in mind, in October, State Minister for Foreign Affairs YAMADA Kenji attended the 8th Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security in Africa held in Dakar, Senegal. Also, President of Senegal Macky Sall paid an official working visit to Japan in December.

2 East Africa

(1) Uganda

Under President Yoweri Museveni's long-serving administration, Uganda has enjoyed sustained economic growth owing to its stable domestic politics and has contributed to regional stability as a major actor in East Africa. Uganda also actively accepts refugees, including those from South Sudan staying in the northern part of the country. Japan-Uganda Foreign Ministers' Meetings were held at the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in March and at TICAD 8 in August, where ministers discussed issues such as food security in Africa.

(2) Ethiopia

Ethiopia hosts the headquarters of the African Union (AU) and occupies an important position in African politics. It has the second largest population in Africa (110 million people) and high annual growth rate of around 10% from 2004 to 2019 (6% in 2020).

Armed clashes occurred between the federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in October 2020, but a peace agreement was signed

in November 2022 between the government and the TPLF through mediation by the AU and others. Moving forward, it is important that all parties implement the agreement in good faith. Japan will push for the realization of the peace agreement in cooperation with like-minded countries through the activities of its Ambassador, Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa.

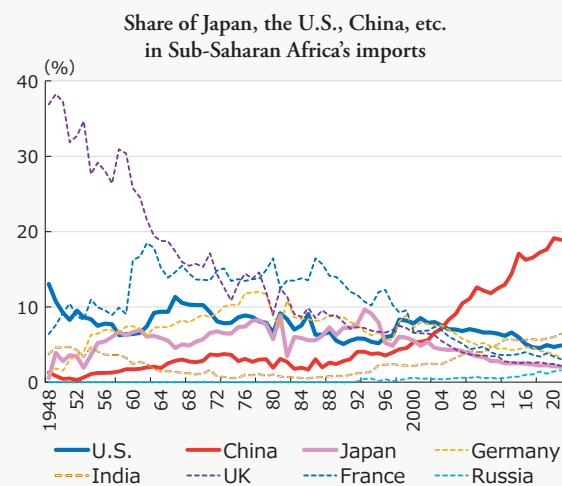
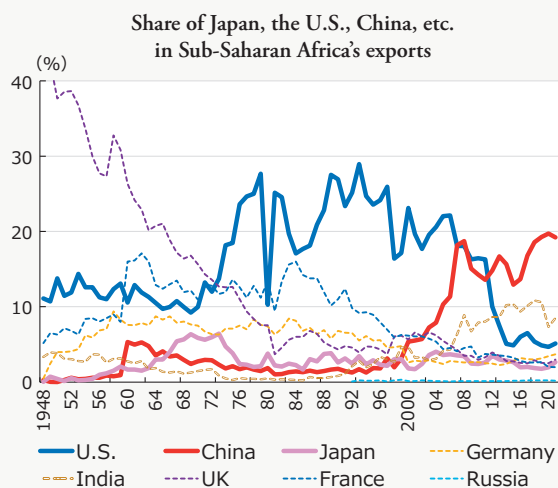
(3) Eritrea

Eritrea is a country located on the international strait connecting the Indian Ocean, the Suez Canal, and Europe. Although it is blessed with mineral, fishery and tourism resources, it is isolated internationally. Eritrea has had an important role in regional stability, including that for the situation in northern Ethiopia. Japan opened an embassy in Eritrea in January, and at the Japan-Eritrea Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on the occasion of TICAD 8 in August, Japan encouraged cooperation for peace and stability in the region.

Reference

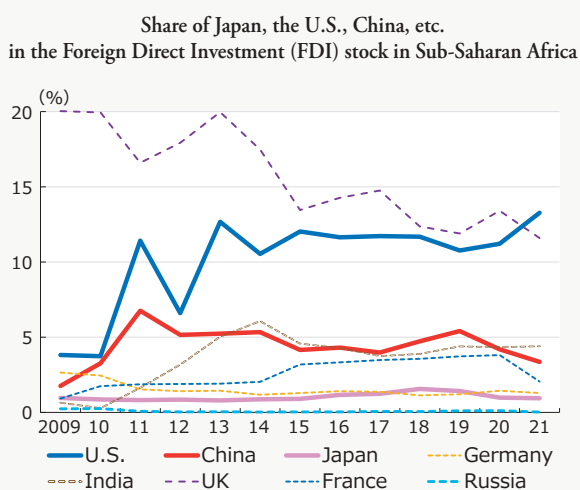
Relations between the Sub-Saharan Africa Region and Japan, the U.S., China, etc., Seen Through Economic Data¹

- Trade: In the past, the U.S. accounted for a large share as an export destination, but China's share has taken the top spot in recent years. Exports from resource-rich countries such as Angola and Nigeria to the U.S. have declined, and China is increasing its presence as a new export destination. In terms of imports, China has large trade volume with regional powers such as South Africa and Nigeria. In 2021, Japan ranked 10th in terms of its share in the region's exports and 11th in terms of imports².
- Investment: The U.S. and the UK are rivaling for the top spot, as the former being the leading investor to Mauritius, which is the largest FDI destination in the region, and the latter, being a former colonial power, holding a prominent share in FDI to South Africa, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda, and Ghana. China certainly has a presence in Niger and Zambia, but it falls short of the U.S. and the UK in the region as a whole. India also has a certain presence in Mauritius and other countries.
- Finance: While, in the past, there were external debts to various countries, even without leaning toward a specific country. Angola and other countries experienced a sharp increase in external debt to China in the 2010s. In 2021, Japan was the fifth largest bilateral creditor country.

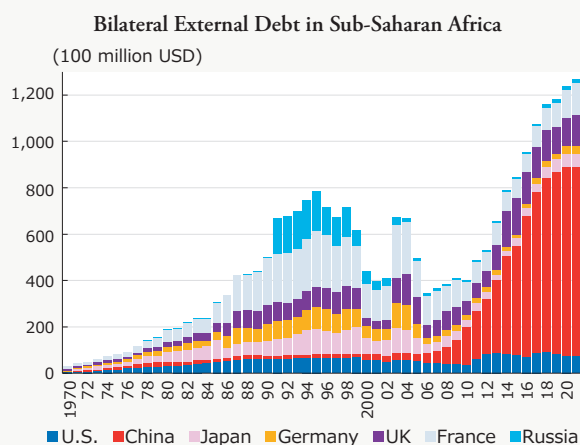


Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (DOT) data.

Note 2: Figures for China are the sum of Mainland China, Hong Kong, and Macau. Graphs for past figures may be skewed due to missing data, etc.



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on IMF (CDIS) data.



Note 1: Prepared by MOFA based on data from the World Bank (IDS).

Note 2: The graph illustrates the sum of bilateral external debt in the public sector and in the private sector (private sector external debt guaranteed by the public sector).

¹ See page 193 for notes regarding this data

² While only limited number of countries such as Japan, the U.S., and China are illustrated in the chart, the rankings in the text are for all countries/regions for which data is available (including countries, etc. in the relevant region).

(4) Kenya

Kenya is an important partner for peace and stability in the region as a stabilizing force in East Africa, playing a central role in the regional economy and making efforts to resolve conflicts in Ethiopia, Somalia, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Japan is cooperating with Kenya's efforts through its Ambassador, Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa. As a result of the presidential election, Dr. William Samoei Ruto was inaugurated as President in September. Mr. MAKIHARA Hideki, a member of the House of Representatives, represented Japan at the presidential inauguration ceremony as a special envoy of the Prime Minister.

At a summit meeting in March, two leaders of Japan and Kenya confirmed that they would work closely together to deal with the situation in Ukraine. On the economic and business front, the Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum was held in Kenya in May, and State Minister for Foreign Affairs SUZUKI Takako, attended the forum and made efforts to strengthen relations. In addition, Japan-Kenya Foreign Ministers' Meetings were held during TICAD 8 in August and the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in November, where the two foreign ministers discussed food security in Africa among other issues and agreed to further develop bilateral relations.



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki meeting with Cabinet Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Raychelle Awuor Omamo (May 3, Nairobi, Kenya)

(5) Union of Comoros

The Union of Comoros is Japan's partner and supports "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" as a maritime nation like Japan. It has chaired the AU since February 2023.

At TICAD 8 in August, the leaders of Japan and the Union of Comoros held a summit meeting where the two leaders confirmed the importance of transparency and fairness in development finance. President Azali Assoumani and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Dhoihir Dhoulkamal attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September, and the Japan-Comoros Summit Meeting was realized.

(6) Djibouti

Djibouti is an important partner for Japan in the realization of FOIP, as it is situated at a strategic point of international security connecting European and Asian countries across the Indian Ocean. It is located at one of the great trade arteries and is aiming to be a regional distribution hub. Since 2011, Djibouti has been hosting the facility of Japan Self-Defense Forces to carry out Japan's counter-piracy operations. In addition to collaborating to strengthen the operational infrastructure in this region, such as protecting and transporting Japanese nationals living abroad, Japan will further deepen its involvement in the country through the Ambassador, Special Envoy for the Horn of Africa. At TICAD 8 in August, Japan held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Abdoukader Kamil Mohamed, where the two leaders discussed regional stability, including countermeasures for piracy.

(7) Sudan

Sudan has the second largest land area in Sub-Saharan Africa and is endowed with crude oil, mineral resources, water resources from the Nile, and fertile land. The country has potential for economic development, but its development has been hampered by a long civil war totaling about 40 years since its independence.

The Bashir administration collapsed in April 2019, and the Sudanese Transitional Government was formed later in August that year and signed the Peace Agreement with the Sudan Revolutionary Front (SRF) in October 2020. However, the military seized power on October 25, 2021, and formed a military government. Japan calls for the immediate realization of transitioning to civilian rule in collaboration with like-minded countries.

(8) Seychelles

Seychelles is an important partner for Japan in the realization of FOIP, as it is located on a security and economically important sea lane in the Indian Ocean, and is an island country rich in tourism and fisheries resources. President Wavel John Charles Ramkalawan attended TICAD 8 in August and met with Foreign Minister Hayashi to discuss the strengthening of food security in Africa among other issues. Japan plans to establish an embassy in Seychelles in FY2023.

(9) Somalia

In May 2022, Somalia's presidential election resulted in the inauguration of President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and the peaceful completion of the transition of power. Japan is supporting President Hassan's efforts to consolidate peace amidst humanitarian crises such as droughts, floods, and the ongoing activities of Al Shabab. In August, at a meeting between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre, who was attending TICAD 8, both parties affirmed their further cooperation in future endeavors. In November, Japan made the decision to provide 14 million US dollars in emergency grant assistance to transport and distribute Ukrainian wheat to Somalia through the UN World Food Program (WFP).

(10) Tanzania

Tanzania is a key East African trading hub, supported by stable internal governance and economic growth. Under President Samia Suluhu Hassan, who took office in April 2021, Tanzania is expected to expand investment and business opportunities.

At the Japan-Tanzania Summit Meetings with Prime Minister Majaliwa Kassim Majaliwa held during the TICAD 8 in August and on the occasion of the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September, the two leaders confirmed their cooperation to further develop economic relations.

(11) Burundi

Burundi is a landlocked country located in the central part of the African continent. Under General Évariste Ndayishimiye, President of Burundi, who took office in May 2020, Burundi has been undertaking pragmatic

all-round diplomacy emphasizing good relations with neighboring countries and economic cooperation with Western countries. Foreign Minister Hayashi held talks with President Ndayishimiye, who attended TICAD 8 in August, and had the Japan-Burundi Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Albert Shingiro, who attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September, where they discussed peace and stability in the region.

(12) Madagascar

Madagascar is an island country located off the southeastern coast of Africa, and is an important country for Japan as a supplier of mineral resources, with Japanese companies operating integrated nickel and cobalt production operations.

In August, Foreign Minister Hayashi and President Andry Nirina Rajoelina, who was attending TICAD 8, had a meeting to discuss strengthening food security and addressing vulnerabilities of the economy in Africa.

(13) South Sudan

South Sudan continued to be in turmoil from the clashes that broke out in December 2013, but the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan (R-ARCSS) was signed in September 2018.

Japan has been supporting efforts toward peace and stability in South Sudan through projects such as the Nile River Bridge, which was completed in May 2022, and Prime Minister Kishida expressed Japan's continued support for the nation-building efforts of South Sudan at the Video Teleconference meeting with Vice President Hussein Abdelbagi Akol Agany, who attended TICAD 8 in August.

(14) Mauritius

Mauritius is a maritime nation like Japan with a vast Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and a partner in realizing FOIP. Relations between Japan and Mauritius have become even closer through cooperation in responding to the oil spill of the cargo ship *Wakashio* that occurred in 2020. At the Foreign Ministers' Meeting held during TICAD 8 in August, the two ministers confirmed that they would develop economic relations through measures such as the establishment of

the “Bilateral Committee on Improvement of Business Environment.”

(15) Rwanda

Under the leadership of President Paul Kagame, Rwanda has continued its efforts toward economic development and national reconciliation. Recently, the country has been experiencing rapid growth, particularly in the field of information and communication technology, and an increasing number of Japanese companies, including start-ups, have set up offices in the country where cooperation in the space sector has also been advancing.

In light of Japan’s economic interest, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki visited Rwanda in May and held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Vincent Biruta, while the



Japan-Rwanda Summit Meeting (November 14, Bali, Indonesia. Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

Japan-Rwanda Summit Meeting was held on the occasion of the G20 Summit in November, where the two leaders reaffirmed further development of the bilateral relations between the two countries.

3 Southern Africa

(1) Angola

Democracy is taking root in Angola, and the country plays an important role in the stability of the region, backed by a stable political infrastructure. It is one of Africa’s leading oil-producing countries, rich in mineral resources such as diamonds, and has great potential in the fields of fisheries and agriculture. President João Manuel Gonçalves Lourenço is actively working to improve the business environment with the aim of diversifying and stabilizing the economy. When he was re-elected in September, member of the House of Representatives SAKURADA Yoshitaka, attended the inauguration ceremony from Japan as a special envoy of the Prime Minister. At the Japan-Angola Foreign Ministers’ Meeting held during the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in March, the two sides discussed the impact of the situation in Ukraine on soaring food prices and supply chains.

(2) Eswatini

Eswatini maintains the only absolute monarchy in Africa under King Mswati III. In April 2018, the country changed its name from the “Kingdom of Swaziland” to the “Kingdom of Eswatini.” It is the only country in



Foreign Minister Hayashi pays courtesy call to King Mswati III of Eswatini (August 27, Tunis, Tunisia)

Africa that has diplomatic relations with Taiwan.

In August, Foreign Minister Hayashi held talks with King Mswati III, who attended TICAD 8. Deputy Prime Minister Themba Nhlanganiso Masuku attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September, activating high-level political exchanges.

(3) Zambia

Zambia, which has abundant mineral resources, has been working on economic diversification in recent

years to shift its economy away from over-dependence on minerals. In November 2020, due to non-payment of interest on Eurobonds, Zambia defaulted for the first time in Africa since the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2021, under the Hakainde Hichilema administration, which came into power after a democratic change of government, the government has made economic restructuring its top priority and is working to restructure its debt through international cooperation. Japan is working with like-minded countries to support its debt restructuring. In August 2022, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Board of Governors approved an assistance program. Later that month, Foreign Minister Hayashi met with Dr. Situmbeko Musokotwane, Minister of Finance and National Planning, who was attending TICAD 8, and discussed fiscal rehabilitation.

(4) Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is a landlocked country where successive kingdoms have prospered between the 11th and 15th centuries, leaving behind a large group of stone ruins known as “Great Zimbabwe.” Japan has had diplomatic relations with the country since its independence in 1980. The country is facing challenges in managing their economy as the Western countries have imposed sanctions such as freezing the assets of certain companies and individuals and banning them from traveling. Vice President of the Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ruling party), Kembo C. D. Mohadi, attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September and paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Kishida.

(5) Namibia

Namibia has abundant marine and mineral resources, and as a distribution hub on the Atlantic side of southern Africa, it is expected that its trade and investment will expand in the fields of resource development and energy. Although the country faces challenges such as poverty and inequality, high unemployment rates, anti-corruption, and a lack of social infrastructure, it has enjoyed a stable political situation since its independence in 1990 and actively engaged in regional cooperation in Southern Africa.

(6) Botswana

Botswana has had good governance with a stable political situation since its independence, and the country is rich in mineral resources such as diamonds. It was the first country in Africa to adopt the Japanese digital terrestrial broadcasting system (ISDB-T system) in 2013 and achieved the first complete transition to the Japanese standard of digital terrestrial broadcasting in 2022, among other countries that adopted the Japanese system. In recent years, it has been focusing on diversifying industry and reducing poverty with the aim of breaking away from its diamond-dependent economy.

(7) Malawi

Malawi has maintained relatively stable domestic affairs since its independence in 1964, and is currently making efforts to promote friendly diplomacy with neighboring countries under President Chakwera. The country is grappling with fiscal reconstruction, improvement of agricultural productivity, and an economic structure dependent on primary agricultural products.

(8) South Africa

South Africa is an economic powerhouse in Africa that continues to attract the interest of foreign companies, including Japanese companies, as a base for business development. South Africa also has a strong presence in the international arena as the only African member of the G20. Going forward, further cooperation on energy and mineral resources is expected. In addition to holding the Japan-South Africa Summit Meeting during the G7 Summit in June, Japan held bilateral Foreign Ministers' Meetings with South Africa at the G20 Foreign Ministers Meeting in July and at the Japan-South Africa Partnership Forum, which was held in Tokyo in October for the first time in nine years, and discussed bilateral relations and the international situation. There were active high-level political exchanges in 2022, including Minister of Tourism Lindiwe Nonceba Sisulu's attendance at the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September.

(9) Mozambique

Mozambique is a gateway to southeastern Africa and is a strategic point overlooking FOIP from the west. Political stability has been secured under President

Filipe Nyusi, and development by foreign capital is progressing against the backdrop of abundant natural resources such as coal and natural gas. Japanese companies are also participating in a liquefied natural gas (LNG) development project in the northern part of the country, but the project has been suspended due to the deteriorating security situation caused by attacks by armed groups in the surrounding area, and Japan is cooperating with like-minded countries in order to resume the project. From 2023, Mozambique serves as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council together with Japan.

Bearing in mind the importance of the country's energy security, Japan has been providing humanitarian assistance such as food assistance for refugees and development assistance for the economic independence of local residents. In June, State Minister for Foreign Affairs ODAWARA Kiyoshi met with Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Verónica Nataniel Macamo Dlhovo, in New York during his visit.

4 Central Africa

(1) Gabon

There are no civil wars or conflicts in Gabon, and the country is politically stable. President Ali Bongo Ondimba is working to diversify the economy, including through strengthening the field of timber processing, with the aim of transitioning from an oil-dependent economy.

In May, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara held a meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs Michael Moussa Adamo in New York, while the Japan-Gabon Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Adamo at TICAD 8 in August. Furthermore, in September when Prime Minister Rose Christiane Ossouka Raponda visited Japan to attend the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, the Japan-Gabon Summit Meeting was held with Prime Minister Kishida. Japan is engaged in cooperation primarily in the fields of health and environmental conservation.

(10) Lesotho

In Lesotho, a landlocked country composed of mostly mountainous highlands, trout aquaculture is conducted in the lake of the Katse Dam constructed by utilizing natural resources, providing a major export product to Japan. Lesotho held smooth and peaceful elections to the National Assembly in October, and the new prime minister, Mr. Samuel Ntsokoane Matekane, was inaugurated.

In relation to Japan, in addition to holding a foreign ministers' meeting on the occasion of TICAD 8 in August, Prime Minister Kishida held the Japan-Lesotho Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Moeketsi Majoro, who attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September, where the two leaders discussed further development of bilateral relations through the promotion of investment from Japan.

(2) Cameroon

Under the leadership of President Biya, who has established a long-term administration, Cameroon is grappling with the problems in the English-speaking regions, where clashes between independent separatists and security forces continue, and with Islamist extremist groups operating in the Extreme North Region. Japan exchanged notes with Cameroon concerning a grant aid project titled the "Project for Improving Infrastructure for the Stabilization of the Lake Chad Basin Area" (cooperation with UNDP)" in February and another one concerning food aid through the WFP in July. Minister of External Relations Lejeune Mbella Mbella attended TICAD 8 in August and held a foreign ministers' meeting with Foreign Minister Hayashi.

(3) Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo, which has entered its fourth year under the administration of President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo, is

working on fiscal reforms and eradicating corruption in cooperation with IMF. Serving as the chair of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in 2022, the Democratic Republic of the Congo prioritized its commitment to the region, by also joining the East African Community (EAC).

The activities of armed groups are intensifying in the eastern region, which is one of the world's leading producers of natural resources, and the process of mediation involving the region and the international community is underway with the support of the United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping operations (PKO).

In August, Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Jean-Michel Sama Lukonde Kyenge held a Summit online Meeting in which the two leaders confirmed that Japan would support efforts to stabilize the eastern region through institutional building and human resource development support for the consolidation of peace, and that Japan would promote cooperation in the area of climate change countermeasures and mineral resources. Based on this, in November, the two countries exchanged notes concerning grant aid for the "Economic and Social Development Programme (equipment related to climate change countermeasures)" and notes concerning the "Project for Strengthening Community Policing Activities (cooperation with IOM)" to support the efforts of the country.

(4) Republic of Congo

President Denis Sassou N'Guesso, who is serving his third term, has promoted domestic policies focused on reforming the administrative system, improving economic and financial governance, and developing social welfare infrastructure, with the foreign policy of "diversification of partners." The country has recently increased its presence as a stabilizing force in Central Africa.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, Francophonie and Congolese Abroad Jean-Claude Gakosso attended TICAD 8 and held the Japan-Republic of Congo Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Hayashi. Japan supports the country's development by strengthening economic infrastructure and providing food aid through the WFP.

(5) Sao Tome and Principe

The National Assembly elections held in September in Sao Tome and Principe resulted in a victory for the opposition, and in November, the fourth Trovoada cabinet was formed, the first change of government in four years.

Recently, Japan has provided food aid to the country almost every year, and in August 2022, the two countries exchanged notes concerning grant aid for food aid. Counterpart funds for food aid are used for the country's economic and social development, including support for the implementation of the above-mentioned elections. While there are few visits by dignitaries and business exchanges, Japan's food aid and assistance in the fisheries sector are widely recognized and appreciated, fostering a favorable pro-Japan sentiment.

(6) Equatorial Guinea

Under the long administration of President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, Equatorial Guinea has been promoting economic development based on its abundant oil resources. President Obiang Nguema Mbasogo was re-elected in the presidential election held on November 20.

In 2022, Japan coordinated with the UN Development Program (UNDP) to help restore a waste treatment facility damaged by the massive explosion that occurred in Bata in March 2021.

(7) Chad

In October, president of the Transitional Military Council Mahamat Idriss Déby Itno, was inaugurated as Transitional President and decided to extend the transition period to civilian rule by up to two years. Japan exchanged notes concerning food aid through the WFP in July in order to improve the country's food security and contribute to the resolution of development issues.

(8) Central Africa

Central Africa continues to work toward democratization. In March 2022, President Faustin Archange Touadera held a dialogue involving government officials and civil society. In November, the country decided to extend the mandate of the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African

Republic (MINUSCA) in order to maintain public order. In addition, as many people are in need of humanitarian aid as a result of the protracted conflict,

Japan exchanged notes concerning food aid through WFP in July.

5 West Africa

(1) Ghana

The Akufo-Addo administration, which was launched in 2017 and re-elected for a second term from 2021, has adopted the concept of Ghana Beyond Aid and is working to promote investment and diversify industries. In addition, the country is focusing on rebuilding the domestic economy, including the debt situation.

The Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research, which Japan has supported for many years through ODA, is a symbol of friendship and cooperation between Japan and Ghana and played a central role as a center for measures against COVID-19 in the country. Further concrete cooperation projects are underway in the health sector, including signing of a grant aid agreement for “the Project for the Improvement of Health Care System in the Northern Region” in May. The Japan-Ghana Foreign Ministers’ Meetings were held three times in 2022 at the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in March, during TICAD 8 in August, and at the G7 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in November.

(2) Cabo Verde

Cabo Verde has a well-established democracy with high political stability among African countries. Japan is cooperating in the economic development of Cabo Verde through ODA, including through the exchange of notes concerning food aid in July. In August, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a meeting with Prime Minister José Ulisses Correia e Silva, who attended TICAD 8.

(3) Gambia

Since President Barrow took office in 2017, Gambia has been promoting reforms based on fundamental values and principles, such as democracy and the rule of law. The country held peaceful presidential elections in 2021 and parliamentary elections in 2022. However, it faces social issues such as a fragile economic structure

dependent on agriculture and serious poverty. Foreign Minister Mamadou Tangara attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September and held talks with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Yamada.

(4) Guinea

In Guinea, after the military takeover by a group of Guinean army soldiers in September 2021, a transitional government (led by interim President Mamadi Doumbouya) was established, and the transition to civilian rule is underway with a completion deadline of the end of 2024.

Guinea has abundant water resources and fertile land, has high development potential for agriculture and fisheries, along with the largest mineral resources in West Africa that produce bauxite and iron. Japan has had a friendly cooperative relationship with Guinea for many years.

(5) Guinea-Bissau

Guinea-Bissau aims to overcome poverty and political instability by taking advantage of its fertile lands, blessed with fishery and mineral resources. In September, Japan exchanged notes concerning food aid in collaboration with WFP. Furthermore, in November, the two countries exchanged notes regarding grant aid for the “Project for Promoting Transparency and Accountability in Governance to Prevent Corruption and Consolidate Peace” (cooperation with UNDP).

(6) Côte d’Ivoire

In May, Japan signed agreements for two yen loan projects (the “Taabo-Kossou-Bouake Power Network Reinforcement Project” and “COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan”) to support efforts such as economic structural reform and national solidarity under the “National Development Plan” by



Working lunch between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Prime Minister Achi of Côte d'Ivoire (August 27, Tunis, Tunisia)

President Alassane Ouattara. At a working lunch with Prime Minister Patrick Jérôme Achi during TICAD 8 in August, Foreign Minister Hayashi stated that Japan intends to support development of the northern region, which is important for the stability of Côte d'Ivoire and its sub-regions. In September, Japan and Côte d'Ivoire exchanged notes concerning the "Economic and Social Development Programme," grant assistance to improve agricultural productivity in the region, while in December, the two countries also exchanged notes concerning yen loans to build a strong agricultural base for the country as a whole. Relations between the two countries are developing further through efforts such as investment promotion and revitalization.

(7) Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone, the Bio administration that began in April 2018 after the election is focusing on building a stable, peaceful, open, and pluralistic democracy, and is prioritizing fields such as job creation and high-quality education.

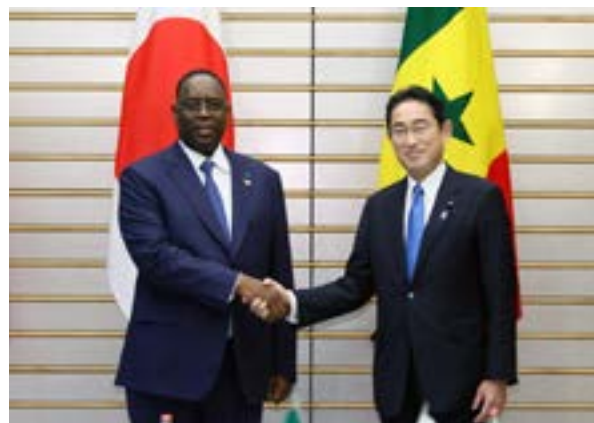
Japan implements development cooperation with the country in areas such as health, human resources development, agriculture, and basic infrastructure development. In December, the two countries exchanged notes concerning grant aid for the "Project for the Extension of Power Distribution Network along the Freetown Peninsula." Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation David John Francis attended TICAD 8 in August and held the Japan-Sierra Leone Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Hayashi.

(8) Senegal

As the chair of the African Union (AU) in 2022, Senegal played a leading role in Africa's response to various challenges in the international arena. In addition, as a stabilizing force in West Africa, Senegal actively worked toward the peace and stability of the region.

At TICAD 8 held in August, Foreign Minister Hayashi (Special Envoy of the Prime Minister) served as co-chair together with President Macky Sall of Senegal and President Kais Saied of Tunisia. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Yamada attended the 8th Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security in Africa held in October and introduced Japan's efforts to support peace and stability in Africa. He called for increased international collaboration to help Africa confront exogenous shocks such as COVID-19 and the food crisis triggered by the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

In December, President Sall made an official working visit to Japan and held his third summit meeting with Prime Minister Kishida. The two leaders issued the Japan-Senegal Joint Statement, confirming that the two countries, as strategically important partners, will strengthen cooperation both bilaterally and in the international arena.



Japan-Senegal Summit Meeting (December 19, Tokyo. Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

(9) Togo

To improve Togo's food security and resolve development issues, Japan exchanged notes concerning food aid with Togo in August. In September, the Japan-Togo Summit Meeting was held on the occasion of President Faure Essozimna Gnassingbe attending the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo. The

two leaders expressed expectations for further strengthening of Japan-Togo bilateral relations, exchanged views on international affairs, and agreed to work for further development of bilateral relations, following up on the outcome of TICAD 8.

(10) Nigeria

President Muhammadu Buhari, who marked the seventh anniversary of his inauguration in May, has tackled issues in a wide range of fields, including security, legislation, infrastructure, economy, and industry. In terms of security, about 80,000 terrorists and their families are claimed to have surrendered by October, and the Government of Nigeria is also working to support the rehabilitation of former terrorists. Combating piracy and armed robbery along the Nigerian coast in the Gulf of Guinea is one of the issues the country is tackling, and notes concerning Japan's grant aid for strengthening maritime security were exchanged in June.

Nigeria, which has one of the largest reserves of natural gas in Sub-Saharan Africa, is working to develop natural gas as an important energy source in the country's energy transition policy toward zero carbon dioxide emissions.

(11) Niger

Niger is facing the growing threat of terrorism primarily on its borders with Mali and Burkina Faso, and is making sustained efforts to counter terrorism and overcome development challenges in cooperation with the international community.

Minister of State, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Hassoumi Massoudou attended TICAD 8 in August. At the Japan-Niger Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on that occasion, Foreign Minister Hayashi announced that Japan would continue to contribute to strengthening food security in Africa, and in September, an exchange of notes concerning food aid was signed. Furthermore, the two countries are steadily deepening their cooperative relationship, including through an exchange of notes concerning grant aid aimed at improving access to secondary education and the learning environment, as well as promoting and continuing the enrollment of girls in schools in November.

(12) Burkina Faso

Terrorism has occurred frequently in Burkina Faso, mainly along the border areas with Mali and Niger in the north, and security has not been restored, resulting in a large number of casualties and internally displaced persons. Domestic dissatisfaction has increased amid the extremely deteriorating humanitarian situation, and in January and September 2022, a group of the Burkina Faso Armed Forces took power.

Japan has contributed to improving the quality of education in Burkina Faso through grant aid for the "Project for the Construction of Lower-Secondary Schools and Lower-Secondary Schools of Technical Education and Vocational Training in the Centre and Centre-Ouest Regions" (cooperation with UNICEF). In addition, Japan cooperates with WFP to implement food aid and is working to improve food security in the country.

(13) Benin

In September, Japan and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) signed a grant aid agreement for the "Project for Supporting Digital Health System for Infectious Diseases Control in Africa," and made the decision to provide support to seven African countries, including Benin, to strengthen and streamline their systems for health facilities and other services. Minister of Foreign Affairs Aurélien Agbenonci attended TICAD 8 held in Tunisia in August, and Minister of Economy and Finance Romuald Wadagni attended the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo in September.

(14) Mali

Following the military takeover by a group of the Malian military in August 2020 and May 2021, a transition government (led by President of the transition Assimi Goita) was established, and the transition to civilian rule is underway with a deadline of the end of March 2024. The security situation is serious, with frequent terrorist attacks and clashes mainly in the north and east. Securing peace and stability in Mali, which is the cornerstone of peace and stability in the Sahel region as a whole, is an urgent issue for the international community.

Through the UNDP, Japan has made the decision to provide the equipment necessary for conducting highly

transparent and reliable elections that meet international standards, and is supporting Mali's efforts to transition to civilian rule. In October, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Yamada met with Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Abdoulaye Diop and announced that Japan would continue to cooperate in resolving the economic and social development challenges that Mali is facing, along with support for the transition to civilian rule. In November, the two countries exchanged notes concerning food aid and grant aid for the "Economic and Social Development Programme."

(15) Liberia

President George Tawlon Manneh Oppong Weah is focusing on reducing poverty in Liberia, following the civil war that broke out in 1989 and the Ebola hemorrhagic fever that spread from neighboring countries in 2014, causing enormous humanitarian damage in Liberia. Other priorities include infrastructure, education, and health. Japan supported the reconstruction of

a highway in the capital city of Monrovia in 2016. The road was renamed "Japan Freeway" in 2019 as a token of the friendship between Japan and Liberia. In July 2022, the two countries exchanged notes concerning grant aid for food aid. Foreign Minister Dee-Maxwell Saah Kemayah attended TICAD 8 in August and had the Japan-Liberia Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

(16) Mauritania

Mauritania is located in the Sahel region, where security is becoming increasingly unstable. Although there have been no terrorist attacks since 2011 and the government has continued to operate in a relatively stable manner, the unseasonable weather and world affairs affecting the country since 2021 have resulted in a serious food shortage, and Japan is providing assistance such as food aid to the country. Japan is also enhancing its cooperative relationship by providing technical assistance and grant aid in the field of fisheries to Mauritania, such as improvement of the facilities of the training center for fisheries.



Notes on “Relations between Each Region and Japan, the U.S., China, etc., Seen Through Economic Data”

1. Common to all data

This section was produced from the aspects of trade, investment, and finance using data from international organizations, but the presence of each country and region should be comprehensively examined from various other perspectives as well. The following points should also be noted regarding each of the statistics used in this section.

Trade data (source: IMF Direction of Trade Statistics: DOTS) are customs-based trade statistics, and it is known that processing trade-oriented countries tend to swell the total amount of trade. It is also necessary to pay attention to the concept of value-added trade, which considers in which countries the added value of goods and services is generated.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) stock data (source: IMF (Coordinated Direct Investment Survey: CDIS)) is based on “voluntary reporting” of each country and region, and it should be noted that it is not comprehensive and differs in scale from figures reported by each country and region.

For External Debt data (source: World Bank (International Debt Statistics: IDS)), only bilateral debt is shown for the sake of clarity, but it should be noted that this is only a part of the total volume of debts and that debts to international institutions such as the World Bank and ADB and other creditors are significant (the category which has the largest share as the creditor in all regions is “Other Multiple Lenders”). In addition, with the development of financial and capital markets, the amount of funds raised through the issuance of bonds is expected to increase (in fact, the share of bondholders is also significant). It should also be noted that countries that receive a large amount of grant aid tend to be less prominent in the chart.

2. Countries and regions covered for each indicator/region

This section compiles the economic data for Japan, the U.S., China, and other countries in regions (1) through (7) as enumerated below, but not all countries and regions are included due to limited country data available depending on the statistics. Countries and regions covered by each statistic are as follows.

- Trade (export, import): 139 countries and regions
- Investment (Inward FDI stock): 74 countries and regions
- Finance (External debt stock): 108 countries and regions

(1) Southeast Asia

Trade: 10 ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Brunei, Vietnam, Malaysia, Myanmar, Laos) and Timor-Leste (11 countries in total)

Investment: Indonesia, Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia, Myanmar (eight countries in total)

Finance: Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand, Philippines, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, Timor-Leste (eight countries in total)

(2) South Asia

Trade: India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives (seven countries in total)

Investment: India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan (six countries in total)

Finance: India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Maldives (seven countries in total)

(3) Pacific Island countries

Trade: Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga, Nauru, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Micronesia (12 countries in total)

Investment: Samoa, Solomon Islands, Palau, Fiji (four countries in total)

Finance: Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Fiji (six countries in total)

(4) Latin America and the Caribbean

Trade: Argentina, Antigua and Barbuda, Uruguay, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Cuba, Guatemala, Grenada, Costa Rica, Colombia, Jamaica, Suriname, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Chile, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Nicaragua, Haiti, Panama, Bahamas, Paraguay, Barbados, Brazil, Venezuela, Belize, Peru, Bolivia, Honduras, Mexico (32 countries in total)

Investment: Argentina, Uruguay, El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Suriname, Chile, Trinidad and Tobago, Panama, Paraguay, Barbados, Brazil, Venezuela, Peru, Bolivia, Honduras, Mexico (17 countries in total)

Finance: Argentina, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guyana, Guatemala, Grenada, Costa Rica, Colombia, Jamaica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Haiti, Paraguay, Brazil, Belize, Peru, Bolivia, Honduras, Mexico (22 countries in total)

(5) Central Asia and the Caucasus

Trade: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Georgia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan (eight countries in total)

Investment: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Georgia, Tajikistan (six countries in total)

Finance: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Georgia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan (eight countries in total)

(6) Middle East and North Africa

Trade: Afghanistan, United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Yemen, Israel, Iraq, Iran, Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Morocco (20 countries in total)

Investment: Algeria, Israel, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Bahrain, Jordan, Lebanon, Morocco (nine countries in total)

Finance: Afghanistan, Algeria, Yemen, Iraq, Iran, Syria, Turkey, Jordan, Lebanon, Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco (12 countries in total)

(7) Sub-Saharan Africa

Trade: Angola, Uganda, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Ghana, Cabo Verde, Gabon, Cameroon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, São Tomé and Príncipe, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Seychelles, Equatorial Guinea, Senegal, Somalia, Tanzania, Chad, Central Africa, Togo, Nigeria, Namibia, Niger, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Benin, Botswana, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, South Africa, South Sudan, Mozambique, Mauritius, Mauritania, Liberia, Rwanda, Lesotho (49 countries in total)

Investment: Uganda, Eswatini, Ghana, Cabo Verde, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Zambia, Seychelles, Senegal, Tanzania, Togo, Nigeria, Namibia, Niger, Burkina Faso, Benin, Botswana, Madagascar, Mali, South Africa, Mozambique, Mauritius, Rwanda (24 countries in total).

Finance: Angola, Uganda, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Ghana, Cabo Verde, Gabon, Cameroon, Gambia, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Côte d'Ivoire, Comoros, Republic of the Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, São Tomé and Príncipe, Zambia, Sierra Leone, Djibouti, Zimbabwe, Sudan, Senegal, Somalia, Tanzania, Chad, Central Africa, Togo, Nigeria, Niger, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Benin, Botswana, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, South Africa, Mozambique, Mauritius, Mauritania, Liberia, Rwanda, Lesotho (45 countries in total).

Chapter 3

Japan's Foreign Policy to Promote National and Global Interests

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Section 1 Efforts for Peace and Stability of Japan and the International Community

1 National Security Initiatives

(1) Security Environment Surrounding Japan

Today, Japan's security environment is as severe and complex as it has ever been since the end of World War II. Military build-up, including nuclear and missile capabilities, is advancing rapidly around Japan. Further reinforcement of military capabilities and acceleration of military activities are becoming more prominent, and unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force are occurring more frequently than ever before. In the international community, a historical shift in the power balance is occurring, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region. Against this backdrop, some countries are attempting to change the existing international order based on their own historical views and values. Russia started its aggression against Ukraine in February. In the maritime domain, there have been cases where a country unilaterally claims its entitlements or takes actions, based on assertions that are incompatible with the existing international order. These have generated undue infringement to rights under international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

Under these circumstances, grey zone situations over territories, cross-border cyberattacks on critical civilian infrastructures, and information warfare through spread of disinformation, are constantly taking place, thereby further blurring the boundary between contingency and peacetime. Furthermore, the scope of security has expanded to include those fields previously considered non-military such as economic, technological and others, and thus the boundary between military and non-military fields has become blurred. In addition, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, as well as responding to international terrorism, continue to pose serious challenges to the international community. In light of these developments, it is now necessary to strengthen efforts related to security policies across diverse sectors.

In December, Japan formulated a new National

Security Strategy (NSS), along with the National Defense Strategy and Defense Buildup Program. While the NSS sets forth a wide range of security measures (fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, including possession of counterstrike capabilities; reinforcement of comprehensive defense architecture; consideration of revisions to the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and its Implementation Guidelines; introduction of active cyber defense; significant reinforcement of maritime security capabilities and expansion of systems; promotion of economic security policies, among others), it establishes diplomatic capability first among the main elements of comprehensive national power for Japan's national security. Based on this document, Japan will develop a strong diplomacy, to prevent crises before they occur, and to proactively create a peaceful and stable international environment (see the Special Feature on page 197).

(2) Enforcement of the “Legislation for Peace and Security,” and Initiatives based on the Legislation

In order to adapt to the changes in the security environment surrounding Japan and to secure the lives and peaceful livelihood of its people, it is important to advance vibrant diplomacy to create a stable and predictable international environment. In addition, it is important to enable seamless responses to any situation, and to contribute even more proactively to the peace and stability of the international community based on the principle of international cooperation. To achieve these objectives, the “Legislation for Peace and Security” took effect in March 2016.

After the enforcement of the legislation, Japan has been engaged in various forms of cooperation with the U.S. and other relevant countries. The Japan-U.S. Alliance is stronger than it has ever been, and Japan is contributing further to peace and stability in the

Special Feature

Adoption of the new “National Security Strategy”
and other documents

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On December 16, the National Security Council and the Cabinet decided and approved a new “National Security Strategy (NSS),” along with the “National Defense Strategy” and the “Defense Buildup Program” based on the NSS.

Russia’s aggression against Ukraine launched in February is shaking the very foundation of the international order. Amid these circumstances, Japan is finding itself in the midst of the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II. The international community is standing at a historic crossroads, and maintaining and developing the free and open international order based on the rule of law is becoming more important than it has ever been. The new NSS was adopted against this backdrop.

The new NSS will dramatically transform Japan’s national security policy after the end of World War II from the aspect of its execution. It sets out policies to be implemented including the following major ones: (1) Develop diplomacy under the vision of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)”; (2) Fundamentally reinforce defense capabilities, including the possession of counterstrike capabilities; (3) Reinforce the comprehensive defense architecture by promoting cross-governmental efforts in areas that complement and are inseparable from the fundamental reinforcement of defense capabilities, namely research and development, public infrastructure development, cybersecurity, and international cooperation, to enhance deterrence capabilities of Japan and like-minded countries; (4) Consider revising, the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, its Implementation Guidelines, and other systems in order to promote smooth transfer of defense equipment and technology of high security significance; (5) Introduce active cyber defense and establish a new organization that will comprehensively coordinate policies in the field of cybersecurity, in a centralized manner; (6) Significantly reinforce maritime law enforcement capabilities in conjunction with efforts to strengthen its organization; (7) Promote economic security policies.

In particular, the new NSS establishes diplomatic capability first among the main elements of comprehensive national power for Japan’s national security. Building on Japan’s long record of diplomatic undertakings and economic activities to promote the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community, Japan will carry out vigorous diplomacy to prevent crises, strengthen diplomacy with the neighboring countries and regions, as well as efforts toward the resolution of various issues of concern including territorial issues, and proactively create a peaceful and stable international environment, guided by significantly enhanced diplomatic implementation architecture.

Specifically, the Japan-U.S. Alliance, with the Japan-U.S. security arrangements at its core, plays an indispensable role not only for the security of Japan but also for the realization of peace and stability in the international community, including in the Indo-Pacific region. From this perspective, Japan, while ensuring bilateral coordination at its strategic levels, will promote multilayered initiatives in coordination with the U.S. in all areas, including diplomacy, defense, and economy.

Moreover, Japan will further promote efforts to realize FOIP by deepening cooperation with like-minded countries with the Japan-U.S. Alliance as a cornerstone and through efforts such as the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) partnership. Japan will also further enhance diplomatic engagement with developing countries, which are economically growing and becoming more influential in the international arena. By doing so, Japan, together with as many countries as possible, will strengthen a free and open international order based on the rule of law. Guided by the vision of FOIP, Official Development Assistance (ODA) plays an extremely important role in maintaining and developing a free and open international order and in realizing coexistence and coprosperity in the international community. Therefore, Japan will continue to expand ODA while strategically utilizing it.

Furthermore, Japan will build a multilayered network among its ally and like-minded countries, expand it, and strengthen deterrence. To that end, while utilizing frameworks such as the Japan-U.S.-ROK and Japan-U.S.-Australia frameworks, Japan will enhance security cooperation with Australia, India, the ROK, European countries, Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries, Canada, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the European Union (EU), and others.

In addition, for the purpose of deepening security cooperation with like-minded countries, apart from ODA for the economic and social development of developing countries and other purposes, a new cooperation framework for the

benefit of armed forces and other related organizations will be established. Japan will provide equipment and supplies as well as assistance for the development of infrastructures to like-minded countries in view of strengthening their security capacities and improving their deterrence capabilities.

In pursuing such efforts, the stance of Japan since the end of World War II as a peace-loving nation remains unchanged. Japan will adhere to the basic policy of maintaining an exclusively national defense oriented policy, not becoming a military power that poses a threat to other countries, and observing the Three Non-Nuclear Principles. Japan's diplomatic policy, as before, to achieve coprosperity with other countries without sacrificing any country, is also unchanged. As one of the most mature and stable advanced democratic countries in the world, Japan will lead the international community by example.

region and the international community. For example, from 2017 till the end of 2021, Japan escorted the U.S. Forces a total of 79 times on occasions such as joint exercises, intelligence and surveillance operations, including ballistic missile warnings. In November 2021, Japan also escorted the Australian Forces for the first time during a joint exercise. In addition, Japan has also expanded and enhanced activities relating to cooperation on international peace and cooperation, such as UN Peacekeeping operations (PKO).

Since the enforcement of the Legislation for Peace and Security, Japan has been deepening cooperation not only with the U.S., but also with various other countries. Going forward, MOFA will strive to maintain and develop diplomatic relations that further advance mutual cooperation with other countries, with a view to securing the lives and peaceful livelihood of

the people of Japan.

(3) Territorial Integrity

Maintaining territorial integrity is a fundamental responsibility of the Government. Japan's policy to resolutely protect its land, sea and air space remains unchanged. Japan will continue to maintain its stance of responding firmly but in a calm manner. Based on this, the relevant government agencies are working in close cooperation to advance measures to ensure a seamless and adequate response to any form of unlawful acts. At the same time, the Government of Japan engages in proactive efforts to promote awareness of Japan's position on territorial integrity among the international community, making use of the contacts and knowledge of its diplomatic missions overseas.

2 Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements

(1) Overview of Japan-U.S. Security Relationship

Under the security environment surrounding Japan, which is becoming increasingly severe at an ever more rapid pace, it is indispensable to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements and to enhance the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance not only for the peace and security of Japan, but also for the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region. Japan and the U.S. are further enhancing their deterrence and response capabilities under the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation ("The

Guidelines") and the Legislation for Peace and Security. Through such efforts, Japan and the U.S. have been expanding and strengthening cooperation in a wide range of areas, including missile defense, cyberspace, space and maritime security. While advancing these efforts, Japan and the U.S. have concurrently been working closely on the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan, including the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma and of approximately 9,000 U.S. Marine Corps in Okinawa to Guam and other locations in order to mitigate the impact on local communities, including Okinawa.

(2) Japan-U.S. Security and Defense Cooperation in Various Fields

A An Overview of Japan-U.S. Security and Defense Cooperation

The Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation, which were formulated in 2015, reviewed and updated the general framework and policy direction of Japan-U.S. defense cooperation. Through the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) and other efforts established under these Guidelines, Japan and the U.S. have been sharing information closely, establishing a common understanding of the situation, and engaging in “seamless” responses and efforts from peacetime to contingencies. From its inauguration till now, the Biden administration has consistently made it clear that it places great importance on the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

In January, the Japan-U.S. “2+2” was convened virtually for the first time. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister HAYASHI Yoshimasa and Defense Minister KISHI Nobuo from the Japanese side, and Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin from the U.S. side. The four Ministers engaged in candid and important discussions on how to advance the evolution of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and continue to effectively address current and future challenges. The outcome of the meeting is broadly summarized in the following three points. Firstly, the Ministers affirmed their commitment to a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).” They also held an in-depth discussion and aligned their understanding on the changing strategic environment in the region, including China’s efforts to undermine the rules-based order and North Korea’s nuclear and missile activities. Secondly, they affirmed that they would advance concrete discussions toward fundamentally enhancing the Alliance’s deterrence and response capabilities. Furthermore, they concurred on pursuing investments to ensure that the Alliance will maintain its competitive edge into the future, including in the field of space, cyberspace as well as emerging technologies. Thirdly, they concurred on the importance of steadily implementing the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan and sharing information in a timely manner, from the perspective of mitigating the impact on local communities

including Okinawa while maintaining the deterrence of the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

In January 2023, the Japan-U.S. “2+2” was convened in Washington D.C., in a timely manner, immediately after the release of strategic documents by the two countries. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Hayashi and Defense Minister HAMADA Yasukazu from the Japanese side, and Secretary of State Blinken and Secretary of Defense Austin from the U.S. side. The two sides welcomed the release of their respective National Security Strategies and National Defense Strategies, and confirmed unprecedented alignment of their vision, priorities, and goals. The following are the three broad outcomes of the meeting. Firstly, Japan and the U.S. carefully aligned their perception of the regional strategic environment, including the greatest strategic challenge of China’s foreign policy-based actions aimed at reshaping the international order for its own benefit, North Korea’s unprecedented number of ballistic missile launches, and Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. Secondly, the two sides affirmed future initiatives toward strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance amidst an increasingly severe security environment. Japan welcomed the U.S.’ determination to optimize its force posture in the Indo-Pacific region including Japan, and the two sides decided to continue close consultation on ways to further optimize U.S. force posture in Japan, including the readjustment of plans for the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan. They also took time to have in-depth discussions on extended deterrence¹ at the ministerial level as one of the agenda, and reaffirmed the strong commitment of the U.S. to the defense of Japan, backed by its full range of capabilities, including nuclear. Furthermore, the two sides also affirmed that attacks to, from, or within space, in certain circumstances, could lead to the invocation of Article V of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. Thirdly, they reaffirmed the importance of efforts to mitigate the impact on local communities, including Okinawa, and Foreign Minister Hayashi reiterated the request to the U.S. side for safe operation of the U.S. Forces with utmost consideration to the impact on local communities, appropriate responses to incidents and accidents

1 Providing deterrence that a country possesses to its allies and others.



Japan-U.S. "2+2" (January 2023, Washington D.C., U.S.)



including sharing information in a timely manner, and cooperation on environmental issues. On top of that, in the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held in the same month, President Biden reiterated his unwavering commitment to the defense of Japan. The two leaders also welcomed the national security strategies of the two countries are aligned with each other and renewed their determination to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, including seeking to create synergies in the implementation of the strategies. In addition, they instructed to further deepen concrete consultations regarding Japan-U.S. cooperation on the security front, taking into account the discussions at the Japan-U.S. "2+2."

In 2022, Japan continued to engage in personnel exchanges with senior U.S. defense officials, including successive visits to Japan by Frank Kendall III, Secretary of the Air Force in August, General David H. Berger, Commandant of the U.S. Marine Corps and Charles A. Flynn, Commanding General, U.S. Army, Pacific in September, Admiral John C. Aquilino, Commander, U.S. Indo-Pacific Command in October, and Lt Gen. William M. Jurney, Commander, U.S. Marine Corps Forces, Pacific and Commanding General Fleet Marine Force, Pacific in December. In April, Foreign Minister Hayashi accepted an invitation from the U.S. to visit the USS *Abraham Lincoln* together with Ambassador of the U.S. to Japan, Rahm Emanuel. In addition, the Japan-U.S. Extended Deterrence Dialogue was held in the U.S. in June and Tokyo in November. This Dialogue was established in 2010, and as a part of Japan-U.S. security and defense cooperation, it provides an opportunity for the two governments to discuss regional

security, Alliance defense posture, nuclear and missile defense policy, and arms control issues, to engage in an in-depth exchange of views on means to sustain and strengthen extended deterrence, which is at the core of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to deepen mutual understanding on alliance deterrence. As a part of this Dialogue, participants visited the Ohio-class submarine USS *Maryland* in June, and observed the "KEEN SWORD 23" Japan-US Bilateral Joint Exercise in November. Through such multilayered initiatives, Japan will continue to promote security and defense cooperation with the U.S., and to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Alliance.

B Missile Defense

Japan has been making steady efforts to develop and engage in the production of the Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD) system while continuing cooperation with the U.S., including on the steady implementation of joint development and joint production of the Standard Missile 3 (SM-3 Block IIA) since 2006, and Japan is fully prepared to protect the lives and property of its citizens from the threat of ballistic missiles to Japan under any circumstances. Japan is also advancing efforts to effectively address new aerial threats, including hypersonic weapons. At the Japan-U.S. "2+2" held in January 2023, based on the progress of joint analysis on counter-hypersonic technology, the Ministers concurred to begin joint research on important elements including advanced materials and hypersonic testbeds, and also concurred to begin discussion on potential joint development of a future interceptor.

C Cyberspace

At the Japan-U.S. “2+2” meeting convened in January 2023, Japan and the U.S. concurred to intensify collaboration to counter increasingly sophisticated and persistent cyber threats. In light of the necessity for cross-governmental efforts by both Japan and the U.S., stakeholders from both sides engage in discussions, through frameworks such as the Japan-U.S. Cyber Dialogue, on bilateral cooperation across a wide range of areas. The two sides are continuing to cooperate on matters related to cyberspace, promoting bilateral policy coordination, strengthening systems and capabilities, and exchanging incident information, while taking into consideration Japan’s cyber security strategy and the cyber policies of the U.S.

D Space

At the Japan-U.S. “2+2” convened in January 2023, Japan and the U.S. committed to deepening cooperation on space capabilities, and considered that attacks to, from, or within space, present a clear challenge to the security of the Alliance, and affirmed such attacks, in certain circumstances, could lead to the invocation of Article V of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty. At the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held in the same month, the two sides concurred on further promoting Japan-U.S. cooperation in the area of space. Japan and the U.S. are continuing to cooperate on space security, including through mutual exchanges of information in the field of Space Situational Awareness and others, as well as cooperation on hosted payloads (mission instruments loaded onto other entities’ satellites).

E Information Security

Information security plays a crucial role in advancing cooperation within the context of the alliance. Based on this perspective, both countries continue to hold discussions designed to enhance their cooperation regarding information security, the importance of which was affirmed in the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held in May 2023 and the Japan-U.S. “2+2” held in January 2023.

(3) Realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan

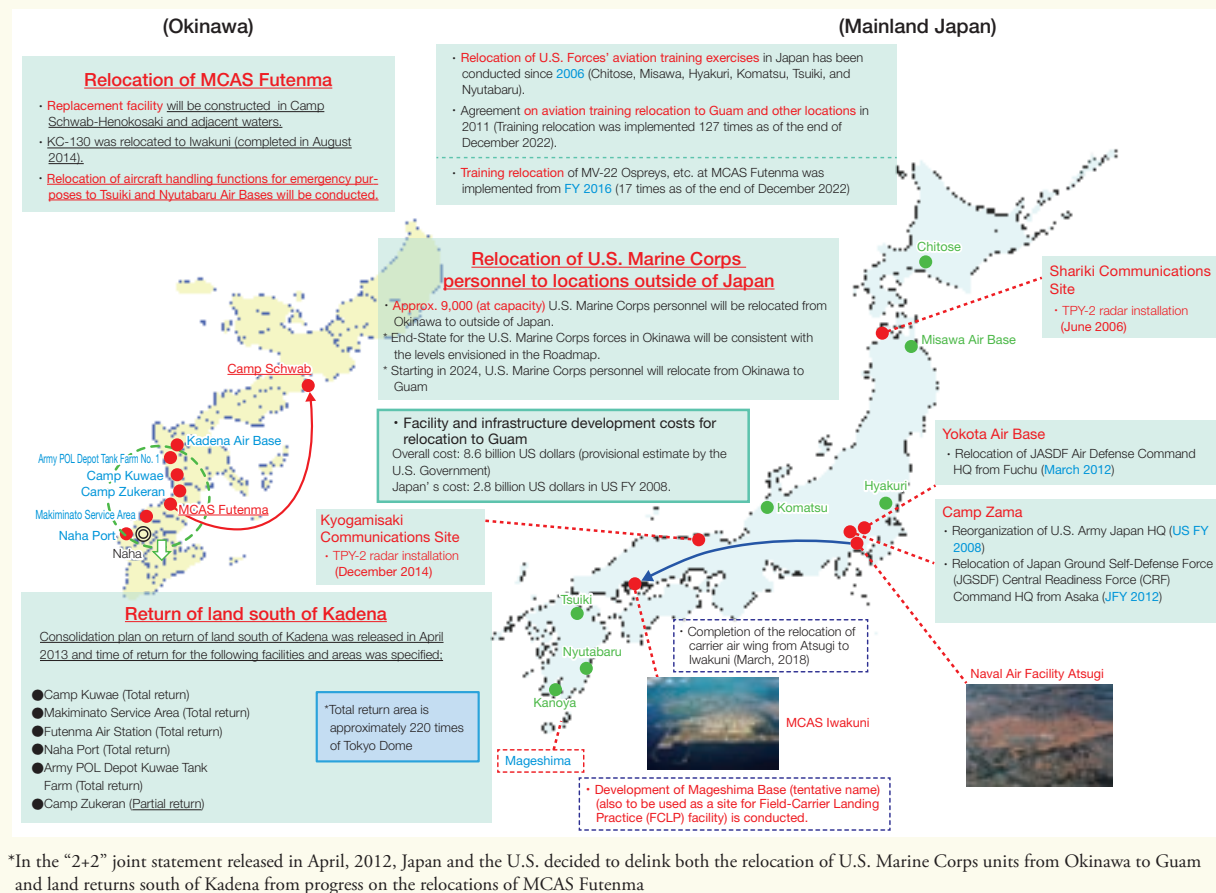
While steadily advancing the efforts described above, the Government of Japan will continue to make every

effort to mitigate the impact on local communities, including Okinawa, by soundly promoting the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan, including the relocation of MCAS Futenma to Henoko.

Similarly in the Joint Statement of the Security Consultative Committee (“2+2”) released in January 2022, the two sides confirmed the importance of accelerating bilateral work on these force realignment efforts. At the Japan-U.S. “2+2” held in January 2023, Japan and the U.S. affirmed the need to optimize the Alliance force posture based on the improved operational concepts and enhanced capabilities, including the defense of the Southwestern Islands of Japan. They also confirmed that the forward posture of U.S. forces in Japan should be upgraded to strengthen Alliance deterrence and response capabilities by positioning more versatile, resilient, and mobile forces with increased intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, anti-ship, and transportation capabilities. In line with such policy, Japan and the U.S. affirmed that the Japan-U.S. Roadmap for Realignment Implementation, as adjusted at the Japan-U.S. “2+2” in April 2012, will be readjusted so that the 3rd Marine Division Headquarters and the 12th Marine Regiment will remain in Okinawa and the 12th Marine Regiment will be reorganized into the 12th Marine Littoral Regiment by 2025. This effort will be carried out while maintaining the basic tenets of the 2012 Realignment Plan, with utmost consideration to the impacts on local communities. Japan and the U.S. also confirmed the importance of accelerating bilateral work on U.S. force realignment efforts, including construction of relocation facilities and land returns in Okinawa, and the relocation of Marine Corps personnel from Okinawa to Guam beginning in 2024.

In particular, the return of lands in Okinawa has been realized by completing various return projects based on the April 2013 “Consolidation Plan for Facilities and Areas in Okinawa,” even after the return of a major portion of the Northern Training Area (NTA, approximately 4,000 hectares) in December 2017. The return of all areas indicated as “Immediate Return” under the Consolidation Plan was achieved with the return of a portion of the Facilities and Engineering Compound in Camp Zukeran in March 2020. The land near Samashita Gate at Futenma Air Station was also returned in December 2020, followed by the return of

■ Realignment of USFJ – An Overview



the laundry factory area of Makiminato Service Area (land along National Route No. 58) in May 2021. In May 2022, which marked the 50th anniversary of the reversion of Okinawa to Japan, Japan and the U.S. concurred to enable the public use of the Lower Plaza Housing Area of Camp Zukeran as a greenspace, ahead of its return to Japan. The necessary preparations are underway toward the start of use in FY2023.

(4) Host Nation Support (HNS)

With a view to ensuring the effective operations of U.S. Forces in Japan amidst the growing severity of the security situation surrounding Japan, Japan bears a part of costs, such as the costs of Facility Improvement Programs (FIP), within the scope provided for under the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). In addition, Japan has also borne the labor costs for U.S. Forces working in Japan, utilities costs, and training relocation costs, by concluding the Special Measures Agreements (SMAs) which sets out special measures relating to the SOFA. Under the New SMA signed on January 7 and

entered into force on April 1, it was decided that Japan will also bear the expenditures related to the procurement of training equipment and materials which will contribute, not only to the readiness of U.S. Forces in Japan but also to the enhancement of the interoperability between the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and the U.S. Forces. Based on the SOFA and the New SMA, the Government of Japan will bear the HNS costs from FY2022 to FY2026.

In consultations on the New SMAs, as both parties concurred that the costs borne by Japan should be used to build a foundation upon which the Japan-U.S. Alliance will be further strengthened, the Japanese side decided to refer to this budget by a Japanese phrase that points to its goal of enhancing Alliance readiness and resiliency.

During the effective period of the new SMAs (April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2027), the annual average budget for HNS is approximately 211 billion Japanese yen.

(5) Various Issues Related to the Presence of the U.S. Forces in Japan

To ensure the smooth and effective operation of the Japan-U.S. security arrangements and the stable presence of U.S. Forces in Japan as the linchpin of these arrangements, it is important to mitigate the impact of U.S. Forces' activities on residents living in the vicinity and to gain their understanding and support regarding the presence of U.S. Forces. The Government of Japan has been making utmost efforts to make improvements in specific issues in light of the requests from local communities. Among these issues are preventing and responding to incidents and accidents involving U.S. Forces, abating the noise by U.S. Forces' aircraft, and dealing with environmental issues at U.S. Forces' facilities and areas, including the sound implementation of the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Stewardship of 2015 and the Agreement on Cooperation with regard to Implementation Practices relating to the Civilian Component of the United States Armed Forces in Japan of 2017. For example, when the leakage of water containing substances such as Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) occurred as a result of the spill of fire-fighting foam, at the Naval Air Facility Atsugi due to heavy rains in September, Japanese officials accessed the facility based on the Supplemental Agreement on Environmental Stewardship to conduct a site visit. Japan and the U.S. are also cooperating closely in the field of health and hygiene issues including infectious diseases such as the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). On January 28, the Quarantine Procedure Panel under the Japan-U.S. Joint Committee was reorganized and upgraded to the new "Quarantine and Health Protection Subcommittee (QHS)" which the health authorities of both Japan and the U.S. participate in. Japan and the U.S. will continue to further strengthen cooperation to put in place thorough measures to prevent the spread of infectious diseases, and to mitigate the anxiety among the local communities.

The "TOFU: Think of Okinawa's Future in the U.S." program provides an opportunity for high school and university students from Okinawa to witness for

themselves what Japan's alliance partner, the U.S., is truly like, and the role that Japan plays in the international community, as well as to promote mutual understanding between the two countries. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, this program was implemented as a Tokyo Dispatch Program² in March 2021. Meanwhile, the Project to Promote Exchanges and Enhance Mutual Understanding Between Japan and the United States, which has been implemented in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) from FY 2020 to facilitate cultural and educational exchanges between Japanese and American middle and high school students, was organized on a larger scale in FY 2022 (see the Column on page 204).

(6) The United Nations Forces and U.S. Forces in Japan

Coincident with the start of the Korean War in June 1950, the UN forces was established in July of the same year based on the recommendation of UN Security Council resolution 83 in June. Following the ceasefire agreement concluded in July 1953, the United Nations Command (UNC) Headquarters was relocated to Seoul, South Korea in July 1957, and UNC-Rear (UNC-R) was established in Japan. Established at Yokota Air Base, UNC-R currently has four military staff members including a stationed commander, as well as military attachés from nine countries who are stationed at embassies in Tokyo as liaison officers for the UN forces. Based on Article 5 of the Agreement Regarding the Status of the United Nations Forces in Japan, the UN forces in Japan may use the U.S. Forces' facilities and areas in Japan to the minimum extent required to provide support for military logistics for the UN forces. At present, the UN forces in Japan are authorized to use the following seven facilities: Camp Zama, U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, U.S. Fleet Activities, Sasebo, Yokota Air Base, Kadena Air Base, MCAS Futenma and White Beach Area.

In July 2019, a joint board was held between the Government of Japan and UNC. The meetings saw discussions held over the situation on the Korean

² Participants from Okinawa are invited to Tokyo to meet related persons involved in Japan-U.S. relations and experts active in the international community (including online meetings), as well as visit and tour various facilities.

Column

Project to Promote Exchanges and Enhance Mutual Understanding between Japan and the U.S. (Youth Exchange Program)

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Since 2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), has conducted exchange programs for the children of U.S. Forces personnel and local junior and high school students in communities that host U.S. Forces Japan. This program aims to nurture human resources who will take an active role in the international society as well as to increase mutual understanding between Japanese and American junior and senior high school students through cultural and educational exchanges.

In 2022, the program was held at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni (Yamaguchi Prefecture), Camp Kuwae (Camp Lester) (Okinawa Prefecture), U.S. Fleet Activities Sasebo (Nagasaki Prefecture), Misawa Air Base (Aomori Prefecture), and Camp Zama (Kanagawa Prefecture). This column introduces the voices of both Japanese and U.S. students who participated in the program at Camp Kuwae in Okinawa Prefecture.

● Yuina Pope, Lester Middle School

I am glad I was selected to participate in this exchange program. Even though the exchange students had little trouble communicating verbally, I realized that language might not be the only barrier to break down. This experience helped me learn the small cultural differences that I did not notice before. In the beginning, the way we communicated was like through a wall. However, the more time I spent with my groupmates, the more I started to see that we could be friends instead of diplomats. This short time will forever impact my perspective.

● CHINEN Ami, Junior High School Attached to Faculty Education, Ryukyu University

I participated in this program on October 1 and 2, where I engaged in exchanges with students from Lester Middle School located in the air base. At the exchanges, in order to learn about the characteristics of our mutual cultures, we split up into four groups, each comprising junior high school students from Japan and the U.S., and worked to produce short plays and local character mascots featuring the characteristics of each country. In one of the short plays, the actor entered a rest room in Japan and, upon seeing too many buttons, became confused about which one to push to flush the toilet. This was a surprise to me. In addition, the tour of the American school made me realize the significant differences from Japanese ones. For example, the library was about four times larger than the one in our school, there were many sofas of various styles where students could relax, and there were rooms where students could make things with 3D printers, theater rooms, and others. I felt that both Japan and the U.S. have many of their own good points. I hope that this opportunity will bring about more exchanges between students of Japan and the U.S. in the future, and that we can incorporate the good aspects of our respective cultures for exchange programs that promote mutual understanding.



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs YOSHIKAWA Yuumi, and Ginowan Mayor MATSUGAWA Masanori, interacting with students (October 2, Ginowan City, Okinawa Prefecture)



Students giving a group presentation (October 2, Ginowan City, Okinawa Prefecture)

Peninsula, with the two sides reaching an agreement on notification procedures in case of unusual occurrences

related to the UN forces in Japan. The Government of Japan will continue to work closely with the UN forces.

3 Global Security

(1) Regional Security

In the international community, a historical shift in the power balance, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region, is occurring. In light of the numerous security challenges confronting this region, there is a need for Japan to cooperate with its allies and like-minded countries and others. In particular, it is more important than ever to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. There is also a need for Japan to fundamentally reinforce its own defense capabilities. At the same time, by actively strengthening bilateral and multilateral security cooperation with each country, Japan has been making efforts to realize a desirable regional security environment for Japan.

ASEAN is located in a geopolitically strategic position and faces Japan's important sea lane. A stable and prosperous ASEAN region is crucial to the stability and prosperity not only of the East Asia region but also of the international community. The Japan-Philippines Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2") was launched in April. At the inaugural meeting, the two sides concurred on starting to consider frameworks to facilitate reciprocal visits as well as reciprocal provision of supplies and services in order to further enhance and facilitate cooperation such as exercises between Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and the Armed Forces of the Philippines. In May, Japan and Thailand signed an Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, accelerating consultations between the two countries toward the realization of concrete defense equipment transfer. In June, Japan and Singapore concurred to commence negotiations on the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology. To ensure the rule of law in the seas, Japan also provides continuous support to the Philippines, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Indonesia, and other countries to improve the law enforcement capabilities of their coast guard authorities. "SAPPHIRE" is an initiative in which the Japan Coast Guard and the

U.S. Coast Guard collaborate to conduct training for third-country agencies, and the first program was conducted in May for the Philippine Coast Guard.

Japan and India held three summit meetings—during Prime Minister Kishida's visit to India in March, at the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders' Meeting in May, and at the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo. At these talks, Japan and India affirmed that they would work to further develop the "Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership." The second Japan-India 2+2 Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting was held in September, where the Ministers confirmed the substantial expansion of bilateral security and defense cooperation and concurred on continuing to conduct bilateral and multilateral exercises in a multilayered manner going forward. At the working-level, the Fourth Japan-India Cyber Dialogue was convened in June, and both sides exchanged views on their respective cyber policies and cooperation in the cyber domain, among other topics.

At the Japan-Australia Leaders Video Teleconference Meeting in January, Japan and Australia signed the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA), aimed at facilitating cooperation such as joint exercises, disaster relief activities, and other forms of cooperation between the JSDF and Australian Defense Force. At the Japan-Australia Leaders' Meeting held in October during Prime Minister Kishida's visit to Perth, the two leaders concurred on the recognition that the "Special Strategic Partnership" between the two countries has been elevated to a new level. They also signed a new Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation. The two leaders concurred that this Declaration is a compass that will guide the direction of Japan-Australia security and defense cooperation for the next 10 years, and that the two countries will further strengthen security and defense cooperation in accordance with the Declaration, including cooperation between the JSDF and Australian Defense Force. The



Japan-Australia “2+2” (December 9, Tokyo)

tenth Japan-Australia Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations (“2+2”) was held in December, where the four Ministers followed up promptly on the outcomes of the Leader’s Meeting held in October. They affirmed that they would identify the bilateral cooperation that should be implemented as soon as possible based on the aforementioned Declaration, and then work together on this identified cooperation toward realizing Japan-Australia cooperation and Japan-U.S.-Australia cooperation in the field of security going forward, alongside promoting multilayered cooperation between like-minded countries. With regard to ship-to-ship transfers,³ the Australian Defence Force carried out surveillance operations by their naval vessels in late June and late October and by their aircraft at the end of February.

In relation to the UK, which is Japan’s “Global strategic partner,” at the Japan-UK Summit Meeting held in May, the two countries affirmed their agreement in principle to the Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement, which facilitates cooperation in areas such as joint exercises between the JSDF and the UK Armed Forces, disaster relief activities, and other forms of cooperation. Thereafter, at the Japan-UK Summit Meeting in January 2023, Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak signed the Agreement, and the two leaders concurred in further deepening security and defense cooperation. In December 2022, Japan, the UK, and Italy decided and announced the joint development of a next-generation fighter jet under the Global Combat Air Program (GCAP). The

three countries shared the view that they expect this cooperation to be a foundation for global safety, stability, and prosperity over the coming decades. With regard to ship-to-ship transfers, naval vessels from the UK Armed Forces engaged in surveillance operations in mid-January, early February, late February, and late September.

With France, which Japan shares an “Exceptional Partnership” with, the Sixth Japan-France Foreign and Defense Ministers’ Meeting (“2+2”) was convened in January. The Ministers shared the view of raising cooperation in the Indo-Pacific to a higher level and further promoting cooperation to address regional situations and challenges facing the international community. France dispatched its Navy frigate *Vendémiaire* in March and the Falcon 200 Maritime Patrol Aircraft (MPA) in October to the waters around Japan, including the East China Sea to conduct surveillance operations against illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean-flagged vessels. At the Japan-France Summit Meeting held in January 2023, the two leaders welcomed the progress in substantive cooperation, including reciprocal visits of assets and joint exercises between Japan and France, and concurred in deepening cooperation between the two countries.

In relation to Germany, the Chief of the German Air Force and German Air Force aircraft visited Japan in September and held the first Japan-German joint exercises in Japan. In addition, the Japan-Germany Foreign and Defense Ministers’ Meeting (“2+2”) was held in November, where the Ministers concurred on promoting concrete measures to deepen Japan-Germany security and defense cooperation, including economic security.

At the Japan-Italy Summit Meeting held in May, Japan welcomed the progress in Japan-Italy security cooperation, including joint exercises in the Gulf of Aden by the Japan Maritime SDF and the Italian Navy, and the training of Japan Air SDF pilots by the Italian Air Force, and valued the formulation of the documents on the Indo-Pacific published by Italy, based on the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. At the

³ In this context, “ship-to-ship transfers” refers to the transfers to or from North Korea-flagged vessels of any goods or items at sea, which UN Security Council resolution 2375 (adopted in September 2017) prohibits the UN member states from facilitating or engaging in.

Japan-Italy Summit Meeting held in January 2023, the two leaders concurred in upgrading the relationship between the two countries to that of “strategic partners,” and shared the view to establish consultations between the respective foreign and defense authorities as well as to further promote cooperation in the field of security.

In March, the EU released “The Strategic Compass of the European Union,” setting out its strategic guidelines for the next 10 years. In this document, the EU clearly stated that it aims to further develop partnerships with like-minded countries and strategic partners, including Japan. At the Japan-EU Summit convened in May, both sides concurred on strengthening cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, and on aiming to expand substantive cooperation in the fields of cyber security, addressing disinformation, maritime security, and crisis management. In relation to NATO, Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with Secretary General of NATO Jens Stoltenberg in June during the NATO Summit, which was attended for the first time by a Prime Minister of Japan. At the meeting, the two sides concurred on the importance of deepening Japan-NATO cooperation more than ever before, based on the recognition that the security of Europe and of the Indo-Pacific is inseparable.

At the Japan-Canada Foreign Ministers’ Meeting held in October, the two Ministers announced the “Japan-Canada Action Plan for contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region”, and concurred on further advancing concrete and robust cooperation and coordination between the two countries going forward. This Action Plan includes cooperation in response to violations of the UN Security Council resolutions on North Korea, such as illegal ship-to-ship transfers,

which Canada has been proactively addressing since 2018, efforts to make the greatest use of the Japan-Canada Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), and cooperation on energy security, among other matters. The fifth Japan-Canada Foreign and Defense Vice Ministerial Meeting (“2+2”) was held in March and the 12th Japan-Canada Political-Military (PM) Dialogue in December. With regard to joint exercises with the Canadian Armed Forces, the Japan-Canada joint exercise “KAEDEx,” which has been conducted every year since 2017, was held in September. A number of multilateral joint exercises were also conducted. As for responding to illegal ship-to-ship transfers, a naval vessel of the Canadian Armed Forces conducted surveillance operations from mid-September, while aerial surveillance by aircraft was carried out for about one month from late April and about one month from early October.

There are various issues of concern in relation to China, such as its intrusion into Japan’s territorial waters, based on its own assertions in the areas around the Senkaku Islands, an inherent territory of Japan, the rapid strengthening of its military power without transparency, and increasing activities by its military in the waters and air spaces surrounding Japan. Japan will continue to make use of opportunities at high-level dialogues, including summit meetings and foreign ministers’ meetings, to firmly assert its position and resolve the issues of concern one by one, as well as to take a calm and resolute approach while strongly requesting for China’s concrete action. As China’s military trends are a matter of serious concern for Japan, Japan is working on communicating its policies through security dialogues such as the Japan-China Security Dialogue, as well as efforts to build multilayered channels for exchanges. At the same time, Japan is communicating its concerns and urging China to improve transparency in relation to its defense policies and military power, as well as to take more concrete actions to contribute to the security environment and to the region, including Japan. The Maritime and Aerial Communication Mechanism between the defense authorities of Japan and China that commenced operation in 2018 is aimed at promoting mutual understanding and confidence and avoiding unexpected collision, and the leaders of Japan and China concurred on the early launch of a



Meeting between Prime Minister Kishida and NATO Secretary General Stoltenberg (June 29, Spain, Madrid; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

hotline under this Mechanism at the Japan-China Summit Meeting held in November.

In relation to the Republic of Korea (ROK), based on the recognition of the importance of Japan-ROK as well as Japan-U.S.-ROK cooperation toward the denuclearization of North Korea, the two countries held a Japan-ROK Summit Meeting (November), Japan-ROK Leaders' Meeting (September), Japan-ROK Summit Telephone Meeting (October), Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meetings (February, July, August, September), Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers' Telephone Meeting (February, March, May, October, November (2 times)), Japan-U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting (June, November), and Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting (February, July, September), where the two sides affirmed that Japan and the ROK, as well as Japan, the U.S. and the ROK, would work closely together. In particular, at the Japan-ROK Summit Meeting held for the first time in three years, the two leaders affirmed cooperation on the issue concerning North Korea, and toward the realization of a free and open Indo-Pacific. Based on the Japan-U.S.-ROK Defense Ministers' Meeting held in June, the three countries conducted joint exercises (August, September, October), in order to further promote trilateral cooperation to respond to regional security issues.

Peace and stability in the Middle East region is vital to the peace and prosperity of the international community including Japan. The Middle East is one of the world's key energy suppliers, and approximately 90% of Japan's crude oil imports rely on the region. It is, therefore, extremely important to ensure the safety of navigation of Japan-related vessels in this region. As Japan's independent efforts toward ensuring peace and stability in the Middle East region and the safety of Japan-related vessels, the Government of Japan has made a Cabinet decision in December 2019 on (1) making further diplomatic efforts toward easing tensions and stabilizing the situation in the Middle East, (2) taking thorough measures for ensuring safety of navigation including robust information sharing with relevant stakeholders, and (3) utilizing vessels and aircraft of the SDF for strengthening its information gathering posture. Japan has continued to conduct information gathering activities using SDF vessels and aircraft in the waters of the Middle East since January 2020.

In addition, Japan has actively participated in and contributed to multilateral frameworks in the region, including the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), in order to strengthen security cooperation in the region. The ARF is an important framework for dialogue on security in which various entities participate including North Korea and the EU, with the aims of improving the security environment of the Indo-Pacific region through dialogues and cooperation on political and security issues. It is also an important forum that focuses on confidence-building through various initiatives. At the 29th ARF Ministerial Meeting held in August, participating ministers candidly exchanged views mainly on regional and international affairs, including issues concerning Ukraine, Taiwan, the East and South China Seas, North Korea, and Myanmar, as well as the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Japan is also making a pro-active contribution through, for example, serving as a co-chair of all the Inter-Sessional Meetings (ISM) on Maritime Security, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime, Disaster Relief, and ICTs Security.

Furthermore, in addition to government-to-government dialogues (track 1), Japan utilizes frameworks where participants from both public and private sectors exchange opinions and explain their security policies (track 1.5), as well as other means, as part of its efforts to promote other countries' understanding of Japan's security policies, and to facilitate cooperation and confidence-building in the region.

(2) Economic Security

A Trends Surrounding Economic Security

In recent years, various challenges have been surfacing in fields that cut across national security and the economy. The scope of the national security domain is expanding rapidly. Various risks are emerging, such as the risk of stolen or leaked advanced civilian technologies being converted to military use in other countries, the risk of suppliers influenced by foreign governments obstructing the stable operation of critical infrastructure such as telecommunications, the risk of disruptions to the supply of critical goods due to dependence on other countries, and the risk of being subjected to economic

coercion by some countries seeking to achieve political objectives by using their advantages in the supply chain or their purchasing power in the market as leverage.

In light of the emergence of various threats through economic means, securing Japan's national interests such as peace, security, and economic prosperity by carrying out economic measures, in other words economic security, is becoming increasingly important. In view of this, Japan is accelerating efforts, such as the enactment of the Economic Security Promotion Act in May. This Act is centered around four pillars: enhancing the resilience of supply chains, ensuring security and reliability of essential infrastructure, public-private cooperation regarding specified critical technologies, and non-disclosure of selected patent applications.

B Recent Initiatives by Other Countries

Other countries have also been rapidly advancing initiatives to promote economic security in recent years.

The U.S. has taken the lead in adopting and implementing regulations and promotion measures from the perspectives of maintaining its technological advantage and addressing supply chain risks, as evidenced by its National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2019, among others. As a part of these efforts, the U.S. enacted the CHIPS and Science Act in August 2022, which provides for direct financial assistance and tax credits to companies that invest in semiconductor production in the U.S. In October, the U.S. released its National Security Strategy, which outlines the U.S. policy to strengthen its industry and innovation base through expanding investments in key areas and securing the safety of critical infrastructure and supply chains, with the goal to maintain and fortify its competitive edge. Moreover, it also set out the U.S. strategy to continue strengthening its resilience against malicious activities in cyberspace, and its responses to counter intellectual property theft, forced technology transfer, and other attempts to harm its technological superiority. In November, the Federal Communications Commission issued an administrative order to prohibit the authorization of imports to and sale within the U.S., of communications equipment that could potentially pose a security threat to the country.

The EU promotes strengthening resilience against the risk of supply disruptions to critical technologies

and materials, based on the concept of “strategic autonomy.” In February, the European Commission published the European Chips Act, which sets out the targets of establishing a supply chain within the region that covers the research and development, design, through to the production of advanced semiconductors, and of growing the EU's global market share of next-generation semiconductors produced within the region to 20% or more by 2030. In September, the European Commission announced that it would put forward a bill on the European Critical Raw Materials Act and establish a new European Sovereignty Fund to strategically enhance the production capabilities, storage, and overall support for critical raw materials within the region. Furthermore, in the same month, the European Commission proposed a Single Market Emergency Instrument (SMEI), drawing from the lessons of the energy crisis triggered by Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The SMEI is aimed at securing goods with strategic importance and guaranteeing their free movement within the EU's single market, in preparation for similar crises that may occur in the future. In addition, the Foreign Subsidies Regulation (FSR) entered into force in January 2023. Under the FSR, the European Commission may conduct investigations in cases of suspected market distortive effects caused by foreign subsidies, in relation to activities by companies receiving subsidies from non-EU governments and operating within the EU market. Besides this, in December 2021, the European Commission proposed an Anti-Coercion Instrument (ACI) to set out procedures and standards for initiating countermeasures as a means of “last resort” against economic coercion to EU Member States by third countries, in case consultations or other measures fail. Deliberations on the ACI are currently ongoing (as of January 2023).

Australia has, thus far, positioned the securing of national resilience and the protection of assets and infrastructure as its national interests, and advanced concrete measures to that end. These include the formulation of the International Cyber and Critical Tech Engagement Strategy (April 2021), which sets out the policy for promoting the identification of technologies that should be protected, the tightening of investment screening systems for land and businesses related to sensitive national security (January

2021), and the establishment of the Next Generation Technologies Fund, which invests approximately 60 billion yen over 10 years from 2016 into game-changing technologies on national security. In December 2021, the Security Legislation Amendment (Critical Infrastructure Protection) Act 2022 came into effect. This law is aimed at strengthening the resilience of critical infrastructure, and sets out the expansion of critical infrastructure departments and their responsibilities, as well as government support and intervention measures in the event of cyber security incidents.

In October, Canada announced the policy of prohibiting, in principle, significant transactions by foreign state-owned enterprises in Canada's critical minerals sector, as a part of its efforts to strengthen the resilience of supply chains for batteries, electric vehicles, critical minerals, and others. In December, an act to amend the Investment Canada Act, including provisions on setting new application requirements when investing in prescribed business sectors, was submitted to the Parliament.

C Diplomatic Efforts Toward the Promotion of Economic Security

Diplomacy plays a significant role in promoting economic security. Japan, in cooperation with the international community, engages in diplomacy in areas such as further strengthening cooperation with its ally and like-minded countries, responding to issues based on existing rules, and rule-making to address new issues.

In relation to further strengthening cooperation with its ally and like-minded countries, Japan leverages cooperation under the Japan-U.S. Economic Policy Consultative Committee Meeting (the Economic “2+2”) or Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) and frameworks such as the G7 and others, as well as strengthens cooperation with Southeast Asian countries, to expand and deepen cooperation with like-minded countries with a view to developing common recognition and coordinating policies.

In responding to issues based on existing rules, Japan has worked on correcting unfair trade policies and

practices of others in cooperation with like-minded countries from the perspective of consistency with existing rules including WTO agreements, EPAs, investment-related treaties, and others. Furthermore, Japan gathers and analyzes information on economic security measures and trade rules, drawing on the efforts of like-minded countries, and works to ensure that Japan's economic security policy needs are appropriately met.

With regard to rule-making related to new issues, existing international agreements are not adequate for addressing areas such as data, critical and emerging technologies, including the fifth-generation mobile communications systems (5G), economic coercion, and others. In fields where there is a need to further develop international rules, Japan continues to play a leading part in international debates in cooperation with like-minded countries.

D Cooperation with its Ally and Like-minded Countries

Japan made particularly significant progress in cooperation with its ally and like-minded countries in 2022. Firstly, during the Economic “2+2” in July, Japan and the U.S. engaged in discussions on responses to challenges to sovereignty of each country and the international order posed by the use of economic influence, such as economic coercion and unfair and opaque lending practices. During the talks, the Japanese side proposed deepening discussions on economic coercion leading up to the 2023 G7 Hiroshima Summit. At the meeting, the two sides concurred on promoting cooperation between Japan and the U.S., as well as with like-minded countries, in areas such as expanding the share of Open RAN⁴ in the global 5G market and the diffusion of related infrastructure. They also concurred on the need to build more resilient supply chains based on a rules-based multilateral free trade system and in cooperation with like-minded countries. In addition, the Ministers also exchanged views on bilateral cooperation on strengthening supply chain resilience in areas such as batteries and critical minerals.

At the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders’

4 Refers to radio access networks (RAN) that can be built in an open way by a combination of multiple vendors. It offers the advantage of contributing to the mitigation of supply chain risks.

Meeting convened in May in Tokyo, in the field of critical and emerging technologies, the leaders concurred on continuing to cooperate in areas such as advancing interoperability and security of 5G, leveraging their complementary strengths across the supply chains, including semiconductors, strengthening cooperation at international standardization organizations such as the Telecommunication Standardization Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), and strengthening horizon scanning cooperation. In addition to announcing the launch of the Common Statement of Principles on Critical Technology Supply Chains, the relevant agencies of the four countries also signed a new Memorandum of Cooperation on 5G Supplier Diversification and Open RAN.

Cooperation in economic security was also affirmed at the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meetings held in May and November, and the G7 Summit in June. In particular, at the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in May, clear statements on economic security were set out in the G7 Foreign Ministers' Communiqué for the first time. Furthermore, at the G7 Elmau Summit, the G7 Leaders' Communiqué also clearly mentioned economic security for the first time, and affirmed the deepening of cooperation to respond to economic coercion. The G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement issued in November affirmed that the G7 will continue to enhance coordination and cooperation, within and beyond the G7, including on economic security challenges, and to stand up to acts of economic coercion.

With regard to Japan's relations with Southeast Asian countries, the Joint Statement between Japan and the Kingdom of Cambodia, issued in March, stated that the two leaders expressed concerns about economic coercion and emphasized the importance of strengthening the international economic order to counter new challenges such as economic coercion. At the same meeting, the two leaders also confirmed the importance of advancing the development of secure, open, and transparent 5G and beyond 5G networks (i.e. 6G) as well as the importance of principles such as openness or diversity for ensuring long term security, reliability and resilience of telecommunication infrastructures including 5G. The Joint Statement issued from the Japan-Philippines Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2") held in April also expressed concern

for and strong opposition to economic coercion to achieve political ends, stressed the importance of an international law-based economic order, and highlighted the importance of close coordination in dealing with economic coercion.

E Response to Economic Coercion

Among the new issues described in "C" above, economic coercion that involves using economic ties with a specific country and taking measures or threatening to take measures in an abusive, arbitrary, or opaque manner, in order to achieve political objectives, is becoming a particularly serious problem against the backdrop of globalization and the growing economic interdependence between countries. Such economic coercion poses challenges to a free, open and rules-based international order.

The new National Security Strategy formulated by the Government of Japan in December also sets out the policy for promoting effective efforts against economic coercion, while working with the ally and like-minded countries. As an issue that cannot be adequately addressed by existing international agreements, it is important to foster a common understanding within the international community by working with its ally and like-minded countries and strategically raising international awareness.

F MOFA's Role

Changes in the global security environment have increased a need to maintain and strengthen the rules-based international economic order, while also taking into account the perspective of security. MOFA is the ministry that is responsible for security policies, external economic relations and international law, and it continues to lead diplomatic efforts related to economic security, as well as to work proactively to maintain and strengthen the international order.

(3) Cyber

Today, cross-border cyberspace has become an indispensable social infrastructure for conducting all activities in countries around the world. While its importance and public nature are growing due to its role as a public space that all citizens are engaged in, the risks that impede free access to and utilization of

cyberspace are becoming increasingly serious. In particular, the threat of cyberattacks, in which the risk of exposure is relatively low and attackers have an advantage, is growing rapidly. Cyberattacks have been used constantly to disable or destroy critical infrastructures, interfere in foreign elections, demand ransoms, and steal sensitive information, even in the form of state-sponsored cyberattacks. It is highly likely that hybrid warfare, combining military and non-military means to achieve military objectives, will be conducted in an even more sophisticated form in the time ahead.

Based on this recognition, MOFA is promoting the following diplomatic efforts to realize a free, fair and secure cyberspace: promoting the rule of law, efforts to deter cyberattacks, promoting confidence-building measures, and cooperating on capacity building.

To promote the rule of law, establishing the rule of law in cyberspace is important for stabilizing relations between nations. From the viewpoint that existing international law is also applicable to activities involving the use of cyberspace, Japan participates actively in discussions in the Open-ended Working Group (OEWG), which all UN member states participate in, for the term from 2021 to 2025.

As an initiative to deter cyberattacks, Japan has issued the “public attribution,” which is for each country to publicly condemn or express concerns about groups conducting cyberattacks. Japan has publicly condemned North Korea’s involvement behind the scenes on the WannaCry⁵ incident in 2017, as well as the long-running cyberattacks perpetrated by the China-based group APT10 in 2018. In July 2021, the Press Secretary of MOFA issued a statement on cyberattacks, assessing that a group known as APT40, which the Chinese government is behind, as well as a group known as Tick, which Unit 61419 of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army is behind, were highly likely to have been involved in these cyberattacks, and firmly condemned these activities in coordination with Japan’s ally and likeminded countries. From the perspective of deterring cyberattacks, it is also important to promote the rule of law. Through means such as discussions in the international fora, it is necessary to formulate and

promote rules for the international community that make a state accountable for a cyberattack carried out within its territory, even when the cyberattack is not attributed to the state actor, under certain conditions.

As a means of promoting confidence-building measures, Japan has engaged in consultations on cyber issues with 14 countries and regions to date, taking into account the need to deepen mutual understanding and build confidence between states in order to prevent the inadvertently heightening of tensions among states or aggravating of the situation between countries as a result of the highly anonymous and covert nature of cyberspace. Consultations were held with India in June 2022, and with France in July the same year. Japan also places importance on regional efforts, and engages in discussions on confidence-building measures that should be taken in the future at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in which ASEAN, the U.S., the EU among others participate.

With regard to capacity building support, in view of the borderless nature of cyberspace, enhancing the capacity of other countries and regions contributes to the security environment for the world as a whole. Relevant ministries and agencies including MOFA continue to provide support for capacity building and promote initiatives through international organizations, mainly to ASEAN, which is the core of the Indo-Pacific region. Specifically, Japan contributes to the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), provides cybersecurity-related equipment through grant aid, implements the JICA Country/Knowledge Co-Creation Program (KCCP), and contributes to the Cybersecurity Multi-Donor Trust Fund through the World Bank, among other initiatives. The Quad Cybersecurity Partnership was launched at the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders’ Meeting held in May, and the four leaders confirmed that they would advance concrete efforts, including providing support for capacity building in the Indo-Pacific region.

Japan announced the new National Security Strategy in December, which states: “In order to ensure secure and stable use of cyberspace, especially

5 A malicious program that North Korea is believed to have been involved in. In May 2017, more than 300,000 computers in more than 150 countries were infected and ransom was demanded.

the security of the nation and critical infrastructures, the response capabilities in the field of cyber security should be strengthened equal to or surpassing the level of leading Western countries.” To that end, it states the introduction of active cyber defense and the establishment of a new organization that will comprehensively coordinate policies in the field of cyber security in a centralized manner. The Strategy also states that Japan will improve coordination with other policies that contribute to the enhancement of cyber security, such as economic security and the enhancement of technical capabilities related to national security, and continue to work for the enhancement of information gathering and analysis, attribution and its public announcement, as well as formulation of international frameworks and rules in a coordinated manner with its ally, like-minded countries, and others.

Based on this Strategy, Japan will continue to contribute to the realization of a free, fair and secure cyberspace.

(4) The Oceans and Seas

Japan is surrounded by the sea on all sides and is blessed with a vast exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and long coastlines. It is a maritime nation that has achieved economic growth through maritime trade and development of marine resources, and has pursued “Free, Open and Stable Seas.” “Free, Open and Stable Seas,” which are upheld by maritime order based on the rule of law including freedom of navigation and overflight, rather than force, are essential for the peace and prosperity not only of Japan but also of the international community as a whole. To maintain and develop “Free, Open and Stable Seas,” Japan promotes initiatives to ensure safe maritime transport and cooperate on maritime security. Such initiatives are also important toward securing Japan’s maritime interests, which form the basis for Japan’s economic survival.

Japan is advancing efforts toward the realization of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” that aims to bring stability and prosperity to the Indo-Pacific region, in particular, by strengthening maritime order in the region where important sea lanes are located.

A Maritime Order

(A) Basic Stance

There is an increasing number of cases where the interests of countries clash with each other from the perspective of securing maritime interests and national security. In particular, in the seas of Asia, there has been an increasing number of cases of tension arising from friction between countries, and the international community is paying attention to these cases with much interest. At the 13th Asia Security Summit (Shangri-La Dialogue) held in Singapore in 2014, Prime Minister Abe shared the view that it was necessary to fully uphold the “Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea” (see 6(2) on page 252).

Japan also utilizes frameworks such as the G7 and ASEAN-related meetings including the East Asia Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)⁶ to actively send a message regarding the importance of “Free, Open and Stable Seas” based on the rule of law, and Japan’s stance on maritime security as well as the importance of international cooperation in this area. At the EAS held in October 2021, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan highly valued the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), which upholds values such as openness, transparency, inclusiveness, and the rule of law. He reiterated full support for the AOIP, which shares fundamental principles with FOIP, and called on each country for their support. In addition, at the ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting held in November 2022, Prime Minister Kishida spoke about the steady progress of concrete cooperation in the four priority areas of AOIP,⁷ including maritime cooperation, that contributes to the fundamental principles of AOIP, after the adoption of the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific by Japan and ASEAN in 2020.

(B) United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)

Also known as the “Constitution for the Oceans,” UNCLOS is the very basis of maritime order governed by the rule of law. Japan regards maritime order with

⁶ Regional cooperative frameworks with the participation of the 10 ASEAN countries as well as various countries, regions and organizations. In addition to the EAS and ARF, other examples include the ASEAN+3 (Japan, China, ROK) and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

⁷ The four areas of maritime cooperation, connectivity, SDGs and economy.

the Convention at the core as the cornerstone that safeguards Japan's maritime rights and interests while facilitating its maritime activities across the international community. As such, Japan actively contributes to discussions among concerned international organizations at conferences that include the Meetings of States Parties to the Convention, as well as to the sharing of ideas for achieving stability in the maritime legal order, in order to ensure that the convention will be even more widely applied and implemented appropriately (see 6(2) on page 252).

(C) Challenge to Japan's Maritime Sovereignty (Situation Surrounding the East China Sea) (see Chapter 2, Section 2, 2(1) B(D) on page 50)

In the East China Sea, China Coast Guard vessels intruded into Japan's territorial sea around the Senkaku Islands in rapid succession in 2022, and the number of days of navigation in the contiguous zone reached a record high of 336 days. Furthermore, there were repeated occurrences of China Coast Guard vessels intruding into the territorial sea and approaching Japanese fishing vessels, and the situation is becoming increasingly severe, with the number of hours of intrusion into the territorial sea hitting a record high of 72 hours and 45 minutes in December. Chinese military vessels and aircraft are also becoming increasingly active and expanding their operations. Furthermore, China has been continuing with unilateral resource development in areas where the EEZ and the continental shelf are pending delimitation. Additionally, in recent years, Japan has found numerous research projects being conducted by China in the waters surrounding Japan, such as the East China Sea, without Japan's consent.

Given China's continued unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the East China Sea, Japan will carefully monitor the trends and movements around its air and sea spaces, and continue to respond in a firm but calm manner while making claims that should be made. At the same time, it will promote cooperation with the relevant countries including the U.S. in order to achieve peace and stability in the East China Sea.

(D) Challenge to the Maritime Order (Problems Surrounding the South China Sea) (see Chapter 2, Section 2, 7(2) on page 95)

In the South China Sea, China has been conducting unilateral attempts to change the status quo, which run counter to the rule of law and openness, as well as attempting to create *faits accomplis*. These include the further militarization of disputed features. China has also continued or enhanced actions that escalate tensions in the region. The international community, including Japan, has expressed serious concerns over these actions. Japan strongly opposes unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion, and has consistently supported the full enforcement of the rule of law in the South China Sea, while focusing on ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight and ensuring the safety of sea lanes. Japan has also emphasized the importance of all parties involved with the South China Sea to work toward the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law, in particular the UNCLOS.

The issue with regard to the South China Sea is directly related to the peace and stability of the region and constitutes a legitimate concern of the international community. The issue is also an important matter of concern for Japan, which depends on marine transport for much of its resources and energy and which is a stakeholder that utilizes the South China Sea. Cooperation within the international community is of great importance in maintaining and developing "Free, Open and Stable Seas" based on the rule of law. For this reason, Japan supports the U.S. Freedom of Navigation Operations.⁸

B Ensuring Safe Maritime Transport

Japan actively contributes to ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight and safe maritime transport through counter-piracy measures in Asia and Africa as well as close partnership and cooperation with other countries.

(A) Counter-piracy Measures in Asia

According to the International Maritime Bureau (IMB)




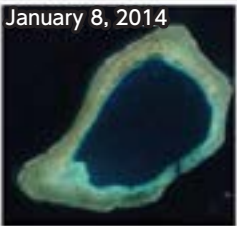
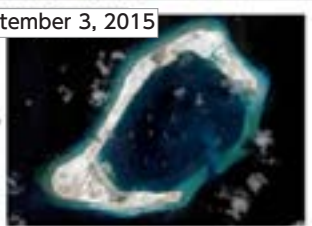



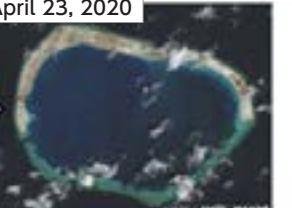
⁸ The U.S. Government explains its "freedom of navigation" operations as efforts to challenge excessive claims that can infringe freedom of navigation and overflight, and the right of lawful uses of the sea. One example of this is the navigation of the U.S. Navy's USS *Benfold* guided-missile destroyer through the waters around the Spratly Islands on September 8, 2021.

■ Uotsuri Island of Ishigaki City, Okinawa Prefecture



Photo: Office of Policy Planning and Coordination on Territory and Sovereignty, Cabinet Secretariat

■ Large-scale, rapid outpost building in the South China Sea by China

	Before reclamation	2015 (After reclamation)	2020
Fiery Cross Reef	August 14, 2014 	September 3, 2015 	March 27, 2020 
Subi Reef	January 8, 2014 	September 3, 2015 	March 27, 2020 
Mischief Reef	January 25, 2015 	September 8, 2015 	April 23, 2020 

Source: CSIS Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative/Digital Globe

of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the number of piracy cases in the seas of Southeast Asia was 62 in 2020, 56 in 2021, and 58 in 2022.

To encourage regional cooperation in coping with incidents such as acts of piracy in Asia, Japan took the initiative in formulating the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), which entered into force in 2006. Each of the contracting parties provides information and cooperates on incidents such as acts of piracy in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore and other regions, via the Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP-ISC) established in Singapore. To date, Japan has been supporting the activities of ReCAAP-ISC by dispatching the Executive Directors (left office in March 2022) and Assistant Directors and making financial contributions. Moreover, Japan is carrying out programs to support enhancing maritime law enforcement and surveillance capabilities of coastal states in Asia, which have been highly acclaimed in the international community.

(B) Counter-piracy Measures Off the Coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden

According to the IMB, the number of piracy and armed robbery cases off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden was 237 at its peak in 2011 but has since declined to a low level (zero in 2019 and 2020, one in 2021 (attempted attack), and zero in 2022). Despite efforts such as maritime operations of the navies and self-defense measures by merchant ships of various countries, the root causes of piracy off the coast of Somalia remain unresolved. There are presently still entities in these areas of the ocean that have the intention and capability to carry out acts of piracy.

Since 2009, Japan has been conducting counter-piracy operations by deploying Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyers (with coast guard officers on board) and P-3C patrol aircraft off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. To solve the root causes of piracy in these areas, Japan has been making multilayered efforts that include support for enhancing the maritime security capabilities of Somalia and its neighboring countries and ensuring the stability of Somalia.

Japan has supported the establishment of Information Sharing Centres in Yemen, Kenya and Tanzania, as well as the construction of the Djibouti Regional Training Centre (DRTC) by contributing 15.53 million US dollars to date to a fund established by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Moreover, Japan has contributed 4.5 million US dollars to an international trust fund that enhances capacity building for piracy prosecution, to support Somalia and its neighboring countries. In addition, Japan provided two patrol vessels to the Djibouti Coast Guard in 2015, and decided in 2021 to provide support for the construction of two patrol vessels as well as the improvement of a floating pier. Japan has also been supporting the enhancement of its capacity to secure maritime security through JICA's technical cooperation and joint exercises with the Deployment Surface Force for Counter-Piracy Enforcement. Furthermore, with a view to promoting the stability of Somalia, Japan has provided a total of over 500 million US dollars since 2007 aimed at supporting the recovery of basic social services, enhancing public security maintenance functions through support for the police, as well as revitalization of the domestic industries through vocational training, among other measures.

(C) Counter-piracy Measures in the Gulf of Guinea

According to the IMB, while the number of piracy and armed robbery cases in the Gulf of Guinea had remained at a high level in recent years with 64 cases in 2019 and 84 cases in 2020, it fell to 35 cases in 2021 and 19 cases in 2022. Moreover, in recent years, piracy cases have been occurring more frequently along the Central African coast in a shift from the previous piracy hotbed of the Western African coast. While the strengthening of maritime law enforcement capabilities among coastal states remains a key issue, such efforts are limited by financial constraints. Japan provides the coastal states with capacity building assistance through trainings conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and JICA, and is also involved in discussions in the international community through participation in the "G7++ Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea,"⁹ a cooperative and

⁹ In addition to the G7, non-G7 countries (+) and international organizations (+) participate in the Group.

coordination mechanism to address illegal maritime activities in the Gulf of Guinea.

C Cooperation on Maritime Security

(A) Capacity Building Assistance

Japan provides seamless assistance to various countries for capacity building in the area of maritime security, through cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), the Ministry of Defense and Self-Defense Forces, the Japan Coast Guard and other agencies.

MOFA provides capacity building assistance to law enforcement agencies and other organizations in developing countries, through the provision of equipment such as patrol vessels and human resource development implemented through bilateral ODA. With the aim of addressing the diverse illegal maritime activities that have been increasing further in recent years, MOFA provides support toward the Maritime Law Enforcement Capacity Building Project implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) under its Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP), and in cooperation with the Japan Coast Guard, develops training courses and conducts training and workshops related to measures against illegal maritime activities in the target countries.

The Ministry of Defense and Self-Defense Forces have provided capacity building assistance in the area of maritime security to Myanmar,¹⁰ Thailand, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Brunei to date. Through these support initiatives, cooperative relations with partners that share strategic interests with Japan are strengthened.

To provide capacity building assistance to coast guard authorities of coastal states of the Indo-Pacific, the Japan Coast Guard dispatches highly skilled Japan Coast Guard officials with expert knowledge as well as the Japan Coast Guard Mobile Cooperation Team (MCT), a special team that provides capacity building support, to the coast guard authorities of each country. In addition, the Japan Coast Guard also invites the coast guard officials from each country to Japan where it conducts training for them. It also administers the Maritime Safety and Security Policy Program, a Master's

level education program on maritime security policy that accepts coast guard officials from Asian countries. Through this program, the Japan Coast Guard contributes to the development of human resources with advanced practical and applied knowledge, knowledge on international law and international relations as well as research into the relevant case studies, the ability to conduct analysis and make proposals, and international communication skills.

When providing such capacity building assistance, Japan cooperates closely with like-minded countries including the U.S., Australia, India, the UK, and France.

(B) Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)

Consolidating and sharing a wide range of maritime information and understanding maritime domain effectively and efficiently are vital toward the realization of “Free, Open and Stable Seas.” Japan places great importance on international cooperation with like-minded countries, including Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) cooperation, in such maritime domain awareness (MDA) initiatives.

In recent years, progress has been made in the Indo-Pacific region to establish information sharing centers for the consolidation, analysis and sharing of maritime information, such as phenomena related to the safety of navigation and ship information. Japan has dispatched personnel, including Executive Directors (left office in March 2022) and Assistant Directors, to the ReCAAP-ISC based in Singapore, as well as liaison officers to the Information Fusion Centre (IFC) established by the Republic of Singapore Navy, and the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) established by the Indian Navy. Furthermore, the authorities of Japan and India exchange information based on the Implementing Arrangement for Deeper Cooperation between the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Indian Navy, signed on the occasion of the Japan-India Summit Meeting held in October 2018.

Japan also organized two previous sessions of the “ARF Workshop on International Cooperation on Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)” as an official

¹⁰ Assistance is currently suspended (as of December 2022)

event of the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security.

(5) Outer Space

In recent years, outer space has become congested due to its diversified use and increasing number of countries using space. In addition, the increase of space debris due to factors such as anti-satellite (ASAT) tests and satellite collisions poses a growing risk to the sustainable and stable use of outer space.

In order to cope with this situation, Japan has been engaging in initiatives such as strengthening Space Situational Awareness (SSA) and mission assurance for space systems. Japan has also been working on international rule-making and international space cooperation.

A Realization of the Rule of Law in Outer Space

The international community has been vigorously discussing international rule-making concerning outer space activities in a variety of ways. Japan has also been actively involved in these efforts toward establishing and strengthening the rule of law in outer space.

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), a permanent committee established under the UN General Assembly, plays an important role in international rule-making related to civil space activities.

Apart from the Committee, which engages in comprehensive discussions, COPUOS has the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee, which conducts reviews on issues related to space activities from scientific and technical aspects, and the Legal Subcommittee, which discusses legal matters arising from space activities.

At the session of the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee convened in February, active discussions were held on the long-term sustainability of outer space activities, in addition to individual themes, such as space debris and remote sensing.

At the session of the Legal Subcommittee convened from March to April, discussions were held on issues related to the definition of outer space and equitable access to the geostationary satellite orbit, as well as on Space Traffic Management (STM) and space resources, which have been attracting more attention in recent

years. In particular, with reference to space resources, intensive discussions were held on how international rules regarding space resources should be at the Working Group on Space Resources, newly established under the Legal Subcommittee in 2021 (chaired by Professor AOKI Setsuko of the Keio University Law School).

With regard to the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS), the Open-Ended Working Group, established for the period of 2022 to 2023 based on the resolution on “Reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours” jointly proposed by Japan, the UK, and other countries, held its first meeting in May and its second meeting in September. During these meetings, active discussions were held on the international laws applied to outer space, and responsible or irresponsible behaviors in outer space.

In April, Vice President of the U.S. Kamala Harris announced that the Government of the U.S. would not conduct destructive, direct-ascent ASAT missile testing. In response, the Government of Japan released a statement by the Press Secretary of MOFA, welcoming and supporting the announcement by the U.S. In addition, the Government of Japan also announced in September, at the aforementioned Open-Ended Working Group meeting, that it has made the same decision as the U.S. in view of its stance to actively promote discussions in the international fora toward the development of norms regarding responsible behaviors.

With regard to the declaration by the U.S., like-minded countries, including the U.S. and Japan, jointly submitted a resolution promoting this matter to the First Committee of the UN General Assembly. The resolution was adopted at the Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly in November, with the support of 154 countries.

Furthermore, with a view to contributing to the rule of law in outer space, Japan has been offering support to developing countries toward capacity building in the development and implementation of domestic space-related laws. Specifically, in May 2021, Japan announced that it would cooperate on the “Space Law for New Space Actors” project of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA). Under this initiative, Japan provides support to emerging space-faring

nations in the Asia Pacific region for the development and implementation of domestic space-related laws.

B International Dialogues and Consultations on Outer Space

Japan promotes dialogues and consultations on outer space primarily with major space-faring nations, represented by the U.S., and nations in the Asia-Pacific region (see D on page 201 about the relationship with the U.S.).

In particular, Japan regularly holds bilateral dialogues on outer space with the U.S., France, the EU, and India. In addition to exchanging information on their respective space policies, various exchanges of opinions are also held on subjects, including security cooperation and inter-agency cooperation.

As part of the efforts under the Quad (Japan-Australia-India-U.S.), at the Summit Meeting held in September 2021, the four leaders concurred on launching a working group on space to advance cooperation in the field of space. At the Quad Leaders' Meeting held in May 2022, the Quad Satellite Data Portal was launched to aggregate links to satellite data resources held by the four countries, and the four leaders expressed their intention to support countries in the region through the utilization of space capabilities to respond to extreme precipitation events as well as efforts for the sustainable use of space.

With regard to multilateral meetings, the 28th session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF-28), co-organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), and the Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology (VAST), was held in November. At this Forum, discussions were held on expanding the space industry, promoting sustainable space activities for the future, and contributing to the resolution of social issues.

C International Space Exploration and the International Space Station (ISS)

The progress of space exploration and application for peaceful purposes is a common benefit for all humankind, and is also of diplomatic significance.

In 2019, Japan decided to participate in the Artemis Program, a U.S.-led international space exploration program. In 2020, with the Artemis Program in mind, eight countries, including Japan and the U.S., signed the Artemis Accords, which set out a political commitment to establish principles for creating a safe and transparent environment in promoting outer space activities. Thereafter, more countries signed the Artemis Accords, and the number of signatories increased to 21 countries as of July 2022.

In 2020, the Governments of Japan and the U.S. concluded a Memorandum of Understanding concerning Cooperation on the Civil Lunar Gateway, a human outpost in the lunar vicinity that will be developed as a part of the Artemis Program. In November 2022, MEXT and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) signed an Implementing Arrangement setting out the details of cooperation on the Civil Lunar Gateway.

Furthermore, the Governments of Japan and the U.S. advanced negotiations on the Framework Agreement between Japan and the United States of America for Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, which is a new legal framework to further facilitate Japan-U.S. space cooperation, represented by the exploration and use of outer space. The two governments signed the Agreement in January 2023.

With regard to the International Space Station (ISS), NASA announced in January that the U.S. would extend the operation period of the ISS until 2030. Following that, in November, Japan also announced its participation in the operational extension ahead of other countries and organizations.

In the ISS, Japan provides emerging space-faring nations with the opportunities to conduct experiments using the ISS/Japanese Experiment Module “Kibo” and to deploy cube satellites, with the aim of providing support for capacity building in the field of space. In August 2022, the Republic of Moldova's first satellite, a nanosatellite, was deployed. The Workshop on Africa-Japan CubeSat Cooperation was held in the same month, co-organized by JAXA, Kyushu Institute of Technology, the Center for Spatial Information Science at the University of Tokyo, and organizations on the

Tunisian side. Seven African countries¹¹ presented reports on the capabilities they have gained through the nanosatellites acquired with Japan's support as well as the issues they faced, and discussions were held on utilizing satellite data to build up satellite technologies and resolve social issues.

D Addressing Global Issues through the Utilization of Space Technology

Amidst rising expectations of space technology's potential in resolving global issues in recent years, Japan has been promoting international cooperation based on the utilization of its internationally superior space technologies, and contributing toward the achievement of the SDGs.

For example, the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) (Climate Change 2021: The Physical Science Basis) contributed by Working Group I of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), released in August, cites many scientific papers that used Japanese satellites and utilizes Earth observation satellite data from Japan. In these ways, Japanese knowhow and data are continuously provided to the international community. In addition, Japan has provided the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) with examples of the utilization of space technology, such as the outcomes of observation of greenhouse gases from space, which Japan holds the world's longest observation record for, and the JICA-JAXA Forest Early Warning System in the Tropics (JJ-FAST). These serve as useful information for the Global Stocktake (GST), which is a five-yearly evaluation process of the global progress status toward achieving the long-term targets of the Paris Agreement.

Japan also provides, at no charge, the Global Satellite Mapping of Precipitation (GSMaP) system, which utilizes multiple satellites to observe the global rainfall situation. This system is applied to a wide range of uses, including rainfall situation monitoring, disaster management and agriculture, in 141 countries and regions around the world. Furthermore, Japan took the lead in launching "Sentinel Asia," an initiative to provide free observational satellite information during disasters

to contribute to disaster management in the Asia-Pacific region. To date, this project has responded to more than 400 emergency requests from 36 countries. Japan also holds workshops for those who are involved in disaster readiness and response, and contributes to capacity building in the utilization of satellite data during disasters in Asian countries.

In light of the global spread of COVID-19, JAXA, NASA, and the European Space Agency (ESA) joined forces to implement an observation project to capture information on the Earth's environment, economic activities, and other aspects (such as changes in carbon dioxide concentration in large cities, changes in airport hangars and car parks, etc.) before and after the pandemic. The results of their analysis are published on a dedicated website.

(6) Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

The international community is still experiencing regional and domestic conflicts as a result of various factors including differences in race, religion, and history, or due to the impact of poverty and disparity. In recent years, the protracted nature of these conflicts has particularly become a challenging problem. For this reason, in addition to post-conflict peacekeeping through the dispatch of UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) and other means, peacebuilding efforts with building a foundation for development in mind, are an agenda for the international community as a whole, in order to prevent conflicts and their recurrence, as well as post-conflict nation-building and the consolidation of sustainable peace.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine in 2022 had a significant negative impact on the global economy, society and stability. For example, it gave rise to a serious humanitarian crisis due to rising food and energy prices. Furthermore, there have also been concerns in recent years about the impact of climate change on peace and stability. As issues facing the international community become more complex and diverse, peacebuilding initiatives are becoming increasingly important.

11 Seven African countries: Kenya, Mauritius, Nigeria, Egypt, Tunisia, Uganda, Zimbabwe

A On-the-Ground Initiatives

(A) UN Peacekeeping Operations (UN PKO)

As of December 31, 2022, 12 UN PKO missions are on active duty, primarily in the Middle East and Africa, to handle a wide range of duties that include monitoring cease-fires, promoting political process, and protecting civilians. More than 80,000 military, police, and civilian personnel have been deployed to these missions. In response to the increasing complexity and scale of the mandates and the associated shortages of personnel, equipment, and financial resources, discussions on more effective and efficient implementation of UN PKO are underway in various fora including the UN.

In addition to PKO missions, the UN has also established Special Political Missions (SPMs) mainly consisting of civilian personnel. SPMs fulfill diverse roles including the peaceful settlement of disputes, post-conflict peacebuilding, and conflict prevention.

Based on the Act on Cooperation with UN Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (PKO Act), since 1992 Japan has dispatched more than 12,500 personnel to a total of 29 missions over the last 30 years, including UN PKO missions. More recently, since 2011, Japanese staff officers have been dispatched to the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), while engineering units have been deployed there from 2012. The engineering units in the South Sudanese capital of Juba and the surrounding areas undertook such activities as developing infrastructure that included roads, the provision of water supplies to displaced persons, as well as site preparation, and concluded their activities in May 2017. As of December 31, 2022, four Self-Defense Forces of Japan (SDF) officers are on active duty at the UNMISS Headquarters, who continue to work toward peace and stability in South Sudan. Additionally, since April 2019, Japan has been conducting activities contributing to peace and stability in the Middle East by dispatching two SDF officers to the Headquarters for the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO), which is stationed in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. On the basis of its past experiences of peacekeeping operations and making use of its own strengths, Japan will continue to contribute proactively in the field of international peace cooperation in the future by means such as enhancing capacity building support and dispatching units and individuals.

(B) ODA and Other Cooperation to Facilitate Peacebuilding

In addressing prolonged conflicts and increasingly diverse humanitarian crises, peacebuilding and preventing the recurrence of conflict even in peacetime, in addition to humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, are important toward the realization of an inclusive society. There is a greater need than before to address the root causes of crises through assistance for self-reliant development by building resilient nations and stabilizing societies from a medium- to long-term perspective. Japan has been providing support for peacebuilding based on this “humanitarian-development-peace nexus” approach, and positions peacebuilding as one of the priority issues in its Development Cooperation Charter. The following are some of the main initiatives implemented recently.

a. Middle East

Japan has provided comprehensive support for peace and stability in the Middle East. This includes providing food and refugee assistance, as well as support for the development of human resources who can play an active role in nation-building. Japan received 12 students from Syria in 2022 to offer education to young people who were deprived of opportunities to attend school due to the Syrian crisis. As for Palestine, in addition to an increase in the refugee population, it is also facing serious deterioration of the living environment, including the deteriorated refugee camp infrastructure as well as unemployment and poverty. In light of this, Japan worked on improving the living environment of refugees through the implementation of the Camp Improvement Project (CIP) at refugee camps in Palestine, as well as by providing support to educational facilities, and contributed to the stabilization and improvement of the people's welfare based on human security.

b. Africa

At the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) in 2022, Japan presented its view of working with African countries to bring about a peaceful and stable Africa, so that the people of Africa can live in peace. Japan announced the appointment of an Ambassador, Special Envoy for the

“Horn of Africa,”¹² with a view to establishing stability and democracy in the “Horn of Africa” region. While respecting Africa’s ownership, Japan provides support for African-led efforts under the New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa (NAPSA), which approaches the root causes hampering human security, and peace and stability. These include consolidating democracy and promoting the rule of law, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, and support toward strengthening the foundations of the community.

For example, Japan has conducted criminal justice training since 2014 for Francophone African countries, and has supported stabilization of the Sahel region by strengthening the capabilities of investigative and judicial bodies. Japan has also provided African countries with security equipment to improve their ability to maintain security against frequent terrorism attacks and transnational crimes, and provided support toward landmine clearance. In November 2022, Japan, in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), decided to provide support to Guinea-Bissau, one of the countries covered in country-specific meetings of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). This support aims at promoting transparency and accountability in government administrations, with a view to preventing corruption and consolidating peace.

In South Sudan, along with dispatching personnel to UNMISS Headquarters, in response to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS)¹³ signed in 2018, Japan has been supporting the implementation of the agreement and cease-fire monitoring through the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a regional organization in East Africa, as well as other organizations. Furthermore, Japan, in collaboration with the UNDP, has disbursed a total of 63.8 million US dollars between 2008 and 2022 to Peacekeeping Training Centers located in 14 African countries, contributing to strengthening Africa’s capacity for peacekeeping activities.

B Initiatives within the UN

Against the backdrop of the growing awareness within the international community of the need for peacebuilding efforts, the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was established in 2006 as an advisory body of the UN Security Council and General Assembly, with the aim of providing consistent advice on assistance, from conflict resolution to recovery, reintegration and reconstruction. In addition to conducting discussions on the approach to peacebuilding in countries and regions, including its agenda countries,¹⁴ the PBC also engages in discussions on themes such as women, peace, and security (WPS) and security sector reform (SSR). In recent years, there have been increasing opportunities for the PBC to fulfill its advisory function to the Security Council and General Assembly. Japan has consistently served as a member of the core Organizational Committee since the PBC’s establishment and contributed actively in ways such as by advocating for the importance of institution building and human resources development as well as the need to strengthen cooperation between the PBC and key actors (UN agencies such as the Security Council, General Assembly, and PBC, donor countries, regional institutions, international financial institutions such as the World Bank and IMF, and the private sector, among others).

Japan has made active contributions to the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF),¹⁵ established in 2006, as a major donor country. As of December 31, 2022, Japan has contributed a total of 61.3 million US dollars.

Japan will continue to address peacebuilding as one of its priorities during its two-year term on the UN Security Council starting from January 2023. Foreign Minister Hayashi also conveyed its commitment to further contribute to peacebuilding when Ms. Elizabeth Spehar, UN Assistant-Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, visited Japan in November 2022. Japan hosted an open debate on peacebuilding as the President of the UN Security Council in January 2023.

¹² The “Horn of Africa” refers to the region on the northeastern part of the African continent that protrudes in the shape of a horn toward the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea. It encompasses the countries of Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, and Kenya.

¹³ As the implementation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan, issued in 2015, seemed to have stagnated, this Revitalized Agreement, bringing together stakeholders in South Sudan by IGAD, set out matters including the implementation schedule for the observance of cease-fire.

¹⁴ The four countries of Guinea-Bissau, Central African Republic, Liberia and Burundi.

¹⁵ A fund established in October 2006 to provide support to regions, including Africa, for stopping the recurrence of regional conflicts and civil war after they have ended as well as preventing conflicts. Specifically, the fund supports peace processes and political dialogues, economic revitalization, institution building for nations, and the participation by women and youths in nation-building, among other initiatives.

C Human Resource Development

(A) The Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development

While highly skilled civilian experts with expertise have a substantial role to play in the field of post-conflict peacebuilding, the number of those capable of fulfilling the role is insufficient. Therefore, the development of relevant human resources remains a major challenge. Japan has been implementing a program for Human Resource Development in order to cultivate civilian experts who can play a leading role in the field. As of the end of 2022, more than 900 people have been trained. The participants who completed the program have gone on to play an active role in the field of peacebuilding and development in Asia, Africa, and other parts of the world, and have received high acclaim from both the UN and different countries. Out of the approximately 190 participants who have completed the training course for entry level human resources (hereafter, “Primary Course”) to date, close to 80 work as regular staff at international organizations. Hence, this program also contributes significantly to the career development of Japanese nationals, as well as the enhancement of their presence in international organizations in the fields of peacebuilding and development. In 2022, the Primary course and a training course for mid-career professionals with experience in the fields of peacebuilding and development were conducted (see the Column on page 224).

(B) Training for Peacekeepers of Various Countries

Japan has been supporting peacekeepers from various countries participating in UN PKO to enhance their capabilities. Since 2015, in conjunction with cooperative efforts among the UN, supporting member states, and troop contributing countries, Japan has been cooperating with the Triangular Partnership Programme (TPP), a framework for innovative cooperation aimed at addressing the urgent need to improve the capabilities of PKO personnel by providing necessary training and equipment. For example, Japan has funded and dispatched SDF personnel and other individuals as instructors. To date, Japan has conducted training on the operation of heavy engineering equipment for 312 personnel from eight African countries that expressed

intentions to dispatch engineering units to UN PKO. Since 2018, the TPP has been extended to Asia and the surrounding regions. Following on from Vietnam, Japan has conducted training for 20 engineering personnel from Indonesia for the first time in Indonesia. Additionally, in October 2019 a lifesaving training program began in the medical field, a considerably problematic area for UN PKO, while support for the introduction of telemedicine into UN PKO missions was launched from 2021. The second trial training for the UN Field Medical Assistants Course (UNFMAC) was held in Uganda in June 2022, and Japan dispatched one SDF medical officer to the course. Japan has dispatched as many as 298 SDF personnel and other individuals as instructors for the operation of heavy engineering equipment and in the field of medicine. Other than TPP, Japan dispatches instructors and other personnel, as well as providing financial assistance, to Peacekeeping Training Centers in Asia and Africa.

(7) Initiatives to Combat Security Threats

Ensuring public security and protecting the lives of the people are the premise of various socioeconomic activities and the basic responsibilities of a country. To cope effectively with security threats such as international terrorism and organized crime, which are rapidly becoming more complex and severe in tandem with social changes such as the advancement of science and technology and the spread of COVID-19, it is vital for the international community to cooperate as a whole.

A Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism

Since the end of 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic has had profound impact not only on domestic politics, economy and society, but also on the international political and economic order, and furthermore, affected people’s behavior, mindsets and values. It has also had a major impact on the environment surrounding terrorism. Terrorists continue to carry out their terrorist activities in Asia and other parts of the world while adapting to the new social circumstances that have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the weakening of governance as well as social divisions brought about by the manifestation of poverty and racial and ethnic issues. Furthermore, the worldwide dependence on information and communications

Column

Participating in the Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development

TAKAO Ryoko, UN Volunteer, Programme Policy Officer (Humanitarian Development Peace Nexus), World Food Programme (WFP) Philippines

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My name is TAKAO Ryoko. Under the Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development, commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, I am working as a UN Volunteer at the World Food Programme (WFP) in the Philippines, the largest humanitarian aid organization in the world that received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2020.

Many Japanese companies operate in the Philippines, and it may often be perceived as a tourist destination because of places such as Cebu and Boracay. On the other hand, armed conflicts have been ongoing for more than 40 years on the island of Mindanao. A comprehensive peace agreement was concluded with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in 2014, resulting in the establishment of the Bangsamoro Transition Authority. UN agencies including WFP, as well as various donor countries, are engaged in support to establish a completely autonomous government and consolidate peace.

The WFP Philippines Office provides support in all aspects of peacebuilding in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM). In addition to formulating projects based on detailed analysis of the causes of conflict through means such as conducting field surveys, it also verifies the effectiveness and suitability of projects during their implementation by introducing, on a trial basis, indicators to measure how much each WFP project contributes to peacebuilding. One of these indicators is conflict sensitivity (an approach that gives consideration to whether the implementation of a project unintentionally contributes to the causes of conflict). As a lecturer, I conducted conflict sensitivity training for WFP staff working in bases within BARMM and provided guidance on how to address factors of conflict such as land issues and conflicts between tribes. At the same time, I worked together with them to review and consolidate measures for easing tense situations. I am now conducting capacity building training on conflict sensitivity also for BARMM government staff on behalf of WFP. This training advises them to accelerate the peacebuilding process, while ensuring that WFP's initiatives do not contribute to the conflict, by including former MILF combatants among those who receive support from WFP, and encouraging members of different tribes to participate in joint activities.

The WFP Philippines Office also provides support for peacebuilding and development of BARMM from the perspective of food security. Through grant aid from the Government of Japan, WFP provides food assistance and promotes the implementation of grant aid in cooperation with international organizations to support the improvement of livelihoods for smallholder farmers and fishermen. Studies conducted by WFP have pointed to the lack of means of livelihood as one of the factors of conflict in BARMM, and dissatisfaction among residents stemming from this can lead to future conflicts. To prevent this from happening, and with the aim of building a value chain that links the produce of smallholder farmers and fishermen to the market, WFP engages in discussions with BARMM government agencies on challenges and necessary support measures, while also introducing the digital app "Farm2Go." Developed by WFP, this app enables producers and buyers to buy and sell online through agricultural cooperatives. Through the app, WFP supports sustainable business activities for smallholder farmers. I am involved in overall project planning and operation to further improve the performance of *Farm2Go*, namely by sharing knowledge and getting technical support from the WFP Headquarters and other offices that have already introduced the app, and providing guidance for securing budgets and for recruiting local IT consultants.



Conflict sensitivity training for WFP staff (the author is on the right of the screen) (Photo: Maria Roxanne Nicola, WFP)

WFP advocates the transition from “arms to farms” (support for the social rehabilitation of former combatants through agriculture). Based on the comprehensive analysis of factors of conflict, I am engaged in efforts to socially integrate and improve the livelihood of former combatants, as well as to ease tensions between divided communities. I feel great joy and fulfilment in having the chance to contribute to the peace and development of BARMM, where impacts of conflicts affect the region.



Former MILF combatant receiving support for improving their livelihoods (Photo: Maria Roxanne Nicola, WFP)

technology has motivated terrorists and terrorist organizations to spread extremism through the Internet and social media, and moreover, to conduct illegal behavior that could lead to terrorism in cyberspace, such as acquisition of funding for terrorism. There is a pressing need to respond comprehensively to these developments.

Based on the “G7 Action Plan on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism” compiled at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit in 2016, Japan has to date implemented the following actions: (1) measures to enhance counter-terrorism capacity, which include promoting the utilization of Interpol databases and measures against the funding of terrorism, (2) education and promotion of moderation in communities through dialogues and other means, in order to prevent violent extremism, which is a root cause of terrorism, and (3) support for capacity building of law enforcement agencies, including measures to support rehabilitation in prisons.

To steadily promote measures to counter terrorism and violent extremism, which is an issue that has gained importance due to changes in the environment surrounding terrorism under the COVID-19 pandemic, Japan has been implementing projects through cooperation with international organizations including the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), Interpol, and the UN Development Programme (UNDP), among others, by using their respective advantages and expertise effectively.

As an initiative that Japan has carried out continuously for the past 17 years, Japan has also run an exchange program inviting Islamic school teachers from

Indonesia and other countries and providing opportunities to experience interfaith dialogue, school visits, and cultural events in Japan. While this was suspended in 2020 and 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the program was resumed in 2022. Japan will continue to implement the program going forward, in order to help promote moderation and the creation of more tolerant societies that are receptive to different values.

Through bilateral and trilateral counter-terrorism consultations and the Quad (Japan-Australia-India-U.S.) Counter-Terrorism tabletop exercise, among other initiatives, Japan also exchanges information on the world terrorism situations and affirms the strengthening of partnerships in the field of countering terrorism, while developing practical cooperation with other countries.

The Government of Japan promotes counter-terrorism measures in collaboration with relevant countries and organizations. Based on the view that information gathering is critical for combating terrorism, the Government established the Counter Terrorism Unit - Japan (CTU-J) in December 2015 and has been making concerted efforts to gather information with the Prime Minister’s Office serving as the control tower. Regarding the incident in which a Japanese national being detained in Syria was safely released in October 2018, this outcome is owed to CTU-J playing a key role in requesting the cooperation of the countries concerned and handling the situation by leveraging Japan’s information network. Following the series of terrorist bombings that occurred in Sri Lanka in April 2019, the Director General and other officials from CTU-J were immediately dispatched to the area to

gather information. To fulfill the critical responsibility of securing the safety of Japanese nationals overseas, Japan will continue to further enhance its information gathering through the CTU-J and take all possible measures to counter terrorism to ensure the safety of Japanese nationals overseas.

B Criminal Justice Initiatives

The UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (“Congress”) and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (both of which have their secretariats under UNODC) are in charge of shaping policy on crime prevention and criminal justice in the international community. In March 2021, the 14th Congress (“Kyoto Congress”) was convened in Kyoto. In accordance with the overall theme, “Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda,” the political declaration (“Kyoto Declaration”), summarizing the matters that should be addressed over the medium- to long-term by the international community in the areas of crime prevention and criminal justice, was adopted. Since then, in cooperation with UNODC and other organizations, Japan has been demonstrating its leadership in advancing such initiatives as; (1) regularly convening the Criminal Justice Forum for Asia and the Pacific as a platform for information sharing and exchanges of opinions between practitioners in the field of criminal justice in the Asia-Pacific region; (2) regularly holding the Global Youth Forum for a Culture of Lawfulness, with the aim of facilitating independent discussions among youths, and incorporating their views into policies; (3) working toward the formulation of UN model strategies to promote efforts by the international community to reduce reoffending. Japan proactively engages in following up on the Kyoto Declaration through efforts such as submitting resolutions for following up on the Kyoto Declaration within the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and supporting theme-based discussions on the Kyoto Declaration conducted by UNODC.

Furthermore, Japan provides support to improve prosecution capabilities and other criminal justice functions, to improve the operation of prisons, and to enhance capacities related to measures against cyber-crime in Southeast Asian countries, by providing

financial contributions to UNODC and Interpol, as well as contributions through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

Japan is a State Party to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), which establishes a global legal framework for promoting cooperation to prevent and combat transnational organized crime including terrorism more effectively. Japan advances international cooperation that includes providing international assistance in investigations in accordance with the UNTOC and reviewing the implementation of the Convention.

C Anti-corruption Measures

There is growing global interest in addressing corruption, which has been pointed out as a factor that threatens sustainable development and the rule of law. Against this backdrop, Japan, as a State Party to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), which sets out provisions for international cooperation and measures to address corruption such as bribery and embezzlement of property by public officials, actively participates in discussions for the effective implementation of the UNCAC and the strengthening of international cooperation on preventing and combating corruption. In September, a country review was conducted on Japan's implementation of the UNCAC regarding the provisions for criminalization and law enforcement (Chapter III) and international cooperation (Chapter IV) by reviewers who visited Japan from Bhutan and Libya. Japan also participates actively in the activities of the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group and has contributed to formulating political documents in areas related to anti-corruption, including enhancing the role of audits. In addition, Japan contributes to the capacity building of criminal justice practitioners in developing countries by conducting the International Training Course on the Criminal Justice Response to Corruption (UNCAC Training Programme) through the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI).

Japan is an active participant in the OECD Working Group on Bribery, which verifies the implementation of the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business

Transactions by each state party to prevent the bribery of foreign public officials.

D Measures to Combat Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism

Regarding anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing (AML/CFT) measures, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an international framework that establishes the international standards that countries should implement and conducts peer reviews to assess levels of implementation. In recent years, the FATF has also been engaged in initiatives to prevent financing for the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and has issued the FATF statement that calls for the eradication of illegal financial activities by North Korea.

As a founding member, Japan has actively participated in these discussions. The Fourth Round Mutual Evaluation Report of Japan was adopted at the FATF Plenary held in June 2021, and was published at the end of August the same year. Japan is steadily making preparations and implementing measures to address the points for improvement raised in this Report.

In addition, Japan takes measures to combat the financing of terrorism as a State Party to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and also implements measures to freeze the assets of terrorists and terrorist organizations in accordance with UN Security Council resolution 1373, and designations by the UN Security Council Taliban Sanctions Committee or the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee. Japan added one organization designated by the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee in March as a subject for asset freezing measures. As of December 31, Japan has implemented asset freezing measures on 397 individuals and 119 organizations in total.

E Measures to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants

Japan has strengthened its domestic system to combat trafficking in persons, for which methods are becoming increasingly sophisticated and obscure, while

proactively providing assistance to developing countries, in accordance with “Japan’s 2014 Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons.” For example, in 2022, Japan continued to conduct training programs through JICA to deepen mutual understanding on human trafficking countermeasures (especially prevention, protection and support to restore the financial independence of victims) of stakeholders in Asian countries, including Japan, and to promote more effective regional cooperation. Furthermore, Japan has been implementing a technical cooperation project with the Government of Thailand via JICA since January, and in August, held a workshop on human trafficking countermeasures to strengthen networks among those involved in such countermeasures in the Mekong region. With respect to cooperation with international organizations, in 2022, through funding to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Japan continued to provide assistance for the safe repatriation of foreign victims of trafficking in persons protected in Japan, and to carry out social reintegration assistance programs to prevent the recurrence of trafficking after they return to their countries. Japan also provided support to strengthen response capabilities, including training programs for law enforcement authorities, by funding projects organized by UNODC in Southeast Asia and the Middle East.

As a State Party to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, Japan has also further deepened its cooperation with other countries with a view to combating trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.

F Measures to Combat Illicit Drug Trafficking

In cooperation with UNODC, Japan is working to take measures against the global proliferation of illicit drugs by conducting status surveys and analyses on synthetic drug trafficking, strengthening the capacity for drug control at borders, and supporting the production of alternative crops to reduce illicit drug cultivation.

4 Disarmament and Non-proliferation and the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

(1) Nuclear Disarmament

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan has the responsibility to lead the international efforts to realize a world without nuclear weapons.

However, the path toward a world without nuclear weapons has become even more severe. As seen in the situation surrounding the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), there exists an apparent divergence of views on how best to advance nuclear disarmament, a divergence that exists not only between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States but also among non-nuclear-weapon States that are exposed to the threat of nuclear weapons and those that are not. In the Joint Statement of the Leaders of the Five Nuclear-Weapon States¹⁶ on Preventing Nuclear War and Avoiding Arms Races issued on January 3, the five nuclear-weapon States affirmed for the first time that “a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought.” Regardless of this Joint Statement, amidst Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, which started on February 24, Russia has been making the threat to use nuclear weapons, and even the actual use of nuclear weapons is emerging as a real problem. Hence, there are growing concerns that the catastrophe of atomic bombings will be repeated. Considering these circumstances, it is necessary to persistently advance realistic and practical efforts, while bridge-building between states with divergent views, in order to promote nuclear disarmament.

With the aim of realizing a world without nuclear weapons, Japan, under the leadership of Prime Minister Kishida, who hails from Hiroshima, has proposed the “Hiroshima Action Plan,” which is rooted in five actions. This Plan, which Prime Minister Kishida presented himself, represents the first step of a realistic road map which would take us from the “reality” of a harsh security environment to the “ideal” of a world without nuclear weapons. Furthermore, Japan has continued to pursue bridge-building between states

with divergent views. It has done this, for example, through holding meetings of the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons (IGEP), submitting the Resolution on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons to the UN General Assembly, and cooperation and collaboration with like-minded countries, including within the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), as well as individual consultations. Moreover, Japan intends to continue maintaining and strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime through cumulative efforts including through building up realistic and practical efforts, such as encouraging states to promote the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and to commence negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT), promoting education on disarmament and non-proliferation, and further, discussions and exercises with nuclear-weapon States toward the realization of effective nuclear disarmament verification.

The TPNW is an important treaty that could be regarded as a final passage to a world without nuclear weapons. However, not a single nuclear-weapon State has joined the TPNW, even though the engagement of nuclear-weapon States is indispensable to change the reality. Therefore, instead of addressing the situation through signing and ratifying the TPNW, Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, must make efforts to involve nuclear-weapon States. To that end, Japan first intends to advance realistic and practical measures toward the realization of a world without nuclear weapons, based on the foundation of trust built with its only ally, the U.S.

A Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

Japan places great importance on maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime, which is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and

¹⁶ The U.S., Russia, the UK, France, China

non-proliferation regime. NPT Review Conferences have been held once every five years with the aim of achieving the goals of the NPT and ensuring compliance with its provisions, and discussions that reflect the international situation of the time have been held since the NPT entered into force in 1970.

The Tenth NPT Review Conference was held from August 1 to 26 at the UN Headquarters in New York, U.S. (see the Special Feature on page 230).

To ensure that this Conference achieves a meaningful outcome, Japan exerted all efforts prior to the Conference. Independently, Japan held meetings of the Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament¹⁷ and the Track 1.5 Meeting for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament.¹⁸ Japan and the U.S. also worked together to issue the Japan-U.S. Joint Statement on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in January. Furthermore, as a part of its multi-lateral efforts, Japan submitted working papers through the NPDI and Stockholm Initiative.¹⁹

At the Conference held in August, Prime Minister Kishida, as the first Prime Minister of Japan to attend an NPT Review Conference, delivered a speech at the General Debate session on the first day. In his speech, as the first step of a realistic roadmap which would take us from the “reality” of the harsh security environment to the “ideal” of a world without nuclear weapons, he advocated that the international community should continue to engage in nuclear risk reduction, and proposed the “Hiroshima Action Plan,” which is rooted in the following five actions: (1) a shared recognition on the importance of continuing the record of non-use of nuclear weapons, (2) enhancing transparency, (3) maintaining the decreasing trend of the global nuclear stockpile, (4) securing nuclear non-proliferation and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and (5) encouraging visits to the affected communities by international leaders and others. Prime Minister

Kishida then called upon the States Parties to achieve a meaningful outcome at the Conference.

Japan has continued to make every possible effort. For example, State Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKEI Shunsuke attended the conference at the instruction of Prime Minister Kishida, where he called upon the President of the Conference, Ambassador Gustavo Zlauvinen, and delegations of the respective countries to adopt the outcome document by consensus.²⁰

At the Conference, Russia expressed its objection at the final stage due to the issue surrounding Ukraine, resulting in the Conference’s failure to adopt the final document by consensus. Nevertheless, Japan considers it meaningful that a draft final document was created with the support of all States Parties except Russia through serious discussions among them.

As Foreign Minister Hayashi revealed in his statement released after the conclusion of the Conference, for Japan, while it is deeply regrettable that this Conference failed to adopt the final document due to the opposition of one country, Russia, it is a tremendous achievement that many of the ideas and proposals that Japan advocated at the Conference were reflected in the draft final document, and this would provide a basis for the international community to advance realistic discussions on nuclear disarmament. Furthermore, at the Conference, the timing of the next Review Conference and the process leading to it, as well as the establishment of a working group on further strengthening the review process, which Japan had long advocated through the NPDI, were agreed. This demonstrates the will of States Parties to maintain and strengthen the NPT, and Japan appreciates it.

B International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons (IGEP)

In January, Prime Minister Kishida announced in his Policy Speech to the Diet that the IGEP will serve as an opportunity for participants from nuclear-weapon

¹⁷ A Group launched in 2017 for the aim of making a recommendation to contribute to the substantive advancement of nuclear disarmament. It comprises 17 experts from countries of different positions, including Japan. A total of five meetings have been held up till July 2019, and the concrete outcomes were submitted to the second and third sessions of the Preparatory Committee of the NPT Review Conference. In October 2019, the Chair’s Report, summarizing discussions at all five meetings of the Group held to date, was published.

¹⁸ A meeting launched in 2020 with the participation of government officials and private-sector experts from both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States for the purpose of following up with and further developing the outcomes of discussions by the Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament.

¹⁹ The “Stockholm Initiative for Nuclear Disarmament and the Non-Proliferation Treaty,” a group comprising 16 non-nuclear-weapon States that share a common recognition of the nuclear disarmament issue. It was launched by Sweden in 2019.

²⁰ Adoption without a vote, but without any statements of dissent or objection

Special Feature

Toward a World without Nuclear Weapons

- The Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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The Tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (Tenth NPT Review Conference) was scheduled to be held in April 2020, but was postponed several times due to the spread of COVID-19. It was eventually held from August 1 to 26, 2022, at the UN Headquarters in New York, the U.S.

The NPT is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and the States Parties to the treaty hold a review conference every five years to review its operation status and decide on the direction of future initiatives. During the previous 2015 NPT Review Conference, then-Foreign Minister Kishida delivered a general statement, in which he called for enhancing the transparency of nuclear force, reducing all nuclear weapons and, eventually, multilateralization in future nuclear weapons reduction negotiations, unifying the international community through a common recognition of the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons, addressing regional non-proliferation issues such as North Korea's nuclear and missile issues, and the significance of having political leaders and youth visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Although the Parties engaged in earnest negotiations thereafter, the respective State Parties could not reconcile their differences, mainly in relation to the concept of establishing a zone in the Middle East free of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction^(Note). The Conference ended without adopting a final document.

The Tenth NPT Review Conference was held under even more difficult circumstances due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, in addition to the existing deep divisions within the international community over nuclear disarmament. Due to these circumstances, it was unclear at the beginning of the Conference whether the final document would be adopted by consensus. Against this backdrop, Prime Minister Kishida attended this NPT Review Conference with a strong sense of urgency, and as the first Prime Minister of Japan to attend an NPT Review Conference, delivered a speech at the General Debate session. In his speech, he pointed out that, as the path towards a world without nuclear weapons has become even more severe, maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime is in the interest of the entire international community. Prime Minister Kishida called upon the States Parties to cooperate in the interest of our common goal, and expressed Japan's determination to firmly uphold the NPT as its guardian along with other States Parties. In addition, he emphasized that we should work on the "Hiroshima Action Plan" as the first step of a realistic road map, which would take us from the "reality" of the harsh security environment to the "ideal" of a world without nuclear weapons. This demonstrated Japan's firm commitment toward the NPT as well as its determination to realize a world without nuclear weapons to the international community. Japan's expression of strong commitment was well received by the respective countries in the Conference. For example, U.S. Secretary of State Blinken, who also delivered a speech at the General Debate, mentioned, "I noted that Prime Minister Kishida of Japan is here, which sends a very powerful message."

Furthermore, at the instruction of Prime Minister Kishida, State Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKEI Shunsuke attended the Conference from August 21 to 26, the final day of the Conference. Throughout the period, he called upon the delegations of the respective countries to respond constructively by adopting a final document by consensus.



Prime Minister Kishida delivering the general debate speech at the NPT Review Conference (August 1, New York, the U.S. Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

Eventually, Russia expressed its objection, resulting in the Conference's failure to adopt a consensus document. However, Japan's proposal, including the "Hiroshima Action Plan" proposed by Prime Minister Kishida, gained support and appreciation from many States Parties, and the joint statement on disarmament and non-proliferation education submitted by Japan received support from a record high of 88 States Parties. Furthermore, many of Japan's ideas and

proposals were reflected into the draft of the final document, including the importance of continuing the record of non-use of nuclear weapons and the importance of maintaining the decreasing trend of the global nuclear stockpile. This is a tremendous achievement for Japan, and will serve as a basis for promoting realistic discussions toward nuclear disarmament in the international community in the future. In addition, the timing of the next NPT Review Conference and the process leading to it, as well as the establishment of the working group on further strengthening the implementation process, which Japan has long been advocating through the Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), were agreed. This demonstrates the will of States Parties to maintain and strengthen the NPT.

Even after the Conference, Japan has continued to advance concrete efforts in line with the “Hiroshima Action Plan.” At the UN General Assembly held in September, Prime Minister Kishida served as the co-chair, and held the Meeting of the Friends of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) at the leader’s level for the first time. During this meeting, he declared Japan’s strong commitment toward the universalization of the CTBT and its early entry into force. In October, Japan’s draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons, based on the contents of the “Hiroshima Action Plan,” was submitted to the First Committee of the UN General Assembly. This resolution was adopted with the support of many countries including nuclear-weapon States such as the U.S., the UK, and France. In December, the first meeting of the International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons (IGEP) was held in Hiroshima. Incumbent and former political leaders of various countries, including former U.S. President Barack Obama, attended the meeting, and frank and candid discussions were held for the realization of a world without nuclear weapons.

The First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2026 NPT Review Conference will be held in the summer of 2023. The Government of Japan will persistently and steadily advance realistic and practical efforts step by step toward the realization of a world without nuclear weapons, in line with the “Hiroshima Action Plan.”

(Note) An attempt to establish a zone in the Middle East that is free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction (non-WMD zone)

States and non-nuclear-weapon States, as well as those from countries participating and not participating in the TPNW, to exchange ideas and thoughts beyond their respective national positions, with the involvement of former and incumbent political leaders of the world, and engage in candid discussions concerning a concrete path toward the realization of a world without nuclear weapons.

The first meeting was held on December 10 and 11 in Hiroshima. In addition to three Japanese members including Chair SHIRAISHI Takashi, Chancellor of the Prefectural University of Kumamoto, 10 non-Japanese members from both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States also attended the meeting, making 13 members in total to participate in person. The Chairperson of Hiroshima Peace Culture Foundation, KOIZUMI Takashi, also attended in person, as an “expert from the host city.”

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei delivered Prime Minister Kishida’s address on his behalf while also delivering the welcoming remarks at the opening session. This was followed by the video messages from political leaders such as former U.S. President Barack Obama, President Frank-Walter Steinmeier of

Germany, and Prime Minister Anthony Albanese of Australia, as well as UN Secretary-General António Guterres, Rector of the College of Europe Federica Mogherini (former High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission), and former Director General Mohamed ElBaradei of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). A video message from former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia Raden Mohammad Marty Muliana Natalegawa (a member of the IGEP) was also presented as he was unable to attend the meeting in person.

Through the four sessions over the two-day meeting, the IGEP members analyzed the current international situation and the security environment surrounding nuclear disarmament, while also having candid discussions regarding challenges in promoting nuclear disarmament, priorities on the nuclear disarmament front and how to advance future discussions in the IGEP.

To deepen their understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings, the IGEP members attended the talk on the experience of an atomic bombing by Ms. YAHATA Teruko, a victim of an atomic bombing. The members also offered flowers to the Cenotaph



International Group of Eminent Persons for a World without Nuclear Weapons
(December 10-11, Hiroshima City. Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

for the Atomic Bomb Victims and made a visit to the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum.

Finally, at the closing session, Prime Minister Kishida expressed his expectations that the IGEP will further discuss concrete measures to bring the harsh “reality” closer to the “ideal” and formulate useful outcomes with an eye on the next NPT Review Conference.

C The Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI)

The NPDI, a group of 12 non-nuclear-weapon States from various regions established under the leadership of Japan and Australia in 2010 has served as a bridge between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. It leads efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation through its realistic and practical proposals. In August, Prime Minister Kishida attended the 11th NPDI High-level Meeting held in New York, as the first Prime Minister of Japan to attend this NPDI High-level Meeting. A Joint High-level Statement was released after the meeting. This statement strongly deplores that Russia's aggression against Ukraine and escalatory actions seriously undermine global efforts on disarmament and non-proliferation, including the NPT regime, and expresses NPDI's resolve to remain committed to fostering the sustained, high-level political leadership and diplomatic dialogue needed to strengthen the implementation of the NPT.

The NPDI has actively contributed to the NPT review process through realistic and practical proposals, including the submission of 19 working papers to the Ninth NPT Review process and 18 to the Tenth NPT Review process. In particular, with a view to the Tenth NPT Review Conference, the NPDI submitted

a working paper (“Landing-zone Paper”) that proposes the elements that should be incorporated into the final document concerning the three pillars of the NPT—nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and the draft final document incorporated many elements proposed by the NPDI in this working paper. Although the Tenth NPT Review Conference failed to adopt the final document, the establishment of a working group on strengthening the review process, which NPDI has consistently been proposing so far, was unanimously agreed.

D Initiatives Through the United Nations (Resolution on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons)

Since 1994, Japan has submitted draft resolutions on the elimination of nuclear weapons to the UN General Assembly. They incorporate issues of the time related to nuclear disarmament with a view to presenting a realistic and concrete nuclear disarmament approach proposed by Japan to the international community. Taking into consideration the discussions at the Tenth NPT Review Conference held in August and recognizing the need to present a way forward for realistic and practical measures to realize a world without nuclear weapons, Japan submitted the 2022 draft resolution, which is based on the “Hiroshima Action Plan” proposed by Prime Minister Kishida at the Conference, with a focus on the importance of continuing the record of non-use of nuclear weapons, enhancing transparency as well as disarmament and non-proliferation education that fosters an accurate understanding of the realities of nuclear weapons use. The resolution was adopted with the broad support of 139 countries at the First Committee of the UN General Assembly in October and of 147 countries at the Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly in December. The states supporting the resolution have divergent views, including nuclear-weapon States such as the U.S., the UK, and France, as well as U.S. allies such as NATO member countries, Australia, the ROK, and the states advocating the TPNW. While other resolutions that comprehensively addressed nuclear disarmament were submitted to the General Assembly in addition to Japan's draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons, Japan has enjoyed support among a larger number of

states. Every year, Japan's resolutions continue to enjoy the broad support of states with divergent views in the international community.

E Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)

Japan attaches great importance to promoting the entry into force of the CTBT as a realistic measure of nuclear disarmament where both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States can participate. Japan also continues with diplomatic efforts to call on all countries that have not yet signed or ratified the CTBT, including those countries whose ratification is necessary for its entry-into-force, to do so.

In his general debate speech at the NPT Review Conference in August, Prime Minister Kishida announced the convening of a first meeting of the CTBT Friends at the leader's level.²¹ This meeting was held during the High-Level Week of the UN General Assembly in September and attended by Prime Minister Kishida. In his statement delivered at the opening of the meeting, Prime Minister Kishida, while referring to the "Hiroshima Action Plan," which he had announced at the NPT Review Conference in August, stated that the entry into force of the CTBT would be an important step in advancing the plan, and stressed the importance of the universalization of the CTBT and its early entry into force, as well as the strengthening of the verification system. At the meeting, statements were also presented by Ms. NAKAMITSU Izumi, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Dr. Robert Floyd, Executive Secretary of Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), the representative of the CTBTO Youth Group, as well as Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President of the Republic of Finland, a member state of CTBT Friends, and, as guest countries, Mr. Azali Assoumani, President of the Union of Comoros, Cardinal Pietro Parolin, Secretary of State of the Vatican, and Ms. Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister of New Zealand. At the end of the meeting, a joint statement of the meeting was adopted.



Prime Minister Kishida delivering a speech at the High-Level Meeting of the Friends of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (September 21, New York, U.S. Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

F Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty²² (FMCT)

A Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) would have great significance for both disarmament and non-proliferation as it would prevent the emergence of new states possessing nuclear-weapons by banning the production of fissile materials such as highly-enriched uranium and plutonium for nuclear weapons. At the same time, it would limit the production of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States. For many years, however, no consensus has been reached on commencing negotiations for the treaty in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Consequently, it was decided at the 71st UN General Assembly in December 2016 to establish the FMCT High-Level Experts Preparatory Group, and Japan actively participated in the Group's discussions. Through discussions at the first meeting (August 2017) and second meeting (June 2018), a report was adopted that includes possible options for the outline of a future treaty and contents to consider in negotiations. The report was submitted to the 73rd UN General Assembly in 2018. The aforementioned Resolution on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons also demands the immediate commencement of negotiations on an FMCT, and the declaration or the maintenance of the production moratorium for fissile materials (FM) for use in nuclear weapons by the nuclear-weapon States. Japan will actively continue to contribute to the discussions on an FMCT.

²¹ A group established in 2002 by Japan, Australia, and the Netherlands from the perspective of maintaining and boosting momentum toward promoting the entry into force of the CTBT. (Member states are Japan, Australia, Netherlands, Canada, Finland, and Germany.) Nine foreign ministers' meetings have been held to date.

²² A treaty concept that aims to prevent the increase in the number of nuclear weapons by prohibiting the production of fissile materials (such as enriched uranium and plutonium) that are used as materials to produce nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

G Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, Japan places great importance on disarmament and non-proliferation education. Specifically, Japan has been actively engaged in efforts to convey the realities of nuclear weapons use to people around the world, through activities such as translating the testimonies of atomic bomb survivors into other languages, invitations for young diplomats from various countries to visit Hiroshima and Nagasaki through the UN Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament,²³ providing assistance for holding atomic bomb exhibitions overseas,²⁴ and designating atomic bomb survivors who have given testimonies of their atomic bomb experiences as “Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons.”

At the General Debate of the NPT Review Conference held in August, Prime Minister Kishida announced that Japan would contribute 10 million US dollars to the UN for the establishment of the “Youth Leader Fund for a World Without Nuclear Weapons.” The goal of this program is to create a global network of future generations with the shared goal toward the elimination of nuclear weapons by bringing future leaders such as young policymakers and researchers from both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States to Japan to learn firsthand the realities of nuclear weapons use. At the same Conference, Japan also delivered a joint statement on disarmament and non-proliferation education that emphasizes the importance of such education. This statement received support from a record high of 89 countries and regions (including Japan).

Additionally, as the atomic bomb survivors are aging, it is becoming increasingly important to pass on the realities of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings across generations and borders. To this end, from 2013 to 2022, Japan conferred the designation of “Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons” for more than 500 youths in Japan and overseas.

H Initiatives Toward Future Arms Control

In the area of nuclear disarmament, in addition to initiatives through multilateral frameworks such as the NPT, the U.S. and Russia have also concluded and maintained a bilateral arms control treaty. On February 3, 2021, the two countries agreed on an extension to the Treaty between the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty). The New START Treaty demonstrates important progress in nuclear disarmament between the U.S. and Russia, and Japan welcomed this extension. However, in August 2022, Russia announced to exempt all its facilities from inspection activities temporarily. In November, Russia also notified the U.S. to postponing the Bilateral Consultative Commission (BCC) scheduled for the same month. In January 2023, the U.S. Department of State submitted a report to Congress stating that Russia cannot be certified as being in compliance with the New START Treaty. In February of the same year, President Putin announced in his Address to the Federal Assembly the suspension of the New START. In light of these developments, at the G7 Leaders' Video Conference on February 24, Prime Minister Kishida referred to President Putin's announcement to suspend the implementation in the New START Treaty, and expressed Japan's serious concern about Russia's behavior from the perspective of both achieving a world without nuclear weapons and ensuring security.

Moreover, in view of the recent situations surrounding nuclear weapons, it is important to establish a new arms control framework that involves not only the U.S. and Russia but other countries and covers a wider range of weapon systems. From this perspective, Japan has been explaining this issue to the relevant countries at various levels. For example, the Japan-U.S. Joint Statement on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) issued on January 21, 2022 and the Japan-U.S. Joint Leaders' Statement issued on May 23 noted China's ongoing increase in its nuclear capabilities, and requested China to contribute to

²³ Implemented since 1983 by the UN to nurture nuclear disarmament experts. Program participants are invited to Hiroshima and Nagasaki to promote understanding of the realities of nuclear weapons use through such means as museum tours and talks by victims about their experiences in the atomic bombings.

²⁴ Opened as a permanent exhibition about the atomic bomb in New York, U.S.; Geneva, Switzerland; and Vienna, Austria, in cooperation with Hiroshima City and Nagasaki City.

arrangements that reduce nuclear risks, increase transparency, and advance nuclear disarmament.

Furthermore, the aforementioned Resolution of the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons also reaffirms the special responsibility of nuclear-weapon States to initiate arms control dialogues on effective measures to prevent nuclear arms racing.

(2) Non-proliferation and Nuclear Security

A Japan's Efforts Toward Non-proliferation

To ensure Japan's security and to maintain peace and security of the international community, Japan has been making efforts concerning non-proliferation policy. The goal of such a policy is to prevent the proliferation of weapons that could threaten Japan and the international community (weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear weapons and biological/chemical weapons, as well as missiles with the ability to deliver those weapons and conventional weapons) and of related materials and technologies used to develop such weapons. In today's international community, economic growth in emerging countries has enabled a growing capacity to produce and supply weapons in those countries as well as materials that could be diverted to the development of such weapons. Meanwhile, methods for procuring these materials are becoming more sophisticated, due in part to increasing complexity in means of distribution. Furthermore, the emergence of new technologies is spurring a growing potential for private sector technologies to be diverted to uses for military purposes, and increasing the proliferation risk of weapons that could pose a threat and of related materials and technologies. Under these circumstances, Japan has been implementing its non-proliferation policies, focusing on maintaining and strengthening international non-proliferation regimes and rules, taking appropriate non-proliferation measures domestically, and promoting close coordination with and capacity building support for other nations.

Japan's three main measures of preventing proliferation are (1) IAEA safeguards, (2) export control, and (3) the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).

Safeguards refer to verification activities conducted in accordance with safeguards agreements between states and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and aim to ensure that nuclear energy will not be diverted from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. As a designated member of the IAEA Board of Governors,²⁵ Japan has made various efforts, including supporting the IAEA. For example, based on the view that the IAEA safeguards are at the core of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, Japan enhances the understanding and implementation capabilities of safeguards of other countries, and encourages other countries to conclude the Additional Protocol (AP)²⁶ to the IAEA safeguards agreements.

Japan participates actively in regional and international efforts to strengthen safeguards. For example, the 13th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Safeguards Network (APSN), which aims to strengthen safeguards in the Asia-Pacific region, was held in Viet Nam in December, and Japan led discussions on efforts to strengthen the international non-proliferation regime through capacity building and other means, and the implementation status of domestic safeguards, among other topics.

In May, following on from February 2020, IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi was invited to Japan as a guest of MOFA. Through his courtesy call to Prime Minister Kishida and meeting with Foreign Minister Hayashi during the visit, Japan and the IAEA affirmed that they would further advance cooperation on the non-proliferation issues such as the ones related to North Korea and Iran, the strengthening of IAEA safeguards, and other matters. Japan also took the opportunity to announce that it will provide a total of 2 million Euros toward the provision of related equipment and the dispatch of IAEA experts, as a part of its efforts to support Ukraine through the IAEA.

Japan provides utmost support at the IAEA General Conference, Board of Governors meetings, and other fora to Director General Grossi, who has extensive

²⁵ 13 countries are designated by the IAEA Board of Governors. The designated member states include Japan and other G7 countries with advanced nuclear energy capabilities.

²⁶ In addition to a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA) that is applied on all nuclear materials pertaining to the peaceful nuclear activities in that country, and that non-nuclear-weapon NPT States Parties are required to conclude with the IAEA pursuant to Article III Paragraph 1 of the NPT, an Additional Protocol is concluded between the IAEA and the respective States Parties. The conclusion of the Additional Protocol expands the scope of nuclear activity information that should be declared to the IAEA, and gives the IAEA strengthened measures to verify the absence of undeclared nuclear materials and activities. As of December 2022, 140 countries have concluded the Additional Protocol.



IAEA Director General Grossi paying a courtesy call to Prime Minister Kishida (May 20, Tokyo. Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

knowledge and experience, while continuing to work with other member countries to strengthen the role of the IAEA.

Export control is a useful measure in the so-called supply-side regulation toward countries of proliferation concern, terrorist organizations, and other entities attempting to acquire or distribute weapons or related materials or technologies. There are currently four export control frameworks (international export control regimes) in the international community. Japan has participated in all of them since their inception, engaging in international coordination and practicing strict export control. Each of the four regimes, namely the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) for nuclear weapons, the Australia Group (AG) for chemical and biological weapons, the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) for missiles,²⁷ and the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) for conventional weapons, establishes a list of dual-use items and technologies which contribute to weapons development. To ensure the

non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, participating countries to the regimes implement export control measures on the listed items and technologies in accordance with their domestic laws. The international export control regimes also exchange information concerning trends in countries of proliferation concern and are engaged in outreach activities to non-participating countries to the regimes in order to strengthen their export control. Japan actively engages in such international rule-making and application of rules. In addition, from the perspective of international contributions in nuclear non-proliferation, the Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Vienna serves as the Point of Contact of the NSG.

Furthermore, Japan seeks to complement the activities of the international export control regimes by actively participating in the activities of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).²⁸ Through efforts such as hosting the maritime interdiction exercise “Pacific Shield 18”²⁹ in July 2018, Japan works to enhance coordination among countries and concerned institutions. In August 2022, Japan participated in an exercise hosted by the U.S.

Japan also holds the Asian Senior-level Talks on Non-Proliferation (ASTOP)³⁰ and the Asian Export Control Seminar³¹ every year in order to promote a better understanding of the non-proliferation regimes and strengthen regional efforts, mainly in Asian countries.

Furthermore, with regard to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540,³² which was adopted in 2004 with the aim of preventing the

²⁷ Apart from export control regimes, the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC), which includes the principle of exercising restraint in their development and deployment, addresses the issue of ballistic missiles. As of December 2022, 143 countries have subscribed to the HCOC.

²⁸ An initiative launched in 2003 for the purpose of implementing and considering possible measures consistent with relevant international laws and national legal authorities in order to interdict the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles, along with related materials. 107 countries participate in and support the PSI as of December 2022. Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the ROK, Singapore and the U.S. have agreed to conduct a yearly rotation exercise in the Asia-Pacific region since 2014. Through the cooperation of agencies including MOFA, the National Police Agency, the Ministry of Finance, the Japan Coast Guard and the Ministry of Defense, Japan has hosted PSI maritime interdiction exercises in 2004, 2007, and 2018, PSI air interdiction exercises in 2012, and an Operational Experts Group (OEG) meeting in 2010. Japan has also actively participated in training and related meetings hosted by other countries.

²⁹ Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the ROK, Singapore, and the U.S. contributed assets and personnel to the exercise, which was held in Yokosuka City, in the sea and airspace off the Boso Peninsula, and in the airspace off the Izu Peninsula, and 19 countries from the Indo-Pacific region and other countries sent observers.

³⁰ A multilateral Director-General-level meeting launched in 2003 and hosted by Japan to discuss various issues related to the strengthening of the nonproliferation regime in Asia among the 10 ASEAN Member States, China, India, the ROK, as well as the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, Canada, France, and the EU, which have common interests in Asian regional security. Most recently, the 16th meeting was held online in December 2020, and discussions were held on topics such as North Korea's nuclear and missile issues and the strengthening of export control.

³¹ A seminar hosted by Japan to exchange views and information toward strengthening export controls in Asia, with the participation of export control officials from Asian countries and regions. It has been organized annually in Tokyo since 1993.

³² Adopted in April 2004, UN Security Council Resolution 1540 obliges all countries to: (1) refrain from providing support to terrorists and other non-state actors attempting to develop weapons of mass destruction; (2) adopt and enforce laws prohibiting the development of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and other non-state actors; and (3) implement domestic controls (protective measures, border control, export controls, etc.) to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The resolution also establishes, under the UN Security Council, the 1540 Committee, which comprises Security Council members and has a mandate to review and report to the Security Council the level of resolution 1540 implementation by member states.

proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery (missiles) to non-state actors, Japan contributes to maintaining and strengthening international non-proliferation frameworks through Japan's contributions to support the implementation of the resolution by Asian nations.

B Regional Non-proliferation Issues

North Korea has not carried out the dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner in accordance with a series of relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

In 2022, North Korea launched ballistic missiles 31 times (at least 59 launches) with an unprecedented frequency and in unprecedented manners, including missiles that flew over Japan and ICBM-class ballistic missiles. The series of actions by North Korea, including the ballistic missile launches that exacerbate the situation, constitutes a grave and imminent threat to Japan's national security and poses a clear and serious challenge to the international community. It is totally unacceptable. The IAEA Director General's report in September pointed out that North Korea's nuclear activities continue to be a cause for serious concern, and that the reopening of the tunnel at the Nuclear Test Site at Punggye-ri is deeply troubling. It also stated that the continuation of North Korea's nuclear programme is a clear violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and is deeply regrettable. Moreover, at the IAEA General Conference convened in the same month, a resolution based on the report was adopted by consensus, demonstrating the united position of IAEA member states toward the denuclearization of North Korea. Japan, too, took opportunities such as the NPT Review Conference in August and the IAEA General Conference in September to proactively convey to the international community the importance of addressing North Korea's nuclear issue.

Regardless of such efforts by the international community, North Korea has continued to repeatedly launch ballistic missiles with an unprecedented frequency and in unprecedented manners thereafter.

It is crucial that the international community makes concerted efforts to fully implement the UN Security Council resolutions for dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner by North Korea. To that end, Japan will continue to coordinate closely with related countries, including the U.S. and the ROK, as well as international organizations such as the UN and the IAEA. At the same time, from the viewpoint of the full implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions, Japan will work on capacity building for export control particularly in Asia. Japan will also continue to contribute actively to discussions on North Korea's nuclear and missile activities in international export control regimes such as the NSG and the MTCR.

Since the withdrawal of the previous U.S. administration under President Trump from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)³³ in 2018, Iran has continued actions to reduce its commitments under the JCPOA. In January 2020, Iran announced that it would not be bound by the limit on the enrichment of uranium set forth in the JCPOA. Since the start of 2021, it has produced 20% enriched uranium in January, suspended the implementation of transparency measures under the JCPOA including the Additional Protocol (AP) in February, and produced 60% enriched uranium in April. In August 2021, it was confirmed that Iran had produced uranium metal enriched at up to 20%.

Japan has consistently supported the JCPOA, which contributes to strengthening the international non-proliferation regime, and is paying close attention to the efforts by relevant countries toward the return of both the U.S. and Iran to the JCPOA. Japan, being

33 Sets forth detailed procedures for imposing constraints on Iran's nuclear activities while ensuring that they serve peaceful purposes, and for lifting the imposed sanctions.

<Main measures undertaken by Iran>

- Constraints on enriched uranium-related activities

- Limit on the number of centrifuges in operation to 5,060 units

- Upper limit on enriched uranium at 3.67%, and limit on the amount of stored enriched uranium at 300 kg, etc.

- Constraints on the Arak heavy-water nuclear reactor, and reprocessing

- Redesign / remodeling of the Arak heavy-water nuclear reactor so that it is not able to produce weapon-grade plutonium and to transfer spent fuel out of the country
- No reprocessing including for research purposes, no construction of reprocessing facilities, etc.

deeply concerned about Iran's continued reduction of its commitments under the JCPOA, has repeatedly urged Iran to refrain from further measures that may undermine the JCPOA and to return fully to its commitments under the JCPOA.

In March, IAEA Director General Grossi visited Iran to discuss these issues related to the implementation of the JCPOA and the series of safeguards issues (in which nuclear materials that had not been declared to the IAEA were found in Iran). The two sides issued a joint statement setting out the measures that should be taken toward the resolution of the safeguards issues by the meeting of the Board of Governors in June. However, the IAEA Director General's report issued at the end of May clearly stated that the issues remain unresolved as Iran had not provided the required technical explanations. In view of this situation, a resolution was adopted at the Board of Governors' meeting in June requesting from Iran an immediate response to the IAEA Director General's call to resolve the issues. Furthermore, a resolution was also adopted at the Board of Governors' meeting in November that set out a decision on the concrete actions that Iran should take toward resolving the issues, and requested for the Director General to issue a report on the matter by March 2023. Japan has consistently been supporting the IAEA's efforts with regard to Iran, and will continue to call strongly on Iran to cooperate completely with the IAEA. Japan will also continue to contribute to discussions related to Iran's nuclear and missile activities in the international export control regimes such as the NSG and the MTCR.

As for Syria, the IAEA Board of Governors in 2011 found that activities such as Syria's undeclared construction of a nuclear reactor would constitute non-compliance with its safeguards agreement with the IAEA. To address this outstanding issue, Japan is calling upon Syria to cooperate fully with the IAEA. It is important for Syria to sign, ratify and implement the AP. Similarly, at the NPT Review Conference held in August 2022, Japan participated in the joint statement on Syria's non-compliance with the safeguards agreement. This statement mentioned the IAEA's assessment pointing out the comparability between Syria's domestic nuclear facilities and facilities in North Korea.

C Nuclear Security

International cooperation is advancing in nuclear security to prevent acts of terrorism such as those involving the use of nuclear and other radioactive materials. These include the entering into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) in 2007 and of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material in 2015 respectively. In addition, the Nuclear Security Summit was held four times between 2010 and 2016. Japan has actively participated in and contributed to these efforts. For example, at the International Conference on Nuclear Security held by the IAEA in 2020, State Minister for Foreign Affairs WAKAMIYA Kenji participated in the ministerial conference as a representative of the Government of Japan and delivered a speech to share the view of Japan with other participants.

In Vienna in March 2022, the first Conference of the Parties since the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material was held, and the validity and implementation status of the Convention were verified. Japan expressed that it would continue to support the IAEA in the areas of human resources development and technological development going forward, as well as contribute to strengthening international nuclear security.

On March 2 and 3, 2022, the IAEA Board of Governors convened an emergency meeting in Vienna to discuss the implications of Russia's aggression against Ukraine on nuclear safety, nuclear security, and safeguards. At the meeting, participating countries condemned and expressed their concerns regarding Russia's attacks on the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant and other nuclear facilities in Ukraine from the perspective of nuclear safety, nuclear security, and safeguards. The resolution adopted by a majority at the meeting deplores Russia's actions in Ukraine, which are posing serious and direct threats to the safety and security of nuclear facilities and civilian personnel. It also calls upon Russia to immediately cease all actions in order for Ukraine to preserve or promptly regain full control over nuclear facilities. Resolutions were also adopted by a majority at the Board of Governors' meeting in September and November. These resolutions express grave concern that Russia has not heeded the call of

the Board to immediately cease all actions against and at nuclear facilities in Ukraine, and call on Russia to enable the Ukrainian authorities to regain full control over the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant to ensure its safe and secure operation, as well as to enable the IAEA to fully and safely conduct its safeguards verification activities. Furthermore, they also incorporate support for the efforts by the IAEA Director General and others to address the implications for the nuclear safety, security and safeguards in Ukraine, through means such as the IAEA Support and Assistance Mission to Zaporizhzhya (ISAMZ) and the continuous presence of the IAEA staff at the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant. Japan also strongly condemns Russia's aggression including its seizure of nuclear facilities, and will continue to support the IAEA's efforts for ensuring the safety of nuclear facilities in Ukraine.

(3) Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

A Multilateral Efforts

Along with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy is one of the three pillars of the NPT. According to the treaty, it is the “inalienable right” for any country that meets its obligations to non-proliferation to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Reflecting the increase in international energy demand, many countries use or are planning to use nuclear power.³⁴

On the other hand, these nuclear materials, equipment, and technologies used for nuclear power generation can be diverted to uses for military purposes, and a nuclear accident in one country may have significant impacts on neighboring countries. For these reasons, with regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, it is vital to ensure the “3S”;³⁵ that is, (1) Safeguards, (2) Nuclear Safety (e.g., measures to ensure safety to prevent nuclear accidents), and (3) Nuclear Security. As the country that experienced the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO)'s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident, it is Japan's

responsibility to share its experiences and lessons learned from the accident with other countries and to contribute to strengthening global nuclear safety. In this regard, in 2013, the IAEA, in collaboration with Japan, designated the IAEA Response and Assistance Network (RANET) Capacity Building Centre (CBC) in Fukushima Prefecture. By December 2022, they had conducted 26 workshops for Japanese and foreign officials to strengthen their capacity in the field of emergency preparedness and response.

The difficult work of decommissioning, contaminated water management, decontamination and environmental remediation has been progressing steadily at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station by leveraging the collective technologies and knowledge of the world, and in cooperation with the IAEA, the expert organization in the field of nuclear energy. The Government of Japan announced its Basic Policy on the handling of the ALPS treated water³⁶ in April 2021, and signed a Terms of Reference (TOR) on Reviews of Safety Aspects of Handling ALPS treated Water with the IAEA in July. Under this TOR, Japan is cooperating with the IAEA to implement the IAEA reviews on the safety and regulatory aspects of ALPS treated water. In May 2022, IAEA Director General Grossi visited Japan, during which he visited TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station and stated that the IAEA could confirm that the discharge of treated water into the Pacific Ocean would be carried out in full compliance with international standards, and that the discharge does not have any adverse impact on the environment. Furthermore, safety and regulatory reviews (assessments) by third-parties, including international experts selected by the IAEA, were conducted in February and March, and the IAEA published the respective reports in April and June. The second safety review was conducted in November, after which IAEA Director General Grossi stated that points raised by the task force in the first mission in February 2022 have been fully reviewed and reflected through revisions to Japan's plans. The IAEA is scheduled to continue conducting reviews going forward.

³⁴ According to the IAEA, as of January 2023, 423 nuclear reactors are in operation worldwide and 56 reactors are under construction.

³⁵ “3S” is used to refer to the IAEA's efforts toward nuclear safety, nuclear security, and nuclear safeguards, which are typical measures for non-proliferation.

³⁶ “ALPS treated water” refers to water purified using multiple purification systems, including Advanced Liquid Processing Systems (ALPS), to ensure that the level of radioactive substances in the water (except for tritium) are below the regulatory standards for safety. Furthermore, it is assumed that the ALPS treated water is adequately diluted thereafter to reduce its concentration of radioactive substances, including tritium, to significantly below the level of regulatory standards for safety, before it is discharged into the sea.

Column

Nuclear Technology and International Security

- From the Frontlines of IAEA's Work

KIRYU Miharū, Director, Division of Operations B, Department of Safeguards,
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We are observing more and more reports these days that contain references to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), such as reports about the nuclear issue in Iran and the situation in Ukraine. We can say that the global situation is having a greater impact on nuclear activities and giving rise to more international security problems that the IAEA should be involved in.

The IAEA is an organization established in 1957 with the aim of promoting peaceful uses of nuclear power and at the same time, ensuring that nuclear power is not used for military purposes. Under the leadership of Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi, the IAEA contributes to member states by ascertaining the role that it should play in relation to issues surrounding the world, such as security issues, environmental issues, and development, and taking action swiftly.

Regarding Iran's nuclear issue, the agreement of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was reached between Iran and six countries^(Note 1) including the U.S. as well as the European Union in 2015, and a resolution regarding this agreement was adopted by the UN Security Council. The JCPOA stipulates lifting economic sanctions in return for significant restrictions to Iran's nuclear activities. The IAEA played an important role in verifying whether Iran's activities were in line with the plan. However, in response to the U.S. withdrawal from JCPOA by the former Trump administration and the subsequent resumption of sanctions on Iran by the U.S. thereafter, Iran began taking retaliatory measures from May 2019 and gradually phased out its commitments under the JCPOA. In February 2021, Iran suspended implementation of the Additional Protocol, which allows for unannounced inspections by the IAEA. Currently, verification inspections by the IAEA are only conducted within a limited scope in comparison with the initial agreement. Director General Grossi has expressed his concerns on not clarifying and resolving the remaining issues on the presence of uranium particles at undeclared locations.



IAEA mission team at the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant
(September, Ukraine. Photo: IAEA)

With regard to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the IAEA has expressed its concern for ensuring the safety of nuclear facilities and nuclear security from an early stage. In addition to dispatching experts to nuclear facilities to assess the situation and providing technical support such as the supply of necessary equipment, it has created a system for monitoring and reporting on the nuclear safety and security situation in real time by establishing a continued presence of IAEA staff at the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant, the vicinity of which has been hit by shelling. The Director General himself also makes visits to Russia and Ukraine in continued efforts to urge both parties to establish Nuclear Safety and Security Protection Zone. Despite the very challenging circumstances, the IAEA has con-

tinued to implement safeguards activities, such as inspections, in Ukraine in accordance with the safeguards agreement and continues to verify that nuclear materials under safeguards are being used for peaceful purposes, and nuclear facilities are being used as declared.

The IAEA is also addressing the security concerns and various issues surrounding the international community as an important part of its responsibilities. These include issues regarding North Korea's nuclear development, IAEA's assessment on Syria's undeclared construction of a nuclear reactor which constitutes non-compliance with its safeguards agreement with the IAEA, and how to apply the IAEA safeguards to nuclear-powered submarines.

The IAEA also contributes to member states facing serious problems in a wide range of fields, such as the "Atoms4Climate" project^(Note 2), "Rays of Hope" project^(Note 3), "NUTEC Plastics" project^(Note 4), and "ZODIAC" project^(Note 5).

These activities require highly specialized technical knowledge, in fields such as physics, chemistry, and nuclear engineering, as well as experience in these fields. While I was in Japan, I was in charge of safety and safeguards of nuclear facilities, and participated verification of Iran's nuclear activities and other states in my role as an IAEA inspector.

Currently, I am in charge of implementation of safeguards for more than 100 countries, working with nearly 100 staff in the Division. In the IAEA, experts in areas such as nuclear safety, security and safeguards play a role in global security, and I would like to let you know that there are opportunities to work in areas that make use of your specialized knowledge and experience.



With the Section Heads at the first department meeting after assuming office as Director (at the IAEA Headquarters; the author is in the center) (September, Vienna, Austria)

(Note 1) UK, France, Germany, U.S., China, Russia

(Note 2) Activity based on the theme of nuclear technology's ability to contribute to resolving climate change issues

(Note 3) Support for regions with few opportunities to receive radiotherapy, under the concept of making cancer treatment available to everyone in the world

(Note 4) Conducting activities such as plastic recycling, and ocean monitoring by using radiation technology in order to address the plastic problem

(Note 5) Support to prepare for diseases caused by viruses such as coronavirus, bacteria, parasites, fungi, etc., and to strengthen the relevant technological capabilities

In July, Dr. Gillian Hirth, former Chair of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) and Ms. Borislava Batandjieva-Metcalf, Secretary of UNSCEAR, and their delegation visited Japan. During the visit, they exchanged opinions with the Government of Japan, local residents, and other stakeholders on the UNSCEAR 2020/2021 Report published in March 2021 as a revised edition of the report on the levels and effects of radiation exposure due to the accident at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. The report concluded that "no adverse health effects among Fukushima residents have been documented that could be directly attributed to radiation exposure from the accident."

In order to make progress in the decommissioning works and in recovery with the support and correct understanding of the international community, the Government of Japan periodically releases comprehensive reports through the IAEA that cover matters such as progress in decommissioning and contaminated water management at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, results of the monitoring of air dose rate and seawater radioactivity concentration, and food safety. In addition, Japan submits reports on the current situation to the relevant organizations, including Diplomatic Missions in Tokyo, and to the IAEA basically every month. Furthermore, Japan has organized more than 100 briefing sessions to the

Diplomatic Missions in Tokyo since the accident (held in February, March, May, June, July, and November in 2022), and provided information through Japanese diplomatic missions overseas.

The Government of Japan continues to provide information thoroughly to the international community in a transparent manner, based on scientific evidence, and to provide highly transparent explanations for claims that may encourage reputational damage.

Nuclear energy is applied not only to the field of power generation, but also to other areas including human health, food and agriculture, environment, and industrial uses. Promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in such non-power applications and contributing to development issues are becoming increasingly important as developing countries make up the majority of NPT States Parties. The IAEA also contributes to technical cooperation for developing countries and to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In this context, Japan has been actively supporting the IAEA's activities, with its technical cooperation based on the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development, and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (RCA) and with its contribution to the Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI). In FY2021, Japan contributed toward projects to address the problem of marine plastic pollution, and in FY2022, toward radiation cancer treatment projects, among others.

B Bilateral Nuclear Cooperation Agreement

Bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements are concluded to establish a legal framework required for securing a legal assurance from the recipient country on nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear-related material and equipment that are transferred between the two countries, so as to realize cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy between the two countries. Under such bilateral agreements, cooperation in areas such as the strengthening of nuclear safety can be promoted. Japan makes its decision on whether or not to conclude a nuclear cooperation agreement framework with another country taking into account a wide range of factors such as non-proliferation efforts and nuclear energy policy of that country, its trust in and expectations for Japan, and the bilateral relationship between the two countries among others. As of October 2022, Japan has concluded bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements with 14 countries and one organization, which in order of entry into force of the agreement are: Canada, France, Australia, China, the U.S., the UK, the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), Kazakhstan, the ROK, Viet Nam, Jordan, Russia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and India.

(4) Biological and Chemical Weapons**A Biological Weapons**

The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)³⁷ is the only multilateral legal framework, comprehensively prohibiting the development, production and possession of biological weapons. However, how to reinforce the Convention is a challenge as there are neither provisions governing means of verification of compliance with the BWC nor an implementing organization for the Convention.

Since 2006, decisions have been made to establish the Implementation Support Unit (fulfilling the functions of a Secretariat) and to hold intersessional meetings twice a year in between the Review Conferences held every five years. During this time, progress has been made with respect to initiatives aimed at strengthening the BWC regime.

At the 9th Review Conference of the BWC held in Geneva from November 28 to December 16, 2022, the final report, which included the establishment of a working group to discuss measures for strengthening the BWC, was adopted by consensus.

B Chemical Weapons

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)³⁸ comprehensively prohibits the development, production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons, and stipulates that all existing chemical weapons must be destroyed. Compliance is ensured through a verification system consisting of declarations and inspections, making this Convention a groundbreaking international agreement on the disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The implementing body of the CWC is the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which is based in the Hague, the Netherlands. Along with the UN, the OPCW has played a key role in the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons. Its extensive efforts toward the realization of a world without chemical weapons were highly acclaimed, and the Organisation was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.

Japan, which has a highly developed chemicals industry and numerous chemicals factories, also accepts numerous OPCW inspections. Japan also actively cooperates with the OPCW in many other concrete ways, including measures to increase the number of member states and strengthening national implementation measures by States Parties with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of the Convention. Moreover, under the CWC, Japan aims to complete, as soon as possible, the destruction of chemical weapons of the former Japanese Army abandoned in Chinese territory by working in cooperation with China.

(5) Conventional Weapons

Conventional weapons generally refer to arms other than weapons of mass destruction and include a wide variety of weapons ranging from landmines, tanks, and artillery to small arms and light weapons such as handguns. The problem of conventional weapons, which

³⁷ Entered into force in March 1975. Total number of States Parties is 184 (as of December 2022).

³⁸ Entered into force in April 1997. Total number of States Parties is 193 (as of December 2022).

are used in actual wars and cause injury and death to civilians, is serious in light of both national security and humanitarian concerns. The disarmament agenda presented in 2018 by UN Secretary-General Guterres categorizes disarmament of conventional weapons as one of the three pillars, “Disarmament that Saves Lives.” Japan is making active efforts involving cooperation and support based on international standards and principles concerning conventional weapons.

A Small Arms and Light Weapons

Described as “the real weapons of mass destruction” due to the many human lives they take, small arms and light weapons continue to proliferate due to the ease with which they can be obtained and used. They contribute to conflict prolongation and escalation, hindering the restoration of public security and post-conflict reconstruction and development. Since 1995, Japan has been working with other countries to submit a resolution on the illicit trade of small arms and light weapons to the UN General Assembly, and the resolution has been adopted every year. In areas around the world, Japan has also provided support for projects to address the issue of small arms and light weapons, including training and the collection and destruction of weapons. In 2019, Japan contributed two million US dollars to a mechanism for preventing small arms established under UN Secretary-General Guterres’ disarmament agenda, and in 2022, through this mechanism, projects on small arms and light weapons were launched in Cameroon, Jamaica, and South Sudan.

B The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)³⁹

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which seeks to establish common standards to regulate international trade in and prevent the illicit trade of conventional arms, entered into force in December 2014. As one of the original co-authors of the UN General Assembly resolution that initiated a consideration of the treaty, Japan has taken the lead in discussions and negotiations in the UN and contributed significantly to the establishment of the treaty. Even after the treaty entered into force, Japan has actively participated in discussions at

Conferences of States Parties and other opportunities. Japan has continued to contribute in ways such as hosting the 4th Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty in Tokyo as the first chair country elected from the Asia-Pacific region in August 2018. Japan also places importance on the universal application of the ATT. To that end, it has been encouraging countries, in particular Asian countries, to participate in the ATT.

C Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, CCW)⁴⁰

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) prohibits or restricts the use of conventional weapons that are deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects. It comprises a framework convention that sets forth procedural and other matters, as well as five annexed protocols that regulate individual conventional arms. The framework convention entered into force in 1983. Japan has ratified the framework convention and annexed Protocols I to IV, including the amended Protocol II. Prompted by concerns in the international community about the rapidly advancing military applications of science and technology, meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) have been held under the CCW framework since 2017. In 2019, the Group formulated 11 guiding principles on LAWS, which were officially approved at the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW held in November the same year. Japan has continued to contribute actively and constructively to such discussions on international rule-making. At the GGE held in March 2022, Japan submitted a proposal on “Principles and Good Practices on Emerging Technologies in the Area of Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems” jointly with the U.S., the UK, Australia, Canada, and the ROK. Many working papers were also submitted by other countries, and the parties engaged in active discussions at the GGE convened in March and July as

³⁹ As of December 2022, there are 112 states and regions that are parties to the ATT. Japan signed the Treaty on the day that it was released for signing and became a State Party in May 2014.

⁴⁰ As of December 2022, 126 countries and regions are parties to the CCW.

well as the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW convened in November.

Concerning Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA), which has been discussed at the CCW and other fora, a political declaration was drawn up in 2022 by countries sharing the same concern under the leadership of Ireland. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs YOSHIKAWA Yuumi attended the adoption ceremony for the declaration held in November and delivered a statement.

D Anti-Personnel Mines

Since the conclusion of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Treaty)⁴¹ in 1998, Japan has continued to promote comprehensive measures with a focus on the effective prohibition of anti-personnel mines and strengthening of support for mine-affected countries. Along with calling on countries in the Asia-Pacific region to ratify or accede to the Convention, Japan has also been steadily engaged in international cooperation through landmine clearance, victim assistance and other activities

in the international community, from the viewpoint of the “Humanitarian- Development-Peace Nexus.”

At the 20th Meeting of the States Parties of the Ottawa Treaty held in Geneva in November, Japan presented its initiatives and achievements in supporting mine action, and also expressed its continued resolve toward playing an active role in achieving a mine-free world. As the Chair of the Committee on the Enhancement of Cooperation and Assistance of the Treaty, Japan also put every effort into promoting international assistance toward mine-affected countries.

E Cluster Munitions⁴²

The international community takes seriously the humanitarian consequences brought about by cluster munitions. Japan is therefore taking steps to address this issue via victim assistance and unexploded ordnance clearance.⁴³ Japan is also continuing its efforts to increase the number of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM).⁴⁴ At the 10th Meeting of States Parties to the CCM held in August 2022, Japan participated in discussions concerning these issues and shared its proactive efforts.

5 Japan's Efforts at the United Nations

(1) Japan-UN Relationship

The UN is an international organization that nearly all the countries in the world are currently members of (193 countries as of December 2022). It addresses various challenges in diverse areas such as conflict resolution and peacebuilding, counter-terrorism, disarmament and non-proliferation, poverty and development, human rights, refugee issues, environment and climate change issues, disaster risk reduction, and public health.

Since joining the UN in 1956, Japan has leveraged on both universality and expertise to realize policy

aims through multilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas, including the three pillars of the UN—peace and security, development, and human rights. An important example of this is that Japan has fulfilled its key role in the maintenance of international peace and security, such as having served as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council more frequently than any other UN Member State. In order to support such activities, the Government of Japan financially contributes to the UN alongside actively engaging in the organizational aspects (management) of the UN. Japan also supports Japanese staff working in the UN

⁴¹ The Convention, which entered into force in March 1999, bans the use and production of anti-personnel mines while mandating the destruction of stockpiled mines and the clearance of buried mines. As of December 2022, there are 164 states and regions that are parties to the Convention, including Japan.

⁴² Generally speaking, it refers to bombs or shells in the form of large containers that open midair and release submunitions that spread over a wide area. They are said to be highly likely to not explode on impact, leading to the problem of civilians being accidentally killed or injured.

⁴³ See the White Paper on Development Cooperation for specific efforts on international cooperation regarding cluster munitions and anti-personnel mines.

⁴⁴ Entered into force in August 2010, it prohibits the use, possession, or production of cluster munitions, while mandating the clearance of cluster munitions in contaminated areas and the destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions. There are 110 states and regions that are parties to the Convention, including Japan (as of December 31, 2022).

to obtain important posts (see Chapter 4, Section 1, 2(1)). Given the pressing challenge of making the UN an efficient organization that is effective and well-suited to the 21st century, Japan continues to proactively engage in the reformation of the UN, including the UN Security Council.

(2) Major Events in 2022

The High-Level Week of the 77th UN General Assembly convened in September, taking a fully in-person format for the first time in three years. Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi attended from Japan.

In the General Debate of the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Kishida addressed the following three pillars on Japan's determination to achieve the visions of the UN: (1) strengthening of the functions of the UN including the UN Security Council; (2) achieving a UN that promotes the rule of law in the international community; (3) promoting efforts based on the concept of human security in the new era. He noted lending a sincere ear to the voices of each country as well as demonstrating Japan's strong commitment to the UN and to multilateralism.

Prime Minister Kishida also attended three other meetings during the High-Level Week. Delivering a speech at the "HeForShe" Summit⁴⁵ organized by UN Women, Prime Minister Kishida as a HeForShe Champion said that "women's economic independence" is at the core of the "New Form of Capitalism," and spoke about the importance of enabling all women to choose their own paths in life. At the High-Level Meeting of the Friends of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), he stressed the importance of the universalization of the CTBT and its early entry into force, as well as the strengthening of the verification system. Furthermore, at the Global Fund's Seventh Replenishment Conference⁴⁶ hosted by President Biden of the U.S., Prime Minister Kishida stated that strengthening health systems under the initiative of the Global Fund will lead to better preparedness for future



Prime Minister Kishida delivering an address at the General Debate of the UN General Assembly (September 20, New York, U.S. Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

pandemics and contribute to achieving universal health coverage (UHC), and stressed the need for the international community to work together to accelerate such efforts. He also announced Japan's intent of contributing up to 1.08 billion US dollars to the Global Fund over the next three years.

Prime Minister Kishida took the opportunity to hold six summit meetings and five informal talks with leaders of various countries, working tirelessly to exchange opinions on bilateral relations as well as on various issues in the international arena, such as the response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

During his stay in New York, Prime Minister Kishida also attended a reception to promote Japanese food culture. He also delivered remarks at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE). In doing so, he explained Japanese economic and fiscal policy directly to experts and business people, actively communicated the attractiveness of Japan, as well as called for investments in Japan. In addition, he held a dialogue with executives of the NYSE and U.S. businesses, as well as observed the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Tokyo Stock Exchange and the NYSE.

Foreign Minister Hayashi engaged in active diplomacy during the High-Level Week, attending a total of eight multilateral conferences, including the G7

⁴⁵ The "HeForShe" Summit is an event organized as a part of the HeForShe Movement conducted by UN Women with the aim of raising awareness and involvement among men in initiatives aimed at realizing gender equality. The events participants include male leaders and stakeholders from the government, private companies, educational institutions, and non-profit organizations. HeForShe Champions refer to male leaders from various sectors selected in this movement.

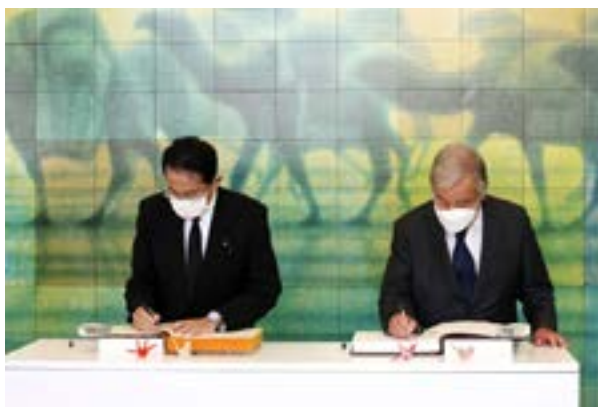
⁴⁶ Established in 2002, the Global Fund has served as a public-private partnership for countermeasures against infectious diseases, which were first addressed as a major summit agenda item at the G8 Kyushu-Okinawa Summit in 2000. It provides financial assistance toward strengthening public health systems and implementing countermeasures in developing countries against the three major infectious diseases (HIV, tuberculosis, and malaria), and contributes to efforts to achieve the SDGs. It is a major organization that supports infectious disease countermeasures. Japan has contributed approximately 4.3 billion US dollars cumulatively (as of 2022), ranking fifth among the donor countries.

Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 countries on UN Security Council Reform, and Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting, as well as 15 bilateral meetings and two summit meetings. In his meetings with various countries, Foreign Minister Hayashi engaged in discussions focusing on strengthening the functions of the UN as a whole, including UN Security Council reform, restoring trust in the UN, and thoroughly upholding the rule of law, while reflecting the contents of Prime Minister Kishida's address at the General Debate. Furthermore, he affirmed cooperation on regional situations including Ukraine, China, and North Korea, and communicated Japan's stance on issues such as food and energy security, and UHC, to the international community.

Foreign Minister Hayashi held a meeting with UN General Assembly President Kőrösi Csaba, during which he expressed his support for strengthening the functions of the General Assembly and for President Kőrösi's leadership.

In August, UN Secretary-General António Guterres visited Japan. During the visit, he attended the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Ceremony held in Hiroshima and held a meeting with Prime Minister Kishida. Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during wartime, will lead international efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons. Both parties concurred to continue to work closely. Prime Minister Kishida also took the opportunity to meet with UN Secretary General Guterres during the NPT Review Conference held the same month.

In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine



Prime Minister Kishida and UN Secretary-General Guterres signing the guestbook at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum (August 6, Hiroshima. Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

from February and Russia's exercising of its veto in the UN Security Council on two occasions, six emergency special sessions of the UN General Assembly were held up till February 2023, and General Assembly resolutions were adopted at each of these sessions (See the Special Feature Russia's Aggression Against Ukraine and Japan's Response on page 27). Japan became a co-sponsor of these resolutions, and urged Russia to listen carefully to the overwhelming voices of the international community and to implement the resolutions.

(3) United Nations Security Council and its Reform

A United Nations Security Council

The UN Security Council holds the primary responsibility within the UN for maintaining international peace and security. It is composed of five permanent members and 10 non-permanent members that are elected by UN Member States (for two-year terms). Japan was elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in June, and will serve a two-year term from January 2023 as a non-permanent member for the 12th time, which is more than any other UN Member State. In January, the month that Japan held the Security Council presidency, Foreign Minister Hayashi visited New York and hosted the ministerial Open Debate on the rule of law. Japan also hosted the ambassadorial-level meeting on peacebuilding during its presidency. The UN Security Council's agenda covers a wide range of areas from the peaceful settlement of disputes and addressing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, to peacebuilding and women, peace and security. In recent years, new themes such as climate change and food security have also been covered. The UN Security Council also has a mandate to determine the details of activities in UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) and UN Special Political Missions (SPM).

The UN Security Council has not been functioning effectively, as shown by Russia's (a permanent member of the Council) aggression against Ukraine and North Korea's nuclear and missile activities that repeat violations of UN Security Council resolutions and threaten the peace and security of Japan, the region and the international community. Under such circumstances, Japan will communicate closely with each country and



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara attending the election for non-permanent members of the UN Security Council—the moment when Japan was elected (Left in the photo) (June 9, New York)

engage in dialogues, throughout its two-year term on the Council, with the aim of maintaining and strengthening international order based on the rule of law while cooperating to enable the UN Security Council to fulfill its expected role. Japan will also contribute actively to discussions on the response to regional issues in the Middle East, Africa, and other regions, as well as on global issues such as climate change. As it has contributed during previous terms, Japan will continue to work on improving the procedures of the UN Security Council, including enhancing the efficiency and transparency of the Council.

B Reform of the UN Security Council

More than 75 years have passed since the UN was established, and the structure of the international community has significantly changed while the UN's functions have become diverse. Despite this, the composition of the UN Security Council has largely remained unchanged to this day. In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February, a resolution that deplores the aggression by Russia was put to a vote in the UN Security Council. However, it was not adopted as Russia exercised its veto. Consequently, the UN Security Council was unable to take a coordinated response. This clearly shows that the UN Security Council cannot adequately fulfill the functions expected by the international community today. There is a broadly shared view among the international community that an early reform of the UN Security Council is necessary to make the body more legitimate, effective and representative.

To play an even more proactive role toward the realization of world peace and security through the UN, Japan has been making efforts to convince other countries to pursue an early UN Security Council reform, with the expansion of both permanent and non-permanent seats and Japan's admission as a permanent member.

C Recent Activities Regarding UN Security Council Reform

Since 2009, in the UN General Assembly, Member States have been engaging in the Intergovernmental Negotiations on UN Security Council reform. In 2022, five meetings took place between February and May. At the end of June, the decision for the 77th session to roll over the work of the 76th session including the expression “instill new life in the discussions on the reform of the Security Council,” was adopted by consensus at the UN General Assembly. In October, about one month earlier than in 2021, President Kőrösi of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly appointed the Permanent Representatives of Kuwait and Slovakia to the UN as co-chairs of the Intergovernmental Negotiations. The spotlight will be placed on how future discussions will progress under the new system.

Japan also places great importance on its initiatives as a member of the G4 (Japan, India, Germany and Brazil), a group that cooperates on promoting UN Security Council reform. Foreign Minister Hayashi attended the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 countries in September in conjunction with the High-Level Week of the UN General Assembly. At the meeting, the G4 Foreign Ministers shared their understanding of the current situation of UN Security Council reform and discussed future directions for their cooperation with member countries, based on the view that the foundation of the international order, which the UN has been playing a central role in the development of, is being shaken due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine and other challenges. With a view to restoring confidence in the UN and bearing in mind that many countries have mixed expectations and dissatisfaction toward the UN Security Council, Foreign Minister Hayashi suggested that Security Council reform be put in the context of strengthening the functions of the entire UN, including efforts to strengthen



G4 Foreign Ministers before their meeting (September 22, New York, U.S.)



Ministerial Meeting of the G4 countries on UN Security Council Reform (September 22, New York, U.S.)

the roles of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General to increase momentum of the reform. To realize Security Council reform, the Ministers agreed to cooperate closely with the President of the General Assembly to launch text-based negotiations in the Intergovernmental Negotiations, to work with relevant countries such as Africa and the U.S., and to seek concrete progress as early as possible. On December 14, State Minister for Foreign Affairs YAMADA Kenji attended the Security Council Open Debate on New Orientation for Reformed Multilateralism, including UN Security Council reform. He emphasized that UN Security Council reform is possible and achievable, and strived to raise momentum toward it. Japan will continue to cooperate closely with countries that support the reform, and to be positively involved in the process toward the realization of UN Security Council reform.

(4) Organizational Aspects of the United Nations (Management)

A Management

UN Secretary-General Guterres positions peace efforts and development along with reforms in the management of the UN as issues of priority, and works continuously to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the UN Secretariat's functions. In 2021, he issued a report titled "Our Common Agenda" which proposed concrete measures for the UN to adapt to a new era. Discussions are ongoing among UN Member States and other stakeholders to bring about the realization of these recommendations. Japan supports the objectives of the reform with the hope that the UN will fulfill its mission more effectively and efficiently.

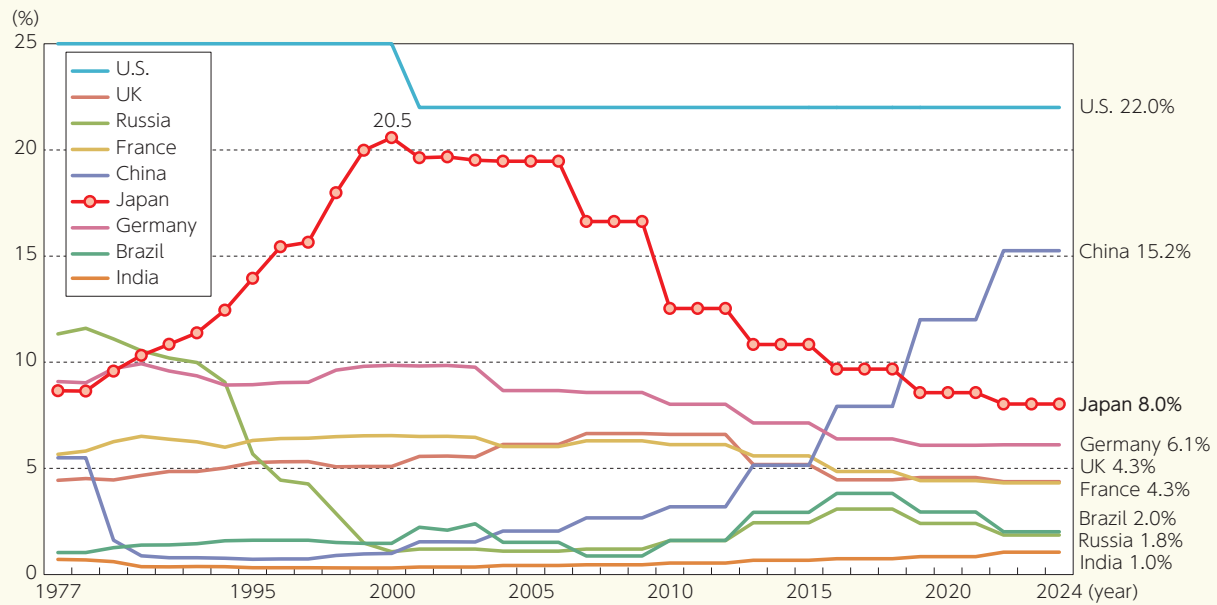
B Budget

The UN budget is mainly composed of the regular budget for general activities (an annual budget for the period from January to December, implemented on a trial basis from 2020 to 2022), and the peacekeeping budget related to peacekeeping operations (an annual budget for the period from July to the following June).

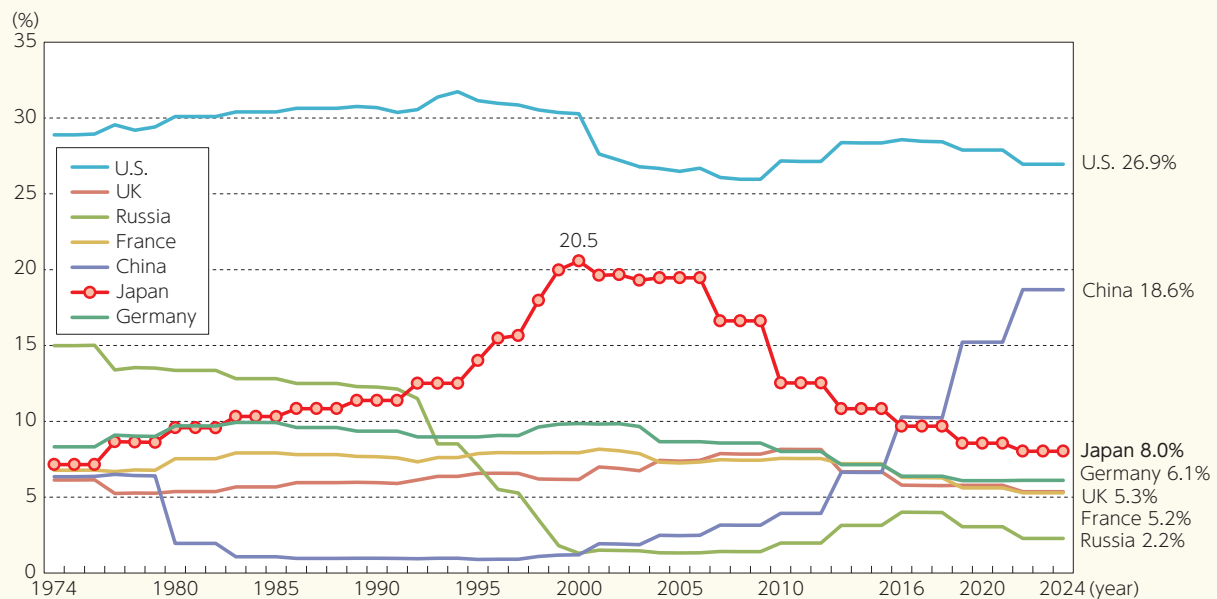
With regard to the regular budget, a budget for 2023 amounting to approximately 3.4 billion US dollars was approved in December 2022 at the UN General Assembly. The budget for peacekeeping operations for the period of 2022-2023 amounting to approximately 6.45 billion US dollars in total was approved in June 2022 (an increase of approximately 1.2% from the final budget of the previous period).

The budget to support UN activities is composed of assessed contributions paid by Member States and voluntary contributions provided in accordance with Member States' policy needs. With regard to assessed contributions, Japan currently ranks third after the U.S. and China. Japan contributed approximately 230.76 million US dollars to the UN regular budget for 2022, and approximately 518.33 million US dollars to the peacekeeping budget for 2022/23. As a major financial contributor, Japan has been encouraging the UN to make more efficient and effective use of its financial resources. The scale of assessments, which provides the basis for calculating the amount of assessed contributions, is revised every three years based on the

Trends in UN Regular Budget Scale of Assessments of Top Contributors



Trends in UN PKO Budget Scale of Assessments of Top Contributors (%)



capacities to pay of the Member States. Japan's scale of assessment, revised at the end of 2021, is 8.033% (2022-2024), behind the U.S. and China.

Key bodies that address administrative and budgetary matters of the UN are the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Committee on Contributions. Both are standing subsidiary committees of the General Assembly and are comprised of members serving in their personal

capacities. The ACABQ reviews the overall administrative and budgetary issues of the UN and makes recommendations to the General Assembly, while the Committee on Contributions submits a proposal on the scale of assessments of the regular budget for a decision to be made by all Member States at the General Assembly. Hence, both committees play an important role. Members from Japan have served continuously on both of these committees.

6 The Rule of Law in the International Community

The rule of law is, generally, the concept that recognizes the superiority of the law over all forms of power. It is an essential cornerstone of a fair and just society within a country. At the same time, it contributes to peace and stability in the international community and constitutes the basis of the international order that consists of friendly and equitable relations between states. In the international community, under the rule of law, we must not allow rule by force, all countries must observe international law in good faith, and there must be no unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion. Japan promotes strengthening the rule of law as one of the pillars of its foreign policy, and promotes rule-making in various fields as well as ensuring their proper implementation.

(1) Japan's Diplomacy to Strengthen the Rule of Law

Japan makes use of various opportunities, including international conferences, to affirm with each country the importance of a free and open international order based on the rule of law. In addition, it participates actively in rule-making in various sectors, contributing to the formation and development of a new international legal order. In order to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and the maintenance of legal order, Japan also actively cooperates with judicial organizations to strengthen their functions via both human resource and financial resource contributions, and works proactively on international cooperation in relation to the rule of law, such as by supporting the improvement of legal systems and organizing events on international law.

With the very foundation of the international order being shaken as a result of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, it is becoming even more important to strengthen the rule of law. In his statement at the General Debate of the UN General Assembly held in September, Prime Minister Kishida emphasized the importance of the following three principles based on

"The Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States" (Friendly Relations Declaration) adopted at the UN General Assembly in 1970: (1) break away from "rule by force" and pursue "rule of law" through observing international law in good faith; (2) in this regard, do not allow any attempts to change the status quo of territories and areas by force or coercion; and, (3) cooperate with one another against serious violations of the principles of the UN Charter. He also expressed Japan's strong resolve toward realizing a UN that promotes the rule of law in the international community.

A Peaceful Settlement of Disputes

In order to encourage peaceful settlement of disputes via international judicial institutions while striving to comply faithfully with international law, Japan accepts the compulsory jurisdiction⁴⁷ of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the principal judicial organ of the UN, and constructively contributes to establishing the rule of law in the international community via cooperation in providing human and financial resources. For example, Japan is the largest financial contributor to the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) (as of December 31, 2022 for the PCA). In terms of human resources, a number of Japanese judges serve on international judicial bodies as of 2022, including ICJ Judge IWASAWA Yuji (incumbent since 2018), Judge YANAI Shunji to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) (incumbent since 2005), and Judge AKANE Tomoko to the ICC (incumbent since March 2018). Through these contributions, Japan strives to enhance the effectiveness and universality of international courts and tribunals (see the Column on page 253). With the aim of fostering people who can play an active role in international litigations in the future, Japan provides active support to Japanese nationals including those who intern at international judicial organizations through the Support Program

⁴⁷ A declaration that States Parties to the Statute of the ICJ recognize the jurisdiction of the ICJ as compulsory ipso facto and without special agreement, in relation to any other state accepting the same obligation, in accordance with Article 36, paragraph 2 of its Statute. Only 73 countries, including Japan, have made such declaration to date (as of February 28, 2023).

for Internships at International Courts and other International Organizations.

At the same time, in order to further strengthen the capacity in dealing with international litigations, Japan is engaged in efforts to enhance expertise on international judicial proceedings, and to create a strong organization that can perform well in international trials by strengthening relationships with lawyers and law firms in and outside Japan, that are mainly active in the field of international justice. In the field of economy, the importance of dispute settlements based on World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements, Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA), and investment agreements has been growing in recent years. Against this backdrop, in the handling of dispute settlements under the WTO agreements and others, Japan engages in litigation work, such as preparation of written submissions, handling of evidence, and preparation and participation in oral proceedings, in close cooperation with the relevant ministries and agencies as well as academic experts and practitioners specializing in international economic law both in Japan and abroad. It also advances initiatives such as analyzing of case law and academic theories, and engages in dispute prevention. In these ways, Japan strives to strengthen the capacity for strategic and effective dispute settlement.

B International Rule-making

International rule-making to respond to issues the global community faces is one of the important efforts toward strengthening the rule of law. Along with actively promoting the conclusion of bilateral and multilateral treaties aimed at building a legal foundation for achieving goals it shares with other countries, Japan is demonstrating initiative starting at the planning phase in creating rules for developing international laws that reflect its ideals and positions in cross-sectoral efforts in the framework of the UN and other fora. Specifically, Japan has been actively involved in the rule-making processes within various international frameworks that include codification work in the field of public international law at the International Law Commission (ILC) and the sixth Committee of the UN General Assembly, as well as the preparation of conventions and model laws in the field of private international law at fora such as the Hague Conference on Private International Law

(HCCH), the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT). In the ILC, MURASE Shinya, Professor Emeritus of Sophia University, whose term is from 2009 to 2022, serves as a Special Rapporteur on the topic of “Protection of the Atmosphere.” In this role, he has long been contributing to the development of international law by participating in deliberations in the ILC, including guiding draft guidelines of the said topic through to adoption. From 2023, ASADA Masahiko, Professor of Doshisha University and Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University, will serve as a member of the ILC (for the term from 2023 to 2027). Japan also sends Government representatives to various meetings of the HCCH, UNCITRAL and UNIDROIT, taking an active lead in the discussions. For example, Dr. Kanda Hideki, Professor of Gakushuin University, chairs the Digital Assets and Private Law working group in UNIDROIT, and contributes to leading-edge discussions on digital finance. Japan has also been showing its presence as a member state of UNCITRAL since the founding of the commission, such as by proposing and realizing the enlargement of the membership of UNCITRAL as well as projects in the field of dispute settlement.

C Development of Domestic Legislation and Other Matters

Japan not only takes steps to appropriately improve its own national laws so as to comply with international law, but also actively supports the development of legal systems, especially in Asian countries, while cooperating internationally on efforts related to further developing the rule of law. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japanese Society of International Law, supported by the Nippon Foundation, co-organize the Asia Cup. The Asia Cup is an international law moot court competition for students in Asia including Japan, which aims to raise awareness about the importance of the peaceful settlement of disputes, nurture future generations in the field of international law, and strengthen exchange and communication among them (the 23rd Asia Cup was held in 2022). Japan also participates in constructive discussions and engages in cooperation concerning human resources and finances with

the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), the only inter-governmental organization in the Asia/Africa region that is engaged in international law.

(2) Initiatives in the Maritime Sector

For Japan, as a maritime nation, maintaining and strengthening maritime order based on the rule of law is an issue of the utmost importance. Therefore, Japan has consistently advocated for the “Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea” to be followed by every nation: (1) making and clarifying claims based on international law; (2) not using force or coercion in trying to drive their claims; and (3) seeking to settle disputes by peaceful means. For example, at the 16th East Asia Summit (EAS), held in October 2021, Prime Minister Kishida pointed out that it is in our common interest to make the Indo-Pacific a free and open sea.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) serves as a foundation for the rule of law at sea. The Convention has been ratified by 167 countries, including Japan (including some regions not officially recognized as nations by Japan), and the EU. The Convention comprehensively provides for principles governing the sea, including the freedom of navigation and overflight of the high seas. It also stipulates rights and obligations under international law on the development and regulation of marine resources, among other things. The provisions of the Convention that concern areas such as territorial sea and exclusive economic zones are widely accepted as established customary international law. In addition, the recognition that activities conducted on the seas ought to be carried out according to the provisions of the Convention is widely shared among the international community. As problems concerning the oceans and seas grow more complex and diverse, it is important to preserve and strengthen the maritime order based on the Convention, which serves as a comprehensive and universal legal framework.

To achieve the objectives of UNCLOS, several international organizations have been established based on UNCLOS. The International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) was established in 1996 for the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes and the preservation and advancement of law and order at sea. The

ITLOS deals with a wide range of cases, including the delimitation of maritime boundaries in recent years in particular, and the importance of the Tribunal has been growing. Japan attaches importance to the role played by the ITLOS and has successively dispatched two Japanese judges to the Tribunal since its establishment (currently Judge YANAI Shunji (term ends at the end of September 2023)). The Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) plays an important role in the operation of the system for establishing the outer limits of the continental shelf. Since its establishment, Japan has continued to cooperate with the Commission in terms of both human and financial resources, through means such as continuously producing members (Japan's current member is Professor YAMAZAKI Toshitsugu from the University of Tokyo (term ends on June 15, 2028)). In the International Seabed Authority (ISA) established for the primary purpose of administering deep sea-bed mineral resources, during three parts of the Council's Session held in 2022, deliberations were held on regulations concerning the exploitation of deep sea-bed mineral resources, and work was also carried out to formulate the relevant standards and guidelines. Japan participates actively in negotiations to ensure that its position is reflected in the regulations. Since before, Japan has also supported developing countries in capacity building for deep sea-bed technologies, and takes the lead in the creation of rules governing the deep sea-bed. Since 2018, an intergovernmental conference (GC) has been convened to formulate a new international agreement under UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ). Japan has continued to participate actively in these discussions, including in the 5th conference held in August 2022.

(3) Initiatives in the Political and Security Fields

In order to strengthen its legal basis for diplomatic activities, Japan is actively engaged in concluding international agreements in the political and security fields. In January, Japan signed the New Special Measures Agreement on HNS (“Host Nation Support”) with the U.S., and this Agreement entered into force in April with approval from the National Diet. In January, Japan also signed the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access

Column

Peaceful Settlement of Maritime Disputes and the Rule of Law

YANAI Shunji, former Ambassador of Japan to the United States,
Judge of the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)

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International relations regarding the seas and oceans are regulated by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), which was adopted in 1982 and is also known as the “Constitution for the Oceans.” This convention has expanded the maritime areas of states, establishing the width of the territorial sea of a state up to a limit not exceeding 12 nautical miles while creating an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of 200 nautical miles and granting wide continental shelves to coastal states. On the other hand, it stipulates the international management of the deep seabed that extends beyond the limits of national jurisdiction, and the mineral resources on such seabed, as the “common heritage of mankind.” As disputes over the delimitation of EEZ and continental shelves, as well as over marine resources and navigation, were expected to arise frequently under this convention, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), which specializes in the law of the sea, was established in Hamburg (Germany) in addition to the existing International Court of Justice and arbitral procedures.

In 2005, I assumed office as a Judge of ITLOS and the second Japanese Judge in the Tribunal after the late Judge YAMAMOTO Soji. I have now served in the Tribunal for close to 18 years, including three years as its President. ITLOS has handled 31 cases of maritime disputes over the quarter century since its establishment, and it contributes not only to the peaceful settlement of international disputes and to the rule of law at sea, but also to the progressive development of the Law of the Sea through its jurisprudence. ITLOS has also provided advisory opinions to clarify the interpretations of provisions of UNCLOS in relation to the deep seabed and fishery. The dispute between Bangladesh and Myanmar over the delimitation of the maritime boundary is an example of an ITLOS judgement that was particularly welcomed by the parties of a dispute. More than 30 years of negotiations between the two countries had not led to a successful conclusion, but ITLOS settled the dispute in about two years and three months.

There are two matters that I feel strongly about in my experience as a Judge of ITLOS. The first is the sense of solidarity and common purpose among the 21 Judges. When hearing cases, various opinions are put forward in the beginning and the situation may appear to be out of control. However, as deliberations proceed, a majority view emerges. I believe this is because the Judges are in accord with one another on their desire to come up with the best solution for the dispute before them, even when there is a wide range of opinions.

Another matter is that we share a common logic and way of thinking about the law. The 21 Judges all come from different countries and have different backgrounds, including cultures, languages, and legal systems. In spite of such differences, as long as the legal opinion is logically clear, these differences do not hinder mutual communication at all.

I think that it is very important for the international community to make greater use of institutions such as ITLOS to settle disputes peacefully, and to establish the rule of law at sea.



The author



Oral proceedings in ITLOS (the author is second from the top left)

Agreement, which establishes procedures between Japan and Australia for the cooperative activities conducted by defence forces of one country while visiting the other country, and defines the status of the visiting force. In January 2023, Japan signed a Reciprocal Access Agreement with the UK. Japan advanced efforts to conclude Exchange of Notes and Agreements concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology, which set out provisions on the handling of defense equipment and technologies to be transferred, and Agreements on the Security of Information, which serve as the basis for the sharing of classified information on security with the relevant countries. With regard to the defense equipment and technologies to be transferred, Japan signed and exchanged notes with Ukraine on March 8 (entry into force on the same day) for the grant of equipment and goods of the Japan Self Defense Forces (JSDF) to Ukraine. It also signed an Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology with Thailand on May 2 (entry into force on the same day). In the nuclear sector, in order to enable the reprocessing, in France, of spent fuel generated in research reactors owned by the Japan Atomic Energy Agency, Japan signed and exchanged notes with France on June 15 (entry into force on the same day) on the transportation and reprocessing of spent fuel and the return of radioactive waste.

(4) Initiatives in the Fields of the Economy and Society

The conclusion and implementation of international agreements that bring legal discipline to cooperative relationships with other countries in the economic sphere remain important for promoting the liberalization of trade and investment, as well as people-to-people exchanges, and for strengthening the foundations for the overseas activities of Japanese citizens and companies. The agreements that Japan negotiated and signed or concluded in 2022 include tax conventions, investment treaties, and social security agreements with various countries and regions. Furthermore, Japan also engaged actively in negotiations on EPAs and other agreements, with the aim of expanding free and fair economic spheres and strengthening wide-ranging economic relationships.

With regard to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), Japan, as the chair of the Accession Working Group, actively advanced negotiations toward the UK acceding to the CPTPP. As for the Japan-EU EPA (Economic Partnership Agreement), formal negotiations with the EU commenced in October to include provisions on the free flow of data into the EPA. The Protocol Amending the Trade Agreement between Japan and the United States of America was signed in June and entered into force in January 2023.

Furthermore, with a view to protecting and enhancing the livelihoods and activities of Japanese citizens and companies, Japan is working on the proper implementation of existing international agreements as well as utilizing the dispute settlement system of the WTO.

In social areas such as human rights, the environment, fisheries, maritime affairs, aviation, health, labor and postal affairs, which are closely linked to the daily lives of the people, Japan actively participates in negotiations of international agreements to ensure that Japan's positions are reflected and also concludes such agreements. For example, in the labor sector, Japan ratified the Convention Concerning the Abolition of Forced Labour (Convention 105) in July. In the postal field, Japan concluded in June 2022 related documents including Additional Protocols to the Constitution of the Universal Postal Union (UPU) drawn up by the Universal Postal Union in 2018 and 2021.

(5) Initiatives in the Field of Criminal Justice

The ICC is the first-ever permanent international criminal court to prosecute and punish, in accordance with international law, individuals who have committed the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. Since becoming a State Party to the ICC Rome Statute in October 2007, Japan has consistently supported the ICC's activities and cooperated with the Court in various ways. Fiscally, Japan is the largest contributor to the ICC, accounting for approximately 15% of the entire assessed contributions to the Court as of 2022. Moreover, Japan has consistently produced judges since its accession to the ICC. As of 2022, AKANE Tomoko, former Ambassador for International Judicial Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Public Prosecutor at the Supreme

Public Prosecutors Office of Japan, is serving as a judge. Japan also cooperates on the activities of the ICC in the aspect of human resources, with HARIMOTO Yukiko serving on the Committee on Budget and Finance, among others. As the ICC evolves into a full-fledged international criminal justice institution, it is imperative to secure cooperation with the ICC, establish the principle of complementarity, and to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in its judicial procedures. Japan actively engages in addressing these challenges, such as through its participation in the working groups of the Assembly of States Parties. In March, from the perspective of expressing clear support for the ICC investigation of the situation in Ukraine, Japan, as the only Asian country, referred the situation in Ukraine to the ICC (see the Special Feature Russia's Aggression Against Ukraine and Japan's Response on page 26). Furthermore, in

the face of an increase of cross-border crimes in recent years, Japan is further working on ensuring judicial cooperation in the criminal sector, such as the mutual submission of necessary evidence with other countries. Specifically, as efforts to improve legal frameworks for promoting international cooperation in the field of criminal justice, Japan has been working on negotiations toward concluding international agreements such as the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLAT),⁴⁸ the Treaty on Extradition,⁴⁹ and the Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.⁵⁰ In May, Japan signed the Second Additional Protocol to the Convention on Cybercrime, which is a multilateral framework related to international cooperation, and in August, the Treaty between Japan and the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters entered into force.

7 Human Rights

There is growing international concern about the human rights situations in various parts of the world. The protection and promotion of human rights is the foundation for peace and stability in the international community. Japan recognizes that human rights are universal values and that the protection of human rights is the basic responsibility of all countries, regardless of differences in the method of achieving this goal and their cultures. While speaking out firmly against any serious violation of human rights, Japan considers, under the basic principle of “dialogue” and “cooperation,” that it is important to promote voluntary efforts of each country through bilateral dialogues and cooperation with countries that are working toward democratization and the protection of human rights. In addition, in the area of human rights, with the standpoint of bridge-building in Asia and protection of socially vulnerable people, Japan puts effort into improving the global human rights situation through bilateral dialogues, proactive participation in

multilateral forums such as the UN, and constructive dialogues with the UN human rights mechanisms.

(1) Initiatives within the UN

A UN Human Rights Council

The Human Rights Council holds sessions throughout the year in Geneva (three regular sessions per year, lasting about 10 weeks in total) to discuss issues and make recommendations concerning the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Special sessions to address the human rights situation in Ukraine and Iran were held in May and November, respectively, and resolutions were adopted, including on the investigation of the human rights situations in the two countries. To date, Japan has served as a member of the Council for five terms (most recently, Japan was elected in the elections held in October 2019 for the term from January 2020 to December 2022).

At the high-level segment of the 49th Session of the Human Rights Council held in February and

⁴⁸ A legal framework that allows for efficient and prompt cooperation with legal authorities of other countries in investigations, prosecution, and other criminal procedures.

⁴⁹ A legal framework having comprehensive and detailed provisions regarding the extradition of criminals to enable more effective cooperation for repressing crime.

⁵⁰ A legal framework aiming to facilitate the social rehabilitation of sentenced persons by giving them the opportunity to serve their sentences in their own countries.

March, NAKATANI Gen, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Japan for international human rights issues, delivered a statement. In his statement, he condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine in the strongest terms, and strongly demanded that the obligations under international law including international humanitarian law should be fulfilled. He also spoke about Japan's continued determination to contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights in Asia and the world, and stressed the importance of the immediate resolution of the abductions issue. Furthermore, he expressed Japan's deep concerns over the situation in China including Hong Kong and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and urged China to take concrete actions. He also introduced Japan's latest initiatives in the fields of business and human rights, eradication of violence against children, elimination of discrimination against leprosy, the realization of a society where the pride of the indigenous Ainu people is respected, and the protection and promotion of women's human rights. The resolution on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), submitted by the EU and co-sponsored by Japan, was adopted without a vote at the same session (adopted for 15 consecutive years). This resolution refers to the urgency and importance of the abductions issue and of the immediate return of all abductees, the long years of severe suffering experienced by abductees and their families, grave concern over the lack of any concrete or positive action by DPRK, as well as the faithful provision of accurate and detailed information to the families of victims on the fates and whereabouts of the victims.

At the 50th session convened in June, the Netherlands delivered a joint statement on behalf of 47 countries, on concerns over the human rights situation in China, particularly in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Japan was the only participating country from Asia.

B The Third Committee of the UN General Assembly

The Third Committee of the UN General Assembly is, along with the Human Rights Council, the UN's main forum focused on human rights. Generally, in October and November, the Committee discusses a wide range of issues, including those concerning social development, women, children, racial discrimination, refugees, crime prevention and criminal justice, as well as the human rights situations in North Korea, Syria and Iran, among others. Resolutions adopted by the Third Committee are then adopted by a plenary session of the General Assembly, contributing to the development of international norms.

At the 77th session of the General Assembly, the resolution on the situation of human rights in the DPRK, submitted by the EU and co-sponsored by Japan, was adopted without a vote at a session of the Third Committee in November and a plenary session of the UN General Assembly in December (adopted for the 18th consecutive year). The resolution refers once again to the contents of previous resolutions, including the urgency and importance of the abductions issue, which involves a serious violation of human rights, and of the immediate return of all abductees, and also strongly demands that North Korea sincerely listen to the voices of the victims and their families, faithfully provide accurate and detailed information to their families on their fates and whereabouts, and engage in constructive dialogue with the parties concerned. At the same session, Canada, on behalf of 50 countries, delivered a joint statement expressing grave concerns over the human rights situations in China, especially in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Japan was the only participating country from Asia.

In addition, Japan participated actively in discussions in the international community toward protecting and promoting human rights, including discussions on the human rights situations in countries such as Syria, Iran, and Myanmar, as well as on various human rights issues that include social development and the rights of the child.

C Promoting the Introduction of Human Rights Due Diligence⁵¹ through the Implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights

Toward the implementation of “the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)” endorsed by the UN Human Rights Council, Japan has been promoting respect for human rights in the context of business activities under the NAP on Business and Human Rights, formulated by the Government of Japan in 2020. As a part of these efforts, Japan is actively introducing its initiatives and sharing knowledge by attending international conferences and through consultations with foreign governments, with a view to promoting “Business and Human Rights.” Furthermore, in order to support efforts by business enterprises to respect human rights, the Government of Japan released the cross-industry guidelines on human rights due diligence in September. Immediately after that, NAKATANI Gen, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister, visited Viet Nam and Thailand. He participated in a regional forum organized by an international organization in Thailand, and held dialogues with government officials as well as with local organizations in both countries, conveying Japan’s initiatives including the release of the aforementioned guidelines. To promote and raise awareness of the guidelines among Japanese business enterprises and provide support for the implementation of human rights due diligence, Japan is also actively engaged in support projects through contributions to international organizations, and holding overseas seminars, among other initiatives. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will continue to steadily implement the NAP in cooperation with the relevant ministries and agencies, while continuing to engage in dialogues with the stakeholders.

(2) Initiatives Concerning International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law

A International Human Rights Law

At the elections of members of the Human Rights Committee held at the 39th Meeting of State Parties to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights

(ICCPR) at the UN Headquarters in New York in June, Prof. TERAYA Koji (Professor of Graduate Schools for Law and Politics, the University of Tokyo), Japan’s candidate, was elected to the Committee. Furthermore, regarding the human rights treaties that Japan has concluded, regular reviews of state party reports on the implementation status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the ICCPR were conducted in August and October, respectively, and Japan engaged in constructive dialogues with respective committees.

B International Humanitarian Law (IHL)

Japan has actively been engaged in efforts for strengthening the national implementation of IHL. In November, Japan participated in the North-East, South-East Asia and the Pacific Regional Conference on IHL. Furthermore, as it does every year, Japan dispatched an instructor to play the part of the jury to the IHL Moot Court and Role Play Competitions, organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), as part of awareness-raising efforts for IHL.

(3) Contribution to Refugee Issues

From the perspective of international contribution and humanitarian aid, Japan has been accepting refugees from Myanmar who were temporarily residing in Thailand, under a resettlement program that ran from FY2010 to FY2014 (the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to a third country that agrees to accept them for long-term settlement). Japan has been accepting refugees from Myanmar who had been residing temporarily in Malaysia since FY2015, and allowed accepting eligible family members of those who already resettled in Japan from Thailand on the condition that mutual aid be provided with them.

Thereafter, in light of dramatic changes to the international situation surrounding refugees and trends in the international community, and from the perspective of better balancing the burden for the refugee problem among the international community, Japan made the decision in June 2019 to accept more refugees resettling from third countries under part of a new framework. Specifically, beginning in FY2020, Japan will now

⁵¹ Human rights due diligence: To identify, prevent, mitigate, and address, as well as to provide information on, the impact of business activities on human rights.

accept once or twice a year refugees temporarily residing in Asia without restriction on their birthplace and family members of the refugees who have already been accepted in Japan under a resettlement program (up to 60 people can be accepted a year).

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic situation in Japan and abroad, the acceptance of refugees for FY2020 was postponed, but this was resumed in March 2022. A total of 74 households (229 people) came to Japan from FY2010 to the end of 2022.

Refugees arriving in Japan undergo a six-month training program, which includes language studies for daily life and employment support services. Those

who have completed the training program live independently in their respective areas of resettlement. Initially, local governments in the Tokyo metropolitan region played a central role in operations concerning the resettlement of refugees. However, from the perspective of promoting national understanding of the refugee issue, active efforts have been made to resettle refugees in municipalities outside the Tokyo Metropolitan area since 2018.

While the acceptance of resettled refugees has been done primarily by Western countries, Japan is the first country in Asia to accept resettled refugees.

8 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

The further deterioration of the global economy due to the spread of COVID-19 and Russia's aggression against Ukraine has not only exacerbated the poverty of women, but also brought about an increase in gender-based violence such as domestic violence (DV), human trafficking, and child marriages. In this conflict situation, conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) has seriously affected particularly women and girls and further highlighted existing gender inequalities. For this reason, it is necessary to prioritize the realization of gender equality and the promotion of women's empowerment as one of the most important issues for peace and prosperity in Japan and the world, and it is vital to focus on various policies and measures for women and girls in order to realize a more peaceful and prosperous society. In this sense, gender mainstreaming, which is to incorporate the gender perspective into all policies is becoming increasingly important in the international community. It is also important for Japan, as a member of the international community, to contribute actively to international efforts to prevent sexual violence in conflict, protect the human rights of women and promote the provision of relief and assistance to women. Since in the Fifth Basic Plan for Gender Equality, it is clearly stated that Japan will continue to contribute to the realization of gender equality and the promotion of women's empowerment by hosting international

conferences on women, vigorously supporting developing countries through development assistance as well as international cooperation with other countries and international organizations.

(1) G7

The G7 Leaders' Communique from the G7 Summit in Elmau held in June referred to mainstreaming gender equality into all policy areas in the spirit of feminist development, foreign and trade policies. With an aim to continuously monitor G7 commitments, it endorsed the G7 Dashboard on Gender Gaps, which selects 12 indicators from the areas of education, employment and social security, entrepreneurship, leadership, health and well-being, and funds for development cooperation, and maps the progress of gender equality in the G7 countries and EU. It also committed to making every effort to increase the share of the G7's bilateral allocable ODA for gender-related initiatives. Furthermore, it referred to the recognition, reduction, and redistribution of unpaid care work, and incorporated support of 79 million US dollars for the Childcare Incentive Fund. The G7 Gender Equality Ministers Meeting was held in October for the first time in three years, and was attended by OGURA Masanobu, Minister in charge of Women's Empowerment and Minister of State for Gender Equality.



President Guðni Jóhannesson of Iceland (left) and UN Women Executive Director Sima Bahous (right) delivering speeches at WAW!2022 (December 3, Tokyo)



Discussions at WAW!2022 (December 3, Tokyo)

(2) G20

In August, the second G20 Ministerial Conference on Women's Empowerment was convened in Bali under the Indonesian G20 Presidency. Minister in charge of Women's Empowerment and Minister of State for Gender Equality Ogura attended an online session on "Closing the Digital Gender Gap." In the G20 Bali Leaders' Declaration issued by the G20 Bali Summit in November, the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to putting gender equality and women's empowerment at the core of their efforts for an inclusive recovery and sustainable development as women and girls continue to be disproportionately affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and other crises.

(3) World Assembly for Women (WAW!)

Since 2014, Japan has been organizing WAW! as a forum for top leaders from Japan and abroad who are active on the frontlines of the political, economic and social arenas, to engage in discussions on various issues surrounding women, and to disseminate information

about Japan's initiatives to promote women's empowerment within and outside Japan. The sixth edition of the assembly, WAW!2022 was held for the first time in three years since March 2019 in hybrid format (combination of in-person and online events). At WAW!2022, under the main theme "WAW! for Mainstreaming Gender into a New Form of Capitalism," participants including youth and women in rural areas exchanged views toward the realization of gender equality and the creation of a peaceful and prosperous society (see the Special Feature on page 261).

(4) International Cooperation for the Empowerment of Women in Developing Countries

Through JICA and international organizations, Japan is engaged in educational support and human resource development, as well as efforts toward the economic empowerment of women and the elimination of gender-based violence in developing countries.

A Educational Support and Human Resource Development

At the Global Education Summit held in July 2021, Foreign Minister Motegi announced in his video message that Japan will provide education support of more than 1.5 billion US dollars over a five-year period, and support the provision of opportunities for quality education and human resource development to at least 7.5 million girls in developing countries. At the 77th UN General Assembly convened in September 2022, Prime Minister Kishida declared that Japan will focus on human resource development and capacity building while putting the emphasis on "investment in

people.” He also assumed the position of “Education Champion”⁵² and stated that he will promote cooperation through human resource development based on the outcome of the UN Transforming Education Summit.

B Supporting Women Through JICA

To promote the economic empowerment of women, Japan has provided support to improve the livelihoods of low-income female home-based workers in Pakistan, and promoted the provision of financial services that meet the needs of women in Viet Nam. To promote peace and security for women, it also provides support to strengthen coordination as well as the capacity of organizations involved in addressing trafficking in persons in the Mekong region. Furthermore, in South Sudan and Pakistan, Japan has provided cooperation aimed at protecting the survivors of gender-based violence and supporting them to gain independence. Japan also conducted training with participants from 12 countries, on the theme of eradicating sexual and gender-based violence.

C Dealing with Sexual Violence in Conflict

Sexual violence as tactics of war is a problem that cannot be overlooked. It is vital to put an end to impunity and to support victims. Japan has been actively working in this field to eliminate human rights violations against women in the 21st century. Japan prioritizes cooperation with international organizations such as the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (OSRSG-SVC), and participation in discussions at the international fora.

In 2022, Japan provided financial support of approximately 0.5 million US dollars to the OSRSG-SVC, providing legal assistance and support for COVID-19 countermeasures to victims of gender-based violence, including conflict-related sexual violence, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In 2022, Japan contributed an additional 2 million Euros to the Global Survivors Fund (GSF), founded by 2018 Nobel Peace Prize laureates Dr. Denis Mukwege and Ms. Nadia Murad and this brings Japan's total contributions to

6 million Euros by 2022. As a member of the board, Japan is also actively involved in the management of this Fund. At WAW!2022 held in December, Dr. Mukwege delivered a speech online. Furthermore, Japan continues to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for Victims of the International Criminal Court (ICC), earmarking contributions for victims of sexual violence and putting efforts into protecting victims of such violence. In addition, Japan also provides support through UN Women.

(4) Initiatives in the UN

A Cooperation with UN Women

Japan strengthened its cooperation with UN Women and increased its contribution from approximately 2 million US dollars (2013) to 13.8 million US dollars (2022). In particular, through UN Women, Japan works on awareness-raising activities among women and girls in developing countries on COVID-19 prevention, economic empowerment of women such as livelihood and entrepreneurship support, and support for female victims of gender-based violence during the COVID-19 pandemic. Japan's support also includes support of women's economic empowerment through providing daily necessities to women and girls who have been affected by conflict and natural disasters, and job creation and vocational training. In September, Prime Minister Kishida took up his role as the HeForShe Champion (male leaders from various sectors selected under the UN Women's HeForShe Campaign, with the aim of raising awareness and involvement among men toward gender equality).

B Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)

Since 1987, Japan has continuously secured a member seat in the CEDAW, which comprises 23 experts of independent capacity. In March, a webinar entitled “Do you know about the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women?” was organized. Moderated by CEDAW member AKIZUKI Hiroko, serving CEDAW members from four countries delivered lectures and engaged in discussions on

⁵² In September, Prime Minister Kishida, at the request of UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, assumed the position of the first “Education Champion,” fulfilling the role as a leader who promotes education in the international community.

the contents of the Convention as well as on the significance of complying with the Convention.

C United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

The CSW held its 66th session (CSW66) in March in a hybrid format, both in person and online, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The session hosted discussions on the priority theme of “Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes.” NODA Seiko, Minister in charge of Women’s Empowerment and Minister of State for Gender Equality delivered statements (via recording) at the General discussions and the ministerial roundtables.

D Women, Peace and Security (WPS)

Japan continues to contribute to implementation of the WPS agenda in the Middle East, Africa and Asia through its financial contributions to international organizations, primarily UN Women and SRSG-SVC Office, in line with the second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (action plan toward the implementation of the UN Security Council resolution 1325 and related resolutions on women, peace, and security). In addition, Japan conducts monitoring of the implementation status and compiles evaluation reports. WPS was one of the sessions at WAW!2022 held in December in Tokyo. Under the session theme “Women’s Participation in Peace and Security,” preventing sexual violence in conflict, women’s participation in PKO, and women’s participation in peace negotiations and other aspects of peacebuilding were discussed.

Special Feature

World Assembly for Women: WAW! 2022 - WAW! for Mainstreaming Gender into a New Form of Capitalism

The World Assembly for Women: WAW! 2022, organized by the Government of Japan, was held on December 3 for the first time in about three years. WAW! 2022 was held as a hybrid conference with in-person and online participants as the new approach linking up Tokyo and 22 satellite venues. 119 speakers from 26 countries participated in WAW! 2022 across borders, regions, and generations.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and recent global situations have raised a renewed awareness of the importance of gender equality in the international community. Based on the present situations, WAW! 2022 with the main theme “WAW! For Mainstreaming Gender into a New Form of Capitalism,” had 10 separate sessions, in order to engage in wide-ranging and comprehensive discussions including the gender wage gap, women’s participation in peace and security, women and disaster risk reduction, and two special sessions focusing on rural women and youth.

In his opening remarks, Prime Minister Kishida emphasized the importance of “gender mainstreaming” in promoting a “New Form of Capitalism,” and spoke about his expectations that discussions in WAW! would serve as momentum to realize a society where everyone can feel fulfilled in life. Next, keynote speeches were presented by Dr. Guðni Thorlacius Jóhannesson, President of Iceland, and Ms. Sima Bahous, Executive Director of UN Women. President Jóhannesson spoke about efforts for gender equality in Iceland, which ranks first in the Global Gender Gap Index^(Note), as well as the importance of enhancing awareness and engagement of men in the gender equality. Executive Director Bahous covered the issues in gender fields in the world and referred to concrete measures to realize gender equality.



Prime Minister Kishida giving the opening remarks
(December 3, Tokyo)



Speakers at the High-Level Roundtable (December 3, Tokyo)

The High-Level Roundtable welcomed the following speakers: President of Moldova Maia Sandu, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mongolia Batmunkh Battsetseg, Minister for Social and Family Development of Singapore Masagos Zulkifli, Minister in charge of Women's Empowerment OGURA Masanobu, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister of Japan on Women's Empowerment MORI Masako, and State Minister for Foreign Affairs YAMADA Kenji. They contributed knowledge from their respective countries on initiatives to promote "gender mainstreaming," and many of the speakers pointed out that realizing gender equality benefits not only women, but society as a whole.

The 10 separate sessions and two special sessions brought together experts, entrepreneurs, and youths who will be leaders of the next-generation, to contribute their views from a wide range of perspectives. Youths from each separate session were assigned as rapporteurs to present recommendations on their respective discussions at the Closing Session. For example, the session about women's participation in decision-making processes proposed incorporating continuous and meaningful gender education into the curriculum from primary education, while the session about women and disaster risk reduction recommended enhancing the resilience of women and girls in times of peace as part of disaster risk reduction measures. In addition, the session on women's participation in peace and security, which was joined online by Dr. Denis Mukwege, 2018 Nobel Peace Prize laureate, emphasized the need to promote gender mainstreaming in peace and security policies and diplomatic policies. Furthermore, the special sessions "Listening to the Voice of Youth: Proposal for the Future" proposed creating a system to facilitate political involvement and engagement among youth.



Session 9: Women's Participation in Peace and Security
Nobel Peace Prize laureate, Dr. Denis Mukwege, participating online (December 3, Tokyo)

(Note) Global Gender Gap Index: An index measuring gender gap in each country, which is released each year by the World Economic Forum (WEF). This index is drawn up based on data from four areas: Economic Participation and Opportunity, Education Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment, with a score of "0" indicating complete inequality and a score of "1" indicating complete equality.

Section 2 Japan's International Cooperation (Development Cooperation and Response to Global Issues)

In 2022, Russia's aggression against Ukraine had serious impact not only in Ukraine and surrounding nations, but also across the entire world. Amid this, Japan made efforts to assist Ukraine through efforts such as humanitarian assistance through international institutions, while working closely with other members of the G7 and the international community (for reference, see

Special Feature "Russia's Aggression Against Ukraine and Japan's Response" 2-(2) on page 19).

The year 2022 proved to be a year when the role of Japan's development cooperation was reaffirmed even more so than before in order to safeguard a free and open international order based on the rule of law.

1 Development Cooperation

(1) Revision of the Development Cooperation Charter

In September 2022, the Government of Japan announced that it would revise the Development Cooperation Charter, which is the foundation of Japan's development cooperation, based on major changes in the international situation that have taken place since the document was formulated in 2015, in order to update approaches to development cooperation more in line with the times and to ensure its implementation is more effective and strategic in nature.

Upon considering the revision of the Charter, an advisory panel on the revision of the Development

Cooperation Charter was established under Foreign Minister Hayashi composed of eight members and chaired by NAKANISHI Hiroshi, Professor at the Graduate School of Law, Kyoto University. After a total of four meetings, in December Chairperson Nakanishi submitted to Foreign Minister Hayashi a report summarizing the advisory panel's discussions.

The report identified the following three policies, placing human security as the foundation for the direction of development cooperation in the future: (1) contribution to maintaining the international order based on universal value as the foundation for peace and prosperity, (2) creating an environment of mutual help and co-creation, where Japan and the world develop and prosper together, and (3) leading international efforts to address increasingly complex and serious global issues. Furthermore, the report's specific recommendations for the strategic utilization of Official Development Assistance (ODA)¹ include: 1) stronger cooperation with partners, including like-minded countries, the private sector, and civil society, 2) more flexible and efficient assistance methods, and 3) increasing the attractiveness of Japan's development cooperation by leveraging its advantages through improved offer-based assistance.



Submission of the report from the Advisory Panel on the Revision of the Development Cooperation Charter to Foreign Minister Hayashi (December 9, Tokyo)

¹ Official Development Assistance (ODA): For details on Japan's international cooperation, refer to "White Paper on Development Cooperation: Japan's International Cooperation."
https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000017.html



The Government of Japan plans to finalize the new charter around the first half of 2023 based on this report from the advisory panel and through discussions held with a broad range of stakeholders including civil society and business circles.

(2) Japan's ODA

In 2021, Japan provided approximately 17.63 billion US dollars (+8.4% year on year) in ODA², based on the grant equivalent system (GE system)³. Japan ranks third among the member states of the DAC, following the U.S. and Germany. The ODA/GNI ratio based on the GE system was 0.34%, placing Japan in 12th place among member states of the DAC (Source: OECD Database (OECD.Stat) (December 2022)).

(3) Development Cooperation in 2022

In 2022, Japan engaged mainly in the following (A to E below) in order to promote strategic and effective development cooperation, with the Development Cooperation Charter positioned at the core of these actions.

A Support for Ukraine and Neighboring

Countries and Support for the Global South

To date, Japan has pledged to provide Ukraine and surrounding countries impacted by Russia's aggression against Ukraine with a total of approximately 7.1 billion US dollars covering the fields of finance, humanitarian assistance, food, and recovery and reconstruction. This includes the announcement of an additional financial assistance of approximately 5.5 billion US dollars for Ukraine announced in February 2023 on the condition of approval of relevant budgets and laws by Japan's Diet. These funds are now being rolled out. From the early days of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Japan has quickly implemented humanitarian assistance for Ukrainian displaced persons including in the areas of medical and health, water and sanitation, shelters, food,

and protection of women and children, in addition to financial assistance. Japan has also steadily provided generators and solar lanterns, among other items, to help the Ukrainian people as support for winterization, following the destruction of many energy and infrastructure facilities due to Russian attacks, which has resulted in large and widespread power outages. The Global South including developing countries have been exposed to a complex humanitarian crisis resulting from the growing seriousness of food insecurity and food shortages caused by the impacts of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. In response to global food security issues, Japan is providing food assistance and support to increase food production capacity through bilateral arrangements, international institutions, and NGOs in Japan.

B Achievement of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)

Second, Japan is promoting concrete initiatives utilizing ODA strategically in order to achieve a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) together with the broad range of partners in the international community who share this vision and the Indo-Pacific region, which is a focal point of the world's vitality. This vision is also shared by countries including the U.S., Australia, India, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). The importance of this vision has further increased amidst Russia's aggression against Ukraine, an act that shakes the international order.

Over the years, Japan has developed "quality infrastructure" for building regional connectivity, assisted in legal system development, offered training on public debt and risk management for ensuring debt sustainability, and capacity building for debt management and macroeconomic policy, and for maritime law enforcement agencies for securing safety at sea (provision of patrol vessels and coastal monitoring radars as well as human resources development, etc.). Japan will continue to offer these in the future.

2 The main modalities of ODA from Japan are: grants including grant aid, debt relief, grants through multilateral institutions and technical cooperation, government loans, and contributions and subscriptions to multilateral institutions.

3 Grant Equivalent System (GE system) was introduced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) in 2018 as the standard method for calculating ODA loans. The grant equivalent of government loans, is calculated as ODA flows. The GE system records the amount of government loans by applying the terms of the loan, such as the amount of loan provided, interest rate and repayment period, to a formula. The more concessional the terms of the loan are, the larger the grant equivalent is. Compared to the net flow system (the full amount of loan is recorded, on the other hand, the amount repaid is counted as negative) that was the standard method used by the OECD/DAC, the GE system measures Japan's actual government loans more accurately. (<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/files/100053766.pdf>). (Japanese only)



Column

Preparing for a Harsh Winter Looming over Those Who Have Been Forced Out of Their Hometowns

- UNHCR's Humanitarian Assistance Activities in Ukraine

TSUJISAWA Akiko, Senior Protection Officer,
the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Vinnytsia, Ukraine

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Ukraine entered a state of emergency since the launch of Russian military aggression on February 24. As of December 2022, more than 7.8 million Ukrainians have evacuated to various countries of Europe, and more than 5.9 million people in Ukraine have been internally displaced.

As intense battles continue to rage in the eastern and southern parts of Ukraine, the impact on civilian life has become increasingly serious, with emergency power cuts being implemented in various regions due to severe power shortages caused by missile attacks by the Russian military on infrastructure, particularly power generation facilities. With the growing severity of the winter cold, heating facilities for internally displaced persons and local residents are being installed across Ukraine in preparation for a large-scale power outage.

The people of Ukraine continue to live under extremely difficult circumstances, experiencing power and water cuts while being exposed to the terrors of bombings. Power generators and emergency relief supplies are important for protecting the lives and dignity of every individual, and the support from Japan is greatly appreciated.

The main activities of UNHCR in Ukraine include protecting displaced persons, supporting emergency relief supplies, cash assistance, and temporary evacuation shelters. UNHCR works closely with the Ukrainian authorities to continue providing assistance that meets the needs on the ground, in order to protect and support internally displaced persons, those who have been affected by the war, and those who have returned to their hometowns. Among these efforts, providing protection against the cold and support for winterization are top priorities for UNHCR. To that end, it provides cash assistance to address specific winter needs, repairs houses, and provides supplies such as thermal blankets, sleeping bags, thermos flasks, heaters, and winter clothing.

Specifically, UNHCR, together with local NGO partners, provides legal assistance and support for acquiring various documents, psychological and social support, information on protection, and counselling services, as well as assists with registration for receiving cash assistance. At the same time, UNHCR is also working to strengthen the system for protecting those who require support the most, and persons with special needs. The impact on mental health as a result of protracted life in displacement, missile attacks, and power shortages, among other difficulties, is of great concern. Therefore, there is a growing need for the continuous provision of mental care and counseling support. UNHCR works in cooperation with NGO partners to provide support for psychological first aid and to conduct recreational activities to help children recover mentally, among other efforts.

UNHCR also supports the initiatives of the Ukrainian government for repairing buildings and rebuilding lives, in order to ensure that refugees and internally displaced persons have the option of returning to their hometowns voluntarily and with dignity in the future. To that end, it provides materials and cash for repairing houses that have been damaged in missile attacks and also helps to repair evacuation shelters.

Going forward, UNHCR will continue to provide humanitarian assistance as far as possible, and stay on the ground in cooperation with various states, municipal governments, local communities, and domestic partners in Ukraine. At the same time, it will also work on building a foundation for reconstruction and rebuilding.



The author (center) distributing emergency relief supplies from Japan in Vinnytsia, Central Ukraine (Photo: Anita Rudyk, UNHCR)



Engaging in psychological and social support activities for children at evacuation shelters, in Vinnytsia, Central Ukraine (Photo: Anita Rudyk, UNHCR)

The development of quality infrastructure is an important foundation for achieving FOIP and is particularly necessary in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. From this standpoint, it is important to continue to disseminate and implement the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment, endorsed at the G20 Osaka Summit of 2019 as an international standard, including such principles as openness, transparency, economic efficiency in view of life-cycle costs, and debt sustainability. At the G7 Elmau Summit in June, the Partnership for Global Infrastructure and Investment (PGII) was launched as an initiative to promote quality infrastructure investment through collaboration with countries, including the G7.

C Countermeasures against COVID-19

Third, in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, Japan continued to support cold-chain development for developing countries with vulnerable health systems in 2022, and extended its assistance in meeting the needs of developing countries in order for them to promote economic and social revitalization and resumption of cross-border travels in preparation for the post-pandemic phase. Specifically, Japan is implementing assistance to the scale of 100 million US dollars (approximately 10.8 billion Japanese yen), primarily in the Indo-Pacific region, around three thematic pillars of vaccination data management, management of the border control system, and infectious disease-related waste disposal. In particular, the Government of Japan co-hosted the COVAX AMC Summit⁴ in June, in which the Prime Minister, as a co-chair called for further solidarity and commitments from the international community in the fight against COVID-19 in terms of vaccines. As a result, we were able to secure funding well beyond the target. Furthermore, Japan provided the Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan up to 700 billion Japanese yen from FY2020 until FY2022 to contribute to maintaining and revitalizing economic activities in developing countries. Japan's assistance has been lauded by other countries.

Japan will continue to provide assistance toward vaccines, treatments and diagnostics for overcoming the current COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, Japan will also offer assistance for health security in a broad range of fields including water and sanitation and for improving health and medical systems in developing countries in preparation for future health crises.

D Addressing Global Issues

Fourth, Japan is working to address global challenges such as achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including combating COVID-19 and responding to global food security, based on the concept of human security. Japan will continue to actively promote development cooperation, including through humanitarian assistance, in such fields as health, food, nutrition, women (gender), education, disaster risk reduction, water and sanitation, climate change and global environmental issues. In doing so, Japan will promote visible development cooperation while utilizing collaboration with NGOs working on international cooperation. Furthermore, as humanitarian crises become prolonged and diversified, Japan will continue to promote humanitarian assistance including support for refugees and displaced persons, reducing poverty, economic and social development, peace building and nation building assistance based on the concept of “humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus” to reinforce responses to fundamental causes of conflict, and provide assistance in maintaining peace in addition to humanitarian assistance and development.

E Diplomatic Efforts in Support of Japan's Economy

Fifth, Japan seeks to revitalize its own economy through the development of developing countries and Japan is promoting initiatives for achieving the growth of both. The Grand Design and Action Plan for a New Form of Capitalism and Follow-up approved in June 2022 call for utilizing ODA and public financing strategically.

⁴ COVAX Vaccine Summit: Japan hosted the summit jointly online with the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (Gavi) in June 2021. The summit contributed to securing funding that greatly exceeded the amount (8.3 billion US dollars) required for providing 1.8 billion doses of vaccine representing 30% of the developing world by the end of 2021. Japan announced that it will provide a total of 1 billion US dollars and 30 million vaccine doses to the Advance Market Commitment (AMC) of the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX Facility, an international, comprehensive mechanism for resource mobilization and supply coordination to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines). The summit in April 2022 was held jointly with the governments of Germany, Indonesia, Senegal and Ghana along with Gavi. There, Japan announced additional funding of up to 500 million while other governments and the private sector made announcements for additional funding totaling 4.8 billion US dollars (provisional figure).

To be particular, in order to have Japan's leading technologies utilized for development in developing countries, Japan will promote the acquisition of business rights and operation rights of Japanese corporations through means such as the provision of grant aid for public projects implemented through public-private partnership and furthermore, offer technical cooperation that contributes to quality infrastructure investment, such as trade facilitation and securing debt sustainability. Additionally, to encourage the overseas expansion of private companies including SMEs and local governments, Japan will increase the visibility of products and equipment that can help resolve issues in developing countries through JICA's private sector partnership in conducting surveys and verification on business models as well as continuously generate demand for these. Through human resource development, Japan will also contribute to advancing the improvement of the business environment, thereby promoting investment and overseas expansion by corporations.

(4) Safety Measures for Personnel Engaged in International Cooperation Projects

In 2022, as countries around the world greatly relaxed their border control measures and immigration restrictions, about 80% of JICA personnel (Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers excluded) have returned to their overseas posts compared to before the spread of COVID-19. While overseas travel for the personnel engaged in international cooperation projects has become more active and frequent, the world faces compound crises such as conflicts, terrorism, and infectious diseases, which increase safety risks.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and JICA will further strengthen safety measures for international cooperation projects while implementing measures based on the final report of the Council on Safety Measures for International Cooperation Projects (August 2016).

(5) Initiatives in Major Regions

A East and Southeast Asia

The achievement of peace, stability, and prosperity in the East and Southeast Asia regions are important to Japan, which has a close relationship with these

regions. Through development cooperation, Japan has helped these regions to resolve various development issues including poverty reduction, by promoting economic growth and human security and contributed to the development of these regions.

Above all, as member states of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are keys to achieving FOIP, Japan not only provides support toward efforts aimed at overcoming issues faced by ASEAN and further promoting integration, but also places a strong emphasis on support for the building of quality infrastructure and training of industrial human resources to strengthen regional connectivity and develop industrial foundation.

Since there is a large number of Japanese companies doing business and a large resident population of Japanese nationals in the East and Southeast Asian regions, Japan has provided intensive support against COVID-19 in the region. Specifically, Japan provided health- and medical-related equipment and provided support for improving health and medical systems in these countries through technical cooperation. Additionally, Japan provided fiscal support yen loans totaling approximately 320 billion Japanese yen to Mongolia and Southeast Asian countries to offset the economic impacts of the pandemic. Furthermore, as part of its support to ASEAN during the pandemic, Japan is also conducting training for public health workers of each ASEAN country geared toward the operation of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases, which will be fully supported by Japan.

Furthermore, Japan is actively providing support for capacity building for maritime law enforcement to countries positioned along Japan's sea lanes such as the Philippines and Viet Nam, with the aim of building a free and open international order. Such efforts include providing equipment such as patrol vessels and coastal monitoring radars, as well as human resource development through the dispatch of experts. Furthermore, Japan is providing consistent support to eradicate domestic and regional disparity, and support for the creation of a sustainable society in areas such as disaster risk reduction, environment and climate change, and energy. Based on the fact that it was confirmed that the principles of the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo Pacific

(AOIP) and FOIP match one another at the Japan-ASEAN summit Meeting held in 2020, Japan plans to continue strengthening Japan-ASEAN cooperation going forward in terms of maritime cooperation, connectivity, the SDGs and economy, which are priority fields of the AOIP. In 2022, Japan conducted training on topics such as marine waste, cyber security, international public law and criminal justice, etc. based on the Japan-ASEAN Technical Cooperation Agreement signed in 2019. Furthermore, since the Mekong region is located at the core of the Indo-Pacific region, Japan will continue to contribute to the development of each Mekong country through the Japan-Mekong cooperation framework.

With regards to Myanmar, in response to the worsened humanitarian situation following the coup d'état in February 2021, Japan has been providing humanitarian assistance that directly benefits the population of Myanmar (food, medical supplies, etc.) through international organizations and NGOs.



Capacity building training for the Vietnam Coast Guard (lecture on drift forecasting) (August, Phu Quoc, Vietnam; Photo: JICA)



Capacity building training for the Vietnam Coast Guard (lecture introducing narcotics operations) (August, Phu Quoc, Vietnam; Photo: JICA)

With regards to China, Japan's ODA to China that began in 1979 was terminated with no more new projects starting FY2018, and all projects have ended as of March 2022.

B Southwest Asia

Southwest Asia holds strategic importance as a marine transportation hub that connects East Asia with the Middle East, and is also a region with immense economic potential, such as India, where economic growth and massive infrastructure demand are anticipated in the future. On the other hand, the region still faces many unresolved challenges such as undeveloped infrastructure, poverty and natural disasters. Japan provides a range of assistance through ODA to assist the region in overcoming these challenges, bearing in mind the improvement of the investment environment for Japanese companies, and ensuring human security. The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has also had a substantial impact on Southwest Asia due to its social and economic vulnerabilities along with an underdeveloped medical system. As a measure against COVID-19 in Southwest Asian countries, Japan has provided a total of 2.57 billion Japanese yen in support to four countries with an emphasis on border control management and infectious waste disposal toward economic and social revitalization and the resumption of cross-border travels. Furthermore, Japan has also provided support for improving health and medical systems through technical cooperation.

Japan has been providing support to India, which has the largest population in Southwest Asia. As part of its support for the development of economic and social infrastructure including transportation infrastructure that contributes to enhancing connectivity and strengthening industrial competitiveness, Japan has assisted with the construction of high-speed railways, subways in a number of cities, water and sewage maintenance, and road construction in India's northeast. In addition, Japan has supported India's sustainable and inclusive growth through such projects as those in the forestry sector including afforestation activities, those in the agricultural sector through production and sales promotion of horticultural crops, as well as those in the health sector that help strengthen the medical system. With regard to Bangladesh, Japan, under the Bay of

Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B) initiative, has provided support which contributes to strengthening domestic and regional connectivity, developing infrastructure, and improving the investment environment. Since August 2017, a large-scale influx of displaced persons from northern Rakhine State, Myanmar, and prolonged evacuation have resulted in the deterioration of humanitarian situations in camps for displaced persons and have also had a severe impact on the living environment of the surrounding host communities. Furthermore, displaced persons who have moved to the island of Bhasan Char are faced with poor sanitary and living conditions due to overcrowding of the camp. In response to this situation, Japan has decided to provide approximately 3.06 billion Japanese yen in support through international organizations and NGOs in the areas of water and hygiene, health and medical care, food security, livelihood assistance, etc..

Furthermore, Japan approved assistance totaling 3.41 billion Japanese yen for Sri Lanka, which has seen the humanitarian situation deteriorate due to the economic crisis that emerged in April 2022, covering such areas as food and nutrition, fertilizer, health and medical, water and sanitation. With regards to Pakistan, which has seen its humanitarian situation deteriorate due to flooding that occurred since mid-June, Japan provided emergency grant aid of 7 million US dollars for such areas as health and medical, water and sanitation following the provision of emergency relief

supplies through JICA (tents and plastic sheets) and food, shelters and non-food relief supplies (mats, blankets, etc.) through international institutions. Moreover, based on local needs, Japan approved additional assistance for Pakistan of 4.21 billion Japanese yen related to such areas as health and medical, water and sanitation and food. Taking into account the Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) following the floods, Japan adopted a project for capacity development of effective river dikes management in response to 2022 flood and organized assistance led by Japanese NGOs through the Japan Platform (JPF)⁵.

C Pacific Island Countries

The Pacific Island countries are not only Japan's "neighbors," connected by the Pacific, but also have deep historical connections with Japan. Moreover, as these countries possess a vast exclusive economic zone (EEZ, or areas where a country's economic right reaches), they are a key region for maritime transportation for Japan, and also provide vital fishing grounds for Japan's distant-water bonito and tuna fisheries. Therefore, the stability and prosperity of the Pacific Island countries are of great importance to Japan.

The Pacific Island countries share common issues that are unique to small island states, such as smaller economies, territories that are scattered over a wide ocean area, difficulty in breaking into the international market, and vulnerability to damages from natural disasters. In light of these circumstances, Japan, as a partner of the Pacific Island countries, is providing support to boost their autonomous and sustainable development.

In particular, at the Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) held via video conference in July 2021, leaders of Japan and Pacific Island nations confirmed that the countries will continue cooperation in the five priority areas of (1) COVID-19 Response and Recovery, (2) Sustainable Oceans based on the Rule of Law, (3) Climate Change and Disaster Resilience, (4) Strengthening Foundations for Sustainable and Resilient Economic Development, and (5) People-to-People Exchanges and Human Resource Development



Document exchange and signing ceremony for grant aid to improve medical equipment mainly in the field of mother and child health (November 22, Thimphu, Bhutan)

⁵ Japan Platform (JPF): Japan Platform, or JPF, is an NGO established in August 2000 (NGO status obtained in May 2001). It was established jointly among NGOs, business and the Government of Japan with the purpose of providing prompt and effective emergency humanitarian assistance activities by a Japanese NGO in response to natural disasters and refugee situations outside of Japan.

in the next three years. In the Declaration for Joint Action adopted at the summit, the document outlines specific initiatives on which Japan will provide support that are within the five priority areas such as provision, management and support on the administration of vaccines, supply of quality medical equipment and development of medical facilities, development of quality infrastructure such as ports and airports, surveillance to eradicate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, disaster prevention, waste management that also includes marine plastic waste, and climate change.

Based on these five priority areas, as COVID-19 countermeasures, Japan is helping to strengthen health and medical systems including developing the cold chain and providing capacity building support for border management ahead of the reopening of international borders. Japan is also providing maritime security related equipment for keeping sustainable oceans based on the rule of law in Oceania with its expansive EEZ and assistance for upgrading power transmission systems to promote the introduction of renewable energy.

Furthermore, in June, Japan joined Partners in the Blue Pacific (PBP)⁶, launched as an initiative to coordinate the approaches of various countries for providing more effective and efficient assistance to Pacific Island nations. Together with Australia, New Zealand, the UK, the U.S., Germany, Canada and others, Japan has confirmed the need to strengthen partnerships and commitments with the Pacific Islands region. In particular, Japan intends to support regional initiatives led by Pacific Island Countries on climate change and other issues.

In response to the damages caused by the volcanic eruption and tsunami that occurred on January 15, 2022, Japan has provided emergency relief supplies through JICA to Tonga, which was delivered by the Japan Disaster Relief Team (Self-Defense Forces), in light of its humanitarian perspective and its amicable relations with the Kingdom of Tonga. Furthermore, Japan has been providing Emergency Grant Aid of approximately 2.44 million US dollars to Tonga.

D Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin America and the Caribbean is a region with which Japan has enjoyed friendly relations for a long time. The region also has deep historical ties with Japan, as demonstrated by the fact that around 2.3 million Japanese descendants, known as “Nikkei,” reside in the region. The region is a major supplier of resources and food, as well as a potential emerging market with gross regional production of around 5.5 trillion US dollars. On the other hand, as many countries in the region are facing challenges such as rectification of income inequality within their country, response to natural disasters, and achievement of the SDGs in each country, Japan is engaged in various cooperative efforts while also taking into account the development circumstances of each country in Latin America and the Caribbean.

To help combat the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America, Japan has extended a COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan to the Dominican Republic and Honduras up to the amount of 30 billion Japanese yen in 2021, followed by the loan provided to Ecuador up to the amount of 23 billion Japanese yen in 2022.

Japan provided support to seven countries totaling 14 million US dollars in 2021 as part of the Last One Mile Support program which aims to establish a vaccination system through the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). Following this, Japan initiated new support on cold chain maintenance in seven countries totaling 10 million US dollars in 2022. In response to the damages caused by natural disasters, Japan has provided emergency relief supplies (tents, sleeping pads, blankets, etc.) through JICA to Brazil that was affected by flood, and to Honduras, Guatemala, Cuba, and Belize that were affected by tropical storms and hurricanes. For Haiti, Japan has provided reconstruction support through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to rebuild hospitals and police stations damaged by the 2021 earthquake, and has decided to provide emergency grant aid totaling 3 million US dollars as humanitarian assistance to address

⁶ Foreign ministers' meeting of Partners in the Blue Pacific for cooperation with Pacific Island nations: https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/ocn/shin4e_000049.html





Handover ceremony for equipment donations supporting the Last One Mile (June 8, Guatemala City, Guatemala)



Class at the Japan Center (April 15, Bukhara, Uzbekistan; Photo: JICA/SHIBUYA Atsushi)

the cholera outbreak through UNICEF and the UN World Food Programme (WFP) in 2022. For Suriname, Japan has decided to extend assistance for developing drainage pumps as a countermeasure against floods.

Furthermore, Japan provides support based on the needs of each country. For example, to improve logistics functions in Central America, Japan approved yen loans of approximately 50 million US dollars for bypass construction in El Salvador and grant aid for the reconstruction of bridge on National Road No.1 in Honduras. In the water sector, Japan approved grant aid to Paraguay for improving the water supply, and in the area of the environment, Japan approved yen loans totaling 45 million US dollars to Peru for improving waste disposal and management capacity. In recent years, as there has been a growing number of immigrants and displaced people from Central America and Venezuela making their way to neighboring countries and the U.S., Japan is providing various forms of assistance to help resolve issues in the areas of poverty, security and disasters, which are the root causes of immigration out of Central America. Furthermore, in 2022, through international organizations, Japan provided grant aid in the areas of water and sanitation for Venezuela, and also extended support for protection of displaced people, humanitarian assistance and socioeconomic integration in Columbia, Ecuador, and Venezuela.

E Central Asia and the Caucasus

Central Asia and Caucasus are surrounded by Russia, China, South Asia, the Middle East and Europe. The stability and development of this region are also important for the development and stability of the

whole of Eurasia, including Japan. Japan supports nation building in a free and open Central Asia and the Caucasus region that allows international orders based on the rule of law to take root and improve, and also sustainable development to progress, while also taking into account broad-based views covering neighboring regions including Afghanistan and Iran.

Japan has provided a total of 3.2 billion Japanese yen to eight countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus region since FY2020 for the provision of health and medical related equipment and supplies as a countermeasure against COVID-19. Additionally, with an emphasis on “investment in people” and “quality of growth” for sustainable development in Central Asia, Japan assists with the capacity building of young public administrators in Uzbekistan, The Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan via the Project for Human Resource Development Scholarship (JDS) as well as human resource development in business through Japan Centers in Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, and the Kyrgyz Republic.

At the same time, Japan is providing support for enhancing border control capabilities and preventing violent extremism in the Central Asian region where countries share a border with Afghanistan.

F The Middle East and North Africa

Securing peace and stability in the Middle East and North Africa regions, which are geopolitical keys in that they are the crossroads of Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, is crucial not only for the energy security of Japan but also for the stability of the world. From this point of view, Japan is providing support to achieve peace and stability in the region.

With regard to Syria, where civil war has been prolonged, Japan has provided more than 3.3 billion US dollars to Syria and surrounding countries since 2012 under its policy of providing humanitarian assistance to all Syrians facing difficulties. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs HONDA Taro participated in the “Supporting the future of Syria and the region, Brussels VI Conference,” organized by the EU in May in-person for the first time in three years. He stated that Japan will continue to fulfill the role in improving the humanitarian situation in Syria going forward with at least 90 million US dollars earmarked for this effort in 2022 in support of Syria and its neighboring regions. Furthermore, in order to foster human resources who could contribute to Syria's future reconstruction, 123 Syrian students have been accepted in Japan since 2017.

In regard to Palestine, based on the Corridor for Peace and Prosperity initiative with the aim of promoting economic and social self-reliance for Palestine promoted through cooperation between Japan, Israel, Palestine and Jordan, Japan assists the development of Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP). Since April, Japan has provided emergency grant aid assistance of 8.35 million US dollars through the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) in response to the significant deterioration in the humanitarian situation caused by the spread of COVID-19 in the Gaza Strip and flood damages. Furthermore, Japan provided 3 million US dollars in food aid through the UNRWA and WFP in August and September with the purpose of improving food security in Palestine and contributing to solutions to development issues there.

In Yemen, where a severe humanitarian crisis is still ongoing, Japan has provided more than 400 million US dollars in support since 2015. At the High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen held in March, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda stated that Japan has decided to provide a total of at least approximately 23 million US dollars in assistance during 2022, and that will continue to offer support toward peace and stability in Yemen. Additionally, in 2022, Japan continued to offer humanitarian assistance and provided cooperation in the field of functional enhancement of the Port of



“Rebuilding Livelihoods and Capacities of Conflict-Affected Small-Scale Fisheries Households in Aden and Hadramout (RELACC)” joint grant aid project for Yemen with the UNDP (April 22, Aden, Yemen; Photo: UNDP)

Aden, fostering human resources through JICA trainings, health and medical care, and education through partnerships with international organizations.

Afghanistan is facing a serious humanitarian crisis since the Taliban took over Kabul in August 2021. Given this situation, Japan has been providing humanitarian support in areas such as health care, education, and food, including support for basic humanitarian needs, through collaboration with international organizations. Moreover, in response to the damage caused by an earthquake in eastern Afghanistan in June, Japan has coordinated with international organizations to provide emergency relief supplies, including blankets and medical assistance through JICA.

Human development is vital to realize stability in the Middle East in the mid- to long-term. As one example, through the technical cooperation project “Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST) Project Phase 3,” Japan is providing support for the development of industrial human resources as well as science and technology human resources in Egypt, the Middle East and the Africa region. Furthermore, Japan has been providing support on school management and developing teaching staff capabilities through the yen loan Egypt-Japan School Support Program (Egypt-Japan Education Partnership). As of December 2022, 51 schools following the Japanese education model have opened.

G Africa

Africa has a population of approximately 1.4 billion people in 54 countries, and continues to attract attention and anticipation from the international community for its high potential in becoming the driving force for the world's growth, backed by its abundant natural



Threshing training for farmers in Madagascar to double rice production (April 28, Analamanga, Madagascar; Photo: JICA)



Refugees living in Uganda learning rice cultivation techniques together with host community members (August, Adjumani, Uganda; Photo: JICA/HISANO Takeshi)

resources. On the other hand, it also faces various challenges such as poverty, a vulnerable healthcare system, and the rise of terrorism and violent extremism. Given this background, Japan has been contributing for the development in Africa over the years through frameworks such as the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). At TICAD 8 held in Tunisia in August, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan was going to make financial contributions of 30 billion US dollars in total from both the public and private sectors over the next three years, with an emphasis on “investment in people” and “quality of growth.” Japan declared its commitment to fostering the human resources development of 300,000 persons in a wide range of fields including industry, healthcare and medical care, education, agriculture, justice and public administration. It is also committed to working toward green growth, investment promotion, development finance, healthcare and public health, regional stabilization and food security, among others. As “a partner growing together with Africa,” Japan will promote African development with approaches quintessentially Japanese, focusing on “people” to realize the resilient Africa that Africa itself aims to achieve.

Based on this philosophy, Japan has set out concrete initiatives at TICAD 8 around the three pillars of economy, society, and peace and stability.

In the pillar of Economy, Japan aims to realize a resilient and sustainable Africa through providing support

toward green growth and achieving transparent and fair development of finance in each African country, as well as through promoting quality infrastructure investment to enhance connectivity. Furthermore, in terms of “investment in people,” Japan also declared its intent to foster industrial human resources who will promote businesses in Africa and support start-up and entrepreneurs through programs such as the African Business Education Initiative for Youth (ABE initiative)⁷. Furthermore, in response to the worsening food crisis in Africa due to the soaring costs of food, fertilizers and energy globally, Japan has announced it will provide short-term support, including food aid. Moreover, Japan will continue to contribute to enhancing food security in Africa through both medium- and long-term assistance, including co-financing of approximately 300 million US dollars for the African Development Bank (AfDB) Emergency Food Production Facility and improving agricultural production capacity.

Under the pillar of Society, Japan announced it will continue initiatives in response to COVID-19, including the Last One Mile Support. Furthermore, Japan will further enhance its initiatives aimed at achieving universal health coverage (UHC)⁸ through infectious disease control, fostering medical care human resources, and developing health and medical care facilities. Moreover, Japan will provide high quality education, including STEM education⁹, to nine

⁷ An initiative that provides business programs including opportunities to obtain a master's degree at a Japanese university, internships at Japanese companies, Japanese language training, and business skills training for African youth in order to develop “pilots” supporting the development of industrial human resources in Africa and Japanese companies looking to do business in Africa.

⁸ Universal Health Coverage (UHC) :To ensure that all people can receive the quality health services they need at an affordable cost without financial hardship.

⁹ Education in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM education)

million students and improve access to education for four million female students.

Under the pillar of Peace and Stability, in addition to providing support aimed at maintaining and strengthening the rule of law, including training for police officers and border control assistance, Japan is providing human resource development to build institutions and strengthen governance in the judicial and administrative fields, as well as providing support for ensuring public safety, under the New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa (NAPSA) (see A (B) b on page 221).

Moreover, Japan also provides assistance for community-level cooperative programs between residents and local government in support of Africa-led efforts aimed at establishing peace and stability.

(6) Approaches to Appropriate and Effective Implementation of ODA

A Approaches to Appropriate Implementation of ODA

In the implementation of ODA, efforts are made to enhance transparency and quality by listening to the views of external experts at each phase and formulating projects based on these opinions. In the phase of preliminary studies prior to the implementation of ODA, MOFA holds the Development Project Accountability Committee meeting in public, exchanges views with independent committee members that have knowledge of the relevant fields and affirms the validity of the project. Furthermore, JICA publishes ex-post evaluation results for all projects valued at 200 million yen or more (2,987 projects published as of the end of December 21, 2022) on the “ODA Mieru-ka Site” after the implementation of the projects in view of enhancing the transparency of the projects. Ex-post evaluations for projects valued at 1 billion Japanese yen or more are conducted by third parties. MOFA conducts third party evaluations at the policy level (such as country assistance evaluations, thematic evaluations and aid modality evaluations) and ex-post evaluations on grant aid projects implemented by MOFA to improve ODA management and ensure accountability. Efforts are made to utilize the lessons drawn from the evaluation results for the policy formulation and project implementation of future ODA. MOFA also publishes the evaluation results on its website.

JICA has adopted the JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations to implement projects in accordance with environmental and social considerations. In 2022, the Guidelines were revised based on the response of the international community to the threats of climate change, etc.

B Approaches to Effective Implementation of ODA

ODA is implemented through three frameworks corresponding to the needs of the partner country and the scale of the project: grant aid, loan aid and technical cooperation. In order to utilize the limited budget efficiently and achieve a high level of development effectiveness, MOFA formulates a development cooperation policy for each country that defines the priority areas and policies of ODA, comprehensively taking into account the development plans and development challenges of respective partner countries. Moreover, the Rolling Plan is formulated as an appendix to the Country Development Cooperation Policy, with a summary for quick reference on how each individual ODA project is associated with a specific priority area. Through these efforts, the policy of development cooperation in each country is clearly identified, enabling more strategic projects to be formed across the confines of each framework.

C Efforts with regard to International Discussions on ODA

Japan also contributes actively to international discussions on ODA. At the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC), discussions are being held on promotion of mobilization of private-sector funds with ODA as a catalyst, and assistance for climate change related issues. In addition, OECD/DAC is working to provide opportunities for mutual learning so that development assistance provided by emerging donors will be accountable and transparent in a manner consistent with international standards and practices.

D Efforts toward Promoting Understanding of ODA

It is vital to have the understanding and support of the people when implementing development cooperation. To that end, efforts are made to promote understanding among the citizens through the effective dissemination of information. MOFA strives to promote publicity on its political measures on Japan's development cooperation activities among a wider range of targets in an easy-to-understand manner through social media, such as the MOFA website, ODA Twitter account, as well as through YouTube videos, e-mail subscriptions, and other tools. Specifically, MOFA has expanded the short animation series "Go! ODA-Man" based on the popular anime "Eagle Talon," and created new documentary videos and television drama on development cooperation, etc. Furthermore, with this year marking the 31st anniversary of the event, Global Festa Japan was held both online and in person as a hybrid event, which attracted more than 22,000 participants in person and online in two days. In FY2022, MOFA has continued to dispatch ministry officials in actively conducting "ODA Delivery Lectures" as a part of its efforts to promote understanding of development cooperation via virtual lectures online, as well as resumed in-person lectures. In addition, MOFA makes active efforts in overseas publicity, including plans for site-visit tours to its development cooperation project for the local media so that they will also cover Japan's cooperation,



First Step: Sekai wo Tsunagu Ainoshirushi, Television drama currently being aired (as of February 2023) (Japanese only)



Efforts for a free and open ocean Documentary movie about ODA involving the ocean
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?app=desktop&list=PLz2FHGxPcAlg4eP_P6KRY0v8dKWtaGsdS



and issues PR pamphlets and materials in English and local languages.

2 Response to Global Issues

(1) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda)" was adopted at the UN Summit in September 2015 as a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) elaborated in 2001. The 2030 Agenda sets out international development goals for realizing a sustainable, diverse and inclusive society under the principle of "Leave No One Behind," by 2030.

The 2030 Agenda lists the "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" consisting of 17 goals and 169 targets that are interrelated and closely linked to each other,

and which serve as development goals for the whole of the international community including developed countries.

After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Japan first built a foundation for the implementation of the SDGs by establishing the SDGs Promotion Headquarters headed by the Prime Minister, with the Chief Cabinet Secretary and Foreign Minister as the Deputy Director-Generals and composed of all cabinet ministers as members, and formulating the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles that set out Japan's medium- to long-term strategy toward the achievement of the SDGs

and eight priority areas¹⁰ that Japan will place particular focus on. Furthermore, Japan puts great importance on public-private partnership for the implementation of the SDGs, and established the SDGs Promotion Round Table Meeting, bringing together stakeholders from a wide range of fields including the private sector, civil society, experts, and international organizations. It also engages in the exchange of views on initiatives by local governments and businesses toward the promotion of the SDGs, measures for the empowerment of women and the future generation, and strengthening cooperation with the international community among others.

The SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles that were adopted in 2016, and revised in 2019, are expected to undergo a second revision in 2023. In preparation for the revision, proposals were invited from private-sector members of the SDGs Promotion Roundtable Meeting. To ensure the summary of proposals reflect the opinions of a wide range of stakeholders, in 2022, the Partnership Meeting on SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles was conducted in July and October, with deliberation on the topic at the SDGs Promotion Roundtable Meeting held in December. Japan will proceed with revising the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles based on the feedback from various stakeholders going forward.

A Human Security

Human security is a concept that pursues the right of individuals to live happily and in dignity, free from fear and want, through their protection and empowerment. Japan positions human security as a guiding principle that lies at the roots of Japan's development cooperation in the Development Cooperation Charter approved in 2015. Japan has led discussions on human security in the UN, and supported the dissemination and implementation of the concept of human security by UN organizations through the contribution of a cumulative total of about 49 billion Japanese yen by the end of 2021 to the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, established in 1999 by Japan's initiative. Furthermore, in the area

of bilateral cooperation, Japan has also put effort into the dissemination and implementation of this concept through support for Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects. The SDGs, which advocate a people-centered approach and the vision of leaving no one behind, also position human security at their core. Foreign Minister Hayashi released a video message announcing that Japan will further promote the implementation and dissemination of human security based on the recommendations of the Special Report on Human Security published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in February 2022. At the General Debate of the 77th session of the UN General Assembly held in September, Prime Minister Kishida announced that Japan will promote initiatives based on the principles of human security in the new era, and declared Japan's stance on ensuring human security in the new era together with the UN.

B Approaches in the Area of Disaster Risk Reduction

200 million people around the world are affected by disasters every year (90% of the victims are citizens of developing countries) and the annual average loss incurred by natural hazards extends to approximately 140 billion US dollars according to estimates by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). While there are concerns about frequent and intensified disasters due to climate change, disaster risk reduction is essential for realizing poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Japan makes the most of its expertise in disaster risk reduction, built up through numerous experiences with disasters, to actively promote international cooperation. At the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai in March 2015, Japan took the lead in the adoption of the "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030," a guideline for efforts by the international community. Japan also announced the "Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction" as its independent contribution, which includes provision

¹⁰ Eight priority areas: 1) Empowerment of All People; 2) Achievement of Good Health and Longevity; 3) Creating Growth Markets, Revitalization of Rural Areas, and Promoting Technology and Innovation; 4) Sustainable and Resilient Land Use, Promoting Quality Infrastructure; 5) Energy Conservation, Renewable Energy, Climate-Change Countermeasures and Sound Material-Cycle Society; 6) Conservation of Environment, including Biodiversity, Forests and Oceans; 7) Achieving Peaceful, Safe and Secure Societies; and 8) Strengthening the Means and Frameworks of the Implementation of the SDGs.

of 4 billion US dollars toward cooperation and training of 40,000 people in the four years from 2015 to 2018. With the achievement of these goals, Japan is providing ongoing support for disaster prevention, including launching the Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction Phase 2 in June 2019, under which Japan plans to provide support to at least 5 million people from 2019 to 2022, in areas such as flood measures.

Coinciding with World Tsunami Awareness Day (November 5), proposed by Japan and enacted unanimously at the 70th UN General Assembly held in December 2015, Japan has hosted the High School Students Summit on “World Tsunami Awareness Day” five times since 2016. High school students from countries around the world are invited to this event, and through practical learning about Japan’s tsunami history, recovery from earthquake disasters, and preparations for a possible Nankai Trough earthquake, the participants make proposals for future challenges and implementation in their home countries. In 2022, Japan, in cooperation with UNDRR and other organizations, supported the hybrid holding of an event (with both in-person and online components) aimed at improving awareness of tsunami preparedness, as well as a tsunami related training program for female administrative officers and formulation of tsunami evacuation plans for schools in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan will continue to share its experiences and lessons drawn from past disasters with the world, and to promote the “mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction” that incorporates the perspectives of disaster risk reduction in the policies of every country.

C Education

In the area of education, Japan is engaged in various forms of educational support around the world under the “Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth,” announced by Japan in line with the timing for the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. Since the beginning of 2020, schools were shut down due to the spread of COVID-19, resulting in rapid increase of children in various parts of the world whose education opportunities were taken away. In light of this situation, Japan has pledged to provide support for the education of 7.5 million girls and foster human resources training

in developing countries, in addition to providing over 1.5 billion US dollars to the education sector over five years until 2025 at the Global Education Summit held in July 2021.

In September, the United Nations Transforming Education Summit (TES) was held following UN Secretary-General António Guterres’ announcement that the recovery from the global education crisis caused by COVID-19 and achievement of SDG4 (Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all) require educational reform. At the event where leaders and ministers from 130 countries participated, Prime Minister Kishida released a video message to declare Japan’s intent to promote human resource development with investment in human assets placed at the core and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Also at the summit, Prime Minister Kishida assumed the position as an “Education Champion” in charge of maintaining the momentum of the summit in promoting global education transformation.

D Approaches in Agricultural Areas

In coordination with the relevant countries, such as G7 and G20 member states and international organizations, Japan has delivered assistance for agriculture and rural development in developing countries. Since 2020, through support via international organizations and others, Japan has been addressing issues of deterioration within the food system due to the stagnation in distribution of agricultural products as a result of travel restrictions due to the spread of COVID-19. In terms of global initiatives, Prime Minister Kishida stated at the G7 Summit held in June that Japan will provide support in terms of food security. In response to global food security issues that are worsened by the situation over Ukraine, Japan has been providing support on enhancing production capabilities to countries faced with food shortages. Furthermore, at the 8th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) in August, Prime Minister Kishida announced that Japan will provide approximately 300 million US dollars in joint-financing for the African Development Bank’s Emergency Food Production Facility, with the aim of strengthening medium- to long-term food production capacity, as

well as assist with capacity building for 200,000 people in the agricultural sector.

E Approaches in the Area of Water and Sanitation

Japan has continuously been the largest donor country in the area of water and sanitation since the 1990s. Furthermore, Japan has implemented high quality assistance utilizing Japan's experiences, expertise, and technologies, as well as proactively participated in discussions in the international community. At the 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit held in April, over 5,000 participants attended both online and in person, including heads of state and ministers from 30 countries in the Asia-Pacific region, with Prime Minister Kishida representing Japan. At the summit, Prime Minister Kishida announced Japan's plan for contribution, the Kumamoto Initiative for Water, an active approach to address water-related social issues through the development of "Quality Infrastructure".

(2) Global Health

Japan advocates human security and undertakes global health related issues as it positions global health, which serves as the basis of "the Development Cooperation Charter", as one of the pillars for its foreign policies.

COVID-19 continues to have diverse impacts on people around the world. Immediately after the outbreak of the pandemic, Japan has provided assistance to developing countries to the scale of approximately 5 billion US dollars in total for global health, both bilaterally and through international organizations. In particular, it is important to ensure equitable access to safe, effective and quality-assured COVID-19 therapeutics and diagnostics for every country and region around the world in order to overcome COVID-19 globally. To this end, Japan has been working with international frameworks, such as the COVAX Facility¹¹ in providing vaccine-related support in each country and region.

Specifically, Japan has provided approximately 44 million doses of vaccines for 32 countries and regions

as of the end of 2022. Furthermore, Japan placed great emphasis on advancing the "Last One Mile" support program for the cold-chain development and capacity development for vaccinating medical workers. In February, Prime Minister Kishida pledged that Japan would contribute 300 million US dollars to the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI), one of the constituent institutions of the COVAX, over the next five years in support of its vaccine development and manufacturing. Moreover, at the Gavi COVAX Advance Market Commitment (AMC) Summit 2022 in April, Prime Minister Kishida announced that Japan would contribute up to 500 million US dollars to the COVAX AMC in addition to the contribution of one billion US dollars which had been already disbursed. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki attended the Joint Working Session of the G7 Development and Health Ministers held in May as the representative from MOFA, and, in light of the need to revitalize the socio-economic activities in developing countries and to resume cross-border travels in order to build back better from the pandemic, made an announcement that Japan would provide further support primarily for the Indo-Pacific region to the scale of up to 100 million US dollars, centered on three pillars of support, management of vaccination data in developing countries, systems development for border control implementing infectious diseases control measures, and disposal of infectious disease-related waste. Furthermore, the COVID-19 Global Action Plan (GAP) Foreign Ministerial Meeting was hosted by the U.S. with ministers from around 30 countries in attendance in four sessions between February 2022 and February 2023. Foreign Minister Hayashi attended all four sessions, where he led discussions on the end of acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, and preparation for future pandemics.

The global spread of COVID-19 has shed light on the fact that global health is not only directly relevant to people's health but is also an important issue for the global society, including major risks in the economy, society, and security. Given this understanding, the

¹¹ COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX Facility): A comprehensive financing and supply coordination mechanism to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, including in developing countries, that is led by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and operated in cooperation with the WHO, UNICEF, and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI). The system enables supply of COVID-19 vaccines swiftly at an affordable price, leveraging economies of scale through guaranteeing purchase and market demand for vaccines.

Government of Japan formulated its new Global Health Strategy in May 2022. The strategy outlines Japan's goals to contribute to developing a global health architecture (GHA), strengthen Prevention, Preparedness and Response (PPR) to public health emergencies such as pandemics, and achieve a more resilient, more equitable, and more sustainable universal health coverage (UHC) that is required in the post-COVID-19 era to ensure human security (see the Column on page 280).

At the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders' Meeting hosted by Japan in May, Prime Minister Kishida confirmed that they will take global leadership in the efforts for building better health security and achieving UHC.

Japan has actively contributed to rulemaking in the international area in its specific effort to build GHA. Furthermore, Japan actively contributed to discussions in meetings held three times as of the end of 2022 by the World Health Organization (WHO) in drafting a legally binding instrument (WHO CA+) for global preparedness toward pandemics, as a member state of the International Negotiation Body. A Japanese delegate has also been elected as a vice chair of the INB. At the same time, Japan also proactively contributes to discussions on the revision of International Health Regulations (IHR) that is underway concurrently.

It is an urgent task to further accelerate our efforts to establish a more resilient, equitable and sustainable UHC in order to address long-standing health challenges that have been set back by COVID-19. Given this perspective, Japan has been providing assistance on strengthening health systems in developing countries, including the development and networking of core medical facilities and support for human resource development in the medical field. At TICAD 8 held in August, Prime Minister Kishida announced Japan's commitment to contribute up to 1.08 billion US dollars over the next three years to the Global Fund to fight the three major infectious diseases of AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, and enhance the health-care system. Furthermore, Japan made contributions to improve immunization coverage in developing countries through the Gavi Vaccine Alliance¹² and

bilateral cooperation, as well as providing support on maternal and child health through international organizations, such as the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), and the World Bank, in addition to providing bilateral assistance to mainly Asian and African countries.

Japan has been making efforts to improve water and sanitation infrastructure, such as water supply and sewage systems, and nutrition, which form the basis of human health, as it regards these to be indispensable for the achievement of the SDGs and issues related to human security. In December 2021, the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 was held, where the Tokyo Compact on Global Nutrition for Growth was issued. On that occasion, stakeholders, including governments of various countries, announced over 27 billion US dollars in nutrition-related assistance, including over 300 billion Japanese yen in nutrition-related assistance to the world from Japan announced by Prime Minister Kishida.

Moreover, Japan has also taken the lead in global health-related discussions at the G7 and G20. At the G7 Elmau Summit in June, Prime Minister Kishida discussed Japan's support related to COVID-19 vaccines and articulated that the pandemic has underscored the importance of UHC. Furthermore, at the G20 Bali Summit held in November, Prime Minister Kishida noted the necessity to enhance GHA as well as the importance of achieving more resilient, equitable, and sustainable UHC. Prime Minister Kishida expressed his intention to consider global health as one of the most critical issues to be addressed also at the G7 Hiroshima Summit hosted by Japan in 2023.

(3) Labor and Employment

It is important to raise income levels through employment, in order to improve the living standards of those who are in poverty. Against the background of an expanding supply-chain worldwide, it is necessary to put effort into developing the labor environment, and to realize “decent work” (work that is of an acceptable quality for motivated human beings) around the world.

¹² The Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (Gavi): A public-private partnership that supports immunizations in developing countries. It is also known as the “Gavi Vaccine Alliance”.
<https://www.gavi.org/our-alliance/about>



Column

Developing and Strengthening the Global Health Architecture (GHA)

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The global health architecture (GHA) refers to an overall framework or organization for addressing global health issues as an international community, particularly health emergencies such as pandemics. The global spread of COVID-19 laid bare the vulnerability of the existing GHA, including in the aspects of governance (administration, control) and finance. Specifically, the world faced issues such as inadequate cooperation between government agencies, including financial and health authorities, and the relevant international organizations, vulnerability of infectious disease monitoring and reporting systems, vulnerability of the health systems of countries around the world, the limitations of large-scale and rapid resource mobilization during the spread of infectious diseases including support for developing countries, difficulties related to rapid research, development, and manufacturing of the necessary medical resources such as vaccines, and inequitable access to medical resources. For this reason, alongside efforts to bring the COVID-19 pandemic to an end, active discussions are also taking place across various frameworks on the approach to the GHA with a view to strengthening prevention, preparedness and response (PPR) to future pandemics.

In light of such changes in various situations, the Government of Japan announced its “Global Health Strategy” in May. In addition to the goal of achieving more resilient, more equitable, and more sustainable universal health coverage (UHC), it also sets out the goal of contributing to developing the GHA and strengthening PPR against public health emergencies including pandemics. Initiatives to deal with governance, finance, and the setting of international norms are currently in progress.

With regard to governance during health emergencies, while utilizing multilateral frameworks such as the G7 and G20, Japan has engaged in discussions on strengthening cooperation between finance and health authorities, as well as on the status of a framework to discuss health emergencies at the leader's level, which is critical.

Furthermore, as for finance, a new fund (the Pandemic Fund) was established under the World Bank in November to enable fund mobilization for PPR, targeted particularly at low and middle-income countries. Japan has announced its intentions to contribute a total of 50 million US dollars to this fund.

As a part of efforts to set norms, discussions are ongoing among the World Health Organization (WHO) Member States concerning the amendment of the International Health Regulations (IHR) (revised in 2005), which aims to prevent the international spread of disease while minimizing its impact on international traffic under Article 21 of the Constitution of the WHO, as well as the drafting of the “WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response (WHO CA+).” As all countries worldwide, including developed countries, were severely impacted by the spread of COVID-19, the need to develop and strengthen PPR capabilities in every country to prepare for health crises was recognized, drawing from the lessons learnt from the pandemic. From this perspective, at the Special Session of World Health Assembly (WHA) convened in November 2021, decisions were made to establish an intergovernmental negotiating body (INB) comprising all WHO Member States and associate Member States to draft and negotiate a WHO CA+, to consider how the WHO CA+ will align with and complement the IHR, and to work toward the adoption of the WHO CA+ along with the amendments to the IHR at the 77th WHA scheduled for May 2024. The INB meetings, held three times in 2022, decided that the WHO CA+ should be a legally binding instrument and discussed the elements that should be included in WHO CA+. In addition, a Japanese delegate was selected as one of the elected vice-chairs and is actively contributing to the discussions.

The realization of “decent work” has been positioned as a primary objective of the activities of the International Labour Organization (ILO), which marks its centenary year in 2019.

In view of this, Japan is also engaged in sustainable development cooperation in the field of labor. In 2022, Japan provided assistance to projects in the Asia Pacific region, including Southeast Asia and South Asia and the African region (Madagascar) through voluntary contributions to the ILO and support to networks of international social partner organizations. These projects include support for emergency job creation in response to natural disasters and the COVID-19 pandemic, the development of labor laws and social insurance systems, and assistance for the improvement of labor, health and safety standards. It also comprised initiatives aimed at upholding human rights in companies within the supply chain.

(4) Environmental Issues and Climate Change

A Global Environmental Issues

Further awareness has been built worldwide on the importance of addressing global environmental issues and global interest in these issues has also risen, as exemplified by the 2030 Agenda, which embeds environmental goals. Japan is actively involved in conserving the natural environment and realizing sustainable development through negotiations and engagements in various multilateral environmental agreements and relevant international organizations. As the second largest donor to the World Bank Group's Global Environment Facility, a financing mechanism for the major environmental conventions regarding biodiversity and chemical pollution, etc, Japan also contributes to projects that address global environmental issues.

(A) Conservation of the Marine Environment

Addressing the problem of marine plastic litter, as a matter of urgency, is growing in importance in recent years, given its potential adverse impact on marine ecology, tourism, fisheries, and human health. The problem is caused by factors such as the illegal dumping of waste and inappropriate waste management. In order to achieve “the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision” that was launched at the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019,

which aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050, Japan is working with international organizations, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in areas such as compiling scientific knowledge and providing assistance on building models necessary for measures against pollution by marine plastic litter, in providing support for environmentally sound management of plastic waste and disposal mainly in the Asian region. In October, Executive Director Inger Andersen of the UNEP visited Japan and made a courtesy call to Foreign Minister Hayashi, where they confirmed cooperation between the UNEP and Japan on addressing global issues. Moreover, State Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKEI Shunsuke released a video message at the 30th anniversary event of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)-International Environmental Technology Center (IETC) held in Osaka.

In recent years, there is growing momentum for creating a new international framework to address marine plastics. At the Resumed Fifth Session of the United Nations Environment held from February to March in 2022, the resolution “End plastic pollution: towards an international legally binding instrument” was adopted. Following this resolution, the first session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee (INC) to develop an internationally legally binding instrument on plastic pollution, including in the marine environment, was held in Punta del Este, Uruguay, in November. Going forward, Japan will be providing a leading role in the area and supporting effective and progressive rule making (see the Special Feature on page 282).

The Fourth Leaders Meeting of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy, which is comprised of leaders of maritime nations and was established to discuss matters such as conservation of marine environments, fisheries and utilization of marine resources, was held on September 21. A message from Prime Minister Kishida was read on his behalf, which discussed the Government of Japan's support extended to island nations and coastal nations and Japan's intent to promote its successful initiatives aimed at achieving SDG 14 (conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development) as the Japan Model. Moreover, State Minister of the

Special Feature

Toward the Establishment of a Treaty on the Plastic Pollution Problem

The first session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution was convened from November 28 to December 2 in Punta del Este, Uruguay, with a view to developing an international legally binding instrument (treaty) on plastic pollution. This meeting was attended by approximately 2,300 stakeholders, including about 150 UN member states, relevant international organizations, and NGOs.

Global plastic production has swelled by as much as 20 times over the past 50 years, and an estimated approximate 8 million tons flows through rivers into the sea every year (Source: Jambeck, et al., 2015). At this rate, there are also estimates that the volume of plastic drifting in the sea may exceed the total volume of fish by 2050 (Source: The Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2016).

Japan has taken a proactive stance in addressing the problem of marine plastic litter and leading the world in such efforts. At the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019, Japan advocated the “Osaka Blue Ocean Vision,” which aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050. To date, this vision has been shared by 87 countries and regions. Toward the realization of this vision, Japan launched the MARINE Initiative to advance efforts such as capacity building and infrastructure development in the area of waste management in developing countries. Through training and other activities, Japan has conducted human resource development for about 17,000 people.

The participation of many countries is vital toward addressing cross-border and large-scale environmental issues such as plastic pollution. In view of that, Japan has continued to emphasize that this treaty on plastic pollution countermeasures should be an effective and progressive framework that involves as many countries as possible, including countries that are major plastic consumers and countries that generate plastic waste.

Measures to counter plastic pollution need to cover the full life cycle of plastics, from their production to their discharge (production, sale and consumption, waste management and discharge). At the first session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution, Japan stressed the importance of setting common global targets for dealing with plastic pollution, and of putting in place measures across the entire plastic life cycle while taking into consideration the circumstances of each country. Furthermore, in advancing plastic pollution countermeasures, it is also important to promote the recycle and reuse of plastics. In Japan, the Plastic Resource Circulation Act was enforced in April, clearly setting out the promotion of “Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Renewable (3R+Renewable).” By promoting the circulation



Marine litter along the coast of Tsushima City (Photo: Ministry of the Environment)

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First session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee on Plastic Pollution held in Uruguay

of plastic resources in Japan and across the whole of the international community, it is important to promote the transition to an environmentally friendly economy while maintaining the role of plastic as a highly useful material.

Plastic pollution is a problem that is closely related to various environmental issues. Addressing this problem contributes to climate change countermeasures and the conservation of biodiversity. Japan will continue to contribute to cross-cutting solutions for environmental issues by leading the world toward a solution for the plastic pollution problem.

Special Feature

Second United Nations Ocean Conference - Toward the Achievement of SDG 14 "Life Below Water"

Issues surrounding the ocean are important for Japan, which is a maritime nation. The UN has set forth conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, among other efforts, under Goal 14 "Life Below Water" of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). To promote the implementation of SDG 14, the Second UN Ocean Conference was held in Lisbon, Portugal, from June 27 to July 1 with Portugal and Kenya as the co-chairs.

More than 6,000 people attended this Conference in total, including 24 heads of states and governments, other high-level representatives, and more than 2,000 participants from civic society. Over the five-day period, they engaged in active discussions on the conservation and sustainable use of oceans and marine resources, the need to improve the health, productivity, and resilience of oceans and marine ecosystems, and the measures to that end. Each country presented their voluntary commitments toward realizing these goals. The commitments covered a wide range of contents, including establishing new Marine Nature Protected Areas, climate change countermeasures, water resources management, solid waste management, the formulation of the Blue Economy economic plan, and the announcement of coastal cleaning plans.

Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAKE Shingo represented Japan at this Conference, where he delivered a speech at the Plenary session (main session). In his speech, he emphasized the importance of the sustainable use of fishery resources and taking measures against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, as set out in SDG 14, while Japan is highly dependent on fishery resources. At the same time, he explained Japan's contributions under the "Osaka Blue Ocean Vision" that Japan advocated at the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019, which aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050. These contributions include providing support to improve the waste management capabilities of developing countries including island nations, and leading new international frameworks on plastic pollution countermeasures. Furthermore, he introduced Japan's contributions within and outside of Japan in areas such as countermeasures for ocean-related natural disasters. He announced that the Government of Japan had registered 18 voluntary commitments (at least 24 million US dollars) in this Conference, and expressed Japan's hope to continue cooperating with the international community toward the realization of SDG 14.

At the Interactive Dialogues held in parallel with the Plenary session, the participants engaged in discussions on eight themes related to the oceans. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Miyake attended and presented a speech at the Dialogue on sustainable fishery, during which he introduced Japan's initiatives related to measures against IUU fishing both at home and abroad and its support for developing countries. He also attended various side events held during the Conference and took the opportunity to introduce Japan's domestic and overseas efforts such as marine plastic litter countermeasures, protecting marine biodiversity, and sustainable fishing including IUU fishing countermeasures, demonstrating Japan's strong commitment in the maritime sector.

This Conference served as an opportunity for reaffirming cooperation in the international community in efforts to conserve the marine environment and realize the sustainable use of marine resources. Japan also aims to continue working together with the international community and contributing actively toward the realization of SDG 14.



Main session of the Second UN Ocean Conference (Lisbon, Portugal)



Marine plastic litter objects on display near the venue of the Second UN Ocean Conference (Lisbon, Portugal)

Environment MUTAI Shunsuke and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAKE Shingo attended the Second UN Ocean Conference held in Lisbon, Portugal between June 27 and July 1, where discussions on SDG14, including conservation and sustainable use of the oceans, seas and marine resources, took place (see the Special Feature on page 283). In December, the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Ocean Peter Thomson made a courtesy call to Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary KIHARA Seiji and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei, where they confirmed the intent to continue collaboration aimed at achieving SDG 14.

(B) Conservation of Biodiversity

The second part of the Fifteenth Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 15) was held in Montreal, Canada from December 7 to 19. 9,472 people representing Parties / regions, related organizations, citizen groups, and others attended the conference in person, while approximately 16,000 people registered to attend. The Government of Japan was represented by a delegation mainly consisting of MOFA, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and Ministry of the Environment.

The Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework consisting of new global targets on biodiversity, was adopted at the same conference (see the Column on page 285).

The high-level segment was held from December 15 to 17, attended by the leaders and ministers of each country. The Minister of the Environment NISHIMURA Akihiro represented the Government of Japan. During the high-level segment, each country presented their initiative toward the 2050 Vision of "Living in harmony with nature," while Japan pledged to provide a total of 117 billion Japanese yen in support of biodiversity conservation from 2023 to 2025, in addition to contributing 638 million US dollars to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and providing a total of 1.8 billion Japanese yen to the Japan Biodiversity Fund (JBF).

In recent years, illegal wildlife trade has exacerbated, drawing international attention as one of the key sources of funding for international terrorist organizations. As

a follow-up to its provision of elephant anti-poaching operation facilities in Uganda and Mozambique in 2019, Japan provided the same monitoring facility in Zambia in 2022, despite construction delay due to the spread of COVID-19. Moreover, Japan decided to provide the related facilities in Rwanda in 2021, and in Botswana in 2022, underscoring Japan's drive to address this issue seriously. Japan also proactively participates in international discussions, including attending the 19th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to CITES (COP19) held in Panama City, Panama from November 14 to 25.

Japan also contributes to international rule-making for promoting conservation and sustainable uses of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, with a view to enhancing sustainable agriculture and food security. At the 9th Session of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture (ITPGR) Governing Body held in New Delhi, India in September, Japan promoted access to and utilization of genetic resources, including breeding. To this end, Japan participated in discussions aimed at expanding the scope of genetic resources covered by the Multilateral System (MLS) and enhancing their functions.

In August, the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) Executive Director Sheam Satkuru made a courtesy call to Foreign Minister Hayashi, where they confirmed that Japan will continue to work with the organization on the legal and sustainable management of tropical forests and the sustainable use of timber. At the 58th Session of the Council of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) held in a hybrid format in November, important discussions were held including consideration for a future renegotiation or extension of the International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA), which forms the premise of the ITTO, and will expire in 2026. In November, the 14th Meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP14) to the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (commonly known as the Ramsar Convention) took place in a hybrid format in Wuhan, China, and Geneva, Switzerland, in which 21 resolutions were adopted, including the revision of the 4th strategic plan, while Niigata City of Niigata Prefecture

Column

Adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework, New Global Targets for Biodiversity

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Biodiversity underpins the survival of humankind, and is the foundation that brings forth various blessings. Living creatures transcend national boundaries, and it is impossible for any country to conserve biodiversity on its own. In light of that, it is vital for the world as a whole to address this issue together. Amidst growing awareness within the international community of the importance of efforts for conserving biodiversity, the 15th Conference of Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP15) was held in Montreal, Canada, in December, and new global targets for biodiversity were adopted at this conference. The “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework”^(Note), which sets out new global targets, serves as a guideline for biodiversity initiatives by each country until 2030.



COP15 venue (Montreal, Canada)

The “Aichi Biodiversity Targets,” the predecessor of the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,” were adopted at the 10th Conference of Parties to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (COP10) held in Nagoya City in 2010. The “Aichi Biodiversity Targets” refer to 20 individual targets included in the “Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011–2020,” which sets out the long-term vision of “Living in harmony with nature” to be achieved by 2050, and the short-term mission of “taking effective and urgent action to halt the loss of biodiversity” by 2020. More than 10 years have passed since the adoption of the “Aichi Biodiversity Targets,” but regrettably, not all of the targets set out have been achieved.

In view of that, the respective countries gathered in Montreal to engage in various discussions and reviews with a view to formulating concrete targets for 2030, while taking over the “Aichi Biodiversity Targets.” After successive days of discussions, the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework,” which sets out targets for 2030, was adopted on December 19. One of the main targets among these new global targets, is the “30 by 30 target” that aims to conserve at least 30% of terrestrial and inland water areas and of marine and coastal areas by 2030. Other targets adopted include the mainstreaming of biodiversity in business.

Structure of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework

2050 Vision

A world of living
in harmony
with nature

2030 Mission

To take urgent action to halt and reverse biodiversity loss to put nature on a path to recovery for the benefit of the people and the planet by conserving and sustainably using biodiversity and by ensuring the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the use of genetic resources, while providing the necessary means of implementation.

Goals for 2050

GOAL A:
Conservation

GOAL B:
Sustainable use

GOAL C:
Access and
benefit-sharing (ABS)
of genetic resources

GOAL D:
Means of
implementation

Targets for 2030

(1) Reducing threats to biodiversity

- 1: Spatial planning
- 2: Restoration of nature
- 3: 30 by 30
- 4: Conservation of species and genes
- 5: Biological harvesting
- 6: Countermeasures for alien species
- 7: Pollution
- 8: Climate change

(2) Meeting people's needs

- 9: Use of wild species
- 10: Agriculture, aquaculture, fisheries and forestry
- 11: Nature's regulatory functions
- 12: Green and blue spaces

- 13: Access and benefit-sharing (ABS) of genetic resources

(3) Tools and solutions

- 14: Mainstreaming of biodiversity
- 15: Business
- 16: Sustainable consumption
- 17: Biosafety
- 18: Harmful subsidies
- 19: Financial resources
- 20: Capacity-building, transfer of technology
- 21: Access to knowledge
- 22: Indigenous peoples, women, and youth
- 23: Gender

Implementation and support mechanism and enabling conditions/Responsibility and transparency (review mechanisms)
/Communication, education, awareness and uptake

Going forward, it is important for each country to put effort into ensuring that these new global targets are implemented properly. To support these initiatives, Minister of the Environment NISHIMURA Akihiro announced at COP15 that in addition to contributing 638 million US dollars to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and providing support of 17 million US dollars in total to the Japan Biodiversity Fund (JBF), Japan also pledges to give 117 billion Japanese yen to support biodiversity protection from 2023 to 2025. Japan aims for a “World of living in harmony with nature,” as established in the 2050 Vision set out in COP10 and carried over to the new global targets. To that end, Japan will continue to contribute to the steady implementation of the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.”

(Note) This conference was scheduled to be held in Kunming, China, in 2020. However, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the first part was held in hybrid format in Kunming in October 2021, and the second part was held in Montreal, Canada, in December 2022. For this reason, it was named the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework.”

and Izumi City of Kagoshima Prefecture were awarded with the Wetland City Accreditation of the Ramsar Convention.

(C) International Management of Chemicals and Hazardous Waste

The 34th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer was held in person in Montreal, Canada in November. At the meeting, matters such as the efficient and effective operation of the protocol between States that are Parties to the convention were discussed.

In June, in Geneva, Switzerland, Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade were held, in which matters such as approval for activity plan and provisional budget for each convention in 2023 were discussed and revision on a portion of appendices was also adopted.

The second part of the fourth meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Minamata Convention on Mercury was held in Bali, Indonesia in March, in which matters such as a framework for the effectiveness evaluation of the Convention were decided. Japan is playing an active role in the implementation of the Convention, as a member of the Implementation and Compliance Committee to promote the implementation of, and review compliance with the provisions of the Convention during the intersession period.

B Climate Change

(A) Initiatives to Achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2050

In October 2020, Japan declared that it would aim to realize carbon neutrality with net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. At the Leaders' Summit on Climate, hosted by the U.S. in April 2021, Japan declared that it aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46% in fiscal year 2030 from its fiscal year 2013 levels, setting an ambitious target which is aligned with the goal of net-zero by 2050. Furthermore, Japan will continue its strenuous efforts in its challenge to meet the lofty goal of cutting its emissions by 50%. In October 2021, Japan submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) that reflects the new reduction target and Long-term Strategy under the Paris Agreement that reflects initiatives aimed at achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Secretariat. Since Russia's aggression against Ukraine which took place in February 2022, the importance of energy security has been reaffirmed. To this end, Japan will actively contribute to the realization of carbon neutrality in the world by 2050.

(B) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Paris Agreement

Global efforts are essential in reducing greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change; however, the Kyoto Protocol adopted at the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) in 1997 required only developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Paris Agreement was adopted at COP21 held in

Paris in December 2015. The Paris Agreement is a fair and effective framework that provides that parties communicate their nationally determined contributions to greenhouse gas emission reductions and undertake efforts toward the achievement of such goals regardless of whether they are developed or developing countries. The Agreement entered into force in November 2016, and has been ratified by more than 190 countries and institutions including Japan (as of December 2022).

Upon the adoption of the Paris Agreement, negotiations commenced on the implementation guidelines of the Agreement toward its full implementation after 2020, and these, except the implementation guidelines for market mechanisms were adopted at COP24 held in December 2018. At COP26 held in 2021 in Glasgow, the UK, significant progress has been made in the steady implementation of the Paris Agreement and the promotion of climate actions worldwide, including adoption of the implementation guidelines for market mechanisms, which had not been concluded at COP24 and COP25, based on a proposal made by Japan.

At COP27 held in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt from November 6 to 20, the focus was placed on strengthening the implementation of climate action as the session was called the “Implementation COP” and built on the outcome of COP26. The COP/CMA cover decision, the Sharm el-Sheikh Implementation Plan, calling on Parties to strengthen their actions in each area of climate change, and the Mitigation Work Programme to urgently scale up mitigation ambition and implementation toward 2030, were adopted. Moreover, a decision was adopted to establish new funding arrangements, including a fund to assist particularly vulnerable developing countries in responding to loss and damage associated with adverse effects of climate change. Minister of the Environment Nishimura Akihiro participated in the negotiations, attending the event on behalf of the Government of Japan, in which he announced the “Assistance Package by the Government of Japan for averting, minimizing and addressing Loss and Damage” with the aim of providing comprehensive technical support and maximizing its effectiveness. Furthermore, Japan has taken the initiative to launch the “Paris Agreement Article 6 Implementation Partnership” with over 60 countries and organizations announcing their participation, with

a view to build a high-integrity carbon markets during this period.

(C) Efforts in Supporting Developing Countries

Developed countries including Japan have provided various supports for developing countries so that those countries can implement sufficient climate change measures. Those supports include financial support, capacity building, and technology transfer. At the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders’ Meeting held in May, the leaders of the four countries jointly launched the Quad Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation Package (Q-CHAMP) with a shared view to expand support for disaster prevention and shipping as well as to broaden the areas of cooperation in clean energy in the Indo-Pacific region.

Japan announced in 2021 at the G7 Cornwall Summit and at COP26 that it would provide climate assistance in both private and public finance totaling 70 billion US dollars over the next 5 years, and would double its assistance for adaptation, totaling 14.8 billion US dollars. From such perspectives, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) also plays an important role as a multilateral climate fund that provides support for developing countries to address climate change. In addition to its initial contribution of 1.5 billion US dollars (2015 to 2018), Japan expressed at the GCF’s First Replenishment (2020 to 2023) that it would contribute up to 1.5 billion US dollars. Moreover, Japan has actively participated in its management as well as policymaking as a Board member and Alternative Board member of the GCF Board. By December 2022, the GCF Board has approved 209 projects, which are projected to avoid CO₂ emissions by 2.4 billion tons and increase resilience of 670 million people.

(D) Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)

The JCM is a mechanism for contributing to greenhouse gas emissions reduction or removal and sustainable development in partner countries through diffusion of advanced decarbonization technologies, as well as the implementation of actions in these countries. The amount of contribution is quantitatively evaluated, and Japan will acquire credits (or emission allowance) proportion to its contribution, assisting both Japan and the partner countries to achieve their

Nationally Determined Contributions. Japan plans to further expand the JCM globally, reflecting the adoption of the implementation guidelines of market mechanisms adopted at COP26 in 2021. The “Grand Design and Action Plan for a New Form of Capitalism · Follow-up” approved by the Cabinet Office in June 2022 states that Japan will accelerate consultation with relevant countries, aiming to increase JCM partner countries up to around 30 by year 2025. Japan signed the Memorandum of Cooperation on the Joint Crediting Mechanism with eight additional countries in 2022, and had established the JCM with 25 countries by the end of the year. There have been over 230 projects on emissions reduction or removal of greenhouse gases implemented worldwide. Among these, three methodologies for credit calculation have been approved for their credit calculation methods and five projects have been registered as JCM projects as of November. The JCM is showing steady results, including credits issued from JCM projects in Mongolia and Bangladesh.

(E) Japan's efforts in Climate Change and Fragility Risk

Concern regarding fragility risks is also growing among the UN, the G7, and other developing countries, with growing interest particularly in the impact of climate change on security. Japan considers climate change as a factor for increased risk of conflict, which also relates to human security, and has been actively participating in discussions on various occasions. Japan became an official member of the Group of Friends on Climate and Security¹³ in May and has joined the “Climate, Environment, Peace and Security Initiative” launched as G7 Initiative by the G7 in November. Japan has been convening the International Conference on Climate Change and Fragility in the Asia-Pacific Region since fiscal year 2018 as an initiative covering vulnerabilities and risks of climate change. In 2022, lectures and panel discussions were held on the topic of the threat of climate change on biodiversity.

(F) Interaction with the Next Generation Who Will Address Climate Change

Young people of the next generation play an important role in achieving the target of net zero emissions by 2050 globally. In particular, in response to the growing interest in climate change in recent years, activities led by so called “Generation Z”¹⁴ are becoming more active. As such, it is important to pay attention to and discuss their voices. Given this consideration, since COP26, MOFA staff have been holding lectures and conducting direct dialogue in small groups. To date, the Ministry has shared information and held discussions with approximately 5,500 people on the climate change response. Going forward, the Ministry will continue to host platforms for opinion exchange and information dissemination targeting the younger generation regarding climate change as a topic of growing interest, and reflect the feedback received in government policies.

(5) Arctic and Antarctic

A Arctic

(1) Current State of the Arctic

There is a risk that rapid changes in the Arctic environment caused by global warming will have a drastic and irreversible impact on the ecology and the lives of those living there. At the same time, as the decreasing amount of sea ice is expected to expand the navigable area, there have been growing economic opportunities such as the use of the Northern Sea Route and the development of resources.

Alongside this, Russia, which has the largest territory in the arctic circle, has announced the “Basic Principles of Russian Federation State Policy in the Arctic to 2035” and the “Strategy for Developing the Russian Arctic Zone and Ensuring National Security until 2035” in 2020. It is also promoting military facility maintenance, resource exploitation and freight shipping on the Northern Sea Route. While Russia took over the chairmanship of the Council at the Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council (AC)¹⁵ held

¹³ A group established by UN representatives of each country in 2018 in New York in order to discuss the impacts that climate change has on global security.

¹⁴ Generation Z: Generally defined as the age cohort of people born between the late 1990s and early 2010s. Generation Z has lived with the Internet, smartphones and social media since an early age. They are also called “digital natives.” Generation Z comes after Generational X and Generation Y.

¹⁵ An intergovernmental consultation body established in 1996 with the aim of promoting cooperation, coordination, and exchanges between the eight Arctic countries (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the U.S.), while gaining the involvement of indigenous communities on common issues related to the Arctic region (in particular, sustainable development, environmental protection, etc.). (It does not address military and security issues.) Japan obtained the Observer status in 2013.

in May 2021, the AC has suspended all activities since March 2022 after seven other AC member countries issued a joint statement to temporarily suspend their participation as protests against Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

China, in recent years, has positioned itself as an important stakeholder in Arctic affairs and is observed to be proactively advancing into the Arctic with its participation in resource development, commercial use of shipping routes, governance development, and scientific research.

Against this backdrop, the U.S. is also enhancing its engagement in light of changes in the situation of the Arctic, including announcing new Arctic strategies between 2019 and 2021 in response to changes in the security situation from the Department of Defense, Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard. The U.S. also positions security as its most important pillar in the new National Strategy for the Arctic Region announced by the White House in October.

(B) Japan's Arctic Policy and International Activities

Japan is aiming to contribute to the global society as a major player that takes part in addressing issues in the Arctic with an emphasis on the three areas of research and development, international cooperation, and sustainable use, based on the "Japan's Arctic Policy" announced in 2015.

Following the suspension of AC activities in March, the importance of international conference of Track II organizations in the Arctic (framework between private sector experts) has increased. The Japanese Ambassador in Charge of Arctic Affairs attended the Arctic Encounter Symposium held in Anchorage, U.S. in April, the Arctic Frontiers conference held in Tromsø, Norway in May, the Arctic Circle Greenland Forum held in August in Nuuk, Greenland, and the Arctic Circle Assembly¹⁶, held in October in Reykjavík, Iceland, in which Japan shared its views and achievements in terms of scientific cooperation in the Arctic. Through the Arctic Challenge for Sustainability II (ArCSII) launched in fiscal year 2020, Japan promotes international cooperation for research and

human resource development at research and observation stations in the U.S., Canada, Russia, Norway, and Greenland (Denmark) among other locations. Japan has also sent its researchers to all AC working groups specialized in specific themes. As for the Arctic research vessel proposed in the 3rd Arctic Science Ministerial (ASM3) for use as an international platform, it has been under construction since 2021.

B Antarctic

(A) Japan and the Antarctic

Japan has been conducting Antarctic observation surveys utilizing its advanced technology at Syowa Station established in 1957, thereby contributing to global environment conservation and international development of science and technology. Moreover, as one of the original signatories of the Antarctic Treaty adopted in 1959, Japan strives to maintain and strengthen the Antarctic Treaty System, which is essential to the peaceful use of the Antarctic, while contributing to the promotion of environmental preservation and international cooperation in the Antarctic.

(B) The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and the Protection of Antarctic Environment

At the 44th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM44) held as a hybrid meeting (both in person and virtually) from late May to early June, discussions were held on issues of climate change in the Antarctic and actions being taken by the Antarctic Treaty System.

(C) Japan's Antarctic Observation

As for Japan's Antarctic observation activities, Japan is implementing research and observation activities based on the tenth six-year plan of the Japanese Antarctic Research program (from FY2022 to FY2027), in addition to long-term continuous observation. The 64th Japanese Antarctic Research Expedition plans to conduct various research observation to understand past and present changes in the ice sheets, ocean and atmospheric general circulation, and upper atmosphere in the Antarctic region as well as elucidating their mechanisms on the first year of the six-year plan.

16 An international conference established by Mr. Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, former President of Iceland and others in 2013, and attended by about 2,000 participants including government representatives, researchers, and business people. Japan has been participating in it since the first assembly with the attendance of the Ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs and other delegates.

3 Science and Technology Diplomacy

Science and technology constitute the foundational elements for peace and prosperity that support socio-economic development, and play a vital role in ensuring safety and security. By harnessing its own advanced science and technology, MOFA promotes Science and Technology Diplomacy, thereby contributing to the development of science and technology at home and abroad, the promotion of relations with other countries through science and technology, the peace and stability of the international community, and the resolution of global challenges. As part of science and technology diplomacy efforts, Japan places emphasis on initiatives implemented through the activities of the Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In September 2015, MOFA established the post of Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and appointed Prof. KISHI Teruo, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo, as the first Science and Technology Advisor. Following the end of his term, Prof. Kishi was replaced by Prof. MATSUMOTO Yoichiro, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo as the new advisor in April 2020. Moreover, Prof. KANO Mitsunobu, Professor of Okayama University, has assumed the post as the first Science and Technology Co-Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to support the work of the Science and Technology Advisor in April 2019. In April 2022, Dr. KOTANI Motoko, Trustee and Vice President of Tohoku University, was newly appointed as the Science and Technology Co-Advisor for the Minister for Foreign Affairs. Together, Prof. Matsumoto and Dr. Kotani support the activities of the Foreign Minister from the perspective of science and technology, and provide advice on the utilization of science, technology and innovation in the planning and coordination of various foreign policies to the Minister and relevant divisions.

Additionally, the Science and Technology Diplomacy Advisory Network, composed of academic experts in a variety of science and technology fields, has been established under the supervision of the Science and Technology Advisor, aiming to make further contributions in the process of planning and formulating

various diplomatic policies. As part of this network, “The Advisory Board for Promoting Science & Technology Diplomacy,” consisting of 20 experts from related fields, with Prof. Matsumoto as the chair and Dr. Kotani as the vice-chair, hold meetings regularly to discuss various topics aimed at enhancing the structure and function of science and technology diplomacy. In 2022, the Advisory Board meeting was held in March and August. In June, Prof. Matsumoto and Dr. Kotani submitted their recommendation for strengthening the foundation of science and technology capabilities to Foreign Minister Hayashi.

Furthermore, Prof. Matsumoto and Dr. Kotani exchanged views with the scientific advisors of the U.S., the UK and Switzerland, among various countries, in an effort to build and strengthen networks. Both deepened discussions about the role of science and technology in resolving global environmental issues and approaches to scientific diplomacy and scientific advisory in the current geopolitical situation at meetings of the Foreign Ministries Science & Technology Advice Network (FMSTAN), involving the scientific advisors of each nation's government.

With the movement of people, which had temporarily stopped due to COVID-19, resuming, Prof. Matsumoto traveled to the U.S. in June, Berlin (Germany) and Geneva (Switzerland) in Europe in October, to take part in discussions on science and technology innovation policy and science and technology diplomacy initiatives with researchers as well as science and technology policymakers in these countries. Dr. Kotani visited Brussels (Belgium) in July to hold discussions with the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation along with relevant parties for science and technology institutions in Europe. She also attended the World Science Forum 2022 held in South Africa in December where she introduced Japan's initiatives for science and technology diplomacy.

Prof. Matsumoto regularly hosts science and technology diplomacy seminars aimed at raising the level of knowledge within MOFA. Prof. Matsumoto also hosted online meetings participated in by officials in

charge of Science and Technology at overseas diplomatic missions in countries with advanced science and technology, where they discussed the further utilization of overseas diplomatic missions for science and technology diplomacy.

In terms of international science and technology cooperation, Japan has concluded 32 science and technology cooperation agreements bilaterally, and these are now in force with 46 countries and the EU¹⁷. Based on these agreements, it organizes regular joint committee meetings with these countries to engage in intergovernmental dialogue. In 2022, joint committee meetings were held with Israel, Canada, France, Brazil, South Africa, Sweden and Australia, respectively. Attended by delegates from the relevant ministries and agencies, consultations were held on the current status

of cooperation in diverse sectors, and on the future direction of cooperation.

With regard to multilateral cooperation, as a member of the Board of the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), which was established to support research for peaceful purposes conducted by researchers on weapons of mass destruction from the former Soviet Union, and now involved in a wide range of research and development such as chemistry, biology, radioactive materials and nuclear power, Japan works to provide support mainly to countries of Central Asia. Japan also participates in International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) project to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of nuclear fusion energy.

17 For the breakdown, see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website (Japanese only):

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/technology/nikoku/framework.html>

Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan each inherited the Japan-Russia Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement on different dates. In 1993, the Czech Republic and Slovakia respectively took over the Japan-Czechoslovakia Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement. Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia (the name of the country at that time), Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro inherited the Japan-Yugoslavia Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement on different dates.



Column

The Importance of Diplomacy Efforts toward Strengthening Science and Technology as a Foundation for National Power

Professor MATSUMOTO Yoichiro,
Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

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Science and technology (S&T) in diplomacy has become increasingly important in recent years, as seen in efforts to address global issues such as climate change, infectious diseases, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and in international competition and coordination in the fields of critical and emerging technologies in relation to economic security. More than ever, it being asked how S&T diplomacy can be developed strategically and effectively. As S&T Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, I chair the Advisory Board for Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy comprising leading experts with diverse backgrounds, with the aim of providing scientific knowledge on foreign policy objectives and adding depth to Japan's diplomacy activities by utilizing S&T, and work to promote the S&T diplomacy.

It is important to possess outstanding S&T capabilities in order to strengthen economic security, which has received increasing attention in recent years. For example, rare metals are vital raw materials of high value-added components and products that support Japan's industries, and its demand has been growing in recent years. However, they are known



The author

to pose a high geopolitical resource risk due to the uneven distribution in production regions. Accordingly, possessing technologies for recycling rare metals, as well as alternative technologies to reduce the use of rare metals, can mitigate the supply chain risk while also contributing to economic security. As for emerging technologies with their remarkable technological innovations, it goes without saying that research and development is necessary to secure technological superiority. Moreover, such technologies are characterized as an accumulation of various scientific knowledge and basic and fundamental technologies. Therefore, it is vital to constantly secure a wide range of S&T seeds (scientific knowledge, technology, knowhow, etc., that can be a source of technological innovations) through diverse scientific research and technological development.

Nurturing human resources in research and development is the key to strengthening S&T capabilities. Japan has positioned its S&T capabilities as its strength so far, but recently, various indicators have given rise to concerns over the decline of Japan's international presence regarding S&T capabilities. At the Advisory Board for Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy, we have summarized the necessary efforts to strengthen the foundation of Japan's S&T capabilities, particularly from the perspective of human resource development and utilization, and submitted them as recommendations to the Foreign Minister. Developing S&T human resources who can play an active role in the international arena, circulating and networking between industry-academia-government sectors, as well as domestically and abroad, and enabling their active participation, can contribute to the strengthening of Japan's S&T capabilities as well as its S&T diplomacy.

Strengthening S&T capabilities cannot be achieved through domestic efforts alone, but with calls for international collaboration. MOFA's networks in countries across the world, mainly developed through its diplomatic missions overseas, are valuable assets, and I believe they can be further utilized in the future toward strengthening networks and the global brain circulation in the field of S&T. The values of freedom and fairness, which Japan emphasizes in its diplomacy, are also important in the field of S&T. There is a need to advance international joint research and S&T cooperation in strategic coordination with other countries while securing academic freedom and research integrity. We also need to promote necessary domestic and foreign policies in a unified manner, and to build an ecosystem toward promoting and strengthening S&T diplomacy.

Section 3 | Economic Diplomacy

1 Overview of Economic Diplomacy

In the international community, as competition among nations arises in the fields of politics, economy, and the military, the balance of power in the international arena is changing in an increasingly rapid and complex manner, while uncertainty over the existing international order is growing. The novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic caused a rapid worldwide economic downturn through the suppression of economic activity. Since then, although the global economy as a whole has shown signs of a gradual recovery as the impact of COVID-19 has waned, prices are now soaring due to a combination of a recovery in demand and the impact of the situation in Ukraine. The outlook remains uncertain due to volatility in financial and capital markets, ballooning governmental debt arising from COVID-19 countermeasures, rising maritime transport and other logistics costs, and rising energy and commodity costs.

Amid these circumstances, Japan has continued its efforts for rule-making and further trade liberalization through economic partnerships. In January 2022 the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement entered into force. With regard to the World Trade Organization (WTO), which is central to the multilateral trading system, the Twelfth Ministerial Conference, which had been postponed three times so far, was held in June. During

the Conference, there was an agreement for the first time in approximately six and a half years to adopt a Ministerial Declaration, and the Conference succeeded in achieving results on important themes such as the COVID-19 response and negotiations on fisheries subsidies. Additionally, with regard to e-commerce negotiations, which were initiated by like-minded countries, Japan, along with Australia and Singapore, the co-conveners of e-commerce negotiations, issued the Ministers' Statement on the WTO Joint Statement Initiative on E-Commerce to express their willingness to remain committed to reaching an agreement on a global set of digital trade rules.

Based on the above assessment, Japan has advanced initiatives with the aim of accelerating the promotion of economic diplomacy as one of the priority areas of its diplomacy, centered around the following three areas: (1) rule-making and initiatives through international organizations to bolster free and open global economic systems by promoting economic partnership agreements, while maintaining and strengthening the multilateral trading system; (2) supporting the overseas business expansion of Japanese companies through promotion of public-private partnerships; and (3) promoting resource diplomacy along with inbound tourism toward Japan.

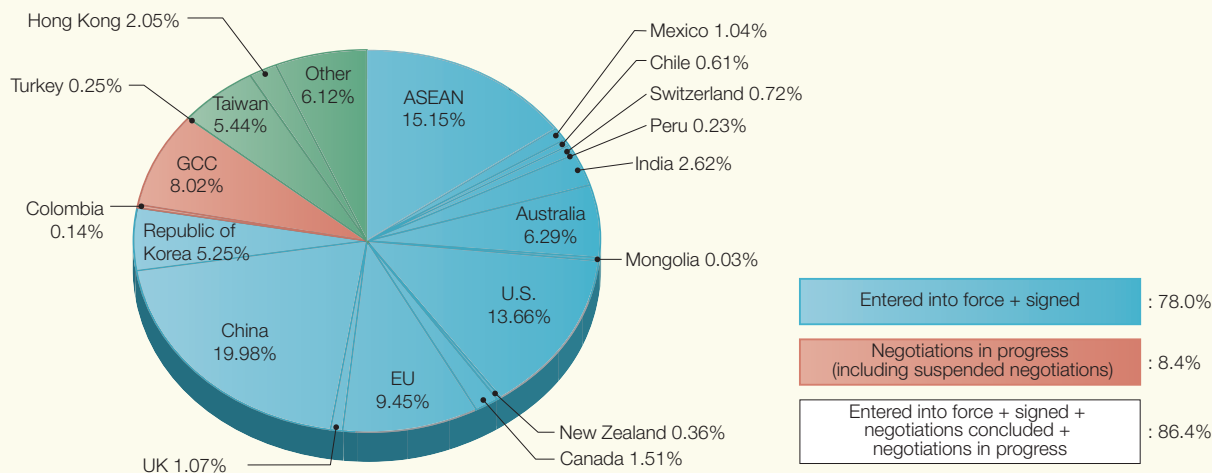
2 Promotion of Rule-Making to Bolster Free and Open Global Economic Systems

(1) Promotion of Economic Partnerships

In recent years, despite the advancement of economic globalism, there have been clear developments toward protectionism as COVID-19 infections spread, and furthermore, the global economy as a whole is in turmoil due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. In such circumstances, Japan has emphasized and steadily

promoted Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), which help capture the vitality of the growing market overseas and strengthen the basis of the Japanese economy through measures such as the reduction or elimination of tariffs on goods as well as barriers on trade in services, and through rule-making for trade and investment.

■ Percentages of Japan's economic partnership agreement partner countries and regions within Japan's total trade



Source: Trade Statistics of Japan by the Ministry of Finance (released in January 2023)
(Percentages of each country's trade value are rounded to the nearest hundredth)

The Japan-UK CEPA entered into force on January 1, 2021, followed by the entry into force of the RCEP Agreement on January 1, 2022 for Japan, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, China, Australia, and New Zealand. This brought the EPA/FTA ratio in Japan's trade (the ratio of trade value with countries that have EPAs/FTAs already signed or entered into force with Japan, to Japan's total trade value) to around 78.0% (source: Trade Statistics, Ministry of Finance, 2023).

Furthermore, in January 2023 the Protocol Amending the Trade Agreement between Japan and the United States of America, which modifies the conditions for the application of agricultural safeguards on U.S. beef, entered into force.

To advance a free and fair economic order, the basis for its own peace and prosperity, Japan will proactively continue its endeavors, including maintaining the high standards of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), ensuring the full implementation of the RCEP Agreement, and negotiating other economic partnership agreements.

A Multilateral Agreements and Other Matters

(A) Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)

The CPTPP is an agreement that promotes efforts to establish new economic integration rules for the 21st

century in a wide range of areas such as tariffs, services, investments, E-commerce, intellectual property, and state-owned enterprises. It also provides opportunities for Japanese companies to better thrive in overseas markets, giving it important economic significance as a major driving force for the country's economic growth. Furthermore, the CPTPP has great strategic significance in that it facilitates the building of a free and fair economic order together with countries that share fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, fundamental human rights, and the rule of law, contributing to Japan's security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region as well as leading to peace and prosperity in the region and the world at large. The 12 countries of Japan, Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the U.S., and Viet Nam signed the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP12 Agreement) in February 2016. However, due to the U.S.' announcement of its withdrawal from the TPP12 Agreement in 2017, Japan proactively led discussions among the 11 countries for the early realization of the TPP. Agreement in principle was reached at the TPP Ministerial Meeting in November 2017, and the CPTPP was signed in Chile in March 2018. The six countries (Mexico, Japan, Singapore, New Zealand, Canada, and Australia) completed necessary domestic procedures and the Agreement entered into force on December 30, 2018. Viet Nam became a Party in January 2019, Peru in September 2021, and Malaysia

in November 2022, and the Agreement entered into force with nine Parties.

Since the CPTPP entered into force, six CPTPP Commission meetings have been held mostly at the ministerial level. At the Fourth Commission meeting in June 2021, it was decided to commence the accession process with the UK, which formally submitted its accession request in February, 2021, and to establish an Accession Working Group (AWG) for the UK. The first meeting of the AWG was convened in September 2021. In July 2022, the AWG meeting was held in Tokyo with the CPTPP Members and the UK holding in-depth discussions on a variety of issues to ensure that the accession process can appropriately proceed while maintaining the high standards of the Agreement in terms of its rules and market access. The progress of the accession process with the UK presents a powerful message to the world that the CPTPP will drive forward free trade. It also provides important momentum for expanding free and fair trade and investment rules for the 21st century. To ensure that the UK's accession process proceeds smoothly while maintaining the high level of the CPTPP, Japan will hold substantial discussions in the AWG as its chair. In October, the 6th Commission meeting was held in Singapore. In this meeting, which was the first face-to-face ministerial-level meeting to be held in three years since the First commission meeting, the Members affirmed their commitment to engage in crucial trade matters that concern the region, such as building resilient supply chains impacted by the pandemic, and to counter unjustified trade restrictive measures and economic coercion. In addition, reports were made on the results of each of the Committee's activities and on the progress of cooperation made in the digital economy and green economy fields. There were also active discussions amongst the attending Ministers, including a report from Japan, Chair of the AWG, on the UK's accession process. Formal accession requests were submitted by China on September 16, 2021, Taiwan on September 22, 2021, Ecuador on December 17, 2021, Costa Rica on August 10, 2022, and Uruguay on December 1, 2022. While carefully assessing whether the aspirant economies that submitted accession requests are prepared to fully meet the high standards of the CPTPP in terms of its market access and rules, Japan will deal

with this matter while taking into account strategic perspectives and public understanding.

(B) Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (Japan-EU EPA)

The EU is Japan's third largest export partner (9.2% of total exports) and its second-largest import partner (11.1% of total imports). The combined GDP of Japan and the EU is 22.1 trillion US dollars, with total trade of 14.6 trillion US dollars (as of 2021 for both figures). The Japan-EU EPA, which entered into force in February 2019, constitutes a free and advanced economic area that accounts for approximately one fourth of global GDP and one third of global trade, and trade between Japan and the EU has remained strong on the basis of this Agreement, despite the impact of COVID-19 and Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

After the Agreement entered into force, discussions have continued through Joint Committees and Specialised Committees in 12 areas in order to ensure its steady implementation. At the third meeting of the Joint Committee held in March, discussions were held on the effective operation of the Agreement, and cooperation between Japan and the EU on various economic issues was confirmed. In October, formal negotiations began for the inclusion of "provisions on the free flow of data" into the Agreement. Japan will continue to aim for the further development of Japan-EU economic relations based on this Agreement.

(C) Japan-UK Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (Japan-UK CEPA)

The Japan-UK EPA, which entered into force in January 2021, ensures business continuity for Japanese companies after the UK left the EU and is a key foundation for further strengthening Japan-UK relations. The Japan-UK EPA, based on the Japan-EU EPA and comprising 24 chapters in total, stipulates rules that are more advanced and high-level than those of the Japan-EU EPA in such areas as electronic commerce and financial services, and also improves access to the UK market for some items such as railway vehicles and automobile parts. It is also Japan's first EPA to include a chapter on Japan-UK cooperation to promote women's access to the opportunities and benefits created by trade. Japan is now exchanging information on the

implementation of the Agreement through specialized committees and working groups in 13 fields. In February, the first meeting of the Joint Committee was held to confirm the operational status of the Agreement and to strengthen cooperation between Japan and the UK in areas such as digital trade and climate change. Japan will continue to closely work together with the UK with the aim of further deepening Japan-UK economic relations.

(D) Japan-China-ROK FTA

The Japan-China-ROK FTA is the one with Japan's major trading partners: China and the ROK. Negotiations began in March 2013 and a total of 16 rounds of negotiations had been held as of December 2022.

(E) Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement

The RCEP Agreement is an economic partnership agreement with a total of 15 member states, namely the ASEAN member states, Japan, Australia, China, the ROK, and New Zealand. RCEP participating countries account for roughly 30% of the world's total GDP, total trade, and population. The entry into force of the Agreement is expected to further strengthen Japan's ties with the regions serving as the world's growth center, thus contributing to the economic growth of Japan. Following a ceremony to launch RCEP negotiations during the ASEAN-related summit meeting held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in November 2012, there were eight years of negotiations that included four summit meetings, 19 ministerial meetings, and 31 rounds of negotiations. The Agreement was signed on the occasion of the fourth RCEP Summit on November 15, 2020. Although India had participated from the start of negotiations, at the third Summit in November 2019, India declared that it would not participate in further negotiations and did not sign the RCEP Agreement. However, at the signing, Signatory States issued a "Ministers' Declaration on India's Participation in the RCEP," which clarified that the Agreement would be open for India, and stipulated a facilitation of India's future accession and allowed it to participate in related meetings as an observer. Due to the significant economic and strategic importance of

India's participation in the RCEP, Japan will continue to play a leading role for the future participation of India to the RCEP Agreement.

The RCEP Agreement entered into force on January 1, 2022. The first Joint Committee meeting was held online on April 26 and 27, and the inaugural RCEP Ministers' Meeting was held in Siem Reap, Cambodia on September 17. Japan will coordinate closely with countries involved to enforce economic activity that is based on free and fair rules in the region by ensuring the full implementation of the Agreement.

(F) Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP)

Concept

The Lima Declaration on the FTAAP adopted at the 2016 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit meeting confirmed mainly the following two points: (1) the FTAAP would be high quality and comprehensive, and address next-generation trade and investment issues, being built in accordance with the CPTPP and the RCEP Agreement; (2) efforts would begin on implementing work plans supporting related capacity building. Thailand, which became the APEC Chair in 2022, compiled a "FTAAP Agenda Work Plan" and called for a progress report on its implementation at the APEC Ministerial Meeting in 2023.

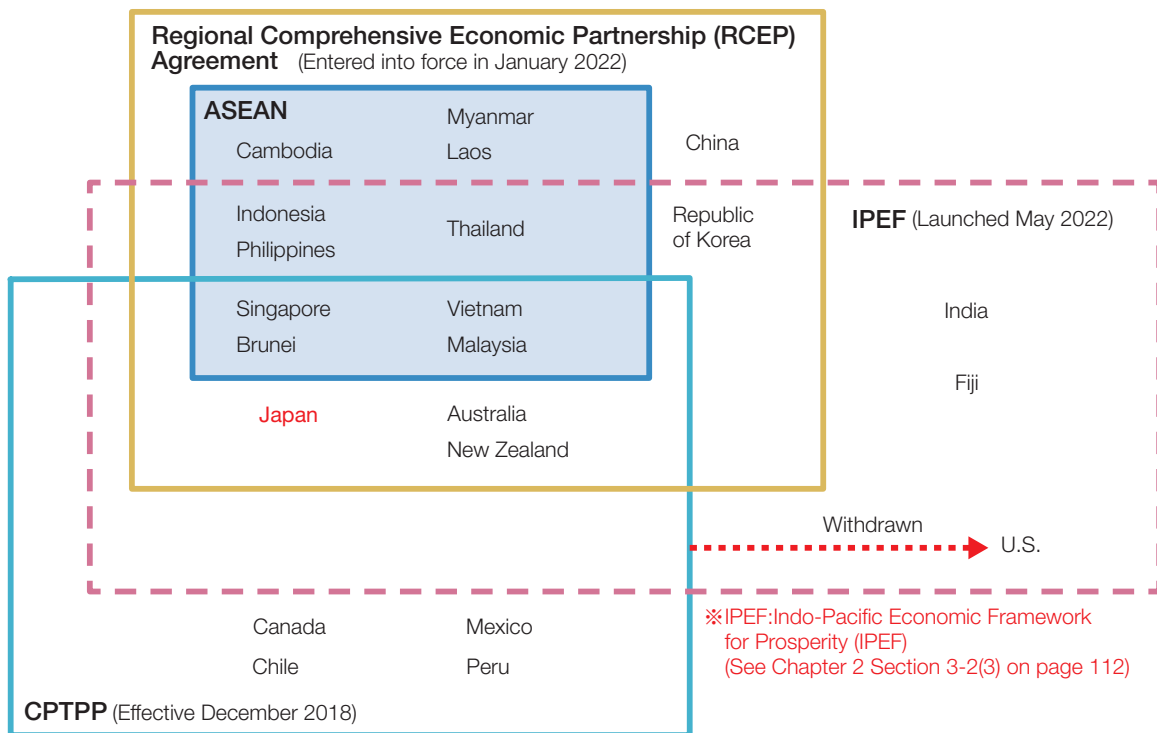
Since 2017, Japan has been continuously providing capacity building support through policy dialogues, etc. concerning the "competition chapters" in FTAs and EPAs and investment policies. From the viewpoint of achieving a comprehensive and high-quality FTAAP, it is highly significant that the CPTPP entered into force at the end of December 2018 and that the RCEP Agreement entered into force in January 2022.

B Bilateral Agreements

(A) Japan-Turkey EPA

As an important country that serves as a hub among Europe, the Middle East, the Central Asia and Caucasus region, and Africa, Turkey has considerable economic potential and is attracting attention as a production base for exports to surrounding regions. Turkey has signed FTAs with over 20 countries and regions, and the need has been recognized for Japan to develop conditions of competition for Japanese companies through the conclusion of an EPA.

■ Multilateral economic agreements in the Indo-Pacific region and the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF)



Furthermore, business communities in both countries have high expectations for an early conclusion of an EPA between the two countries. At the Japan-Turkey Summit Meeting in January 2014, the leaders agreed to launch negotiations, and 17 rounds of negotiations had been held as of the end of 2022.

(B) Japan-Colombia EPA

Japan began EPA negotiations in December 2012 with Colombia, a country with rich natural resources and high economic growth. Since Colombia has concluded FTAs with a number of countries (including the U.S., Canada, the EU and the ROK), it has been increasingly necessary for Japan to establish a competitive environment in the country. The strengthening of bilateral relations through an EPA is also expected to lead to improved cooperation in the international arena and promote cooperation among Japan and the Pacific Alliance (Mexico, Colombia, Peru, and Chile). Negotiations are currently ongoing.

C Other Existing EPAs

The existing EPAs contain provisions concerning the joint committee, which is a body that discusses the implementation of the agreements, and a process to review the agreements after a certain period of time following their entry into force. In addition, a variety of consultations are being held in order to smoothly implement EPAs after their entry into force.

In accordance with the EPAs, Japan has been accepting candidates for nurses and certified care workers from Indonesia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam. In total, 3,633 (as of FY2022) candidates have been accepted from Indonesia (since 2008), 3,384 (as of FY2022) from the Philippines (since 2009), and 1,696 (as of FY2022) from Viet Nam (since 2014). The total number of nurses and certified care workers who have passed national exams is 573 and 2,136 individuals, respectively, as of FY2021.

D Investment-related Treaties

Investment-related treaties (Investment agreement and EPA/FTA including investment chapter) constitute

an important legal basis to improve predictability for investors and promote investment by establishing common rules for the protection of investors and their investment property, enhancement of transparency in regulations, expansion of investment opportunities, procedures for investment dispute settlement, and other matters. Japan has actively engaged in concluding investment agreements, as these agreements are considered to improve the investment environment for Japanese companies overseas and to attract foreign investment to the Japanese market.

In 2022, the Japan-Morocco Investment Agreement entered into force in April and the Japan-Bahrain Investment Agreement was signed in June. As of the end of January 2023, 52 investment-related agreements have entered into force (35 investment agreements and 17 EPAs), and three investment-related agreements have been signed but have not yet entered into force (two investment agreements and one EPA). Altogether, there will be 55 investment-related agreements covering 80 countries and regions. Including investment-related agreements that are currently under negotiation, these investment-related agreements will cover 94 countries/regions and approximately 95% of Japan's outbound direct foreign investment¹.

E Tax Conventions/Agreements on Social Security

(A) Tax Conventions

Tax conventions are intended to eliminate international double taxation in cross-border economic activities (e.g. to reduce or exempt withholding taxes imposed on investment income such as dividends), or to prevent tax evasion or avoidance, and provide an important legal basis for promoting sound investment and economic exchange between two countries. To support the sound overseas business expansion of Japanese companies, the Government of Japan is working to expand the necessary tax treaty networks, both in terms of quality and quantity.

Entering into force in 2022 were a tax treaty with Morocco in April, a tax treaty with Colombia in September, and a revised protocol for a tax treaty with

Switzerland in November. Furthermore, a new (completely revised) tax treaty was reached with Azerbaijan in May, and a tax treaty with Algeria was agreed to in substance in June. As of December 2022, Japan has signed 84 tax treaties applied to 151 economies.

(B) Agreements on Social Security

Agreements on social security aim to resolve the issues of the double payment of social security insurance premiums and annuity insurance non-refunds. They are expected to facilitate interpersonal exchange and strengthen further bilateral relations, including economic exchange, by reducing the burden on Japanese companies and citizens working overseas. The total number of countries that have concluded or signed such agreements with Japan now stands at 23 as of December 2022.

(2) Initiatives with International Organizations

A World Trade Organization (WTO)

(A) The 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12)

The 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12) was held in Geneva from June 12 to 17. After being postponed three times, MC12 was finally held after four and a half years. For the first time in about six and a half years, the WTO Ministerial Conference also achieved results such as the issuance of the Ministerial Declaration. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAKE Shingo from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) attended the meeting, actively held bilateral talks, and contributed to coordinating the opinions to achieve the results. Furthermore, he participated in an EU-sponsored solidarity with Ukraine meeting, and in a UK-sponsored meeting on trade effort to support Ukraine, expressing solidarity with Ukraine and condemning Russia's aggression.

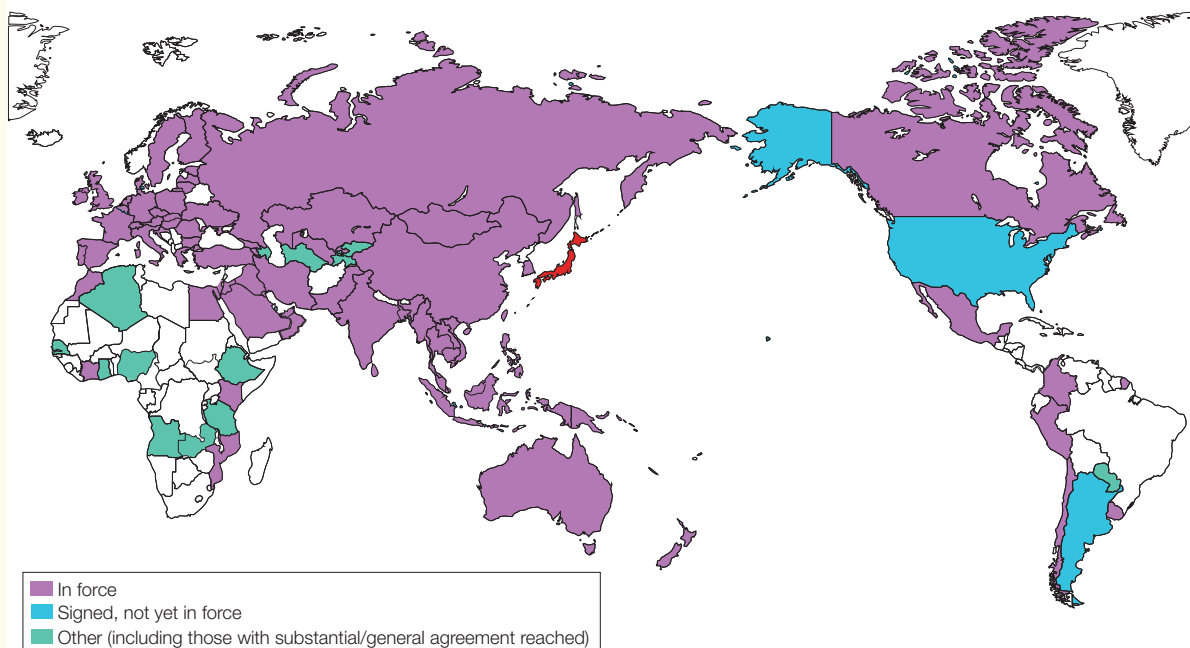
MC12 confirmed the role that the WTO should play as a trade organization in addressing the current challenges faced by the international community, such as the COVID-19 crisis and the food supply problems caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Discussions were also held on the role of trade in addressing future crises and in the process of economic

¹ "Regional balance of Direct Investment (Assets)," Ministry of Finance (All regions) (As of the end of 2021)

Current investment-related agreements (as of the end of July 2022)

Negotiation status of investment-related agreements ^(note) ^(note) EPA/FTA including investment agreements and investment chapter

- In force: 52 (35 investment agreements, 17 EPAs)
 - Signed, not yet in force: 3 (2 investment agreements, 1 EPA)
 - Under negotiation: 18 agreements (15 investment agreements, 3 EPAs)
- Covering 80 countries / regions
Once those under negotiation enter into force
Covering 94 countries / regions



■ In force (terminated agreements excluded)

(^(L)): year of entry into force
(^(L)) denotes treaties with investment liberalization

Investment agreement

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1 Egypt (1978) | 19 Myanmar (2014) ^(L) |
| 2 Sri Lanka (1982) | 20 Mozambique (2014) ^(L) |
| 3 China (1989) | 21 Colombia (2015) ^(L) |
| 4 Turkey (1993) | 22 Kazakhstan (2015) |
| 5 Hong Kong (1997) | 23 Ukraine (2015) |
| 6 Pakistan (2002) | 24 Saudi Arabia (2017) |
| 7 Bangladesh (1999) | 25 Uruguay (2017) ^(L) |
| 8 Russia (2000) | 26 Iran (2017) |
| 9 Republic of Korea (2003) ^(L) | 27 Oman (2017) |
| 10 Vietnam (2004) ^(L) | 28 Kenya (2017) |
| 11 Cambodia (2008) ^(L) | 29 Israel (2017) ^(L) |
| 12 Laos (2008) ^(L) | 30 Armenia (2019) ^(L) |
| 13 Uzbekistan (2009) ^(L) | 31 Jordan (2020) |
| 14 Peru (2009) ^(L) | 32 United Arab Emirates (2020) |
| 15 Papua New Guinea (2014) | 33 Cote d'Ivoire (2021) ^(L) |
| 16 Kuwait (2014) ^(L) | 34 Georgia (2021) ^(L) |
| 17 Iraq (2014) | 35 Morocco (2022) |
| 18 Japan, China and Republic of Korea (2014) | |

Note: A private investment arrangement with investment liberalization was made between Japan and Taiwan in 2011.

EPA including investment chapter

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1 Singapore (2002) ^(L) | 12 Mongolia (2016) ^(L) |
| 2 Mexico (2005) ^(L) | 13 TPP11 Agreement ^(note 1) (2018) ^(L) |
| 3 Malaysia (2006) ^(L) | 14 EU (2019) ^(L) |
| 4 Chile (2007) ^(L) | 15 ASEAN (2020 ^(note 2)) ^(L) |
| 5 Thailand (2007) ^(L) | 16 UK (2021) ^(L) |
| 6 Brunei (2008) ^(L) | 17 RCEP Agreement ^(note 3) (2022) ^(L) |
| 7 Indonesia (2008) ^(L) | |
| 8 Philippines (2008) ^(L) | |
| 9 Switzerland (2009) ^(L) | |
| 10 India (2011) ^(L) | |
| 11 Australia (2015) ^(L) | |

Note 1: TPP11 Agreement: Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement on Trans-Pacific Partnership

Note 2: year of entry into force of the Protocol to Amend the Agreement

Note 3: RCEP Agreement: Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement

■ Under negotiation

Investment agreement

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 1 Angola | 9 Nigeria |
| 2 Algeria | 10 Zambia |
| 3 Qatar | 11 Ethiopia |
| 4 Ghana | 12 Tajikistan |
| 5 Tanzania | 13 EU |
| 6 Turkmenistan | 14 Paraguay |
| 7 Senegal | 15 Azerbaijan |
| 8 Kyrgyz Republic | |

EPA/FTA including investment chapter

- Canada
- Japan, China, and Republic of Korea
- Turkey

■ Signed / not in force

- TPP Agreement* (signed February 2016, approved) (EPA)^(L)
- Argentina (signed December 2018, approved)^(L)
- Bahrain (signed June 2022, unapproved)

Note: TPP Agreement denotes Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement

recovery, as well as discussions on rule-making in areas such as fisheries subsidies. As a result of persistent discussions that lasted well into the night, extending the originally scheduled session, Ministerial Declarations and Ministerial Decisions were adopted in the specific areas of pandemic response, responses to food insecurity, exemptions of World Food Programme (WFP) food purchases from export prohibitions and restrictions, and extension of the current practice of not imposing customs duties on electronic transmissions until the next WTO Ministerial Conference (MC13). Furthermore, after more than 20 years of negotiations, numerous other results were obtained in addition to this, such as the conclusion of negotiations on fisheries subsidies (see the Special Feature on page 301).

With regard to e-commerce negotiations, which were initiated by like-minded countries, Japan, Australia and Singapore, who are co-conveners of e-commerce negotiations, expressed their willingness to remain committed to reaching an agreement on global digital trade rules, and released the Ministers' Statement. As a co-convenor on e-commerce negotiations, Japan will continue to lead discussions in order to formulate high-level rules in a way that includes many participating countries.

(B) Visit to Japan by Director-General Ngozi

Okonjo-Iweala of the WTO

From October 18 to 20, Director-General Okonjo-Iweala of the WTO visited Japan for the first time since assuming the post of Director-General. In addition to meeting with dignitaries of Japan, including a courtesy call to Prime Minister Kishida and a working dinner with Foreign Minister Hayashi, she exchanged views with executives from the ruling party of Japan and the Japan Business Federation (*Keidanren*), and gave a lecture at the Japan Institute of International Affairs. During her meetings with senior officials of Japan, Director-General Okonjo-Iweala expressed her appreciation for Japan's contributions to the WTO thus far, and expressed her strong expectations for the role of Japan as the G7 Presidency in 2023. In response, Prime

Minister Kishida stated that he would support the leadership of Director-General Okonjo and actively contribute to discussions at the WTO. In addition, Foreign Minister Hayashi stated that as the international environment surrounding trade is undergoing major changes, it is now more important than ever for the WTO, as the core of the multilateral trading system, to fulfill its functions for meeting the demands of the time. Foreign Minister Hayashi and Director-General Okonjo-Iweala also confirmed that Japan and the WTO will continue to work closely toward the next WTO Ministerial Conference.

Since assuming her office in February 2021, Director-General Okonjo-Iweala has visited major countries, including Japan. Furthermore, she has actively participated in various international conferences and has strongly promoted cooperation with member states on issues that the WTO faces, including the fisheries subsidies negotiations and WTO reforms. In 2022, in addition to trade-related meetings, including the G7 and G20, the WTO also participated in non-trade-related international conferences, such as the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) held in Tunisia in August and the 27th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP27) held in Egypt in November, and has been active in communicating the relationship between global issues and international trade.

(C) Dispute Settlement

The WTO dispute settlement procedures² are a system for settling economic disputes between WTO Members based on rules, and serve as a pillar that imparts security and predictability to the multilateral trading system. Since December 2019, the Appellate Body that serves as the Second Instance (final instance) has "ceased to function" due to a lack of members needed for deliberation, but the dispute settlement system itself continues to be used by member states. In 2022 eight disputes were submitted, and, in the 27 years since the WTO was established, 615 cases have

2 Related article: (Japanese only) https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/ecm/ds/page24_000710.html



Special Feature

The Twelfth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO): Adoption of the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies

At the Twelfth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (WTO) held in Geneva, Switzerland, in June, all 164 member countries and regions reached a consensus, and a new protocol was adopted to add the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies to the WTO Agreements.

The Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies aims to achieve the sustainable use of living marine resources by prohibiting subsidies for illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, and others. Up until now a variety of efforts have been made by Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) from the perspective that international cooperation is necessary to effectively deter IUU fishing. Under the FAO framework, the Agreement on Port State Measures (PSMA), which Japan joined in 2017, allows port states to deny entry to and use of their ports to vessels that are engaged in IUU fishing. In contrast to this, the Agreement on Fisheries Subsidies, with respect to the fisheries subsidies that are granted by each country, stipulates prohibition of subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and prohibition in principle of subsidies regarding overfished stocks and so forth.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN that were adopted in 2015 call for the elimination of subsidies that lead to IUU fishing. The conclusion of this Agreement will contribute to achieving this goal. At the same time, it is also important that it is the first agreement adopted with the participation and negotiation of all WTO Member countries and regions since the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement that entered into force in 2017, thereby demonstrating that the WTO's rule-making function remains sound and well.

When a new WTO agreement is accepted by two-thirds of the WTO Member countries/regions, it then enters into force for those countries/regions, and thereafter it enters into force for other countries/regions when each one of them accepts the agreement. Early entry into force of the Agreement is desirable as it is expected to contribute to promoting global fisheries resource management and to realizing the sustainable use of living marine resources.



The Twelfth Ministerial Conference of the World Trade Organization (June, Geneva, Switzerland; Photo: World Trade Organization)

been filed, including 6 current cases³ in which Japan is one of the parties.

B Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

(A) Features

The OECD researches and analyzes a broad range of economic and social fields and makes specific policy recommendations to its members. Through discussions held by approximately 30 committees, it has formed international standards and rules. Since its accession to

the OECD in 1964, Japan has been actively engaged in OECD initiatives through discussions at various committees as well as financial and human resources contributions.

(B) 2022 OECD Ministerial Council Meeting

The 2022 OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (MCM) met in Paris, France, on June 9 and 10 with Italy as Chair and Mexico and Norway as Vice Chairs, and discussed various issues under the theme of “The Future We Want: Better Policies for the Next

³ India's safeguard measure on iron and steel products, the ROK's anti-dumping duties on stainless steel bars made in Japan, the ROK's support measures for the ROK's shipbuilding industry, India's handling of tariff increases on ICT products, Japan's review of export control procedures for the ROK, and China's anti-dumping duties on stainless steel products made in Japan.

Generation and a Sustainable Transition.” Minister of State for Economic and Fiscal Policy YAMAGIWA Daishiro and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Miyake attended the meeting in person. Parliamentary Vice-Minister Miyake stated that Japan strongly condemns Russia's aggression of Ukraine as an attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force, and stressed the need for the OECD to continue to act in solidarity based on “shared values.” He also stated that it is important to disseminate OECD rules and standards to non-member countries, in particular to realize new accession from Southeast Asian countries, and expressed his expectation that the OECD Tokyo Centre will serve as a regional hub.

At the end of the MCM, the 2022 OECD Ministerial Council Statement was adopted, which reflects the positions and views of member countries on issues such as Russia's aggression against Ukraine and climate change. In the Statement, elements such as condemnation of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, countering economic coercion, promoting compliance with OECD standards by non-member countries, launching the Inclusive Forum on Carbon Mitigation Approaches (IFCMA), strengthening international cooperation on supply chains as well as corporate governance and Responsible Business Conduct (RBC), developing principles on government access, and continuing cooperation on “data free flow with trust (DFFT)” are included.

(C) Initiatives in Various Sectors

The OECD is strengthening its cooperation with the G20, G7, APEC, and other international fora, and is undertaking initiatives that include leading discussions on international taxation system reform, disseminating and implementing the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment, addressing the issue of excess production capacity involving steel, and revising principles concerning corporate governance and aid coordination.

(D) Outreach to Southeast Asia

Due to the growing importance of Southeast Asia as a center for global economic growth, the OECD has

been working to bolster relations with the region by holding policy talks and other events through the Southeast Asia Regional Programme (SEARP). In February the OECD SEARP Ministerial Conference was held in Seoul, ROK in a hybrid format, and Foreign Minister Hayashi sent a video message from Japan. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKAGI Kei attended the OECD Southeast Asia Ministerial Forum held in Hanoi, Viet Nam in person, and stated that Japan will continue to support the efforts of Southeast Asian countries as a bridge between the OECD and Southeast Asia. Japan will continue to utilize the Tokyo Centre of the OECD to encourage future accession from Southeast Asian countries to the OECD.

(E) Contributions in Terms of Financial and Human Resources

As of 2022, Japan was the second largest financial contributor to the OECD, covering 9.2% of the OECD's mandatory contributions (the U.S. is first, covering 19.9%). Moreover, Japanese nationals have successively served as one of the Deputy Secretary Generals (there are four positions in total; currently Deputy Secretary General TAKEUCHI Yoshiki), and 85 Japanese staff work at the OECD Secretariat as of the end of 2022.

(3) Intellectual Property Protection

Strengthening intellectual property protections is extremely important for the promotion of technological innovation and eventually for economic development. Japan has actively participated in multilateral consultations such as APEC, the WTO (TRIPS)⁴, and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and is working to improve an environment for ensuring that Japanese intellectual property is appropriately protected and utilized overseas. For EPAs as well, Japan strives to establish regulations on intellectual property rights to ensure the adequate and effective protection of intellectual property. The CPTPP, the Japan-EU EPA, and the RCEP Agreement have stipulated contents on further promotion of the protection and use of intellectual property. Moreover, for the purpose of

4 TRIPS: Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights

rapidly and efficiently providing assistance for Japanese companies that are facing problems such as counterfeit and pirated goods, the MOFA appoints Intellectual Property Officers at almost all of Japan's diplomatic missions overseas so that they can advise Japanese companies and make inquiries with or requests to their counterpart governments. Furthermore, every year, Meetings of Intellectual Property Officers are held to

assess the damage in each country and the response status by diplomatic missions overseas, exchange opinions and share best practices on building appropriate systems, and strengthen efforts to combat intellectual property right infringements. In 2022, the meetings were held with a focus on Middle East and Africa in February and China in November.

3 Leading Discussions at International Conferences

(1) G7

With the foundation of the international order shaken by Russia's aggression against Ukraine which started in February, 2022 saw closer policy coordination than ever before in the G7, which shares fundamental values and principles.

At the G7 Elmau Summit held from June 26 to 28, under the overall theme of "Progress towards an equitable world" that was set forth by the German Chancellor Franz Scholz, which holds the G7 Presidency, in addition to the response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the G7 leaders had candid discussions on issues such as the global economy, including price measures, regional affairs in the Indo-Pacific and other regions, climate change, and food security. As in previous years, invited countries and organizations participated in parts of the conference, and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy of Ukraine participated online in the session on the situation in Ukraine.

Prime Minister Kishida called for the G7, which shares values and principles, to continue to lead the

international community's efforts on the situation in Ukraine. Regarding the global economy, he said that the G7 should also strengthen unity to protect people's livelihoods from rising prices. On regional affairs, the G7 reiterated the importance of maintaining "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" that is inclusive and based on the rule of law. Prime Minister Kishida explained that China continues to intrude into Japanese territorial waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands, and emphasized the importance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. Furthermore, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Russia's threat to use nuclear weapons and North Korea's progress in nuclear weapons and missile development have once again demonstrated the threat of nuclear weapons to the international community. He noted that maintaining and strengthening the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is becoming increasingly important, and pointed out that, in order to achieve a "world without nuclear weapons," the declining trend in the number of nuclear weapons in the world must not be reversed. On climate and energy, he stated that it is essential to simultaneously work to achieve carbon neutrality and to strengthen energy security. On food security, he stressed the importance of ending Russia's aggression against Ukraine, which is the root cause of the problem, and of showing solidarity through concrete assistance to countries facing real food crises.

At the conclusion of the Summit, Prime Minister Kishida announced that, as the next G7 Presidency, the next G7 Summit would be held in Hiroshima in May 2023. Prime Minister Kishida stated that, with the world facing an unprecedented crisis of aggression



G7 Elmau Summit (June 28, Elmau, Germany; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

against Ukraine and a growing risk of the use of weapons of mass destruction, at the 2023 G7 Summit he hopes to demonstrate with historic weight the G7's willingness to firmly reject armed aggression, threats with nuclear weapons, and attempts to overthrow the international order.

As a result of the discussions, the G7 leaders confirmed that the G7 would unite to uphold the international order against Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and as a summary of the discussions, a G7 Leaders' Communiqué and five individual statements were issued.

Under Germany's G7 Presidency in 2022, in addition to the Elmau Summit in June, in order to discuss the G7 response to the Russian aggression against Ukraine a face-to-face extraordinary G7 Summit Meeting was held in Brussels, Belgium in March along with additional extraordinary online G7 Summit Meetings in February, May, October, and December.

In addition to the G7 Summit Meetings, numerous Ministerial Meetings were also held, with G7 Foreign Ministers' Meetings alone being held 11 times in 2022 (includes G7 Foreign Ministers' Meetings that were held online). Two independent face-to-face G7 Foreign Ministers' Meetings, held in Weissenhaus, Germany from May 12 to 14 and in Münster, Germany from November 3 to 4, featured in-depth exchanges of views on Ukraine, China, North Korea, the Indo-Pacific, and the Middle East. In addition, at the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in May, G7 cooperation was confirmed on COVID-19, infrastructure development, and climate change, and, at the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in November, the Foreign Ministers of Ghana and Kenya and the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union (AU) were also invited to a part of the Meeting and the situation in the African region was also discussed.

As for the G7 Trade Ministers' Meetings, the first Meeting was held online on March 23, and the second meeting was held in Neuhausen, Germany on September 14 and 15. Foreign Minister Hayashi and Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry HAGIUDA Koichi attended the Meeting on March 23, while Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry NISHIMURA Yasutoshi and State Minister for Foreign Affairs YAMADA Kenji attended the Meeting

on September 14 and 15. At both meetings candid discussions were held on trade related responses to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, WTO reform, and a level playing field.

On May 18 and 19, the G7 Development Ministers' Meeting and the G7 Development and Health Ministers' Meeting were held in Berlin, Germany, with State Minister for Foreign Affairs SUZUKI Takako and State Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare SATO Hidemichi attending. Discussions were held on a variety of development issues, including on how the G7 should support Ukraine in response to Russia's aggression and on strengthening pandemic response measures in developing countries.

Since the beginning of 2023, Japan has been leading the G7's efforts as the G7 Presidency. At the February 18, 2023 G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in Munich, Germany, which was the first face-to-face G7 meeting held under Japan's G7 Presidency, discussions centered on the situation in Ukraine, and Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba of Ukraine participated in the latter half of the meeting. The G7 Foreign Ministers underlined their commitment to upholding the international order based on the rule of law, welcomed Ukraine's commitment to a just and lasting peace, and concurred on their commitment to actively working with Ukraine to that end. On February 24, 2023, one year after the start of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, Prime Minister Kishida hosted a G7 Leaders' Video Conference and reaffirmed the G7's unwavering unity in responding to Russia's aggression against Ukraine.

(2) G20

The G20 is the premier forum for international economic cooperation participated in by both major developed countries and emerging countries.

At the G20 Bali Summit held on November 15 and 16, under the theme of "Recover Together, Recover Stronger," which was advocated for by Indonesia, the G20 Presidency, discussions were held on issues that were currently important to the international community, such as food and energy security and international health. Prime Minister Kishida strongly condemned Russia's aggression against Ukraine and stressed that Russia's threat of use of nuclear weapons, let alone



G20 Bali Summit (November 15, Bali, Indonesia; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

any use of nuclear weapons, must not be tolerated. Furthermore, looking ahead to 2023 in which Japan holds the G7 Presidency, Prime Minister Kishida actively communicated Japan's position and efforts on these important issues, and contributed to the discussions.

The G20 Bali Leaders' Declaration was released as a summary of the discussions, stating that most members strongly condemned the war in Ukraine, and clearly including the message that "The use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is inadmissible."

Foreign Minister Hayashi attended the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on July 7 and 8, and, amidst Russia's continuing aggression against Ukraine, discussions were held on important issues in the current international situation, such as the state of multilateralism and food and energy issues.

(3) Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

APEC is a framework of economic cooperation in which 21 economies (countries and regions) in the Asia-Pacific region participate. The Asia-Pacific region is the "world's growth center," accounting for about 40% of the world's population, about 50% of the world's trade volume, and about 60% of the world's total GDP. APEC, in order to liberalize and facilitate trade and investment in the region, conducts activities such as deepening regional economic integration, and enhancing economic and technical cooperation. The Asia-Pacific region, which thrives by liberalizing trade and investment and strengthening connectivity in accordance with international rules, is the core of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" that Japan has been promoting. Japan's active involvement in

and promotion of cooperation with APEC is of great significance to the effort to support our own economic growth and the overseas expansion of Japanese companies.

Thailand served as the Chair for APEC in 2022, and discussions were held at various meetings throughout the year under the overall theme of "Open, Connect, Balance (open to all opportunities, connected in all dimensions, and balanced in all aspects)." Among the topics discussed were cooperation for recovery after the spread of COVID-19 for inclusive and sustainable economic growth, as well as progress for the realization of an "open, dynamic, resilient and peaceful Asia-Pacific community" as set forth in the APEC Putrajaya Vision adopted at the 2020 APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting.

At the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting on November 18 and 19, which was held face-to-face in Bangkok, Thailand for the first time in four years, in addition to the "2022 Leaders' Declaration," the "Bangkok Goals on Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy" document, which describes efforts for sustainable growth in the APEC region after COVID-19, was also adopted. The "Bangkok Goals on Bio-Circular-Green (BCG) Economy" included targets to be addressed in the areas of responding to environmental issues, promoting sustainable and inclusive trade and investment, environmental conservation and resource management. In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the Leader's Declaration incorporated language stating that "Most members strongly condemned the war in Ukraine and stressed it



APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting (November, Bangkok, Thailand; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

is causing immense human suffering and exacerbating existing fragilities in the global economy – constraining growth, increasing inflation, disrupting supply chains, heightening energy and food insecurity, and elevating financial stability risks.”

Prime Minister Kishida, who attended the meeting, expressed his determination to put the Japanese economy on a new growth trajectory and to contribute to inclusive and sustainable growth of the Asia-Pacific region by aiming to realize a new form of capitalism. He then called for the realization of a green society,

including zero emissions throughout Asia; the promotion of digital transformation; economic growth through an inclusive society, such as greater participation by women in economic activities; the promotion of free, fair, and open trade and investment based on rules; maintaining the high standards of the CPTPP that is incompatible with unfair trade practices and economic coercion; and the promotion of investment in “quality infrastructure” and transparent and fair development finance for sustainable development.

In 2023 the U.S. will serve as the Chair for APEC.

4 Communicating Japan's Economic Strengths

(Including the Promotion of Japanese Agriculture, Forestry, Fishery and Food Exports)

(1) Promotion of Japanese Companies' Overseas Business Expansion by the MOFA and Accompanying Diplomatic Missions Overseas

The number of Japanese companies operating overseas has been increasing over the medium- to long-term despite being affected by domestic and overseas economic conditions and other circumstances. One of the reasons behind this is that many Japanese companies, which underpin Japan's economic development, have embarked more actively than ever before on overseas expansion with the aim of further cultivating foreign markets. There is considerable momentum behind economic growth abroad, mainly in Asia. To capture this for the Japanese economy, it is becoming increasingly important for the Government to support Japanese companies.

In light of the situation, MOFA, in coordination with diplomatic missions overseas, has been engaged in supporting Japanese companies in their efforts to expand their businesses overseas. At the diplomatic missions overseas, all staff, including those responsible for Japanese business support, provide Japanese companies with information while lobbying foreign governments under the leadership of ambassadors and consuls-general. Under the motto of being “open and responsive government offices,” these missions aim to provide specific support that corresponds with the conditions in that respective region. They also offer

seminars about local legal systems, various information and legal consultations. In FY2022, these were provided at 20 diplomatic missions in 15 countries, with a focus on Asia and Africa.

In addition to consultations about business problems, another important function performed by diplomatic missions overseas for Japanese companies is promotion and publicity of the “Japan Brand” for products, technologies and services, as well as for agricultural, forestry and fishery products from Japanese companies at receptions to celebrate the Emperor's birthday and various other events and exhibitions. These missions actively offer the embassies and official residences of the ambassadors for use as publicity and advertising spaces for Japanese companies to hold product exhibitions, or for local governments to hold local product exhibitions and food-tasting events. These spaces can be used for conducting seminars on business expansion, or for exchange with local companies and concerned organizations. In addition, diplomatic missions overseas conducted projects utilizing online methods in response to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic.

(2) Promotion of the Japanese Infrastructure System in Overseas Business Expansion

In order to capture infrastructure demand mainly in emerging countries and promote the overseas deployment of infrastructure systems by Japanese

companies, the “Ministerial Meeting on Strategy relating to Infrastructure Export and Economic Cooperation,” comprising relevant cabinet ministers and the Chief Cabinet Secretary serving as chair, was established in 2013. A total of 54 meetings have been held as of December 2022. The Meeting had discussed annual revisions to and follow-ups for the Infrastructure System Export Strategy, which was formulated in 2013. In December 2020, the Meeting formulated the “Infrastructure System Overseas Promotion Strategy 2025” (hereinafter “the New Strategy”) based on recent changes in the relevant situations. The New Strategy aims to garner 34 trillion Japanese yen in infrastructure system orders in 2025 by promoting the achievement of three goals, namely (1) achieving economic growth, (2) contributing to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and (3) realizing “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP),” clarifying this as a key strategy. Japan has finalized the “Policy toward steady implementation of the New Strategy looking at the post-COVID-19 era” and has formulated “thematic action plans” on five areas that include utility, mobility/transportation, digital, construction/urban development, and agriculture/healthcare/postal services, as well as established policy targets (key performance indicators, or KPI) for such things as trade promotion by high-ranking ministry officials to complement the Prime Minister’s trade promotion efforts. Furthermore, in June 2022 Japan formulated a supplementary version of the New Strategy and clarified key strategies based on changes in the environment. In addition, Japan is also promoting a variety of measures to achieve the New Strategy’s goals, such as setting specific measures that are in line with priority strategies.

With regard to diplomatic missions overseas, MOFA has been appointing “Officers in charge of Infrastructure Projects” to gather and consolidate information on infrastructure projects (approximately 200 personnel at 99 diplomatic missions overseas in 77 countries as of the end of March 2023). This initiative has also shown results.

(3) Promotion of the Export of Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Products and Food (Import Restrictions on Japanese Food Products after the Great East Japan Earthquake)

Expanding exports of Japan’s agricultural, forestry, fishery and food products is a major objective of the Government of Japan. The Strategy to Realize Export Expansion of Agricultural, Forestry, Fishery and Food Products was formulated in December 2022 to further promote concerted efforts by the Government of Japan. The strategy calls for developing exporting regions and business operators in order to achieve two trillion yen by 2025 and five trillion yen by 2030 of agricultural, forestry, fishery, and food product exports. As part of efforts to accelerate initiatives to further expand exports, the strategy was revised at the end of 2021, the year in which exports exceeded one trillion yen, as well as in June 2022 and December 2022. MOFA enthusiastically promotes the attractiveness of Japanese agricultural, forestry, fishery and food products by collaborating with the relevant ministries and agencies, as well as Japanese companies and local governments, utilizing the networks of organizations such as diplomatic missions overseas as well as social media and other tools. In particular, Japanese business support officers (in charge of the food industry) have been assigned to 60 diplomatic missions overseas in 56 countries and regions to strengthen initiatives to promote the export of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products and food. Japan has made energetic efforts toward such promotion at numerous opportunities such as receptions and cultural events to which dignitaries have been invited from countries and regions around the world. Furthermore, since April in major exporting destinations and regions, Japan Food Export Platforms have been launched and are primarily staffed by personnel from diplomatic missions overseas, the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)’s overseas offices, and Japan Food Product Overseas Promotion Center (JFOODO) personnel who are stationed overseas, providing ongoing, comprehensive, and expert support to local export businesses.

One of the biggest barriers to increasing exports is import restrictions on Japanese agricultural, forestry and fishery products and food by countries and

regions following the Great East Japan Earthquake and TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident. Completely eliminating these restrictions and addressing Japan's reputational damage are top priorities for the Government of Japan. MOFA has been making efforts in collaboration with relevant ministries and agencies to have these restrictions lifted as quickly as possible. As a result of these efforts, in 2022, import restrictions were lifted in the UK (June) and Indonesia (July). So far, 43 countries and regions have removed their import restrictions.

For the 12 countries and regions that are still maintaining their import restrictions as of the end of 2022

(restrictions including suspension of imports: Republic of Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau; conditional import with certificates: French Polynesia, the EU, Iceland, Switzerland, Norway, Liechtenstein, and Russia), MOFA will closely work with the relevant ministries, agencies, local governments and international organizations and will continue taking every opportunity and making every effort to provide further explanations and appeal to these countries and regions, with the goal of having restrictions promptly removed and reputational damage repaired based on scientific evidence.

5 Promoting Resource Diplomacy along with Foreign Direct Investment in Japan

(1) Securing a Stable Supply of Energy and Mineral Resources at Reasonable Prices

A The Current Situation Concerning Energy and Mineral Resources in Japan and Abroad

(A) Situation in the World

Structural changes in recent years have been seen in the international energy market with respect to three areas: (a) demand (consumption), (b) supply (production), and (c) resource selection. Regarding (a) demand, global demand for primary energy has shifted towards non-OECD member countries, primarily China and India. With respect to (b) supply, the U.S. became the world's largest producer of both oil and natural gas due to the "Shale Revolution"⁵, and liberalization of export controls on crude oil in December 2015. The U.S. is promoting energy export policies such as further exports of the U.S. liquefied natural gas (LNG). As for (c) resource selection, based on the fact that production and usage on energy account for about two-thirds of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the transitions to cleaner energy resources such as renewable energy are accelerating. In addition, since the Paris Agreement on climate change was adopted in December 2015,

companies have made their efforts to further advance towards low-carbonization. In 2021, numerous countries have announced goals to achieve carbon neutrality in the second half of the century, an indication of increasing momentum for decarbonization worldwide. Looking at movements in oil markets, as the economy recovered from COVID-19, supply shortages became more pronounced and oil prices exceeded their pre-COVID-19 level, reaching a three-year high in October 2021. In 2022, energy prices rose further due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and fluctuated at high levels through the first half of the year. Prices had a downward trend from July due to concerns about an economic slowdown caused by tightening interest rates in major countries and China's zero-COVID policy, but the market price has remained unstable. The international community faces the challenge of how to break its dependence on Russian energy, stabilize energy markets, and achieve decarbonization.

(B) Sanctions against Russia

With regard to sanctions in the energy sector against Russia in response to its aggression against Ukraine, in May, the G7 Leaders' Statement announced a policy

⁵ Shale Revolution: The development in the late 2000s of new technologies for drilling for oil and natural gas contained in layers of rock known as shale in the U.S., and the ability to do so at an economical cost, has led to a significant increase in U.S. oil and natural gas production, affecting many aspects of international affairs.

of embargo on Russian oil, and Japan also announced a policy of suspension of Russian oil imports in principle. In addition, amid worries about rising energy prices due to global oil supply concerns, with the aim of reducing Russia's energy revenues while preventing a sharp rise in global energy prices by allowing a certain amount of Russian oil and other such products to be transported, in September at the G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors Meeting, the Ministers agreed to introduce a "price cap" measure that would prohibit services related to the marine transportation of crude oil and other such products above a certain price. The G7 (including the EU) and Australia are participating in this measure. Furthermore, from the perspective of Japan's energy security, oil produced through the Sakhalin-2 project is exempted from the restrictions of this measure.

(C) Situation in Japan

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake, the percentage of fossil fuels out of power generation in Japan has reached about 90% in 2012, up from about 60% before the earthquake, due to the shutdown of nuclear power plants. Japan's primary energy self-sufficiency ratio (including nuclear power), which relies on imports from overseas for almost all of its oil, natural gas, coal and other energy resources, dropped sharply from 20% before the 2011 earthquake to 6.3% in 2014. It remains at a low level compared to other OECD countries despite a recovery to 12.1% in 2019. Furthermore, nearly 90% of crude oil imported by Japan comes from the Middle East. With regard to LNG and coal, Japan depends less on the Middle East for oil but almost completely on Asia and Oceania. Under the circumstances, efforts to secure a stable supply of energy at reasonable prices are becoming increasingly important. At the same time, climate change response measures are also important. In October 2020, the Government of Japan announced its intention to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, and in April 2021 pledged to achieve a 46% emissions reduction by FY2030 and announced its new reduction goal to continue making further efforts to realize a 50% reduction. Against this backdrop, the Sixth Strategic Energy Plan, approved by the Cabinet in October 2021, lays out specific measures to be taken by 2030 with a continued focus on the

principle of "3E+S," which emphasizes energy source safety (Safety), ensuring of a stable energy supply (Energy Security), the economic efficiency of energy costs (Economic Efficiency), and environmental suitability from the point of view of climate and other elements (Environment).

B Diplomatic Efforts to Secure a Stable Supply of Energy and Mineral Resources at Reasonable Prices

Securing a stable supply of energy and mineral resources at reasonable prices are the foundation for a vital Japanese economy and the livelihoods of its people. MOFA has been strengthening diplomatic efforts with a focus on the following activities.

(A) Gathering and Analysis of Resource-Related Information at Diplomatic Missions Overseas

"Special Assistants for Natural Resources" have been appointed to 60 diplomatic missions overseas in a total of 53 countries to work intensively on the acquisition and stable supply of energy and mineral resources with a view to strengthening the function of diplomatic missions overseas, as of the end of 2022. MOFA also calls for "Strategy Meetings on Natural Resources" every year, which bring together officials working at diplomatic missions overseas in countries central to ensuring a stable supply of energy and mineral resources. In 2022, the meeting was held online on December 19 (see B (D) on page 311).

(B) Efforts for Energy Market Stabilization

Russia's aggression against Ukraine that began in February 2022 caused energy prices to majorly rise, with oil prices exceeding 130 US dollars per barrel and European gas market prices rising above 70 US dollars per million BTU. This greatly destabilized the energy market.

Amidst this situation, in February and March, Japan diverted to Europe a portion of the LNG handled by Japanese companies in order to alleviate the tight supply and demand of natural gas in Europe. In addition, as a member of the International Energy Agency (IEA), Japan conducted two collective releases of oil reserves from March to April, releasing a total of 22.5 million barrels of petroleum reserves, the largest amount ever.

Amidst this situation surrounding energy, Japan is also encouraging resource producing countries to increase their production in order to stabilize the energy market. In March, Prime Minister Kishida held meetings with Crown Prince Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, of Abu Dhabi, and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia. Foreign Minister Hayashi also held meetings with Foreign Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates, and Minister of Industry and Advanced Technology Sultan Al Jaber of the United Arab Emirates. In April, Foreign Minister Hayashi held meetings with Foreign Minister Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohamed Al-Sabah of Kuwait, and Foreign Minister Sayyid Badr bin Hamad al Busaidi of Oman. In July, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a meeting with Foreign Minister Faisal bin Farhan Al-Saud of Saudi Arabia. In September, Prime Minister Kishida held meetings with Crown Prince Mohammed of Saudi Arabia, and President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan of the United Arab Emirates. In addition to urging oil-producing countries by taking the opportunity to have successive summit and ministerial-level meetings with them, Japan has also urged these countries at various levels through its diplomatic missions overseas as well as relevant ministries and agencies.

(C) Cooperation with International Organizations

Related to Energy and Mineral Resources

Japan makes active use of international fora and rules to coordinate and collaborate internationally towards achieving a stable energy supply and enhancing the resilience of supply chains for critical mineral resources. Even in the midst of the energy crisis caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine, in order to make a realistic energy transition towards decarbonization while ensuring energy security, Japan is communicating to the international community the importance of ensuring the stability of energy supply as well as ensuring stability of critical mineral resources essential for both energy supply diversification as well as energy transitions.

In March, State Minister for Foreign Affairs ODAWARA Kiyoshi attended the 28th IEA Ministerial Meeting (Paris, France). He stated that Japan will support the activities of the IEA from the perspective of combining all energy sources and technologies, while

taking into account the energy situations of various countries and regions, in order to promote global energy transitions. In addition, he also pointed out the current issue of there being an oligopoly of refining and separation processes for many critical mineral resources in certain countries, and announced that Japan decided to newly contribute approximately 1.8 million euros (about 220 million Japanese yen) to the IEA as support for enhancing resilience of the supply chain of critical mineral resources. Also in May, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara attended online the 23rd Session of the Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA). He stated that the crisis in Ukraine has made him recognize anew the importance of balancing energy security and energy transition. He also stated that there is no single path to an energy system based mainly on renewable energy, and thus it is necessary to have discussions in accordance with the situations of various countries. He also welcomed the progress of efforts related to critical mineral resources essential for the spread of renewable energy as well as for international trade for building hydrogen supply chains.

In June, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki attended the Ministerial Meeting of the Minerals Security Partnership (MSP) (Toronto, Canada). She expressed Japan's support for the launch of the MSP, which aims to strategically promote public-private cooperation, including the promotion of investment, in order to achieve high environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards in a series of supply chains, such as mine development, refining, processing, recycling, and reuse. She also introduced Japan's efforts to diversify the supply of mineral resources and stated that Japan would like to actively contribute to the discussions and activities in this framework to resolve the current issues surrounding mineral resources.

In September, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takagi attended the G20 Energy Transitions Ministers Meeting held under the Presidency of Indonesia. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takagi pointed out that soaring energy prices are putting pressure on the lives of vulnerable people in both developed and developing countries, and that ensuring energy access is an urgent issue. He stated that access to affordable energy is a

basic human need. He emphasized that as the importance of energy security has been reaffirmed by the recent energy crisis, energy security is not a national-level issue, but rather a human-level issue, and that energy should be provided to each and every person. Thus, ensuring energy security is the foundation for accelerating energy transitions. Japan is closely cooperating with international organizations on a daily basis at the working level to ensure a stable energy supply and to enhance the resilience of supply chain of critical mineral resources.

(D) Strategy Meeting on Diplomatic Missions Overseas Concerning Energy and Mineral Resources

Every year since FY2009, MOFA has held meetings attended by embassies and consulates-general established in major resource-producing countries, relevant ministries, agencies and organizations, experts, and representatives from companies. These meetings have provided opportunities to discuss diplomatic initiatives for ensuring a stable supply of energy and mineral resources in Japan, formulate policy, and strengthen cooperation. The 2022 Strategy Meeting was attended by energy and mineral resource specialists from over 30 diplomatic missions and officials from the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy, among others. In the first part of the meeting, the participants discussed future issues and countermeasures for those issues based on reports on energy situations from diplomatic missions overseas amidst the energy crisis caused by Russia's aggression against Ukraine. In the second part of the meeting, officials from the Bureau of Energy Resources of the U.S. Department of State explained the significance of the MSP, which was established at the initiative of the U.S. to ensure a stable supply of mineral resources necessary for transitioning to clean energy. Discussions were then held on efforts towards strengthening the supply chain for critical minerals.

(E) Agreement in Principle on the Negotiations Concerning the Modernization of the Energy Charter Treaty

The Energy Charter Treaty (ECT) is a multilateral treaty that entered into force in April 1998 (entered into force with Japan in 2002). It was established as a legal framework for implementing the European Energy Charter, which called for promoting improvements based on market principles in the energy sector in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe following the collapse of the Soviet Union, as well as promoting trade and investment activities in the global energy sector. This treaty⁶ was signed by 52 countries and organizations mostly located in Europe and central Asia. Discussions for revision of the ECT began in 2020, and an agreement in principle was reached among the parties to the negotiations in June 2022. In addition, Japan has contributed to the development of the ECT as the largest contributor of assessed donations. This includes serving as chair for the first Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference in East Asia, which was held in 2016, and hosting the 27th Meeting in Tokyo. Furthermore, in September 2021, HIROSE Atsuko became the first Japanese national to become the Deputy Secretary General of the Energy Charter Secretariat, the administrative body for the ECT.

(F) Efforts in the Public Relations Field Related to Energy and Mineral Resources

In April, with support provided by the Japan Business Federation (*Keidanren*), MOFA held a webinar entitled “Geopolitics and Energy: Role of Natural Gas in Energy Transition” as part of the Seminar on Energy Security in Asia. In addition to State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara, Chairman MIYAJI Shinji of the Policy Sub-Committee, Committee on Asia and Oceania, *Keidanren* also attended the seminar as a representative of *Keidanren*. Minister of Energy and Mineral Resources Arfin Tasrif of Indonesia and IEA Chief Energy Economist Tim Gould gave keynote speeches, and the panelists included officials from international organizations involved in energy and international relations, experts, and others. Approximately 1,200 people

⁶ The ECT prescribes the liberalization of the trade and transit of energy source materials and commodities, the protection of investments in the energy sector, and other matters. It ensures a stable supply of energy from supply countries to demand countries, contributes to improving energy security for Japan, which largely relies on other countries for energy resources, and provides an important legal foundation for further improving the investment environment for Japanese companies overseas.

registered and attended the seminar online from Japan and abroad. The seminar opened with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara noting that Russia's aggression against Ukraine made the world recognize anew the importance of balancing energy transitions and energy security. He also pointed out the need to implement realistic, smooth energy transitions in order to realize a decarbonized society. He also noted that natural gas will play an extremely important role in the transitional period of decarbonization, from the perspective of providing adjustment capabilities to supplement solar and wind power generation, whose power output is easily affected by weather conditions. During the seminar, there were lively discussions on the geopolitical risks of energy, the importance of discussions that bear in mind the timeline for decarbonization, and how energy transitions should be promoted in daily life. The participants shared the recognition that during the present time when energy security risks are becoming more apparent, we also have an opportunity to promote significant efforts regarding energy transition.

In addition, from November 7 to 8, MOFA conducted the study tour "Energy in Crisis" for eight diplomats from eight embassies stationed in Japan to visit energy-related facilities in Fukushima Prefecture. Specifically, they visited the Nakoso IGCC Power Station of Nakoso IGCC Power GK, Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, Fukushima Hydrogen Energy Research Field, Soma IHI Green Energy Center, and Fukushima Renewable Energy Institute, and had an exchange meeting with local officials. The participating diplomatic corps commented that it was very interesting to learn comprehensively about the energy situation in Japan and the future potential of renewable energy.

(2) Ensuring Food Security

The global food security situation has seen the emergence of problems affecting the food system in the form of supply chain disruptions and stoppages caused by compounding risks from COVID-19, rising energy prices, climate change, conflicts, and other such issues. Now Russia's aggression against Ukraine has led to a

sharp deterioration of the food security situation on a global scale, particularly in Africa and the Middle East. Furthermore, there are challenges for the future, such as land use for food production, agricultural production adapted to climate change, and the use of appropriate fertilizers according to the situation. The number of people facing acute food insecurity has reached 349 million, the largest number ever.

According to the State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI) 2022⁷, as economic downturns and supply chain disruptions reduce food access, although the number of undernourished people in 2021 slowed compared to 2020 when there was a surge due to COVID-19, this is expected to continue its increasing trend, reaching up to 828 million people. The report also noted that in 2022 as well, Russia's aggression against Ukraine caused new challenges for the SDGs (specifically Goal 2: Zero Hunger), and negatively impacted food security and nutrition in countries facing hunger and food crises. Furthermore, as Russia and Ukraine have been some of the world's largest exporters of grains and other products, Russia's aggression against Ukraine has had an even more serious impact on the stable supply of grains to countries that heavily rely on grains from Russia and Ukraine, particularly developing nations in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Fears of grain supply shortages around the world have fueled trading price increases that have led to increased food prices. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has therefore exposed the vulnerabilities to food security posed by global supply chain disruptions.

A Cooperation in International Frameworks Concerning Food Security

In 2022, various discussions were held to address this global food crisis. In particular, concerns about the global food insecurity following Russia's aggression against Ukraine led international frameworks such as the G7 and G20 as well as various international organizations to express their concerns about the situation. In addition, a framework for international cooperation was created on the initiative of the United Nations (UN), the U.S., Germany, France, and others. Various

7 The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World (SOFI): An annual report on global food insecurity and nutrition jointly published by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), the World Food Programme (WFP), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the World Health Organization (WHO)

initiatives were also implemented, including the “Black Sea Grain Initiative” for grain exports from Ukraine through the Black Sea at the initiative of the UN in order to realize grain exports from Ukraine, and the EU-led “Solidarity Lanes” that use railroads and trucks traveling over land routes to transport grain exports from Ukraine as well as daily necessities into Ukraine.

B Main Initiatives in Which Japan Participates

In May, at the initiative of the U.S., the Global Food Security Call to Action Ministerial Meeting was held at the UN Headquarters in New York, with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara in attendance. During the meeting, Japan committed to even closer cooperation with the countries participating in the meeting, with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara stating that three urgent priorities to address the food security crisis are important for building a sustainable food system: restoring the international flow of Ukrainian food, improving agricultural productivity and promoting efficient use of fertilizers, and avoiding unjustified export restrictions and excessive stockpiling.

In June, the “Ministerial Conference for Uniting for Global Food Security” was held in Berlin at the initiative of Germany, and Foreign Minister Hayashi participated online. Many of the attending Ministers expressed concern that Russia’s aggression against Ukraine is worsening global food security, and confirmed that continued close cooperation among all parties concerned is indispensable to address the current food security crisis.

In addition, the G7 Elmau Summit was held. Under the overall theme of “Progress towards an equitable world” set forth by the chair, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, the G7 leaders held candid discussions and confirmed that the G7 would unite to uphold the international order in response to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine. The G7 Statement on Global Food Security was issued as an outcome document of the Summit, and confirmed the G7’s unity with its statement, “We, the Leaders of the G7, will spare no effort to increase global food and nutrition security and to protect the most vulnerable, whom the food crisis threatens to hit the hardest.”

In September, the World Summit on Food Security was held in New York at the initiative of the U.S., the EU, and others, and Foreign Minister Hayashi attended it. During the Summit, there was discussion on the impact and challenges to global food security, including rising food prices and partial supply disruptions due to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, as well as consideration of guidelines for the international community’s efforts to resolve the current food crisis. The meeting also provided an opportunity for Japan to reaffirm its commitment to collaborating with the international community to address the urgent issue of global food insecurity.

C Strengthen Collaboration with International Organizations on Food Security

As a responsible member of the international community, Japan supports the activities of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), a specialized agency of the UN in the fields of food and agriculture. Japan, a major donor to the FAO and the third largest contributor of assessed contributions, significantly contributes to strengthening global food security through efforts such as providing development assistance in the areas of food and agriculture, and creating international rules that include food safety standards. Japan also works to strengthen its relationship with the FAO, holding Annual Strategic Consultations and conducting seminars aimed at raising awareness for the FAO domestically.

In addition, in 2022, Japan provided support through the FAO for the distribution of wheat and corn seeds to Ukrainian farmers and the expansion of temporary storage capacity to store harvested grain, as there were concerns about the state of agricultural production in Ukraine, a major grain producing country in the world, following Russia’s aggression against the country. Japan also provided support for capacity building at the Izmail quarantine station on the Romanian border to help promote exports over land routes. Moreover, close dialogue is being continued through annual strategic consultations and the like in order to strengthen relations between Japan and the FAO.

D Efforts in the Public Relations Field Related to Food Security

In March, MOFA held the online food security symposium “Ensuring the global and Japanese food security in the wake of Russia’s aggression against Ukraine.” More than 500 people from Japan and abroad attended this seminar. In addition to State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara, the seminar was attended by Professor OKABE Yoshihiko, Faculty of Economics, Kobe Gakuin University; HIRASAWA Akihiko, General Manager and Senior Chief Economist, Norinchukin Research Institute Co., Ltd., and EZAKI Michio, Visiting Professor, Takushoku University Graduate School. In addition, experts and people related to agribusiness also served as speakers. In his opening remarks at the beginning, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara pointed out the situation in which Russia’s aggression against Ukraine has had various negative impacts on the international community, including food security in the world and Japan. He also pointed out the importance of preparedness in peacetime, such as maintaining and strengthening the free and fair trade system and international cooperation, as well as the importance of responding to contingencies, such as maintaining national reserves and diversifying supply sources. There was then a panel discussion by the speakers, in which there was a lively discussion with people asking questions on the policies that Japan should take from the perspectives of food security, agricultural measures, geopolitics, and economic security, which are becoming increasingly complex due to the recent global situation.

(3) Fisheries (Tuna, Whaling, etc.)

Japan is one of the major fishing countries and consumers of fishery products in the world. Japan actively contributes through international organizations to the appropriate conservation management and sustainable use of marine living resources.

Japan advocates the view that cetaceans are a part of marine living resources that should be utilized in a sustainable manner based on scientific evidence. Based on the fact that the International Whaling Commission (IWC) has the two roles of “conservation of whale stocks” and “orderly development of the whaling

industry,” Japan has been promoting dialogue in good faith based on scientific data collected for more than 30 years. However, it became clear that it would be extremely difficult to coexist with countries that deny sustainable use of whales and insist only on their protection, so Japan withdrew from the IWC in 2019 and resumed commercial whaling.

Japan restricts commercial whaling to its territorial waters and Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) with catch limits calculated in line with the method adopted by the IWC, which is based on scientific evidence, and in a manner that will not adversely affect the stock even if the whaling continues for 100 years.

Japan’s policy of actively contributing to the international management of marine living resources has not changed after its withdrawal from the IWC. Japan has been actively involved and cooperated with international organizations such as the IWC and the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission (NAMMCO), including participation as an observer at the Meeting of the IWC, which was held in October for the first time in four years. Japan has also developed non-lethal scientific research on whale stocks, some of which is conducted jointly with the IWC. The results are provided to the IWC and other international organizations as important data that can serve as a basis for realizing sustainable utilization and appropriate management of whale stocks.

Illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing is one of the threats to the sustainable fishing industry. The Leaders’ Declaration from the 2019 G20 Osaka Summit, for which Japan served as the G20 Presidency, states that “we recognize the importance of addressing IUU fishing.” This was one of the catalysts for the recent statements in outcome documents of multilateral conferences, such as the G7, G20, and APEC, mentioning affirmation of commitment to end IUU fishing. Furthermore, Japan has been encouraging non-contracting parties to sign the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA), which stipulates rules for port states to take measures against IUU fishing vessels, including denial of port entry. Japan is also providing capacity building assistance to developing countries for the purpose of countering IUU fishing.

In the Central Arctic Ocean, there are concerns about the possibility of unregulated fishing in the future due to partial melting of ice caused by global warming. Against the backdrop of these concerns, 10 states and organizations, including Japan and five Arctic Ocean coastal states, signed the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean in October 2018, and it entered into force in June 2021. The first meeting of the contracting parties was held in the ROK in November 2022, 10 countries and regions, including Japan, participated in the meeting, during which discussions were held on scientific research and the formulation of a monitoring plan in the Central Arctic Ocean.

As one of the largest tuna consumer countries, Japan has joined Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) for tuna, and leads discussions on strengthening conservation and management measures (CMMs) at annual meetings and other occasions. In recent years, results are being seen from active efforts through international resources management. For Pacific bluefin tuna, a 15% increase in the catch limit for large fish was adopted at the annual meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) in 2021, and operations were conducted in 2022 based on this measure. At the same meeting in 2022, a management method was also adopted for skipjack which sets in advance the level at which resources should be maintained over the medium to long term and the way fishing should be conducted in accordance with the status of the resources. For Atlantic bluefin tuna, in light of the recovery of resource levels in recent years, the total allowable catch (TAC) in the eastern Atlantic Ocean was increased by 12.7% over the previous year at the annual meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT) held in November. The TAC for the western Atlantic Ocean remained at the level of the previous year. As for southern bluefin tuna, the meeting of the Commission for the Conservation of Southern Bluefin Tuna (CCSBT) held in October confirmed that the TAC for 2023 will be the same level as the previous year.

With respect to Pacific saury, the recent deterioration of stocks and the resulting poor catches have become a problem. The annual meeting of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) in 2022 was postponed in light of the current international situation. It is important to further enhance resource management at the annual meeting scheduled to be held in 2023.

As for Japanese eel, the first scientific meeting on eel was held in April under the leadership of Japan. Scientific knowledge on the management of eel stocks was shared during the meeting. In addition, at the 15th informal consultation on international cooperation led by Japan from May to July, Japan, the ROK, China, and Taiwan discussed and confirmed the establishment of limits on glass eel stocking in aquaculture ponds and the promotion of cooperation in joint research on Japanese eels. This was the first time in eight years that China participated in the informal consultation.

(4) Foreign Direct Investment in Japan

With regard to promotion of foreign direct investment in Japan, the “Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan,” which has been held since 2014, is spearheading initiatives to promote activities for discovering and attracting investments. While gathering opinions from foreign company managers, Japan continues to respond to the needs of foreign companies by making further progress in implementing additional measures such as regulatory and institutional reforms and support measures that help improve the investment environment in Japan. Based on the “Five Promises for Attracting Foreign Businesses to Japan,” decided at the second meeting of the Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan, held in March 2015, foreign companies have utilized the Investment Advisor Assignment System⁸ since April 2016 to meet with the relevant State Ministers in charge. In addition, Japan achieved the initial target value of “doubling (compared to 2012) the inward foreign direct investment stocks to 35 trillion Japanese yen in 2020,” as laid out in the Japan Revitalization Strategy approved by the Cabinet in June 2013. At the ninth meeting of the Council for Promotion of Foreign

⁸ A system that seeks to prepare an environment in which foreign companies that have made important investments in Japan can easily consult with the Government of Japan through state Ministers and other officials from the ministries that oversee the main industries in which these companies engage.

Direct Investment in Japan, held in June 2021, a new Strategy for Promoting Foreign Direct Investment in Japan was adopted as a medium- to long-term strategy to promote foreign direct investment in Japan, and a decision was made to aim to double (compared to 2020) the inward foreign direct investment stocks to 80 trillion yen by 2030 and reach 12% of GDP as the key performance indicator (KPI).

MOFA implements various measures adopted by the Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan. It utilizes diplomatic resources to engage in initiatives through diplomatic missions overseas and trade promotion by key government officials, and also strategically implements various initiatives towards promoting foreign direct investment in Japan. The “Contact Points for Direct Investment toward Japan,” established at 126 diplomatic missions overseas in April 2016, have been collaborating with JETRO to conduct surveys of requests for improvements to Japanese regulations and systems, call for investments in Japan by making use of networks of contacts at diplomatic missions overseas, and hold events for promoting foreign direct investment in Japan, among other initiatives. More than 650 cases of these activities were conducted in FY2021.

Furthermore, in Japan, MOFA held a Global Business Seminar in March, with the theme of promoting foreign direct investment in Japan, focusing on offshore wind power, which is considered a pillar of renewable energy, and on the hydrogen business, which is referred to as the trump card for decarbonization. In addition to a keynote speech by the Director-General of IRENA, lively discussions were held with the participation of approximately 250 participants from domestic and foreign companies, embassies in Tokyo,

business groups and chambers of commerce in Japan, as well as government and local government officials.

(5) The Road to 2025 World Expo Osaka (Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan)

Following the approval of a registration dossier for Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan at the General Assembly of the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) held in December 2020, Japan began activities to officially invite other countries and international organizations to participate in the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. MOFA is currently engaged in invitation activities to drive significant participation by other countries and organizations.

In February, Japan signed an agreement with the BIE to grant privileges and immunities to participating countries and international organizations in order to improve the environment for holding the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan and its preparations. The agreement entered into force in August.

In addition, in October, the Japan Association for the 2025 World Exposition held its “International Planning Meeting,” inviting countries and international organizations that had been invited to participate to Osaka City to provide various information.

The Expo, which is expected to attract a large number of visitors from Japan and abroad, aims to convey the appeals of Japan to the world and accelerate efforts to achieve the SDGs, which are all to be achieved by 2030, under the theme of “Designing Future Society for Our Lives.” Japan will continue making a concerted national effort aimed at ensuring that the Expo inspires and surprises people around the world, while also energizing Japan as a whole.

Column

The Indian Ocean Fishing Industry as seen from Mauritius

KAWAGUCHI Shuichiro, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to Mauritius

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Sometimes called the “Pearl of the Indian Ocean,” Mauritius is an island nation surrounded by beautiful coral reefs with a population of approximately 1.26 million. In August 2020, an oil spill from the bulk carrier “*Wakashio*” occurred due to its running aground. Through extensive and earnest Japanese public-private sector support, the oil removal and cleanup operation was completed in January 2021, with the ocean restored to a pristine state unrecognizable from before the accident occurred.

The year 2023 is highly important for the fishing industry in Mauritius, as the annual conferences of two international institutions governing fishing in the Indian Ocean are taking place there: the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) and the Southern Indian Ocean Fisheries Agreement (SIOFA). I would like to take this opportunity to briefly talk about the state of the fishing industry in Mauritius.

The waters surrounding Mauritius in the emerald-green seas have rich fishing resources including tuna, with many foreign vessels coming to catch Yellowfin, Albacore, and other species of tuna. The harbor of Port Louis located in the capital bustles with over 100 round-haul netters from countries such as Spain and France visiting each day for supplies, refueling, and to land their tuna catch. The Yellowfin that these European ships bring in weigh as much as 40kg each, which is then processed into canned or frozen fish products for export, principally to Europe, forming an important source of income for Mauritius.

The fishing industry in Mauritius has a strong connection with Japan, to the extent that there appears to have been enough Japanese fishing industry personnel residing there 30 years ago to create a Japan Town. The majority of the fish exported to Japan are species of tuna, but also include other species such as Alfansino. On the other hand, Mauritius has not got the culture of eating fresh raw tuna as *sashimi* like in Japan, with the tuna caught around the atolls by local fishermen typically fried deeply and cooked in curry. As such, the cold chain (refrigerated logistics) infrastructure in Mauritius is not sufficiently established, and that poses an issue in terms of developing high-value markets. At the same time, this means there is likely enormous latent potential for future market expansion.

Combating illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, a threat to sustainable fishing, is a major issue for Mauritius. In order for tuna to be merchandized in a sustainable manner on the international market, the improvement of capabilities to crack down on IUU vessels within the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) as well as the development of its legal system for enforcement against crew engaged in IUU fishing, are urgently required.

Inscribed as UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage, *washoku* (traditional Japanese cuisine) is also very popular in Mauritius. Fresh fish dishes are essential elements of *washoku*. When welcoming guests at the ambassador’s official residence, we also put great effort into serving delicious fish dishes. The fish dishes we serve, such as *sashimi* made with fish purchased from local fishermen and the open-sea Alfansino simmered in soy sauce and sugar (*nitsuke*), are now said to surpass the ones at a five-star hotel, becoming a hot topic in political and business circles. Fish dishes are now an indispensable tool in diplomacy.



The sea in Mauritius



The author with a purchased fish

Section 4 Efforts to Promote Understanding and Trust in Japan

1 Strategic Communications

(1) Initiatives in Strategic Communications

With a free, open, and stable international order facing grave challenges, and Japan confronting its most severe and complex security environment since the postwar era, it is becoming increasingly important for Japan to communicate its foreign policies and recognition of international situation to other countries. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is implementing strategic communications based on the three-pillar approach of (1) making further efforts to disseminate Japan's policies, initiatives and positions, (2) sharing Japan's rich and diverse attractions, and (3) expanding the circle of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan, while enhancing the capabilities of its overseas missions, which are on the frontlines of public diplomacy. Regarding pillar (1), MOFA focuses mainly on promoting public understanding of Japan's contributions to peace, stability and prosperity in the international community, and the maintenance and strengthening of the international order based on the rule of law, as well as on enhancing public awareness of issues concerning the recognition of history and territory/sovereignty. In particular, MOFA is actively communicating Japan's positions and viewpoints through opportunities such as daily press conferences, interviews, contributions of articles, and speeches at official visits to foreign countries and international conferences by the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, and other government officials. Japan's diplomatic missions overseas are also communicating to the governments of assigned countries, their citizens and the media on Japan's positions and viewpoints on a range of subjects including the recognition of history and territory/sovereignty. When foreign media outlets publish reports that include factual errors, the MOFA Headquarters and diplomatic missions overseas promptly lodge protests or post rebuttals, to ensure that media reports are made based on objective facts and understanding. In addition, MOFA actively communicates with the public



Policy promotion video, "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" (English) (Posted on MOFA's YouTube channel from March 17, 2022)



through online tools such as its official website and social media, while creating publicity materials such as videos on Japan's foreign policy and utilizing them in a variety of forms. Furthermore, in order to make Japan's basic positions and viewpoints on policy issues understood, it is also important to enhance coordination with experts and think tanks. From this perspective, MOFA invites influential experts and media personnel to Japan from abroad, and provides them with opportunities to exchange views with various people including Japanese government officials, as well as to visit various places around Japan for study tours and to conduct interviews. MOFA dispatches Japanese experts abroad, while extending its support for Japan-related seminars conducted by overseas research institutions.

In 2022, the situation became more complex as the international order faced great challenges due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, while the international community was urged to cooperate in order to respond to climate change and other global issues. Against this backdrop, MOFA made use of various diplomatic opportunities and initiatives to communicate strategically on Japan's basic stance and efforts toward global issues as well as in maintaining and strengthening the international order based on the rule of law. Moreover, MOFA worked to strengthen institutional functions, such as through close cooperation between

the information departments and the publicity and policy departments, in order to respond to information warfare in the cognitive domains, including the spread of disinformation. The National Security Strategy approved by the Cabinet Decision in December, too, stresses the importance of addressing disinformation.

Furthermore, MOFA continued with initiatives that can be implemented without in-person exchanges, such as online seminars (webinars) and exchange programs, with a focus on invitational and dispatch programs as well as cooperation with research institutes overseas and other organizations. With the resumption of projects involving cross-border travel, MOFA implemented projects that were conducted both in-person and online.

By taking advantage of various opportunities and utilizing various tools, Japan is also engaged in efforts to strategically communicate information about matters on the recognition of history, including the issue of the so-called “comfort women” and various issues on Japan’s territory and sovereignty. For baseless criticism of the Rising Sun Flag, accurate information about the flag is provided in a variety of forms, including making multi-language explanatory materials and videos available on MOFA’s website to gain understanding from the international community¹.

With regard to sharing Japan’s rich and diverse attractions, a variety of efforts involving public relations and cultural projects are being made mainly through diplomatic missions to promote understanding and support for Japan, which will also lead to the promotion of inbound tourism in the post-COVID-19 world. Cultural projects have been conducted by diplomatic missions around the world and the Japan Foundation (JF), and the 16th Japan International MANGA Award was organized by MOFA. The attractiveness of all regions of Japan was also communicated through various means including social media. Amidst the gradual resumption of projects alongside the recovery of international travel, projects were implemented both in-person and through online formats with the

aim of maintaining and further developing Japan’s ties with the world through culture. Moreover, Japan has worked on initiatives in cooperation with people in the country and abroad to preserve tangible and intangible cultural heritage throughout the world and to promote the inscription of Japan’s cultural and natural heritage on the World Heritage List and the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Concerning pillar (3), “expanding the circle of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan,” MOFA has been making various efforts to promote people-to-people and intellectual exchanges, and Japanese language education. The efforts include youth exchange programs between Japan and other countries and regions under Japan’s Friendship Ties Programs. MOFA also supports Japanese studies at universities and research institutions in major countries around the world. In order to contribute to the realization of its foreign policy and national interests, MOFA will continue to strategically and effectively implement initiatives based on the abovementioned three pillars.

(2) JAPAN HOUSE

MOFA has established JAPAN HOUSE overseas communication hubs in three cities, namely São Paulo (Brazil), London (UK) and Los Angeles (U.S.). The purpose is to attract a wide range of people, including those who were not necessarily interested in Japan previously, and to enlarge the base of the people with great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan by communicating Japan’s rich and varied attractiveness as well as its policies, initiatives, and views.

JAPAN HOUSE promotes effective communication by (1) communicating through “All-Japan” efforts by the central and local governments, private sectors and other actors, (2) promoting outreach that reflects the needs of local communities, and (3) providing a “one-stop-service” where various information related to Japan can be obtained from one location.

With the slogan “Mind-blowing Encounters with Japan across the Globe,” each JAPAN HOUSE

¹ Reference materials concerning the Rising Sun Flag are available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here:

(1) https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/rp/page22e_000892.html

(2) Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9co0U5lcE0c>
“Rising Sun Flag as Japanese Longstanding Culture”

(Posted on MOFA’s YouTube channel from October 8, 2021)

(1)



(2)



conducts locally designed exhibitions which are independently organized by each hub, as well as touring exhibitions that are selected by experts from public proposals in Japan and exhibited at all three hubs. In this way, JAPAN HOUSE works to provide high-quality exhibitions by leveraging the knowhow of experts both in those hub cities and in Japan. In addition to exhibitions, Japan's diverse attractions, including traditional culture and arts, advanced technology, nature, architecture, food and design, as well as its policies, initiatives and views, are also widely disseminated through other formats such as lectures, seminars, workshops, webinars, library spaces, websites and social media, merchandise, food and beverages, and cafés. JAPAN HOUSE is also currently working actively to win over new audiences by conducting some exhibitions in other cities or in neighboring countries, as well as by further promoting online communication and expanding hybrid methods that combine in-person and online formats, following the COVID-19 pandemic. By the end of 2022, the total number of visitors for the three hubs had exceeded 4.7 million, indicating that the hubs are becoming firmly established as a major cultural facility in each city.

(3) Media Coverage of Japan in Other Countries and Regions, and Dissemination to Foreign Media

In 2022, foreign media coverage of Japan was centered on diplomatic issues such as its response to the situation over Ukraine, President Biden's visit to Japan and the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Leaders' Meeting, the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8), Japan-China relations, Japan-ROK relations, and the issues concerning North Korea, as well as the state funeral for the late Prime Minister ABE Shinzo, border measures in relation to COVID-19, strengthening of defense capabilities, energy policies, and exchange rate fluctuations, among other topics.

MOFA promptly and proactively provides information and assistance to foreign media in order to gain the understanding and support of the international community on Japan's policies, initiatives and positions. Communication through foreign media includes interviews with the Prime Minister and the Foreign

Minister, regular press conferences by the Foreign Minister (livestreaming in Japanese and English is also available online), and the provision of information and opportunities for press coverage to correspondents in Tokyo via briefings, press releases, press tours and other means. MOFA makes efforts to achieve strategic and effective communications by providing information in a timely manner based on the diplomatic schedule.

With the resumption of in-person diplomacy in 2022, Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi actively traveled overseas and provided information to foreign media outlets through interviews and contribution of articles. For example, when TICAD 8 was held in August, Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi contributed to several papers including the major media outlets of Tunisia, the host country, and communicated that Japan would continue to contribute to sustainable development led by Africa going forward. Furthermore, Prime Minister Kishida also made use of other timely opportunities, apart from overseas trips, to provide information proactively, including responding to an interview request by the Financial Times in October, in which he appealed for the need to strengthen defense capabilities.

In 2022, the Prime Minister contributed articles and held interviews 15 times, and the Foreign Minister contributed articles and held interviews for a total of 17 times. Additionally, MOFA provided information to foreign media through the Press Secretary and other means, and held press briefings to local media on the occasion of overseas visits by the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister. Under the project to invite foreign media coverage, MOFA extended invitations coupled with visits to Japan alongside coverage in online format, corresponding to the status of border measures. In 2022, 26 invitation programs were provided (of which six were coupled with visits to Japan, and 20 were coverage in online format), and more than 231 journalists from 137 countries participated in the project.

(4) Information Provision Through the Internet

In view of the increasingly active use of online media, MOFA has been actively engaged in providing information through the Internet, such as the MOFA websites and social media, in order to gain better understanding and draw further support of people

Column

Open Diplomacy Through Social Media

IWAI Fumio, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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Social media has long been described as an effective tool for exerting soft power in diplomatic activities, and MOFA, too, actively uses the Internet to disseminate information on culture, sports, tourism, and other subjects.

I first dipped my toes into the world of social media in 2015 when I assumed office as the Ambassador of Japan to Iraq in the capital city of Baghdad, where I created a Facebook account due to unavoidable reasons, including the security situation at the time. Based on that experience, when I was assigned to Saudi Arabia in February 2021, I created a Twitter account the day after I arrived in the capital city of Riyadh because there was a large number of Twitter users in Saudi Arabia. I began to tweet and have gained approximately 97,000 followers^(Note) to date.

Bilateral relations between Japan and Saudi Arabia are closely linked to the economic field, as Japan imports oil from Saudi Arabia and exports products such as Japanese cars to the country. Against the backdrop of the recent popularity of Japanese anime and manga worldwide, there are also many fans of Japan in Saudi Arabia. However, the reality on the ground is that little is known about Japanese culture and its society apart from these aspects. Accordingly, in my tweets, in addition to my diplomatic activities as an Ambassador, I also tweet about various other topics such as Japan's climate and culture, and even about my own family at times.

When I tweet, I am mindful of communicating in the local language, which is Arabic. I also read every comment that I receive after tweeting, and where necessary, reply and try to reach a mutual understanding with my followers. There is a tendency to think of diplomats as special people, but through these exchanges, I aim to show that we stand with the people. Among my comments, there are people who tell me that they got to know about Japan or feel closer to Japan through my tweets, as well as some who say that they would like to visit Japan. This gives me a real sense of growing affinity toward Japan among the people of Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, while reading the comments meticulously, identifying the interests and values of the people of Saudi Arabia is also important to learn about the society of the country I am assigned to. As I receive many heartwarming comments in response to my tweets about my family or football, it is clear to me that the people of Saudi Arabia place great importance on family and enjoy football. There were also times when I tweeted a simple and personal question but received comments objecting to the tweet, followed by further rebuttals to the initial comment in question, which in turn led to a major debate on Twitter. In such cases, I may have unintentionally “trodden on the tiger’s tail,” as the Japanese saying goes, of Saudi Arabian society.

As an Ambassador, I am happy when I can get a real sense that not only sending out information through Twitter but also engaging in exchanges with citizens through comments contributes to deepening mutual understanding, raising awareness about Japan, and fostering goodwill toward Japan. If we think of soft power’s purpose as “something that instills, deep in the minds of people, a desire to support Japan in times of need,” then I believe there is still immense potential for using social media to advance diplomatic activities, and that it is something worth pursuing.

(Note) As of December 2022



Exchanges during the Al Qassim Date Festival (the author on the far right) (August)



A video post of Ambassador Iwai eating with his hand in the traditional Saudi-Arabian style, when visiting a provincial region. The video was played 340,000 times. (May, Najran, Saudi Arabia)

inside and outside Japan on Japan's foreign policy. In 2022, MOFA actively provided information on the situation in Ukraine, along with live streaming of the regular press conferences by the Foreign Minister (in Japanese and English), and posting of video messages delivered at international conferences.

Considering MOFA's English website to be an important tool for public diplomacy, MOFA has been enhancing its efforts to provide information in English

on Japan's foreign policy concerning such subjects as territory and sovereignty, recognition of history, and security, as well as Japan's position on international affairs and Japan's diverse appeals. MOFA has also been working to provide information in local languages through the social media and the websites of Japanese embassies, consulates-general, and permanent missions overseas (see the Column on page 321).

2 Cultural, Sports, and Tourism Diplomacy

(1) Overview

For a very large number of foreign nationals who have an interest in Japan, Japanese culture is a motive for their interests. MOFA and JF carry out various projects ranging from introducing Japanese culture and sports to promoting inbound tourism, aimed at creating positive images of Japan abroad, boosting the overall Japanese brand and encouraging a deeper understanding of Japan, as well as fostering the circle of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan and increasing the number of foreign visitors to Japan in the post-COVID-19 world. For example, "Cultural Projects of Diplomatic Missions Overseas" introduce the wide-ranging attractions of Japan, from traditional culture such as tea ceremony, flower arrangement, and martial arts, to aspects of modern culture such as anime, manga and fashion, as well as Japanese food culture. As it continued to be difficult to implement programs with guests and participants in 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the diplomatic missions overseas also used online media to organize and conduct many programs.

Under the "Japan Brand Program," MOFA has dispatched experts of various fields overseas to establish a national brand and give Japan a stronger presence in the world. MOFA also holds seminars, workshops, and demonstrations to share Japan's outstanding cultural assets, which represent a culmination of Japan's experience and wisdom. In light of the continued difficulty in sending experts overseas due to the spread of COVID-19, MOFA continued to share Japan's charm by incorporating projects using online platforms.

Going forward, MOFA will continue to put effort into sharing Japan's diverse charm and strengths while harnessing tools such as online platforms and video-streaming,

In order to carry on the legacy of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 ("Tokyo 2020 Games") held in 2021, MOFA engaged in initiatives as part of the "Sport for Tomorrow (SFT)" program, such as various sports exchanges and sports promotion support projects overseas, dispatching sports instructors through the JICA Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) program, and the provision of sporting equipment and improvement of sporting facilities through Cultural Grant Assistance. MOFA also provided information about these initiatives in Japan and abroad on MOFA's "MofaJapan × SPORTS" Twitter account.

MOFA conducts a range of activities through Japan's diplomatic missions overseas to promote a deeper understanding of Japan by fostering the circle of the next generation of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan and encouraging Japanese studies. These include providing information on studying in Japan; building alumni networks comprising foreign nationals who have studied in Japan; cooperating with the JET Programme, which invites young foreign nationals to work for local governments in Japan; holding exchange programs for youth and adults from Asia and the U.S.; and providing support for Japanese studies.

Promoting Japanese language overseas fosters individuals who engage in exchange with Japan, deepens

understanding of Japan, and creates foundations for friendship between Japan and other countries. Japanese language education is becoming increasingly important, as evidenced by the promulgation and entering into force of the Act on Promotion of Japanese Language Education in June 2019, and the formulation of the Basic Policy for the Comprehensive and Effective Implementation of Measures to Promote Japanese Language Education (Cabinet Decision) in June 2020. Through JF, MOFA dispatches Japanese language specialists overseas, conducts training programs for overseas Japanese language teachers, and develops Japanese language education materials. To address the labor force shortage in Japan, Japan began accepting foreign workers under the “Specified Skilled Worker” residence status since April 2019. Through this connection, MOFA has also been working to meet a new type of need by providing Japanese language education to foreigners interested in coming to Japan for work.

In cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Japan has been actively engaged in protecting the world’s tangible and intangible cultural heritage as well as natural heritage. Moreover, Japan is actively taking part in the promotion of international frameworks for safeguarding heritage through conventions such as the World Heritage Convention and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

By putting creative efforts into promoting such cultural and sports diplomacy during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as through online channels, and by sharing information on Japan’s charms to the world, MOFA also contributes to bringing more foreign visitors to Japan in the future.

(2) Cultural Programs

For Japan’s foreign policy to be smoothly implemented in the international community, it is important to promote a better understanding of Japan among the individual foreign nationals who form the foundation of public opinion and policy making, and to make Japan’s image even more positive. Based on this perception, MOFA engages in communicating information about the diverse attractions of Japan through diplomatic missions overseas and JF. Diplomatic missions

overseas carry out a range of cultural projects as part of efforts to promote a deeper understanding of Japan and expand the circle of people with a great affinity toward Japan in the areas under their jurisdiction. For example, they actively introduce Japanese lifestyles and culture such as workshops on tea ceremony, flower arrangement and origami, Japanese film screenings, Japanese music performances, martial arts demonstrations, exhibitions on traditional crafts and Japanese photography, popular culture such as anime and manga, as well as Japan’s food culture. At the same time, they also plan and implement Japanese speech contests and essay contests.

From January to February 2022, in cooperation with nine of Japan’s diplomatic missions overseas located in the Spanish-speaking parts of Latin America and the Caribbean (Embassy of Japan in Argentina, Embassy of Japan in Peru, Embassy of Japan in Dominican Republic, Embassy of Japan in Colombia, Embassy of Japan in Ecuador, Embassy of Japan in Guatemala, Embassy of Japan in Paraguay, Consulate-General of Japan in Leon, and Consular Office of Japan in Santa Cruz), MOFA conducted calligraphy lectures and demonstrations as a cross-regional online cultural project. Calligraphers gave explanations about Japanese calligraphy tools and calligraphic styles, as well as reviewing works by participants. This provided an opportunity to deepen understanding about Japanese calligraphy while engaging in two-way communication online, and participants came from a total of 29 countries including Asia, Europe, and Africa.

With the aim of promoting timely understanding of Japan in years that mark diplomatic milestones, MOFA cooperates with government-affiliated organizations and private organizations to implement large-scale and comprehensive commemorative events



“Linking the Spanish-speaking Parts of Latin America and the Caribbean Through Calligraphy” (From January to February, Central and South America)



Japan Festival Support Program by JF (Deer Dance (Shishi-Odori) from Tohoku was performed at the Israel Festival) (September, Jerusalem, Israel; Photo courtesy of JF)

intensively, and to engage in active exchanges. In 2022, large-scale cultural programs were held in the following countries to commemorate the respective anniversaries: China (September), Central Asia (Kyrgyz Republic (September), Tajikistan (October), Turkmenistan (November), Bangladesh (October), Mongolia (November), and United Arab Emirates (December).

In collaboration with MOFA and diplomatic missions overseas, JF promotes and provides support for Japanese-language education, Japanese studies, and Global Partnerships Programs for international dialogues, as well as runs arts and cultural exchange projects to promote Japanese culture and arts in a variety of forms throughout the world. Projects were implemented locally in all parts of the world despite various restrictions in place under the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to holding *Beyond Borders: Architectures of Japan*, an exhibition on contemporary Japanese architecture in Shenzhen as one of the programs to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China relations, Japanese traditional folk dance performance was implemented in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv to celebrate the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Israel.

At the Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris (The Japan Cultural Institute in Paris), which is JF's largest base for promoting culture in Europe, comprehensive efforts were made to promote Japanese culture. For example, all 50 works in film series *Otoko wa Tsurai yo* were screened over a one-year period, tourism pamphlets featuring various regions of Japan where each film was set (prepared by the Japan National Tourism

Organization (JNTO)) were distributed at the screening venue. To ensure that the activities of the Institute contribute to the development of a sustainable society, the exhibition *Un Bestiaire Japonais - Vivre avec les animeaux à Edo-Tokyo (XVIIIe-XIXe siècle)* ("A Japanese Bestiary") was held to focus on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the Edo era, in addition to the distribution of the online program, "Shibusawa Eiichi and SDGs."

In parallel with these efforts, JF also continued to actively roll out projects that leverage on the characteristics of the Internet medium, and expanded its multilingual video offerings such as "STAGE BEYOND BORDERS" and "Invitation to Explore Japan's Museums," which introduce Japan's performing arts and unique museums across Japan to the world.

Under the "WA Project: Toward Interactive Asia through Fusion and Harmony" announced by Prime Minister Abe in December 2013 (see the Column on page 327), JF implements the NIHONGO Partners Program and two-way exchange programs in the field of arts and culture exchange. These are targeted at Asian countries, with a focus on ASEAN member states. In 2022, 223 persons were dispatched as NIHONGO Partners to nine countries and regions. JF also presents the "TIFF Lounge," now in its third year, in cooperation with the Tokyo International Film Festival. Through this initiative, it provides opportunities for Japanese filmmakers active on the front lines and filmmakers in Asia as well as other countries and regions around the world, to engage in dialogues and exchanges in Tokyo.

The Japan International MANGA Award was launched by MOFA in 2007 with the aim of rewarding manga creators who have contributed to the spread of manga culture overseas and the promotion of international cultural exchanges through manga. The 16th Japan International MANGA Award, held in 2022, received a record-high 503 entries from 77 countries and regions, and the Gold Award was presented to a work from the Republic of Korea. This year, there were entries for the first time from Kosovo, Sri Lanka, and Mozambique.



Japan-China exchange event on dinosaurs (July 30, Beijing, China)



“Un an avec Tora san” held at the Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris (The Japan Cultural Institute in Paris) (Photo: JF, ©Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris/©Shochiku)



Japanese musical instrument concert to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Friendship between Japan and Bangladesh (October 15, Dhaka, Bangladesh)



NIHONGO Partners providing support in classes (September, Prachin Buri, Thailand; Photo: JF)

(3) People-to-People Exchange and Exchanges in the Area of Education and Sports

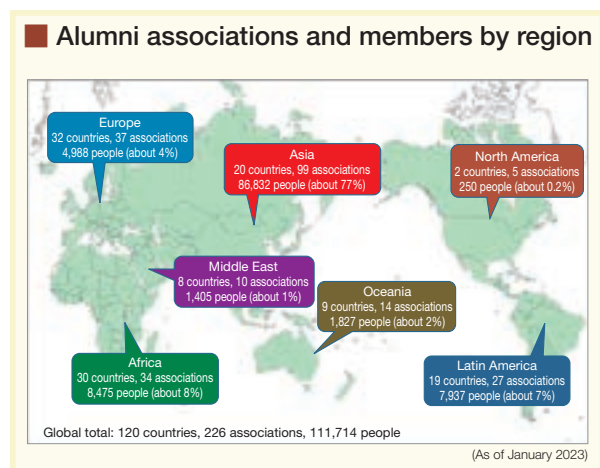
To build personal relationships and promote a better understanding of Japan, MOFA carries out a number of programs that invite foreign nationals who have a significant influence on shaping public opinion and the policymaking process and who are expected to play a leading role in various fields. In the area of education and sports, MOFA conducts various activities to promote people-to-people exchanges. These programs not only promote mutual understanding and friendships but also enhance Japan's presence in the international community, which considerably benefits Japan's national diplomatic interests.

A Student Exchange Programs

MOFA actively introduces the attractiveness and opportunities of studying in Japan to foreign students through Japanese diplomatic missions overseas, and implements application and screening procedures to grant the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship to promising students abroad. It also makes efforts to network with former foreign students who have

returned to their home countries through Japan Alumni Associations and to foster the circle of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan. In March, the second Japan Alumni Conference was held online following the inaugural event held in the previous year, and it was attended by participants from 50 countries. At the Conference, alumni from various countries gave presentations on best practices and future challenges, and strengthened networks among alumni from different countries through the social gathering (see the Column on page 328).

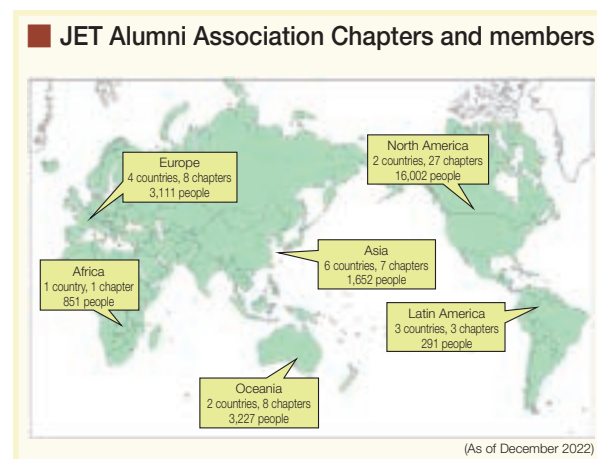
In May, the Launch Event for the Quad Fellowship was held at the Prime Minister's Office of Japan with the attendance of the four leaders of Japan, Australia, India, and the U.S.. This Fellowship was announced at the 2nd Quad Summit (September 2021) as an educational and people-to-people exchange cooperation program, and awards scholarships for studying in the U.S. to outstanding individuals in STEM fields (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) from the four countries. In December, the first 100 awardees (25 from each of the four countries) selected under the program were announced.



2022 marks the 70th anniversary of the Japan-U.S. Fulbright Program, a study abroad program between Japan and the U.S., and a commemorative ceremony was held in July. Under this Program, approximately 6,600 Japanese grantees have been sent to the U.S. and approximately 2,900 U.S. grantees have been accepted by Japan to date.

B JET Programme (The Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme)

The JET Programme was launched in 1987 to improve foreign language education in Japan and promote international exchange with Japanese citizens in local areas. This program is administered by local authorities and other organizations in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), MOFA, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), and the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR). Through the program, young foreign nationals are invited to Japan and appointed to posts in local governments and schools. MOFA is responsible for the application and screening process, pre-departure orientation, and support for the activities of the JET Alumni Association (JETAA), which operates in 18 countries and has about 25,000 members. With the relaxation of border measures in fiscal year (FY) 2022, 5,723 participants from 50 countries, including 2,038 new participants, were dispatched to all parts of Japan, and a total of about 75,000 people have participated in the JET programme to date as of December 31, 2022. JETAA conducts activities to introduce Japan in many countries. Many of those who went through the JET Programme are important human and diplomatic



JET information session at a career fair at the University of St. Thomas (September, Houston, U.S.)

assets for Japan, as they go on to work in a variety of fields around the world as supporters for Japan and experts of Japan.

C Sports Exchange

Sports enable communication beyond language and can be an effective tool for promoting friendly relations and a better understanding of Japan. To date, the Government of Japan has implemented the “Sport for Tomorrow (SFT)” program in the lead-up to the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020. Since FY 2022, a successor project to SFT has been ongoing to carry on the legacy of the Tokyo 2020 Games. Under the “Projects for Sports Diplomacy Enhancement” scheme, MOFA is engaged in sports exchange initiatives including providing support toward equipment transportation, thereby contributing to the development of bilateral relations. These projects enhance mutual understanding internationally and contribute to international peace by promoting diplomacy through sports and by nurturing people with a great

Column

Developing a Circle of Empathy Through the “WA Project: Toward Interactive Asia through Fusion and Harmony”

Dating back to a decade ago, at the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit Meeting held in Tokyo in December 2013 to mark the 40th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, former Prime Minister Abe announced the launch of a new policy for cultural exchange in Asia, “WA Project: Toward Interactive Asia through Fusion and Harmony.” In response to this, the Japan Foundation (JF), as the implementing agency of this Project, intensively implemented new initiatives in the areas of “arts and cultural exchanges” and “support for Japanese language education.” Targeted at ASEAN and the rest of Asia and lasting until the year of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, these initiatives were based on the motto of harmony and fusion in diversity, and emphasized two-way interactions on an equal footing while respecting the identity of each country.

In the “arts and cultural exchanges,” projects that connect Asia and Japan were carried out in various fields including arts, film/moving images, music and dance, performing arts, sports, as well as intellectual and people-to-people exchanges. In the football project, for example, numerous exchanges took place through dispatch and invitational visits by coaches, referees and others. At the end of the project, a select team named “ASIAN ELEVEN” was formed, comprising players from each of the 10 ASEAN member states as well as Timor-Leste. Through opportunities such as a friendly match with the “U-18 Tohoku Selection Team” held at the J-Village in Fukushima Prefecture, this project contributed to raising the standard of “Asian football,” and enhanced mutual understanding and exchanges within the region through football. Against this backdrop, the developments and remarkable progress of ASEAN football is attracting global attention, such as the announcement of the bid by the 10 ASEAN member states to jointly host the FIFA World Cup in 2034.

To date, JF has dispatched about 2,600 “NIHONGO Partners” to various countries and regions in Asia, with a focus on ASEAN member states, to “support Japanese language education.” These “NIHONGO Partners” serve as assistants to local Japanese language teachers in junior and senior high schools and other learning institutes in each respective country and region. Through local Japanese language classes and activities that introduce Japanese culture, “NIHONGO Partners” also deepen their own knowledge of the local language, culture, and society. As human resources with knowledge of Asia, they contribute to promoting coexistence with other cultures and intercultural understanding all over Japan upon their return.

To date, the “WA Project” has facilitated exchanges of approximately 7.31 million people in Japan and Asia, and has contributed to expanding the circle of empathy among people. The leaders of ASEAN member states and others have expressed their desire for the continuation of the project. In October 2020, then-Prime Minister Suga visited Viet Nam and Indonesia as the first overseas trip after assuming office. In his speech delivered at the Vietnam-Japan University, he announced, “I am hoping to announce attractive cultural exchange projects to succeed the “WA Project” on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Japan-ASEAN friendship and cooperation in 2023.” The year 2023, which marks the historical milestone of the 50th year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, is an excellent opportunity for launching new initiatives toward strengthening exchanges between Japan and ASEAN in anticipation of the future, and it is hoped that the circle of empathy fostered through the “WA Project” will continue to be passed on to future generations.



International friendly football match, “JapaFunCup” (June 2019, Fukushima Prefecture. ©JFA Photo: JF)



NIHONGO Partners introducing folded paper cranes (*origami*) at the assigned school (September, Thailand. Photo: JF)



NIHONGO Partners chatting with students and teachers at their assigned school (September, Thailand. Photo: JF)

Column

Japan Alumni Associations: Expanding the Circle of Japan

Veronica Eri Tamagawa Kojima, Vice President and Head of PR,
Mexican Association of Former Scholars of Japan – AMEJ
(Asociación Mexicana de Exbecarios del Japón, A.C.)

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A few years after returning to Mexico from Japan, where I earned a doctorate in arts and design, I went to a job fair for Japanese companies. With great surprise, I saw a large number of companies that I had not seen in Mexico before. I also noticed a significant increase in people interested in Japanese culture, especially among the youth, that extended from commercial products to the food market, language schools, film, theater, music, and the arts.

In 2018, as I was feeling the significant change of this new mindset towards Japan, a publication on social media announcing an event of the 130th Anniversary of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Mexico, organized by the Mexican Association of Former Scholars of Japan (AMEJ), caught my eye. This was the start of my involvement in AMEJ.

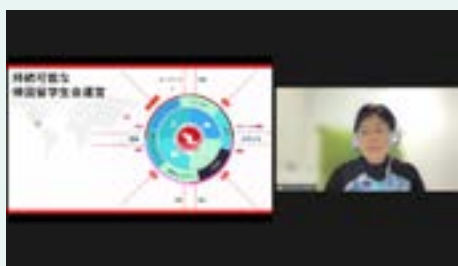
Thanks to the initiative of the Japanese Government, who stresses the importance of having alumni associations, there are currently 226 Alumni Associations, spread over 120 countries, with more than 110,000 members worldwide, of which 556 are from Mexico. The scope of AMEJ's activities, through the headquarters in the capital Mexico City and its six regional branches, covers most of Mexico, a country more than five times the size of Japan. Among its members, there are scholars who studied in various special fields in addition to Japanese language and Japanese culture.

Marking the 28th year since its establishment, AMEJ is functioning as an alumni network that brings together highly skilled human resources who had the wonderful opportunity of studying in Japan. At the same time, it has also engaged in outreach activities such as collaborating with the Embassy of Japan in Mexico to publicize opportunities to study abroad and conduct pre-departure orientations, holding seminars and cultural events related to Japan, organizing networking events that bring together Japanese and Mexican companies, researchers, and alumni students, and providing support to Japanese students studying in Mexico. In addition to



Promoting studying abroad in local cities

these, in light of the recent growing economic ties between the two countries, as shown by as many as 1,300 Japanese companies setting up bases in Mexico, AMEJ also cooperates with the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Mexico on economic-related events, such as the recruitment event that I mentioned at the beginning of this article.



The author giving a presentation at the Second Japan Alumni Conference

In 2022, AMEJ supported in-person activities of the Consulate-General of Japan in Leon, located in the Bajío region where many Japanese companies are based. We also strengthened ties with the Association of Japanese Scholars in Mexico (Nichi-Boku Koryukai), and we are in the process of connecting and creating alliances with alumni associations in Latin America and the Caribbean countries. Also, in view of the decline in the spread of COVID-19, we restarted the in-person activities and social gatherings in local Japanese restaurants to enjoy Japanese food and reminisce about our experiences in Japan, based on AMEJ's objective of strengthening the fraternity among its members. Moreover, at the Second Japan Alumni

Conference held in March, in which alumni from 50 countries participated, AMEJ had the opportunity to present the topic on the challenges and opportunities of our activities and we were able to strengthen our lateral ties while deepening our friendships with alumni from other countries.

Being a volunteer organization, our challenge has not only been financial sustainability, but we are operationally limited by work commitments and time constraints. Management must sustain the interest and interaction ties, and it has been relevant to keep the members committed. It has also been of the utmost importance to allow the passion

and commitment of future generations to grow, and we have needed strategies to encourage their collaboration. Placing an emphasis on these challenges, we will continue with our activities in the future.

Former international students of Japan are a treasure trove of a vast variety of professionals who can drive projects in the academic, economic, and humanitarian fields, and whose interests have been focused, committed, and emboldened by the experience of having studied in Japan. The source of energy for us former international students of Japan and Japan Alumni Associations is the knowledge we acquired and the friendships we made through the experience of studying in Japan. While I have mentioned various activities in Mexico as an example of one of the many Japan Alumni Associations around the world, at the root of these activities is our fervent desire to serve Japan's and our home country's society that influence us as human beings.

I would like the people of Japan to know that there are supporters of Japan among the former international students of Japan and the Japan Alumni Associations spread out across the world, and it is my hope that this wish can reach Japan from Mexico, as a neighbor across the Pacific Ocean. I wrote this column with the hope that we can cooperate together in any way we can for the benefit of Japan and the world.



A networking event in Mexico City



Presenting Japan-related books in local cities



OH Sadaharu speaking at the Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON) Symposium 2022 (October, Kyushu National Museum. Photo: JF)

affinity toward or knowledge of Japan. At the same time, they also improve the standing of Japan in the international arena.

D Japan's Friendship Ties Programs

With a view to expanding the basis for Japan's diplomacy, which develops bilateral and inter-regional relationships between Japan and countries and regions

in the Asia-Pacific, North America, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Japan's Friendship Ties Programs provide opportunities for multifaceted people-to-people exchanges to youths from various countries and regions, through invitations, dispatches, and online exchanges. In addition to promoting understanding of Japan, these projects also work to find and nurture people who will have great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan in the future. The Programs continued to be implemented online during the COVID-19 pandemic, but with the easing of Japan's border measures in 2022, in-person invitations and dispatches were finally resumed. Under the Japan's Friendship Ties Programs, online exchange and visit-Japan programs were newly launched to further deepen knowledge about Japan for Alumni who had previously visited Japan in person. These included attending lectures by Japanese experts in various fields such as politics, economics, society, culture, history, and diplomatic policies, observation tours in each field, and exchanges of opinions and cultural exchanges with the Japanese people. Program participants developed greater interest in Japan, built networks with the Japanese people,

and expanded their horizons. Furthermore, the sharing of experiences by youths from various countries and regions, such as what they have learnt through the programs and the places they have visited, on social media and through reports presented to their respective organizations, also contributes to promoting understanding of Japan in the international society and to enhancing Japan's image.

(4) Exchange in the Intellectual Field

A Japanese Studies

JF comprehensively supports a range of overseas research activities related to the politics, economy, society, and culture of Japan. In 2022, JF's Japanese Studies Fellowship Program provided 210 researchers with the opportunity to visit Japan.

JF also dispensed research grants, and provided support for expanding the collection of books on Japan and for organizing seminars and symposiums, including online events, to a total of 45 institutions of Japanese studies in 25 countries and regions in 2022. In addition, it provided support to academic societies with the goal of promoting network building among Japanese studies researchers and research institutions from various countries and regions. As a part of the projects to celebrate the 50th anniversary of JF, a special panel session based on the main theme of "Strengthening Human Capital Pipelines for Area Studies" was held in March in conjunction with the annual conference of the Association for Asian Studies (AAS). Approximately 1,500 participants attended the session conducted in hybrid format combining in-person and online formats.

B International Dialogue

MOFA also implements a Global Partnerships Program for international dialogues through JF. Specifically, it supported and co-hosted seminars and symposiums based on the themes of common international issues, and conducts exchanges by dispatching or inviting authors and other guests. In addition, with a view to deepening interest in and understanding of Japan at the grassroots level in the U.S., it planned and supported exchange projects that contribute to promoting dialogue at various levels, human resource development, and the establishment of interpersonal

networks. These include the implementation of the Japan Outreach Initiative (JOI) program, a Japan-U.S. grassroots exchange program that dispatches Japanese coordinators to the U.S.. At the Asahi World Forum 2022 (organized by The Asahi Shimbun Company) in October, JF implemented a special session entitled "Technology and Society: The Future and How We Shape It," a dialogue between Professor ISHIGURO Hiroshi (Osaka University), a leader in the field of android research, and Professor Yuval Noah Harari (Hebrew University of Jerusalem), historian and global bestselling author of "Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind" and other works.

C Japan-United States Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON)

CULCON is a panel where experts from the public and private sectors in Japan and the U.S. engage in discussions on culture, educational exchanges, and intellectual dialogues. In October, the U.S. CULCON panelists including the Chair Sheila Smith visited Japan, and a symposium based on the theme of mutual understanding between Japan and the U.S. was held at the Kyushu National Museum.

D Cooperation with the United Nations University (UNU)

The UNU is the only UN organization based in Japan, and it contributes to the international community through study and research on global issues and human resource development. Japan has been providing various forms of cooperation and support to the organization. In addition to contributing to stimulating discussions on the SDGs with the launch of the BIG IDEAS: SDGs Dialogue Series in May by Senior Vice-Rector of United Nations University and Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations SHIRAHASE Sawako, UNU also fulfills an important role in developing human resources who play an active role in the global arena, such as with the resumption of the in-person sessions of the UNU Conversation Series in September by then-Rector David Malone. In July, it was announced that Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Johannesburg Tshilidzi Marwala would assume office as the next Rector of UNU with

effect from March 2023. The UNU has also established Master's and Doctoral programs in its graduate school, and is making efforts to improve the quality of its global human resource development programs.

(5) Promotion of the Japanese Language

As the globalization of Japan's economy prompts more Japanese companies to do business overseas and Japanese pop culture finds increasing global popularity, interest in Japanese language is growing around the world, especially among young people. Further promotion of Japanese language overseas leads to a more favorable international environment for Japanese people and companies. A survey conducted by JF in FY 2021 found that approximately 3.79 million people in 141 countries and regions overseas learn Japanese. In 2019, the number of applicants for the Japanese Language Proficiency Test offered by JF (including those taking the test in Japan) reached a record high of about 1.37 million. The test has been conducted partially since 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the number of applicants has decreased. However, the number of applicants recovered to about 930,000 in 2022. Nevertheless, it is clear that a shortage of Japanese language teachers is a major challenge in the pursuit of satisfying the increasingly diverse interests in and needs concerning Japanese language learning in these many countries and regions.

Through JF, MOFA works to address the diverse needs related to Japanese language education overseas. For example, JF dispatches Japanese language specialists abroad, carries out training programs for Japanese language teachers, foreign-service officers and public officials, conducts Japanese language pre-training for nurse and care worker candidates under the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with Indonesia and the Philippines, encourages educational institutions in each country and region to introduce Japanese language education and supports Japanese language educational activities, develops teaching materials, runs e-learning programs, and promotes the "JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education," which corresponds with international standards for foreign language education.

To address labor force shortages brought about by declining birthrate and aging population in Japan,

Japan has begun to accept foreign nationals under the new residence status as "Specified Skilled Worker" since April 2019. Accordingly, through JF, MOFA is taking new measures, based on the "Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals" (decided upon at the December 25, 2018, Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals), that include conducting the Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese (JFT-Basic), which assesses the Japanese language ability of foreign nationals who come to Japan (by the end of 2022, a total of about 81,000 people have taken the test in 10 countries overseas and within Japan), as well as developing and disseminating learning materials and curriculum with the goal of fostering people's Japanese language ability effectively, and nurturing local Japanese language teachers who teach Japanese to those who wish to work in Japan.

(6) Cultural Grant Assistance

To promote culture, sports, and higher education in developing countries, as well as provide support for the improvement of facilities and the purchase of equipment to be used in the conservation of cultural heritage, thereby enhancing mutual understanding and friendly relations between Japan and these countries, the Government of Japan provides Cultural Grant Assistance as part of the Official Development Assistance (ODA). The assistance implemented in 2022 consisted of five Cultural Grant Assistance projects (totaling around 503.5 million Japanese yen) and 23 Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects (totaling around 197.4 million Japanese yen). In 2022, Cultural Grant Assistance was implemented with an emphasis on the provision of equipment for exhibiting, restoring, and preserving cultural assets in museums, while Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects centered on cooperation in promoting sports, particularly Japanese martial arts (*budo*), and Japanese language studies.

(7) Cooperation through United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

UNESCO is the first international organization that Japan became a member state of after the war, in 1951.

Japan is actively involved in a variety of UNESCO projects in the fields of education, science and culture. Since 1952, Japan has continued to serve as a member of the Executive Board of UNESCO, and was reelected in the election of Executive Board members held in November 2021. Japan also cooperates with UNESCO to provide support to developing countries in areas such as education, science, and culture.

In the field of culture, Japan is providing cooperation with the preservation and promotion of the world's tangible and intangible cultural heritage as well as the provision of support in the field of human resource development as its major pillars. It also participates proactively in international frameworks for the protection of cultural heritage. Representative efforts in this area include the provision of support for the restoration and preservation of Angkor monuments in Cambodia since 1994, and the restoration and preservation of the Bamiyan ruins in Afghanistan since 2003. In these projects, Japanese experts played a central role, and human resource development was undertaken to enable local people to protect such sites by themselves in the future. At the same time, Japan has also provided support for the development of conservation and management plans for heritage sites, as well as for their preservation and restoration. In recent years, Japan has also been providing support for human resource development to African countries and small island developing states to help them strike a balance between protecting cultural heritage and sustainable development. As for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, support is provided to projects to pass on traditional performing arts such as music, dance, and traditional arts and crafts to the next generation in developing countries, as well as projects involving development of domestic institutions and capacity building for relevant parties to enhance countries' ability to protect intangible cultural heritage by themselves.

In the field of education, on September 13, Japan deposited the instrument of acceptance of the Global Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education with the UNESCO Director-General. This Convention establishes the principles, criteria, and rights and obligations for recognizing or assessing higher-education qualifications, and provides for, among other things, the sharing of



Prime Minister Kishida received a courtesy call from UNESCO Director-General Azoulay (January 9, 2023, Paris, France; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

information on higher-education institutions. The conclusion of this Convention is expected to contribute to attracting international students to Japan and encouraging Japanese students to study abroad.

UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay has been promoting “Strategic Transformation” toward strengthening UNESCO, which includes reforms for the de-politicization of UNESCO and organizational reforms, and Japan has been consistently supporting the Director-General in her work. Japan will continue to contribute actively to UNESCO’s activities advanced under the leadership of Director-General Azoulay. In January 2023, Prime Minister Kishida received a courtesy call from Director-General Azoulay during his visit to France. Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan places importance on the role that UNESCO plays in the fields of education, culture and science, and that it has been contributing proactively over the years. Prime Minister Kishida also stated that Japan would like to further strengthen the relationship between Japan and UNESCO. In response, Director-General Azoulay expressed her appreciation for Japan’s financial support and stated that UNESCO would like to further strengthen cooperation with Japan, including support for Ukraine. Furthermore, both sides concurred to also cooperate in dealing with the World Heritage Committee.

A World Heritage Convention

The World Heritage Convention aims to protect cultural heritage and natural heritage internationally as heritage belonging to all mankind. Japan became

a party to the Convention in 1992 (as of December 2022, the number of parties to the convention is 194). The sites listed on the “World Heritage List” are known as “World Heritage Sites.” They are classified into “Cultural Heritage Sites” (monuments and remains), “Natural Heritage Sites” (natural areas) and “Mixed Heritage Sites” (sites with both cultural and natural elements). As of December 2022, a total of 1,154 World Heritage Sites are inscribed on the World Heritage List, including 20 cultural heritage sites and five natural heritage sites in Japan. The 45th Session of the World Heritage Committee, which had been scheduled to take place in Kazan in June with Russia as the Chair, was postponed due to Russia’s aggression against Ukraine.

With regard to the “Sites of Japan’s Meiji Industrial Revolution” the State of Conservation Report was submitted in November to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre based on the decision adopted by the World Heritage Committee in 2021. Japan will continue to respond sincerely to the relevant decisions.

With regard to the “Sado Island Gold Mines” nominated for World Heritage inscription in February, the nomination dossier was submitted once again to the UNESCO World Heritage Centre in January 2023. Japan will continue to work toward the inscription of the site, while continuing to engage in in-depth discussions with the relevant countries.

B Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage aims to develop an international system for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage such as traditional performing arts and traditional craftsmanship techniques (as of December 2022, the number of parties to the convention is 180). Japan, with abundant experience in safeguarding domestic intangible cultural properties, served as the chair of the intergovernmental working group reviewing the operational mechanism of this Convention, and led discussions by incorporating requests from developing countries. In November,

it was decided that Japan’s “Furyu-odori” would be inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity formulated based on this Convention. A nomination for the inscription of “Traditional knowledge and skills of *sake*-making with *koji* mold in Japan” in 2024 has been submitted to UNESCO.

C UNESCO Memory of the World Programme

The UNESCO Memory of the World Programme was established in 1992 to promote the safeguarding of and access to, and raise awareness of valuable archival heritage. As of December 2022, 429 items have been inscribed under the international register.

The fact that member states could not be involved in the assessment process of the nominations under the previous mechanism, even in the cases where there are clear discrepancies of views between the concerned member states, is not consistent with the founding principle of UNESCO: promoting friendly ties and mutual understanding among member states. After 2017, submission of new nominations was suspended, and Japan led the comprehensive review process of the programme. As a result, a new mechanism was approved by the UNESCO Executive Board in April 2021, under which nominations are submitted through the governments of member states. Additionally, a contestation system was newly established, which keeps nominations over which member states have conflicting views on hold until dialogues between the concerned countries have been concluded. With the completion of the review process, the call for new nominations resumed in July the same year. In November 2021, Japan submitted two nominations to UNESCO: “Three Comprehensive Printed Editions of the Buddhist Canon Held in Zojoji of the Jodo Shu”, nominated by Religious Corporation Jodo Shu and Jodo Shu Principal Temple Zojoji, and “the Monk Enchin Archives: A History of Japan-China Cultural Exchange”, nominated by Onjo-ji Temple and Tokyo National Museum.

Chapter 4

Japan's Diplomacy Open to the Public

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Chapter 4

Section 1 Japanese Society and People Deepening Their Ties with the World

1 Japan's Growth and Acceptance of Foreign Nationals

(1) Growth Strategy and Visa System

At the end of March 2016, the Government of Japan formulated the “Tourism Vision to Support the Future of Japan,” heading toward a new nation-building as an “advanced tourism nation.” It set new goals for the number of inbound international visitors¹ to 40 million in 2020 and 60 million in 2030. Given this context, and from the perspective of promoting people-to-people exchanges and strengthening bilateral relations, etc., with other countries, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) had been implementing a relaxation of visa requirements, including simplification of application documents and expansion of targeted persons for certain visas issuance. Through these efforts, inbound international visitors numbered 31.88 million in 2019 (source: Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO), 2020 Visitor Arrivals & Japanese Overseas Travelers).

However, the number of inbound international visitors dropped significantly in and after 2020 due to the impact of strengthened border measures imposed by Japan and other foreign countries in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Japan then began to gradually relax its border measures in March 2022, while balancing the prevention of the spread of the infections and maintenance of socioeconomic activities. On October 11, along with the resumption of individual tourism and the abolishment of the limit of the total number of entrants, visa exemption measures that had been temporarily suspended were resumed (meanwhile, in light of the acute deterioration of infectious situations and the difficulty of obtaining detailed information in China, since December 30, Japan has taken provisional measures such as requiring travelers from China to take an on-arrival test and to submit a certificate of negative result of a COVID-19 test (as of

the end of January 2023)). The abovementioned series of relaxation of border measures led to the increase of the number of inbound international visitors between October and December 2022 up to approximately 2.8 million people, indicating a trend of the recovery (37.6% compared with the number of the same period in 2019, before the COVID-19 pandemic as calculated based on the preliminary figures published in JNTO's 2022 Visitor Arrivals & Japanese Overseas Travelers (compared with 2019)). As the relaxation of visa requirements is expected to have a certain effect on promoting people-to-people exchanges and Japan's economic growth, it is an important measure to boost the recovery of inbound tourism after the relaxation of border measures.

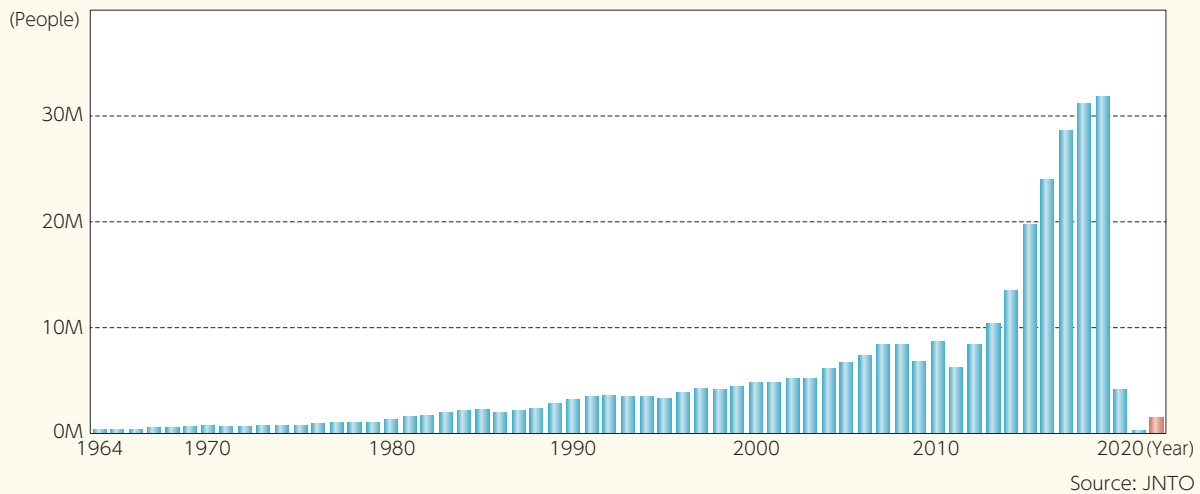
Meanwhile, from the perspective of preventing the entry of criminals and foreign visitors planning to work illegally, as well as those who could become victims of human trafficking, intensifying visa control is also an important challenge. MOFA will keep considering the relaxation of visa requirements in order to increase the number of foreign visitors to Japan while maintaining “Japan as the safest country in the world,” and to contribute to making Japan a tourism-oriented country both in quality and quantity by attracting wealthy, repeat, and younger visitors. MOFA intends to consider this relaxation of visa requirements while taking into account bilateral relations, its diplomatic significance, and other factors in a comprehensive manner, as well as considering its balance with border measures.

(2) Hosting Foreign Human Resources and Their Social Integration

With Japan's declining birthrate, aging population, and shrinking population, in order to address worsening labor shortages faced by various businesses including

¹ Inbound international visitors are foreign travelers entering Japan. This group consists of foreign nationals legally entering Japan minus foreign nationals who are residents of Japan (both according to the nationality-based statistics by the Ministry of Justice), plus those in transit.

■ Number of inbound international visitors to Japan by year



small- and medium-sized businesses and small-scale enterprises, a “Specified Skilled Worker” system was established in April 2019 for accepting work-ready foreign nationals with certain expertise and skills into some industries, which continued to face difficulties in securing human resources despite efforts that were made to improve productivity and secure human resources domestically. MOFA, as one of the organizations related to this system alongside the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the National Police Agency, prepares Memorandums of Cooperation (MOC) that set out the frameworks for information partnerships with the countries of origin, and participates in bilateral discussions based on those MOCs. MOFA also undertakes public relations efforts

in the local languages of the main countries of origin.

Furthermore, “the Ministerial Meeting on accepting and coexisting with foreign human resources” was established to conduct a government-wide, comprehensive discussion on developing the environment for accepting new foreign human resources and realizing a society in which Japanese nationals coexist with foreign nationals living in Japan. In June, the “Comprehensive Measures for Accepting and Coexisting with Foreign Human Resources” (revised 2022) were decided upon. Furthermore, every year MOFA hosts the “International Forum on Acceptance of Foreign Nationals and Their Integration into Japan,” aiming to encourage debate among the people by providing opportunities to discuss concrete challenges and measures.

2 Japanese Continuing Working in the International Community

(1) Japanese Continuing Working in International Organizations

International organizations are founded to serve the common interest of the international community. People of various nationalities join these international organizations, and draw on their skills and traits to create an environment where people of the world can live in peace and enjoy prosperity. There are many international organizations working to solve global issues that cannot be addressed by individual countries, including Russia’s aggression against Ukraine, the

global pandemic of COVID-19, the environment, climate change, sustainable development, disarmament/non-proliferation, conflict prevention/peacebuilding, food, energy, disaster prevention, education, labor, human rights/humanitarian issues, and gender equality.

Talented individuals with specialized knowledge, passion and capabilities to contribute to the world’s interests are needed so that international organizations can competently perform their duties and fulfill the roles expected of them. As a member country of these international organizations, Japan, in addition

to policy contributions, makes assessed and voluntary contributions. Furthermore, it can be said that the activities and services of Japanese staff are, in a broad sense, also Japan's contributions. Additionally, a larger number of talented Japanese people continuing working in international organizations will further enhance Japan's presence in the international community more visibly. Japanese staff are involved in various fields and duties at different locations, but they share the same goal of solving various issues facing the international community (see the Columns on pages 339 and 340). Moreover, encouraging the employment of more Japanese nationals who can continue working on the international stage with professional experience at international organizations will in turn lead to enrichment of Japan's human resources, contributing to the development of Japan as a whole.

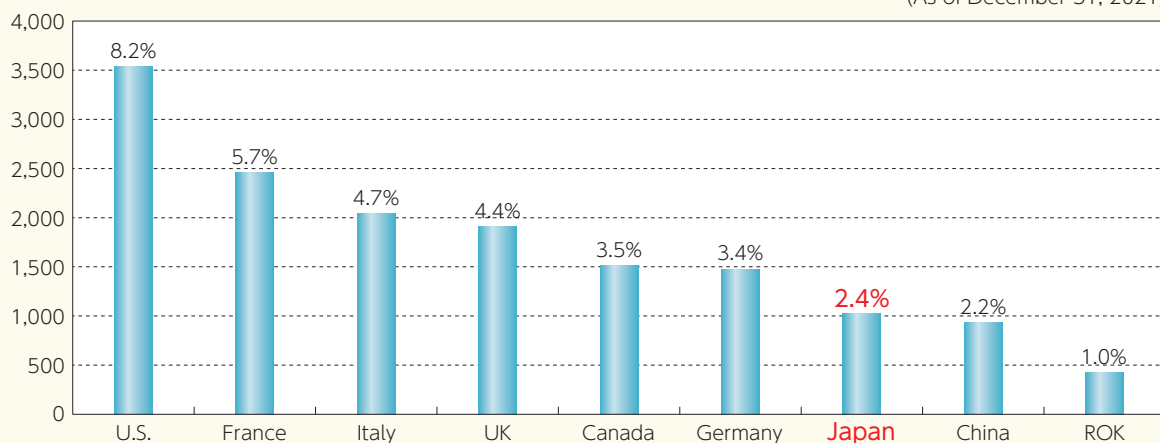
Currently, Japanese nationals are serving in important posts at international organizations that include the United Nations (UN). Japanese nationals are actively performing leadership roles at organizations such as the Universal Postal Union (UPU), a specialized agency of the UN that Mr. METOKI Masahiko assumed leadership of in January 2022, the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the Asian Development Bank (ADB). In addition, for many years Japan has sent a succession of Japanese judges to international courts such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)

and the International Criminal Court (ICC). In light of the importance of international organizations for addressing global challenges, securing the top and other important posts that contribute to strengthening ties between Japan and international organizations, including as the heads of international organizations, is an important challenge. On the other hand, the top and other important posts of international organizations, are not something that can be secured overnight. It is necessary to make a finely-tuned response by adopting a long-term perspective while cultivating suitable personnel.

Currently, 956 Japanese nationals (as of the end of 2021; figures gathered by MOFA) are working as professional-level or higher-level staff in UN-related agencies around the world, which is a record figure. With the aim of further increasing such Japanese personnel, the Government of Japan has set a target of 1,000 Japanese working for UN-related agencies by 2025. To this end, in collaboration with universities, related ministries and agencies, and organizations, MOFA is actively recruiting, training and supporting Japanese nationals who can continue working in the international organizations and make a contribution on the global stage. As part of this effort, MOFA runs the Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme, which sends young Japanese nationals to positions in international organizations for a term of two years in principle, with the aim of gaining regular staff positions

■ Number of Staff Members at UN-related Agencies by Nationality (professional or higher)

(As of December 31, 2021)



Note 1: This graph includes the number of professional staff members or higher with a term of one year or longer.

Note 2: The percentage represents the ratio against the total number of employees (43,189).

Note 3: Calculation method differs from that of MOFA.

Source: Created by MOFA from UN document (CEB/2021/HLCM/HR/4)

Column

Voices of People Who Have Been Supporting Activities of the United Nations

International Security in a Turbulent Era -Leading UN Disarmament Efforts

NAKAMITSU Izumi, UN Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs

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Russia's invasion of Ukraine, which began in February 2022, has become a major challenge to the international order based on the UN Charter. The impact of the invasion has extended beyond the boundaries of Ukraine's neighborhood, creating ripple effects that have been felt by developing countries through a three-pronged global crisis of food, energy, and finance. Today, we are experiencing a period of increased turbulence in which multiple crises are simultaneously escalating across the globe. These include growing tensions between major powers that may exacerbate global instability and further divisions, the proliferation of conflicts and military coups d'états, the global backlash against human rights, the increasingly intensifying impact of the climate crisis, deepening disparities and inequalities, which NGO Oxfam International defines as "economic violence," and sweeping technological advancements that regulatory frameworks have not been able to keep up with.

Disarmament affairs, which I oversee at the UN, is an area closely linked to security. Today, in the field of disarmament, it is becoming difficult to see the kind of progress we have experienced in the post-Cold War era, especially in the face of heightened international tensions.

The challenges in the field of disarmament are manifold. These range from the elimination of weapons of mass destruction - such as nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons - that threaten the very survival of humankind, the restriction and effective control of conventional weapons such as small arms and light weapons, which are the main cause of casualties in most conflicts, and efforts to ensure and preserve peace in new domains of human activity such as outer space and cyberspace. These are coupled with new challenges such as preventing the adverse security risks emanating from artificial intelligence and all types of emerging technology. Emerging technologies might fundamentally change the landscape of war and conflict in ways we cannot even imagine, just as nuclear weapons did. To respond to these challenges, multilateral normative efforts at the UN have become more acute and critical than ever.

Against this constantly evolving backdrop, our role at the UN Office for Disarmament Affairs is to support discussions and negotiations among Member States. We identify new issues and challenges, analyze them, and propose a range of possible options to address them based on substantive expertise. In multilateral discussions, we provide support and advice to the Chairpersons and Member States and help broker compromises between the diverging views of Member States as needed. We maintain close dialogue with all Member States, work to understand their various positions, and support efforts to find common ground between them. Once consensus has been formed, we provide support to Member States so that they are able to implement the agreement in their national contexts. A lot of hard work goes on behind the scenes, day and night.

Is disarmament even possible in today's deteriorating international security environment? I will give you an example: the Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) held in August 2022 failed to adopt a final outcome document. However, this was due to opposition from one country. Even in today's difficult environment, all state parties seriously engaged in discussions relating to nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy during the Review Conference. I believe the fact that we were so close to consensus demonstrates the shared understanding that multilateral disarmament negotiations continue to have a strong value. Indeed, disarmament and arms control negotiations are not at all idealistic notions, but practical and realistic instruments for security. Indeed, the 9th Review Conference of the Biological Weapons Convention held in December 2022 adopted its final document by consensus after



The author briefing the UN Security Council under the agenda item "threats to international peace and security." (December, New York, the U.S. Photo: UN Office for Disarmament Affairs)

tough negotiations, despite the global security context. The steps agreed to strengthen the Convention were the most important ones taken in the last 20 years.

In September 2021, UN Secretary-General Guterres launched his vision for our collective future on the globe in his “Our Common Agenda.” As part of the follow-up work envisaged in this document, my office together with other entities of the UN’s peace and security pillar, have developed the Secretary-General’s report on the “New Agenda for Peace.” This New Agenda has a strong focus on disarmament issues and creates entry points for a new vision for disarmament mentioned in “Our Common Agenda.”

I recall the famous words of former Secretary-General of the UN, Dag Hammarskjöld, someone I very much respect, who said “the UN was not created to take mankind to heaven, but rather to save humanity from hell.” In these turbulent times we are going through, I strongly believe that the efforts of the UN are needed more than ever to bring us to a safer future.



Opening of the photo exhibition “Women Making the World Safe from Biological and Toxin Weapons: 50 Years of the BWC” (the author is the fourth from the right) (November, Geneva, Switzerland. Photo: UN Office for Disarmament Affairs)



The signature and ratification ceremony for the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (the author is in the center) (September, New York, the U.S. Photo: UN Office for Disarmament Affairs)

Column

Voices of People Who Have Been Supporting Activities of the United Nations United Nations Staff = What is the role of a Facilitator?

TANAKA Tetsuya, Chief of the Climate Change Section, the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)

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The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO, headquarters: Montreal, Canada) formulates a variety of international rules for the orderly development of international aviation, and consensus documents are developed by government representatives from 193 Member States (Contracting States to the Chicago Convention), including Japan, through discussions on these rules at various levels, from high-level ministerial meetings to expert-level committees and working groups. International rules agreed upon at ICAO are then implemented based on the domestic laws and regulations of each Member State (such as Japan’s Civil Aeronautics Act).

Compared to the field of aviation safety and other fields, the environmental protection that I am in charge of, and particularly the topic of climate change, is a relatively new field within ICAO, and when I joined the ICAO Secretariat in 2008 my work was like painting on a blank canvas. There were no CO₂ reduction goals for international aviation, almost no CO₂ reduction measures being developed, and no implementation support, or follow-up mechanisms. Thereafter, continuous progress has been made at the ICAO Assembly held every three years; in 2010 an agreement was reached on a medium-term CO₂ reduction goal and the development of State Action Plans for the international aviation sector; in 2013 an agreement was reached to develop a global market mechanism to achieve the medium-term goal in 2016



The author in the ICAO Headquarters Council Chamber. After working in the Civil Aviation Bureau at the Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, he has been working at the ICAO Secretariat since 2008, and has been in his current position since 2015.

a historic agreement was reached on the specific Carbon Off setting and Reduction Scheme for International Aviation (CORSIA) system; in 2019 an agreement was reached to explore the feasibility of a long-term sectoral goal and in 2022, the most recent ICAO Assembly, an agreement was reached on “Net-Zero 2050” as a long-term global aspirational goal for international aviation.



Standing ovation when the CORSIA was agreed to at the ICAO Assembly in 2016



In climate change discussion under ICAO, there are two major reasons that make it difficult to reach a consensus on international rules. The first is how to achieve the competing goals of reducing emissions, which are the primary focus of climate change measures, without impeding the orderly growth of aviation. The second is how to integrate the principle of the historical responsibility of developed countries for climate change, which is included in the so-called Kyoto Protocol and Paris Agreement, with ICAO’s principle of non-discriminatory treatment of countries in the international aviation sector, where the emissions themselves are transnational, without causing market distortions.

Over the above two issues, the positions of the governments of the ICAO’s 193 Member States are always sharply divided. It is not just a simple dichotomy between developed and developing countries. It is not true that the so-called developed countries are all lined up behind the same position. For example, the position between European countries, which are environmentally advanced, and the rest of the developed world sometimes differ completely. On top of this, some developing countries show a more active position in reducing emissions and in consensus building at ICAO than some developed countries.

As the ICAO Secretariat and as the “facilitator” for these discussions, the most difficult, and conversely, the most exciting aspect of my role is to listen to such diversified positions of the various countries while supporting the Chairperson of meetings/conferences in moving the discussions forward. When the positions between countries are far apart then the Secretariat sometimes provides a middle position proposal that is difficult for any country to propose directly, and then, we have to promote discussions and update the proposal as the discussions progress, in order to increase the support base and eventually secure a large majority support toward an agreement by all. Additionally, we need to prepare a variety of scenarios in advance in order to create this kind of discussion flow in a proactive manner.

Going forward, from the beginning of 2023, discussions intensify toward achieving the long-term goal of “Net-Zero 2050” for the international aviation sector, a goal that was agreed upon at the recent ICAO Assembly. The ICAO Secretariat cannot make any decisions by itself, but it facilitates discussions and can offer proposals to help reach final decisions by the Member States. This is also a job that requires a sense of calm and foresight to know each country’s position and how far forward a compromise can be agreed upon. I believe that the ICAO Secretariat has a significant role to play in making substantial progress toward addressing climate change issues in international aviation at ICAO, and that ICAO will ultimately be recognized by the world as an organization that continues to lead the way on this issue.

in such organizations after the term. MOFA also runs a program to support the advancement of Japanese nationals who can be future managerial candidates by offering them mid-career and higher professional experience. In addition to encouraging the employment of more Japanese nationals through these efforts, MOFA is also working to coordinate with international organizations and gather information for the employment and promotion of Japanese staff.

For Japanese nationals who wish to work for international organizations, the MOFA Recruitment Center for International Organizations continually provides useful information of vacancy announcements at international organizations on its official website, and through mailing lists, social media such as Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn, and video sharing platforms such as YouTube. In addition, the MOFA Recruitment Center for International Organizations works on publicity to provide online career seminars explaining the attractiveness of working at international organizations and methods to apply for a job, and also online explanatory sessions with invited senior Japanese staff working for international organizations and human resource specialists from international organizations.

MOFA will continue to encourage the employment of more Japanese nationals working in international organizations and support their promotion, so that a larger number of competent Japanese nationals who have high aspirations and passion to contribute to solving global issues can take part in international organizations.

(2) Activities of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

A Development Cooperation

NGOs can play significant role in development cooperation and humanitarian assistance as players that provide support to various nations, including developing countries. MOFA supports these NGOs' efforts in light of conducting comprehensive diplomacy through leveraging the capabilities of organizations other than the Government.

Through NGOs, MOFA actively provides Official Development Assistance (ODA) via financial cooperation in the form of grant assistance (Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects) for economic and social development projects implemented by Japanese NGOs



Psychological first aid for refugees in three regions in Western Ukraine
(photo: IVY and its associate organization STEP-IN)

in developing countries and regions. The projects cover a wide range of assistance, including health, medical and hygienic care, rural development, and support for people with disabilities, education, disaster risk reduction, and the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnances (UXO). In FY2021, MOFA provided funding for 96 projects to Japanese NGOs (51 organizations) implementing Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects in 35 countries and one region, including Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America and the Caribbean (see the Special Feature on page 343). Moreover, the NGO Project Subsidies are provided to improve the project execution capabilities and expertise of NGOs and to support activities that contribute to the promotion of NGO projects.

Additionally, Japan Platform (JPF) was established in 2000 with the aim of conducting emergency humanitarian assistance more effectively and promptly through cooperation and partnerships among the Government, NGOs, and business communities at the time of large-scale natural disasters or conflicts. As of the end of December 2022, 45 NGOs are members of JPF. In 2022, JPF implemented response programs for the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine (support for displaced persons in Ukraine and nearby countries) and for the food crisis resulting from the impact of rising food, fuel, and feed prices, etc., due to the situation over Ukraine. It also implemented a support program for the humanitarian crisis in Myanmar (support for displaced persons in Myanmar), an earthquake victim support program in eastern Afghanistan, and a flood victim support program in Pakistan, as well as support for refugees and internally displaced persons in

Special Feature

20th anniversary of Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects – Toward the Next 20 Years

Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects was established in 2002 by consolidating Japanese NGO programs and other programs within the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Projects (currently “Grant Assistance For Grassroots Human Security Projects”). In 2022, this program is celebrating its 20th anniversary. Through this framework, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) provides Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Japanese NGOs for economic and social development projects in developing countries and regions. With the goal of “leave no one behind,” Japanese NGOs are effectively reaching the most vulnerable people, such as the poor, women, the elderly, refugees, and internally displaced persons, who are difficult to reach through assistance from governments and international organizations alone. NGO support activities are closely related to local communities in each developing country, and are able to respond in detail to the support needs of the local population, thereby making it possible to provide assistance at the grassroots level, a true example of “visible development cooperation.”

From FY2002 to FY2021, a total of approximately 61.9 billion yen has been provided to 74 countries and 1 region. The projects cover a wide range of areas, including education, agriculture and forestry, medicine and health, disaster risk reduction, water and hygiene, and the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnances. In FY2021, approximately 5.7 billion yen in funding assistance was provided for 96 projects. The amount of funding provided has increased approximately 10-fold since program began in FY2002.

MOFA will continue to support NGO activities and will further strengthen its cooperation with NGOs, which are “important partners to the government in development cooperation,” and utilize their knowledge to achieve more effective and efficient ODA.



Opening ceremony of a school in Nepal (Photo: Shanti Volunteer Association)

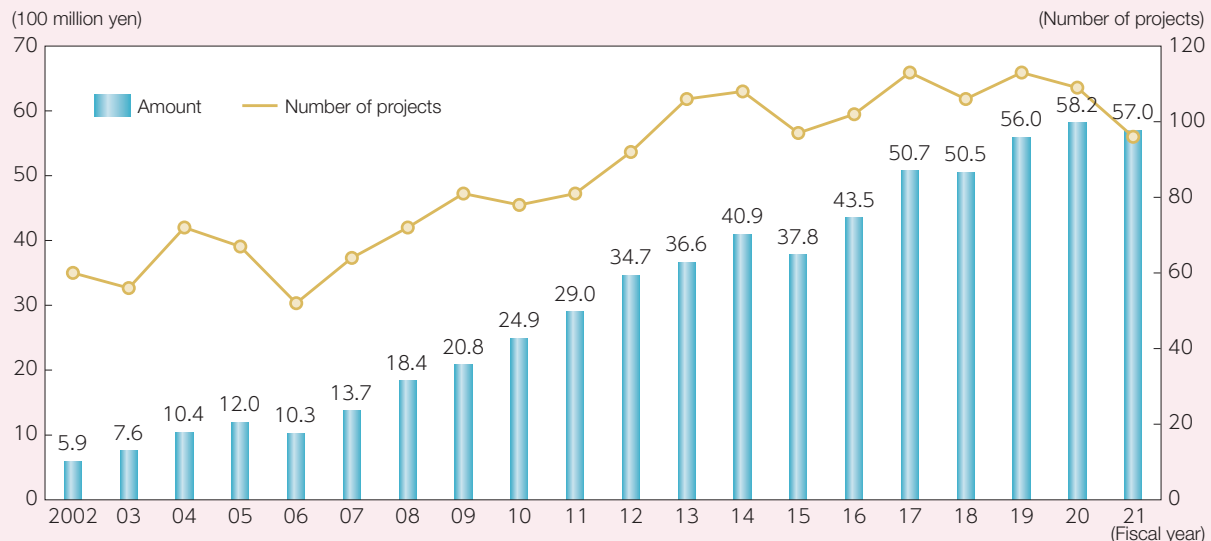


Students studying in a PC classroom in Iraq (Photo: IVY)



Maintenance committee discussing infrastructure that was constructed in a Myanmar project (Photo: Terra People Association)

Changes in the amounts and number of Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects over the past 20 years



Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Mozambique, South Sudan and neighboring countries, Uganda, Yemen, Venezuela, Afghanistan, Palestine, Iraq, and Syria.

In this way, NGOs assume important roles in the area of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. Identifying such NGOs as partners in international cooperation, MOFA and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provide indirect support for NGO activities through various policy measures aimed at enhancing their capability and expertise as well as developing human resources so that NGOs can strengthen the foundation for their activities and perform further tasks. In 2022, MOFA implemented four programs – namely, the “NGO Consultant Scheme,” “NGO Study Program,” “NGO Intern Program” and “NGO Study Group.”

The plenary meeting of the NGO-MOFA Regular Consultation Meeting, the purpose of which is to promote dialogue and coordination between NGOs and MOFA, was held in November. Meetings of the ODA Policy Council, where opinions are exchanged on general ODA policies, were held online in March, July and November, while meetings of the Partnership Promotion Committee to discuss support and cooperation measures for NGOs were also held online in January, July, and December. Furthermore, an extraordinary plenary session was held in September regarding revisions to the Development Cooperation Charter. In addition, based on the understanding that multi-stakeholder partnerships and engagement is indispensable to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), MOFA has been exchanging views with various stakeholders, including NGOs, at the “SDGs Promotion Roundtable Meeting” established in September, 2016.

B Partnership in Other Major Diplomatic Areas

The Government of Japan holds dialogues with civil society including NGO representatives and experts on matters related to government reports to be submitted based on various human rights treaties, as well as on implementation of the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, the National Action Plan to End Violence Against Children and the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, which is based on the UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution 1325 and related resolutions.

In the area of conventional weapons, MOFA works in cooperation with NGOs in implementing clearance of mines and UXOs, and mine risk education projects, in countries affected by mines and UXOs.

Furthermore, in the area of nuclear disarmament, MOFA has been conducting dialogues with various NGOs and experts. The Government supports the activities of NGOs and others to convey the realities of nuclear weapons use to the international community, through the commissioned projects known as the “Special Communicator for a World without Nuclear Weapons” and the “Youth Communicator for a World without Nuclear Weapons.” As of December 2022, a total of 302 Special Communicators on 102 occasions and a total of 569 Youth Communicators on 42 occasions have been dispatched to the world through these commission programs.

With regard to countermeasures to combat transnational organized crime, coordination with civil society, such as NGOs, is essential, especially in the field of trafficking in persons. In this respect, the Government actively exchanges opinions with NGOs and other stakeholders to identify recent trends of trafficking in persons and to examine effective measures to address this crime.

(3) Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, Experts and Others

The Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV, JICA Volunteer Program) is a JICA program aimed at providing cooperation and assistance for the socio-economic development of the communities of developing countries. In the program, Japanese nationals from 20 to 69 years of age with skills, knowledge, and experience live and work together with local people in these countries while fostering mutual understanding with these people. As of the end of March 2022, 54,772 JOCVs have been dispatched to 98 countries in total since the program's launch in 1965. The dispatched volunteers have been engaged in about 190 types of work in nine sectors: planning/administration, commerce/tourism, public utility works, human resources, agriculture/forestry/fishery, health/medical care, mining, social welfare, and energy.

Ex-volunteers have been contributing to Japanese society through initiatives such as sharing their

Column

International Cooperation through Judo: Receipt of Medal from the President of the Country of Appointment

IWAHORI Tomokazu, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) (Speciality: *Judo*),
Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

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I started *judo* when I was four years old, but a major turning point came when I was at university. I participated in an overseas training program in *judo* and was impressed by the foreign children's attitude toward learning and their fearlessness. Later, when I became a working adult, I wanted to do something to give back through *judo* after practicing it for so many years, so I applied for the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer program. The spread of COVID-19 delayed my dispatch for about a year, but I was finally able to land in Madagascar in December 2021.

Currently I promote *judo* and coach the national team as a member of the Malagasy *Judo* Federation. When I was first dispatched to Madagascar, I was shocked to see that there were no *tatami* mats in the *judo dojo* (hall used for martial arts training) and that the *judoka* (*judo* players) practiced in torn *judo* uniforms, which was different from the environment in Japan. However, upon closer observation, I was delighted to see the *judoka* "bowing as they entered and left the *dojo*," which is *judo* etiquette in Japan. At the same time, I was also moved by the fact that *judo*, which was established by the master KANO Jigoro, has infiltrated so far into Madagascar, a country far away from Japan. This gave me the strength to continue my activities in this country.

After five months had passed since my dispatch to Madagascar and I was gradually getting used to living in the country I was dispatched to, I received a request from my organization to coach the national team that would compete in the African *Judo* Championships. I accompanied the team to a training camp for about a month, and four athletes from the team competed in the finals held in Algeria. Although they did not win a prize, all of them were able to win their first round in an international tournament where they had often lost the first round in the past. It was decided that I would continue coaching them for the next competition, too. As a result of the appreciation for my coaching, the Federation asked me to accompany two *judoka* as a coach to the African Junior Championships Individuals held in Kenya in July. At this competition, I helped one *judoka* place third in the men's 73 kg weight class, and the other place first in the women's 70 kg weight class.

Thanks to the splendid results at the international competition, the *judoka* and I were awarded the Medal of Sports Merit by the President of Madagascar. At this moment I realized that I was not wrong in my coaching methods, and at the same time, I was proud of the Madagascan athletes who practice in a tough environment and are active in international competitions.

In the future, I plan to coach the national team with the goal of competing in the Olympic and Paralympic Games Paris 2024. I also plan to promote *judo* in the hope that young people in Madagascar will learn the decorum of *judo* and be brought up to be people who are considerate of others.

Additionally, I would like to contribute to Japan's international cooperation through *judo*.



Receiving the medal from the President of Madagascar with the *judoka* (the author is on the right)



Ceremony to present *Judo* uniforms donated by Fukui Prefecture and the NPO JUDOs (the author is third from the right)

experiences in educational, regional and business activities. These unique participatory initiatives by Japan have been highly appreciated and expected both within and outside of Japan, including recipient countries.

Although dispatches of JOCVs had been temporarily suspended due to the spread of COVID-19, since November 2020, JOCVs have been dispatched once again, to the countries where the conditions for dispatch had been met, taking into account the COVID-19 situation and other factors (see the Column on page 345).

JICA experts with specialized knowledge, insights, skills, and experience are dispatched to governmental agencies and other sites in developing countries. The experts provide high-level policy advice and transfer necessary skills and knowledge to government officials and engineers of the partner countries. Furthermore, they work together with their counterparts to develop, promote and disseminate technologies and systems

that are suitable to each country's context. These experts actively engage in a wide range of sectors, including those addressing basic human needs such as health/medical care and water/sanitation, and those of socio-economic development such as legal system development and formulation of urban planning. They contribute to the social and economic development of developing countries and to fostering mutual trust between Japan and developing countries through their activities.

A total of 2,583 experts were newly dispatched to 95 countries and regions in FY2021, showing a recovery trend from the impact of the global spread of COVID-19. Experts who are on standby in Japan due to the difficulties in traveling to their destination are carrying out their duties remotely while staying in touch with their counterparts.

3 Cooperation with Local Governments

Regional revitalization is one of the priority issues of the Cabinet. MOFA also actively works on the issue and strives to deploy measures that strengthen comprehensive diplomatic capabilities through collaboration with regions.

In Japan, as part of efforts to support regional revitalization, the Foreign Minister and respective prefectural governor invite members of diplomatic corps to Japan, foreign chambers of commerce and industry, and tourism-related parties in Japan to the Iikura House, co-hosting receptions and setting up booths as means of broadly promoting the various charms of regions to audiences both in Japan and abroad.

In 2022, MOFA and Fukushima Prefecture co-hosted the “Fukushima Revitalization Reception - Continuing to Take on New Challenges,” on July 25 in Happon-en² in Tokyo, which was attended by approximately 140 guests. At the event, Foreign Minister Hayashi asked for guests' understanding and support for widely disseminating and promoting accurate information about Fukushima's food, tourism, and

other diverse attractiveness to their respective countries and regions. During a presentation entitled “Future of Fukushima,” the Governor of Fukushima Prefecture UCHIBORI Masao spoke about the Prefecture's latest status of reconstruction and challenges toward its revitalization. Along with providing information about its tourism, food, traditional arts and crafts, and other areas, Fukushima Prefecture broadly promoted the region's diverse attractiveness and efforts through



Foreign Minister Hayashi listening to Fukushima governor Uchibori at the Fukushima Revitalization Reception (July 25, Tokyo)

² Event held at Happon-en in Tokyo as the Iikura House was undergoing construction at the time

activities such as *samurai* and *fula* dance performances by local artists. This reception served as an opportunity to promote further exchanges between participants, including the co-hosting prefecture, diplomatic corps, foreign chambers of commerce and industry, and company representatives.

Furthermore, Foreign Minister Hayashi and State Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKEI Shunsuke conducted the “Local to Global” project to promote the attractiveness of regional areas of Japan worldwide. Through the project, the Foreign Minister and State Minister for Foreign Affairs visit Japan’s regions together with members of diplomatic corps in Japan. The project provides opportunities for diplomatic corps to experience the attractiveness and gain a better understanding of a region through communication with local people, with the goal of encouraging those participating diplomatic corps to disseminate their experience with the people of their own countries, promoting inbound demand. The project also aims at further stimulating local economies through dialogues between the Foreign Minister and local residents (see Chapter 4, Section 3,1-(4)). Foreign Minister Hayashi and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei also visited Nagasaki Prefecture in November with diplomatic corps members, followed by visits to Miyagi and Yamagata Prefectures in December.

Moreover, MOFA, together with local governments and others, co-organize Regional Promotion Seminars to disseminate local policies and attractive points, such as local products, tourism, industry, and investment, for members of diplomatic corps to Japan, foreign chambers of commerce and industry, related companies, and other organizations. At the event held on October 14,



“Local to Global” project: Foreign Minister Hayashi inspecting the exterior of Oura Cathedral (November 12, Nagasaki Prefecture)



Presentation by a participating local government organization at a Regional Promotion Seminar (October 14, Tokyo)

representatives from Yamagata Prefecture, Takayama City in Gifu Prefecture, Sapporo City in Hokkaido, and Kuroishi City in Aomori Prefecture promoted the attractiveness of their regions through presentations, introduced local specialties and tourist attractions through exchanges with participants, performed traditional performing arts, and ran booths. These events have been received by attendees as valuable opportunities to directly experience the attractiveness of regional Japan while being in Tokyo. They also contribute to promoting exchanges among local governments and participants of diplomatic corps and others.

Furthermore, MOFA and Japanese local governments co-organize “Diplomats’ Study Tours” for the diplomatic corps in Japan, with the goal of enabling them to directly experience the attractions of each region by actually visiting them. For the tour to Yokohama City, Kanagawa Prefecture, on April 19, participating diplomatic corps members toured the facilities of business enterprises and organizations working with Yokohama City to carry out SDG-related initiatives, gaining a better understanding of these initiatives. The tour to Kumamoto City in Kumamoto Prefecture conducted on September 12 and 13 gave diplomatic corps members a better understanding of the attractiveness of Kumamoto and efforts to recover from the 2016 Kumamoto earthquake by touring facilities involved in the reconstruction. The tour to Niigata Prefecture on November 5 and 6 saw diplomatic corps members enjoy Niigata’s many charms, including its colored carp (*nishikigoi*), firework shows, and food culture through activities such as visiting *nishikigoi*-related facilities in Nagaoka City and Ojiya City, the “birthplace of *nishikigoi*,” and attending the World Nishikigoi Summit. Diplomatic corps members toured Shiga Prefecture on November 10 and 11, visiting places including Mt.



Photo at the World Nishikigoi Summit (November 6, Niigata Prefecture; Photo: World Nishikigoi Summit Executive Committee)



Reception organized by Fukushima Prefecture during a Diplomats' Study Tour (November 29, Fukushima Prefecture)

Hiei Enryaku-ji Temple, Lake Biwa, and a prefectural high school, while also learning about the Prefecture's history, nature, food, *Shigaraki* ware, and other such attractiveness. In the tour to Fukushima Prefecture held on November 29 and 30, diplomatic corps members visited facilities such as the Great East Japan Earthquake and Nuclear Disaster Memorial Museum and deepened their understanding of the prefecture's path to recovery and current situation, as well as the region's many charms, including the tradition of *Aizu clan samurai* and food culture. As a result of the tours, some local governments have started exchanges and collaborations with participating countries, while others have aimed to increase the number of visitors to such communities by utilizing connections with participating diplomatic corps.

Moreover, MOFA provides local governments with explanations of Japan's current diplomatic policies, etc., that relate closely to international exchange activities at the regional level, and opportunities to exchange views. MOFA holds the "Local Partnership Cooperation Forum" as a part of such activities, but the forum was postponed in 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.



PR video from Shizuoka Prefecture streamed from the social media account of the Embassy of Japan in China as part of the Project to Support Overseas Presentations to Promote the Attractiveness of Regions

With regard to projects overseas, as a way to counter international reputational damage stemming from the Great East Japan Earthquake, MOFA conducts a comprehensive PR program called "Project to Support Overseas Presentations to Promote the Attractiveness of Regions," together with efforts to lift and ease import restrictions. Conducted from July 2022 through March 2023, the project included online public messaging in China and Hong Kong. During this period, short movies filmed in various locations in Japan by the 58 participating local governments were posted on the Weibo (Chinese social media) account of the Embassy of Japan in China. These video clips are intended to give a large audience the opportunity to experience, through social media, the attractiveness of each region, including tourism, culture, and food in Japan. Additionally, MOFA dispatched influencers to showcase Japan's regional attractiveness at events to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China relations, which were organized and supported by diplomatic missions in China. MOFA also held a promotion event for the Tohoku region at a book fair in Hong Kong in July.

Furthermore, MOFA undertakes "Regional Promotion Projects" that aim at supporting local governments in expanding sales channels for local products and promoting inbound tourism by making use of Japan's diplomatic facilities overseas to promote the attractiveness of each region. In February and June, PR events to promote the traditional arts and crafts, foods, tourism destinations, and other attractive aspects of Toyama Prefecture, Iwate Prefecture, Kitakyushu City, Miyagi prefecture (in February), and Kanagawa Prefecture (in June) were conducted online at the official residence of the Consul-General of Japan in Shenyang.

In addition, on the occasion of the receptions for celebrating the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor, which are held at diplomatic missions overseas every year, Japanese attractions such as local products and events are presented. In 2022, while many diplomatic missions overseas either canceled these receptions or switched to holding them online, a total of 42 local governments attended these occasions at 39 diplomatic facilities to offer information on their attractiveness.

Furthermore, MOFA has been supporting international exchanges between both Japanese and foreign local governments through various initiatives such as sister-city exchanges between Japanese local governments and their counterparts overseas and the Host Town Initiative for the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020. Specifically, in order to support the international activities of local governments and municipal communities, Japanese diplomats visit sister cities of Japanese municipalities in their assigned countries or regions and share opinions with officials responsible for international and economic affairs. The heads of Japanese diplomatic missions also visit local municipalities in Japan to have dialogues on the activities related to the sister city or the Host Town Initiative or deliver lectures prior to their departure for new posts or when they temporarily return to Japan. In cases where any foreign local governmental bodies wish to newly establish sister-city relationships with any Japanese municipal communities, MOFA supports them by providing the related information to the respective prefectures and ordinance-designated cities, and conducting indirect support by promoting these regional cooperation initiatives on the website of “Local Partnership Cooperation” (named “Glocal (global and local) Diplomatic Network”)³ on MOFA’s website.

In addition to the “Glocal Diplomatic Network,” as public relations media for showcasing regional cooperation initiatives, MOFA also distributes Monthly Glocal News, a monthly e-mail newsletter,⁴ and posts

information via Twitter.⁵ Via these PR media, MOFA not only presents information on its regional cooperation projects, but also introduces sister-city exchanges and Host Town exchanges conducted by various local governments, regional revitalization from the perspective of foreigners, and information about various other international exchanges.

Additionally, as part of the overseas promotion activities for Japanese alcoholic beverages (Japanese *sake*, wine, *shochu*, *awamori*, etc.) produced in various parts of Japan, the diplomatic missions overseas are actively promoting Japanese alcoholic beverages by offering tasting occasions at dinners and lunches with government leaders of the assigned countries or foreign diplomatic corps, and by using Japanese *sake* on the occasion of making toasts at grand events such as the receptions for celebrating the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor. On these occasions, diplomatic missions overseas call attention to the fact that Japan has proposed “Traditional knowledge and skills of *sake*-making with *koji* mold in Japan” for inscription on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2024.

MOFA is also working to respond to the growing demands for issues such as water treatment, waste disposal, urban transportation and anti-pollution measures caused as a result of rapid economic development in developing countries. These efforts involve making use of ODA and leveraging Japanese local governments’ experience and expertise, as well as conducting development cooperation using outstanding technologies and products from local SMEs. Through these efforts, MOFA provides support for matching these countries’ development needs with companies’ products and technologies. These efforts not only contribute to the global outreach of Japanese local companies and the development of globally competent human resources, but also to vitalizing regional economies and the Japanese economy as a whole.

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3 “Glocal Diplomatic Network,” MOFA website:

https://www.mofa.go.jp/ms/lpc/page25e_000167.html

4 Local Partnership Cooperation Division’s e-mail newsletter “Monthly Glocal News”:

https://www.mofa.go.jp/ms/lpc/page25e_000219.html

5 Local Partnership Cooperation Division

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/localmofa>



Section 2 Supporting Japanese Nationals Overseas

1 Risks and Safety of Japanese Nationals Overseas

(1) Incidents and Accidents in 2022 and Responses to them

As of 2022, approximately 2.77 million¹ Japanese nationals travelled overseas over the course of the year, and approximately 1.31 million Japanese nationals live abroad (as of October 2022). Protecting the lives of Japanese nationals traveling and residing abroad, as well as promoting their interests, is one of the most important missions of MOFA.

There has been no Japanese victim of terrorism incidents since 2020. However, 2022 was another year in which a large number of terrorist attacks occurred in various regions. The main terrorism incidents included shootings at subway stations in New York, the U.S., in April, shootings at a grocery store in New York, the U.S., in May, shootings in Oslo, Norway, in June, and bombings in Istanbul, Turkey, in November. Moreover, terrorism incidents occurred frequently in the Middle East, such as in Iraq, Syria, and Afghanistan, while extremist organizations also attacked in Pakistan. Furthermore, many terrorism incidents occurred in Africa, such as in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Somalia, Nigeria, Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Mozambique.

In recent years, terrorist attacks have been occurring not only in the Middle East and Africa but also in Europe, North America, and Asia where many Japanese nationals travel and reside. There continues to be a large number of homegrown terrorist attacks perpetrated by those born in Western countries and indoctrinated through websites or other means by foreign extremists, terrorist attacks perpetrated by those acting on their own with little organizational background, and terrorist attacks in locations where unspecified large numbers of the general public gather every day. In particular, in North America and Europe violent acts by far-left and far-right actors, such as hate crimes motivated by

animosity for a particular race or ethnic group, have been intensifying in frequency against the backdrop of increasing social anxiety and online activity stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, as Islamic extremists expand their scope of activities around the globe, the threat of terrorism is increasing worldwide in the COVID era.

The impacts of COVID-19 continued in 2022, but as restrictions on travel were eased in Japan and around the world, the number of people traveling overseas increased significantly compared to 2021 (approximately 510,000 people). While the number of incidents in which Japanese nationals fell victim to crimes was low compared to before the pandemic, such incidents continued to occur worldwide.

Natural disasters also occurred around the world and caused great damage. These included the volcanic eruption in Tonga (January) and flooding in Pakistan (August).

In Ukraine, in light of the increased tensions derived from the Russian military buildup in the border regions, MOFA raised the risk level to evacuate for the entire country and warned Japanese nationals to avoid all travel there. For those already in Ukraine, in February MOFA urged them to ensure their safety and evacuate immediately. In Russia, considering the severe restrictions placed on means for leaving the country such as the suspension of flights and the impact on everyday life such as the suspension of credit card settlement operations, in March MOFA raised the risk level to "Avoid all travel" or "Evacuate and Avoid all travel" for the entire country. In Africa, MOFA raised the risk level for Mali in August due to the worsening political situation driven by the rising threat of terrorism, raised the risk level for Burkina Faso in October due to the political instability caused by a group of army officers taking power in a coup d'état and increased threat of

¹ Source: Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO)

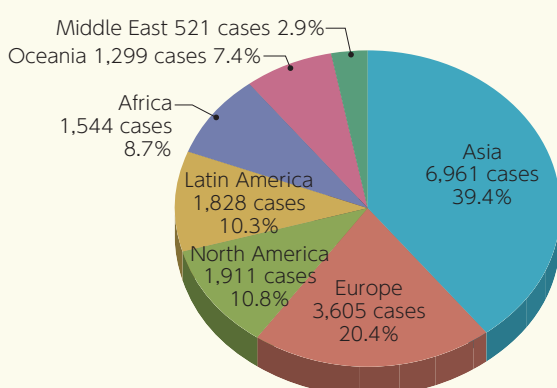
Top 20 Japanese diplomatic missions overseas with a large number of support cases

Rank	Diplomatic mission	Number of cases
1	Embassy of Japan in the Philippines	971
2	Consulate-General of Japan in Denpasar	889
3	Embassy of Japan in Thailand	857
4	Embassy of Japan in Korea	649
5	Consulate-General of Japan in Vancouver	551
6	Embassy of Japan in the Lao PDR	392
7	Embassy of Japan in Cambodia	357
8	Consulate-General of Japan in Atlanta	339
9	Embassy of Japan in the UK	336
10	Consulate-General of Japan in Cebu	308

Rank	Diplomatic mission	Number of cases
11	Embassy of Japan in Indonesia	266
12	Embassy of Japan in Croatia	253
13	Embassy of Japan in Australia	249
14	Embassy of Japan in India	242
15	Consulate-General of Japan in Barcelona	232
16	Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney	230
17	Embassy of Japan in Fiji	229
18	Embassy of Japan in Norway	227
19	Embassy of Japan in France	214
20	Embassy of Japan in Bolivia	206

*Figures are shown for the 20 diplomatic missions with the largest number of support cases, including embassies, consulate-generals, and consular offices.

Breakdown of cases of support to overseas Japanese nationals in 2021 by region



Source: 2021 Statistics on Assistance Provided by MOFA to Japanese Nationals Overseas

terrorism, and also raised the risk level in Abuja, the capital of Nigeria, in October due to the increasing danger of terrorism. In Haiti in October, MOFA raised the risk level to “Evacuate and Avoid all travel” due to political instability, intermittent demonstrations and strikes, and frequent criminal acts by armed groups.

In October, two Japanese women were killed in the crowd crush which occurred in Itaewon, Seoul, the Republic of Korea (ROK). In Ukraine, a Japanese male who was engaged in fighting against the Russian military was killed in November. Moreover, a male Japanese national detained by the Myanmar authorities was found guilty in court and sentenced to a 10-year term of imprisonment in July, but in November he

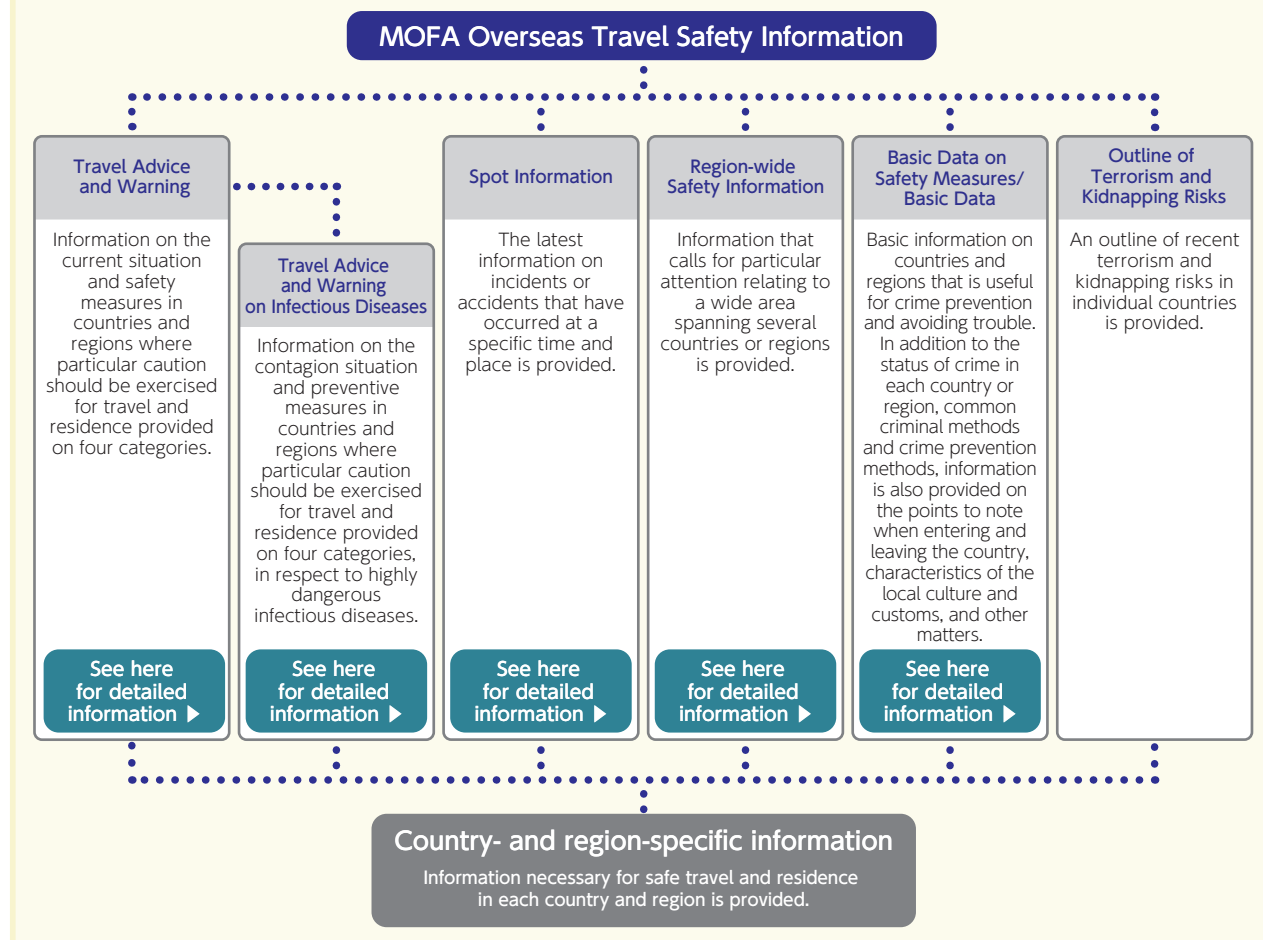
was pardoned by the Myanmar authorities, freed, and returned to Japan after continued requests for early release from the Government of Japan.

Whenever necessary, MOFA issues overseas travel safety information on infectious diseases in countries and regions where health and medical caution is required, in order to communicate the current outbreak situation and prevention measures, and highlight matters worth paying attention to when travelling and staying in the affected regions.

In terms of COVID-19, while the global pandemic situation generally improved in 2022, the outbreak situation rapidly deteriorated in China in December. MOFA reviews the level of Travel Advice and Warning on Infectious Diseases and issues region-wide safety information in a timely manner, and provides information to Japanese nationals residing or traveling abroad via its websites and consular e-mails in a timely and appropriate manner.

In terms of other infectious diseases, cases of Ebola were reported in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda, with Mpox and cholera prevalent in various parts of the world. Furthermore, cases of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) have been reported in the Middle East. Mosquito-borne diseases such as dengue fever have also spread throughout Southeast Asia.

■ Main Overseas Safety Information posted on MOFA's Overseas Safety Website (structure and overview)



(2) Safety Measures for Japanese Nationals Overseas

The number of Japanese nationals receiving support or protection from Japanese diplomatic missions overseas and the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association fell in 2021 to a total of 8,252 as the number of people traveling overseas significantly decreased due to the impact of COVID-19, and the number of cases of support or protection also decreased to 17,669. Amid the pandemic, Japanese embassies and consulates-general worldwide provided assistance in many ways such as support to Japanese nationals who contracted COVID-19 as well as disseminating information about entry/exit limitations and restrictions on movement.

The safety of Japanese nationals is threatened constantly in various regions throughout the world. With border restrictions in response to the pandemic being relaxed in Japan and around the world, the number of Japanese nationals residing or traveling abroad is

increasing. However, due to the continuing impact of COVID-19, Japanese nationals traveling abroad must be prepared for multiple risks such as terrorist attacks and infectious disease striking at the same time and it is more difficult than ever to respond if Japanese travelers encounter a terrorist attack or another incident or accident while traveling overseas. Therefore there is increasing need to take every possible overseas safety measure.

Based on this perspective, MOFA works to enhance the safety awareness of Japanese nationals and promote its safety measures by disseminating information widely to the general public. Specifically, MOFA added panels to its Overseas Safety website page for easy access to the necessary information, and issues the latest safety information for each country and region on the website. Furthermore, MOFA send emails on the latest safety information of travel destinations to Japanese residents and travelers who have registered

with Overseas Residential Registrations or overseas travel registration service (Tabi-Regi). Moreover, the website's map functions was renovated to make them easier to read.

MOFA strives to enhance the knowledge and capability of the Japanese people concerning overseas safety measures and crisis management through seminars and training. In 2022, MOFA held virtual and in-person seminars on safety measures inside and outside Japan to address the need for safety measures, taking into account increased mobility of people with the easing of COVID-19 border restrictions (15 times at diplomatic missions overseas and seven times within Japan). Furthermore, Consular Affairs Bureau staff delivered lectures at seminars held throughout Japan by domestic organizations, associations and other groups.

Furthermore, MOFA held “Public-Private Joint Practical Training for Counter-Terrorism and Anti-Kidnapping Measures” in collaboration with the business sector. These initiatives are useful in preventing harm from regular crimes and terrorism, but also in improving response capabilities in the event of encountering such an incident. Furthermore, the public and private sectors are cooperating to advance safety measures even overseas, and the diplomatic missions in each country host regular meetings of Security Consultation and Liaison Committees. Even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the diplomatic missions overseas are continuing to share information, exchange opinions and bolster collaboration in preparation for emergencies with local Japanese nationals in their respective countries, including by hosting such events online.

Following the terrorist attack in Dhaka in July 2016, MOFA developed “Golgo 13’s Security Guidelines for Japanese SMEs Abroad,” with the aim of raising the awareness of international cooperation personnel, as well as small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), students studying abroad and short-term travelers, who have limited access to information on safety. MOFA continued to promote awareness utilizing the expanded edition of the Security Guidelines with an added episode and commentary videos regarding measures to address the combined risk of an infectious disease pandemic, terrorist attacks and other composite risks. Moreover, from October 2022, MOFA has been using the LINE messaging platform, through “Messages from

Duke Togo” by the medium of “Golgo 13’s Security Guidelines for Japanese SMEs Abroad,” to distribute educational messages about security measures and useful knowledge for people to protect themselves.

With regard to Japanese students studying overseas, MOFA personnel hold lectures at universities and other educational institutions, on the grounds that many such institutions have not accumulated sufficient expertise or experience in safety measures and dealing with emergency situations, and requested their cooperation in raising the submission rate of Overseas Residential Registrations and the registration rate of Tabi-Regi. With the easing of COVID-19 border restrictions, MOFA receives gradually increasing numbers of requests from educational institutions, and conducted lectures on safety measures online and in other formats in 2022. MOFA will continue to strive to help institutions to raise awareness of safety measures among their students and build in-house crisis management structures. MOFA is moving ahead with efforts to connect government agencies with

■ Page for Tabi-Regi and Overseas Residential Registrations



Website for Tabi-Regi
registration
<https://www.ezairyu.mofa.go.jp/tabiregi/index.html>



Website for online Overseas
Residential Registrations
<https://www.ezairyu.mofa.go.jp/RRnet/index.html>

educational institutions, overseas study agencies and students studying abroad, by beginning an automatic Tabi-Regi registration system together with some overseas study institutions.

In terms of safety measures for short-term travelers, MOFA is engaged in PR activities mainly focused on promoting registration to the above-mentioned Tabi-Regi, including by distributing the *Kaigai Anzen Tora no Maki* (handbook for overseas travelers) as well as information cards aimed at increasing awareness of Overseas Residential Registrations and Tabi-Regi, and

thus raising their registration rate. Furthermore, the Consular Affairs Bureau provided a booth at Tourism Expo Japan held in September at the Tokyo Big Sight convention center, providing information and raising attention for the safety of Japanese nationals residing or traveling abroad, including about Overseas Residential Registrations and Tabi-Regi. As of January 2023, the number of travelers who had registered on Tabi-Regi since its launch in July 2014 exceeded 7.25 million, reflecting initiatives for enhancing the system's convenience and activities that aim at promoting registration.

2 Consular Service and Assistance for Japanese Living Overseas

(1) Improving Consular Service and Promoting Digitalization

A Improving Consular Service

With the aim of providing quality consular services to Japanese nationals overseas, MOFA conducts every year a questionnaire survey on services such as consular staff's attitudes in over-the-counter and telephone responses as well as work implementation status at diplomatic missions overseas. The survey conducted in January 2023 covered 142 diplomatic missions overseas and received valid responses from 16,857 people. The survey results suggested that respondents were for the most part satisfied with the level of consular services provided by diplomatic missions overseas. Nevertheless, some respondents also submitted views that consular staff showed insufficient concern and understanding for users' situations, including that staff seem to adopt matter-of-fact attitudes and terms of speech. MOFA takes such user feedback seriously, and will continue its efforts to enhance services and make improvements so as to provide better consular services that are oriented to the perspective of its users.

B Promoting Digitalization

Furthermore, based on the Priority Policy Program for Realizing Digital Society (Cabinet decision of June 2022), MOFA will further digitalize consular procedures, such as online application for passports, visas and certificates, as well as cashless payment for fees in order to increase user convenience. Specific actions

have included revising the Passport Act in April 2022 and starting the online application system on March 27, 2023. On the same day, some diplomatic missions overseas also began accepting online application for certificates as well as online application for and issuance of one type of visas in electronic form, as well as online credit card payments for these consular and visa fees. In addition, on April 1, 2023, the Consular Digital Transformation Division was established within the Consular Affairs Bureau.

(2) Passports: Maintaining trust, enhancing convenience and making administrative tasks more efficient

The number of Japanese passports issued declined from February 2020, due to the global decline in overseas travel as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, but is showing signs of recovery as of the end of 2022. The number of passports issued in 2022 was 1.37 million, an increase of approximately 2.2 times compared to 2021. There were approximately 21.75 million valid passports in circulation as of the end of December 2022, falling by approximately 11% compared to 2021.

The online application system for passports, which began on March 27, 2023, is available in principle when applying to renew passports in Japan. Application can be done via the Individual Number Portal website (a government-run online administrative service), therefore it will no longer be necessary for applicants to appear at a service counter in person.

Applicants are able to take a photo of their face and signature and submit them via smartphone or other digital devices. Moreover, referring to electronic family register certificates will be possible from FY2024 through linkage with the Ministry of Justice's Family Register Information Linkage System. This will enable online application for new passports that currently require submission of a copy of a family register at the counter in person.

Measures taken in 2020 such as upgrading the functions to prevent unauthorized reading of personal information contained in passport IC chips as well as adding the designs of the “Thirty-six Views of Mount Fuji” by Katsushika Hokusai to the visa pages have made unauthorized usage of passports such as forgery and alteration more difficult. However, unauthorized obtaining of passports by impersonating others continues to occur². Looking ahead, MOFA will consider ways to further increase the trust of Japanese passports - such as introducing next-generation passports with laser printing on thermoplastic material - based on the criteria considered at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

In the passport index (number of travel destination countries not requiring visas) that was announced by a private-sector UK company in January 2023, Japanese passports ranked first out of 109 countries and areas. MOFA will continue to engage in maintaining the trust of Japanese passports while enhancing convenience for applicants and making passport administration more efficient.

(3) Overseas Voting

The overseas voting system allows Japanese voters living overseas to vote in national elections. In order to vote through the overseas voting system, it is necessary to be registered in advance on the overseas voter directory managed by the election board of the city or town government and to obtain overseas voter identification. Starting in June 2018, in addition to the conventional method of applying through a diplomatic mission overseas after moving there, Japanese nationals can now apply at their municipal service counter at the same time as filing their notice of moving overseas. As

a result, there is no longer a need to appear in person at a diplomatic mission overseas after moving outside Japan, which simplifies procedures. Voters can vote by choosing one of the three methods of voting, a) voting at diplomatic missions overseas, b) voting by mail, or c) voting in Japan.

The diplomatic missions overseas have been making efforts to spread the overseas voting system and to increase the number of registered voters by publicizing the overseas voting system to the territories under their jurisdiction and carrying out a visiting service for the registration of Japanese nationals living in remote areas. In 2022, for the 26th regular election of the House of Councillors, voting at diplomatic missions overseas was conducted for the 16th time involving 234 diplomatic missions and offices. In 2023, MOFA will continue its PR and other activities to increase the number of registered voters and promote voting at diplomatic missions overseas.

Moreover, a May 2022 judgment of the Grand Bench of the Supreme Court ruled that Japanese nationals overseas not being permitted to vote in national review of judges of the Supreme Court is unconstitutional. Based on this ruling, the Act on National Review of Judges of the Supreme Court was partially revised (taking effect on February 17, 2023) and an Overseas Nationals Review System established, enabling Japanese nationals residing overseas to exercise their right to review in the national review.

(4) Assistance for Japanese Nationals Living and Engaging in Activities Overseas

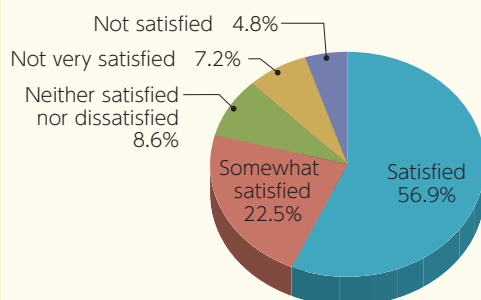
A Japanese Schools and Supplementary Education Schools

Education for children is one of the major concerns for Japanese nationals living abroad. In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), MOFA provides assistance to Japanese Schools (partial assistance for school building rental fees, remuneration for locally hired teachers, and safety measures expenses) so that the overseas school children at the age of compulsory education in Japan can receive a level of education equivalent to that in Japan. MOFA also provides

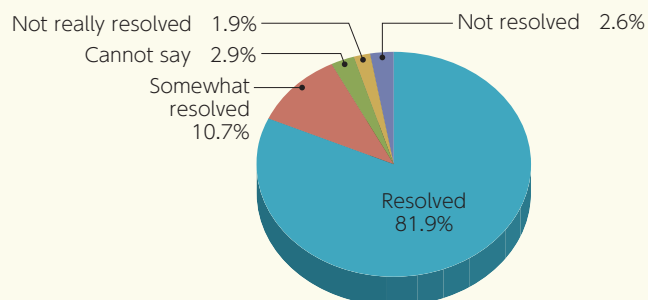
² Known cases of unauthorized obtaining of passports were as follows: 35 cases in 2018, 42 in 2019, 15 in 2020, 12 in 2021, and 34 in 2022.

■ Results of questionnaire survey on consular services (FY2022: 142 diplomatic missions)

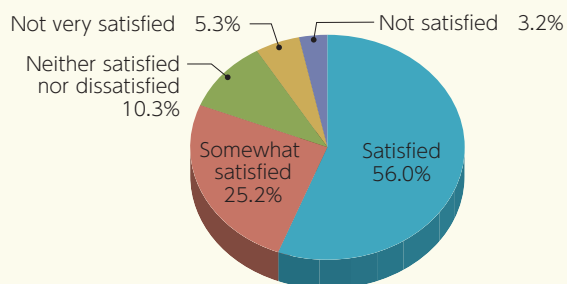
How satisfied are you with the overall consular services you have received?



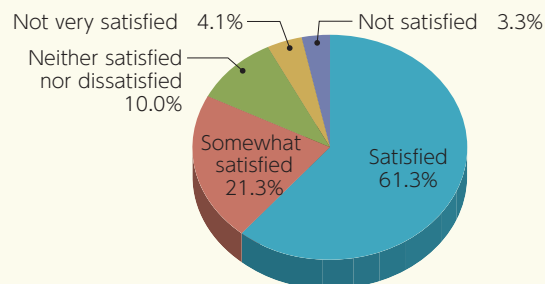
Was your problem (application, notification, consultations, etc.) resolved by consular services?



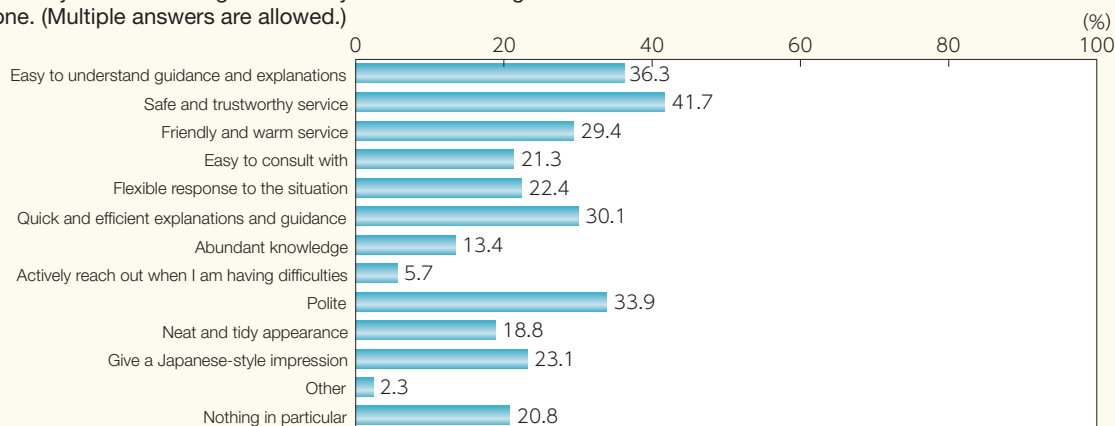
How satisfied are you with the knowledge and processing speed of the consular services?



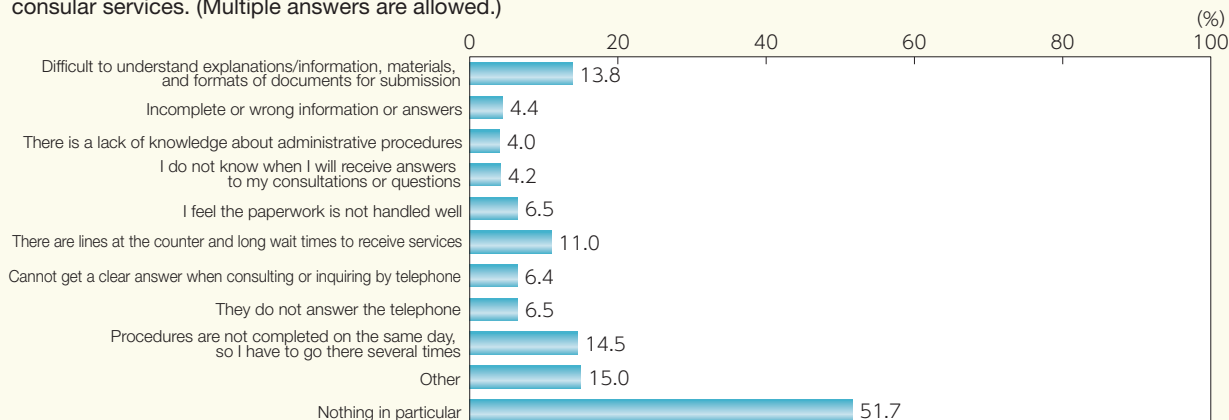
How satisfied are you with the customer service manners of staff?



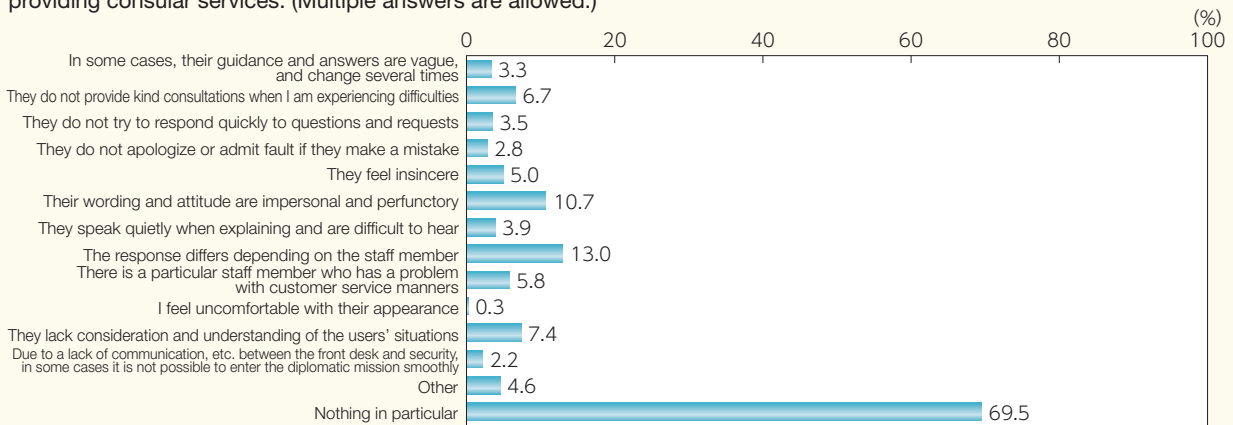
Please select any of the following items that you found to be "good" about the staff at the consular service counter or on the phone. (Multiple answers are allowed.)



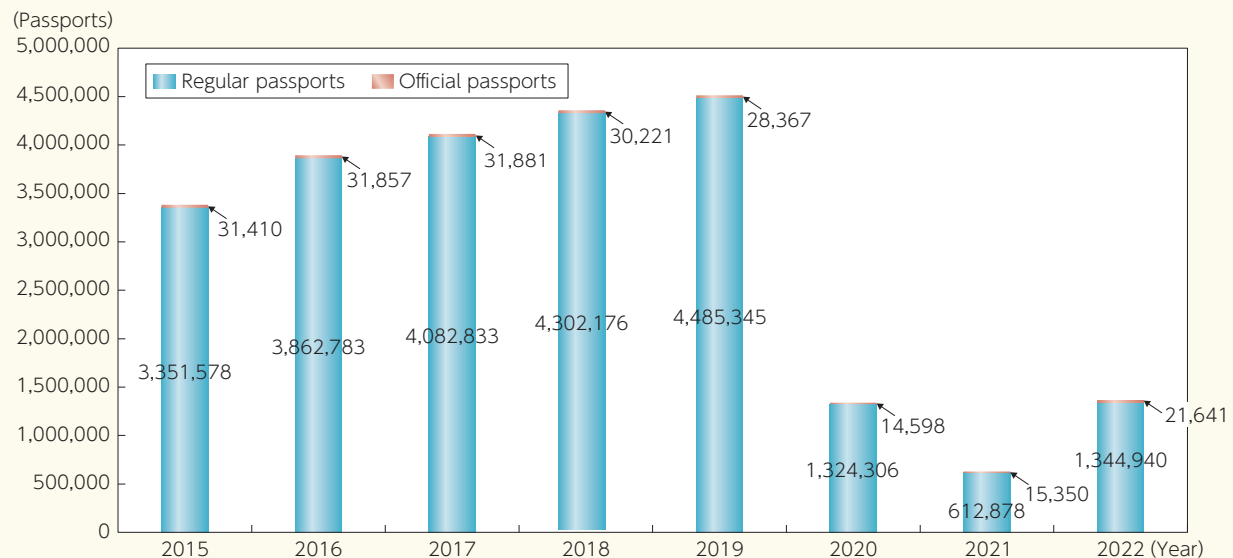
Please select all that apply if you feel that improvement needs to be made for the knowledge and processing speed of consular services. (Multiple answers are allowed.)



Please select all that apply if you feel that improvement needs to be made for the customer service manners of staff providing consular services. (Multiple answers are allowed.)



Changes in the number of passports issued



Note: Official passports include diplomatic passports.

Source: Prepared based on passport statistics for 2022 (MOFA's Passport Division)

the same level of assistance for Japanese Schools to Supplementary Education Schools (educational institutions established to maintain children's academic ability, such as Japanese language proficiency) mainly in areas where overseas Japanese educational facilities are not located.

The Act Concerning the Promotion of Education at Overseas Japanese Educational Facilities was approved and promulgated in June 2022, stipulating the basic principles for promoting education at overseas Japanese educational facilities and clarifying the responsibilities of the Government of Japan in this respect. Furthermore, MOFA is working together with MEXT to develop a basic policy for advancing measures related

to overseas Japanese educational facilities based on the above Act.

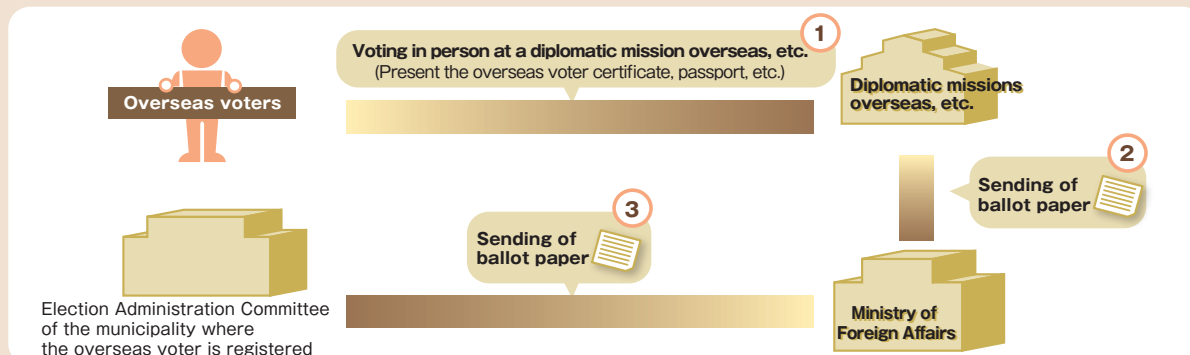
B Medical/Health Measures

MOFA gathers information on outbreaks of infectious diseases overseas and provides information to a broad audience through the overseas safety website, websites of diplomatic missions overseas, emails and other means. Furthermore, in order to provide health advice through consultations to Japanese nationals residing in countries where the medical situation is poor, MOFA dispatches medical teams with the cooperation of domestic medical institutions. MOFA also organizes health and safety lectures by medical specialists for

Voting in elections for overseas voters

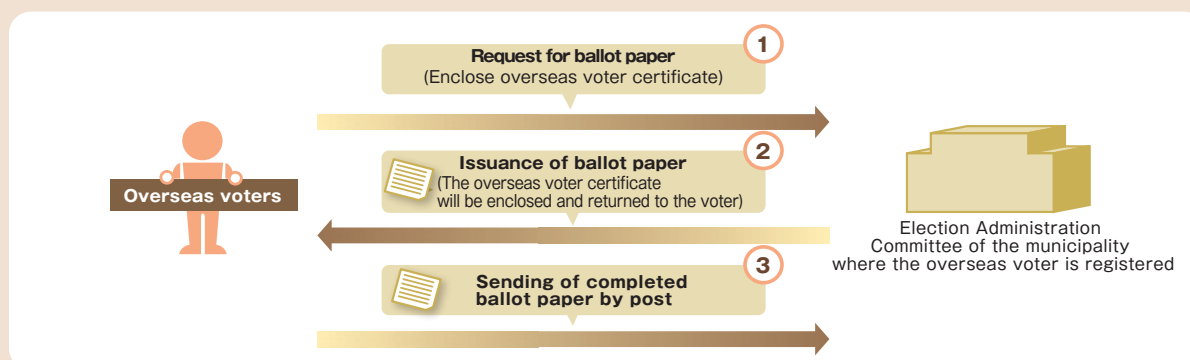
a. Voting at a diplomatic mission overseas

Voters who are registered on the overseas electoral roll may vote by presenting their overseas voter certificates, passports and other necessary documents to a diplomatic mission overseas set up as a polling station. (The period and time of voting differs depending on the diplomatic mission.)



b. Postal voting

Send the overseas voter certificate and request form for ballot paper to the chairperson of the Election Administration Committee of the municipality that you are registered with to request a ballot paper. Complete and return the ballot paper to the chairperson of the Election Administration Committee of the municipality, ensuring that the ballot paper reaches the polling station by the time the voting ends on the date of the election in Japan (8:00 p.m. Japan time). (Voting is carried out from the day after the date of public notice.)



c. Voting in Japan

In the case where the overseas voter returns temporarily to Japan at the time of the elections, or where the overseas voter is not yet registered on the electoral roll in Japan after returning to Japan, he or she may vote through the same voting methods as voters in Japan (early voting, absentee voting, voting on election day).

regions where infectious diseases or air pollution are becoming serious issues.

C Support for Japanese Nationals Living Overseas and Japanese Descendants (Nikkei)

From August 2021, the Government of Japan operated a COVID-19 vaccination initiative at Haneda and Narita Airports for Japanese nationals living overseas who do not have a resident registry in Japan and others, vaccinating 51,000 people to date (as of January 2023).

Between March and December 2021, in order

to support Japanese nationals living overseas and Japanese descendants (Nikkei) whose lives are being disrupted by the spread of COVID-19, MOFA carried out the Program to Strengthen Livelihood and Business Foundations for Japanese Nationals Overseas and People of Japanese Descent (Nikkei), which supported projects implemented by Japan societies, Japanese chambers of commerce and industry, and Nikkei groups overseas. The projects included PCR testing, distribution of masks and disinfectants, and other awareness raising in order to halt the spread of infections, as well as legal and tax consultation services

to nurture business environments. Until March 2022, MOFA carried out a program that provided medical and psychological counseling to Japanese nationals living overseas.

D Responses to Other Needs

In order to eliminate the complexity of various procedures for Japanese nationals living overseas (such as converting Japanese driver's licenses, obtaining residence/work permits) and to make living abroad more comfortable, MOFA continues to engage with the authorities in the respective countries where Japanese nationals reside.

For example, when converting driver's licenses issued in foreign countries to Japanese driver's licenses, all persons with driver's licenses issued in a foreign country are exempted from taking certain sections of the Japanese driver's license examination (theory/practical), when it has been confirmed that they have no

problems with driving vehicles. On the other hand, as it is mandatory for Japanese nationals to take driving tests when converting Japanese driver's licenses to local licenses in some countries and states, MOFA is calling for those countries to simplify the procedures for license conversion to the same degree as in Japan.

MOFA also supports victims of atomic bombings living overseas in applying for the authorization of Atomic Bomb Diseases and for the issuance of Health Check Certificates, via diplomatic and consular missions.

Furthermore, MOFA is working to address issues of loneliness and social isolation among Japanese nationals residing overseas. MOFA liaises with NPOs in Japan to provide detailed assistance for individual cases overseas, and works to increase international understanding related to this issue such as by co-hosting with the Cabinet Office meetings related to loneliness and social isolation for overseas ambassadors to Japan.

3 Cooperation with Emigrants and Japanese Descendants (Nikkei)

The migration of Japanese nationals overseas has a history of 154 years, as of 2022. There are over 3.8 million overseas Japanese and Japanese descendants (Nikkei) around the world, with especially large numbers residing in North, Central, and South America. They make a significant contribution to the development of their countries of residence in various fields, including politics, economy, education and culture, and at the same time, they act as a bridge between Japan and those countries in developing close relations.

Together with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), MOFA provides cooperation in Central and South America, where over two million Nikkei live. Various forms of assistance are offered, including welfare support for aging emigrants, training in Japan for Nikkei people, and dispatch of volunteers to the local Nikkei communities. MOFA is also working to further strengthen relationships with Nikkei communities based on the report submitted to the Minister for Foreign Affairs from the Panel of Experts on Collaborating with Communities of Japanese

Immigrants and their Descendants ("Nikkei") in Central and South America in May 2017.

Thus far, invitation programs to Japan for Nikkei leaders in various fields, and from various countries and regions, have been carried out in North, Central and South America. Furthermore, efforts are underway to strengthen relations with Nikkei people in these regions through close cooperation between the diplomatic missions in each country and Nikkei communities, including actively creating opportunities for senior officials from Japan to meet with Nikkei persons during their visits to these countries.

Following 2021, the 62nd Convention of Nikkei and Japanese Abroad in 2022 was held virtually due to the impact of COVID-19, and a video message from Foreign Minister Hayashi was played. Going forward, along with providing support to Japanese abroad and Nikkei, MOFA will promote cooperation with the younger generation and strengthen their bonds with Japan.

4 Implementation Status of the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (The Hague Convention)

The Hague Convention is designed as an international mechanism for addressing disputes arising from the wrongful removal or retention of children across borders in the belief that the interests of children are of paramount importance. It requires cooperation between Contracting States to the Convention for returning children to their state of habitual residence and establishing opportunities for transboundary parent-child access.

This Convention entered into force in Japan on April 1, 2014, with 103 countries including Japan parties to the Convention as of the end of December 2022.

The Convention is implemented through mutual cooperation among the governmental agencies designated as the Central Authority in Contracting States to the Convention. In Japan, MOFA as the Central Authority avails itself of experts in various fields and provides assistance to both the parent whose child was removed and the parent who removed the child for the resolution of child removal cases, in communication and cooperation with foreign Central Authorities.

In the eight years and nine months since the entry into force of the Convention, MOFA received a total number of 505 applications by the end of December 2022: 331 applications seeking the return of the child and 174 applications seeking access to the child. Of the cases seeking the return of the child from Japan to another country, children were returned in 61 cases

and conclusions were reached not to return the child in 46 cases. Of the cases requesting the return of the child from another country to Japan, children were returned in 58 cases and conclusions were reached not to return the child in 35 cases.

In order to build awareness of the Hague Convention among a broad public, MOFA holds online seminars and contributes articles to relevant local community press to raise awareness among Japanese nationals living overseas, as well as running seminars in Japan for local governments and relevant institutions such as bar associations. MOFA also puts efforts into PR activities by creating awareness-raising videos on the Hague Convention and posting them on MOFA's website and video-sharing platforms³.

■ Number of applications for assistance received by MOFA based on the Implementation Act of the Hague Convention (as of the end of December 2022)

	Application for assistance in child's return	Application for assistance in visitation or contact with child
Applications related to child located in Japan	185	132
Applications related to child located overseas	146	42

³ See the MOFA website regarding the 1980 Hague Convention and Japan's efforts https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/hr_ha/page22e_000249.html



Section 3 | Diplomacy with the Support of the Public

1 Proactive Communications to the Public

(1) Overview

Public understanding and support are indispensable for the smooth implementation of Japan's foreign policy. As such, providing prompt and clear explanations on the policy details and on the role of the government is crucial. Accordingly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is making efforts in timely and effective public relations, using various forms of media, lectures, publications and others.

(2) Providing Information Through Domestic Media

MOFA has committed itself to promptly and accurately providing information through various media, such as newspapers, television and the Internet, in order to gain the understanding and support of Japanese nationals for Japan's foreign policy. To provide information effectively, regular press conferences are conducted by the Foreign Minister and the Press Secretary, while extraordinary press conferences are held as necessary. Press conferences by the Foreign Minister with simultaneous English interpretations are open to various media including Internet media, and the records and videos of the press conferences are posted on MOFA's website. During foreign visits by the Prime Minister or the Foreign Minister, MOFA provides information from visiting countries/regions via multiple means, including the Internet, so that people can promptly follow and understand the purposes and the outcomes of the visits. MOFA also regularly releases statements by the Minister for Foreign Affairs or Press Secretary on individual international issues, expressing the position of the Government of Japan. Similarly, MOFA frequently provides press releases on its daily diplomatic activities. Additionally, the Minister and State Ministers for Foreign Affairs explain the Government's foreign policies directly to the public through appearances on various media and interviews.



Press Conference by Foreign Minister Hayashi (August 10, Tokyo)

Dissemination of Information through Press Conferences

Minister for Foreign Affairs	126 times
Press Secretary	36 times
Total	162 times

(From January 1 to December 31, 2022)

Dissemination of Information through Documents

Statements by the Minister for Foreign Affairs	26 times
Statements by the Press Secretary	33 times
Press releases by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	2,184 times
Total	2,243 times

(From January 1 to December 31, 2022)

(3) Information Provision Through the Internet

MOFA's website (in Japanese and English) promptly provides information on the diplomatic activities of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister as well as on Japan's foreign policy including territory/sovereignty, recognition of history and security, along with the latest international relations and other basic relevant information.

MOFA's website in the Japanese language provides a variety of contents for Japanese nationals across a wide range of age groups, including the "Anything Report from Around the World," "Find Out about

MOFA's official website: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/index.html>

MOFA's official website



MOFA's official Facebook account



MOFA's official Twitter account

MOFA's official Twitter account:
https://twitter.com/MofaJapan_en

International Situations” and “MOFA for Kids.” In particular, “MOFA for Kids” publishes contents for children such as videos and quizzes to explain MOFA’s activities in an easy-to-understand way, and Q&A corners explaining vocabularies and international issues that are covered frequently in the news and newspapers (see the Column on page 363).

In addition to the above, MOFA provides a variety of information through various social media platforms. In 2022, MOFA actively provided information on the situation in Ukraine, along with live streaming of the regular press conferences by the Foreign Minister (in Japanese and English) and posting of video messages delivered at international conferences on social media.

(4) Dialogue with Japanese Nationals

With the notion of “Public Relations through Dialogue with the People,” MOFA promotes direct dialogue between the people and the Foreign Minister, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and MOFA officials.

Foreign Minister Hayashi, along with State Minister for Foreign Affairs TAKEI Shunsuke, held roundtable dialogues in November with those who are based in Nagasaki Prefecture based on the theme “Nagasaki to Global,” and in December with those who are based

in Yamagata Prefecture based on the theme “Yamagata to Global.” These lively exchanges of opinions about Japan’s diplomatic policies and the appeal of each region were undertaken as a part of the “Local to Global” Project that aims to promote the attractiveness of regional areas of Japan worldwide (see Section 1.3 on page 347).

At the “Dialogue with Students,” a MOFA seminar for university students and others held online in February, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs UESUGI Kentaro gave an opening address, and Foreign Ministry officials exchanged views with a large number of the participating students during the lectures. At the “Children’s Kasumigaseki Tour Day” held in August, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Uesugi answered various questions from elementary and junior high school students regarding diplomacy and other matters in the “Children’s Press Conference.” The program “From Japan’s Overseas Diplomatic Missions! Ask Diplomats About the World” was also implemented as a two-way online exchange from Japanese diplomatic missions overseas, transmitted live and through video recordings.

Various programs in which MOFA sends its officials to venues such as local government offices, international exchange organizations, universities and high

Column

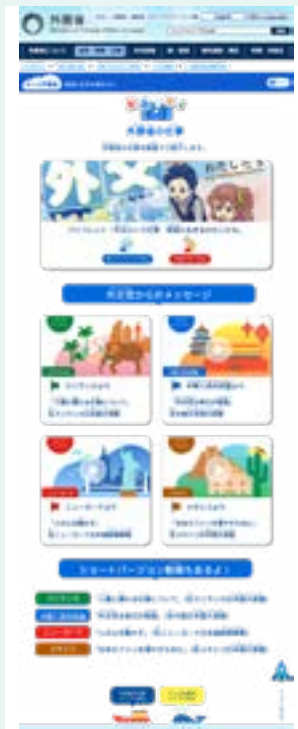
Instruction Manual of “MOFA For Kids”(Note)

“Namaste! Banana is highly nutritious and effective in preventing heatstroke. Now, which country produces the most bananas in the world?”

This is one of the questions posted in a quiz series on the “MOFA Yawaraka Tweet” (@MofaJapan_ITPR) Twitter account that offers a variety of overseas information in a casual and easy-to-understand manner, under the hashtag “#Instruction Manual of MOFA for Kids.” Although the Philippines received the most votes in answer to this question, the correct answer is, in fact, India. Such trivia can also be found on “MOFA for Kids.”

“MOFA for Kids” is a dedicated website for children, launched under MOFA’s website in 2006. Targeted mainly at elementary and junior high school students, it introduces MOFA’s work and initiatives, information about each country, international issues, and other topics in an easy-to-understand manner, such as by using quizzes and illustrations.

● The most popular content is “Global Trivia Ranking”



“MOFA’s Work on Videos”

The section that receives the most hits in the “MOFA for Kids” site is “Global Trivia Ranking.” It covers a wide range of themes, from “countries with large areas” and “highly populated countries,” to “countries that produce many bananas,” “countries with many endangered species,” and “countries with high levels of achieving the SDGs.” As the country rankings for each topic can be seen at a glance, the section has a good reputation as a useful tool for research and summer vacation homework assignments.

The “Q&A” section provides answers to questions about the international situation, such as “What is the relationship like between Japan and the United States?” and “What is Japan doing to address climate change issues?” It also provides easy-to-understand explanations to terms that are frequently used in the news, such as “EEZ” and “TICAD.”

Other contents on the site include “MOFA’s Work on Videos,” “Countries and Regions of the World,” “National Flags of the World,” and “Sport for Tomorrow,” which features Japan’s sports diplomacy. The contents are designed to allow parents and children to learn together, to increase interest and concern among children toward diplomacy and the world, and to provide an opportunity to enhance their understanding.

● The keyword is “excitement”—Supporting children’s desire to learn more!

“MOFA for Kids” is packed full of information while also offering a sense of “excitement” to stir the curiosity of children. Various contrivances are hidden in the illustrations on the top page. The illustrations and their colors change depending on the time of the day, such as afternoon, evening, and night. By moving the magnifying glass cursor, users can discover statistics such as the total global population and the number of countries in the world. Each time you visit the page, you will find new surprises and interesting mechanisms that will make you want to click and find out more.



“MOFA for Kids” top page



“Diplomat’s Test for Kids”

In addition, the section “Diplomat’s Test for Kids” has been renewed and republished in March. Comprising three-choice questions and a map-based puzzle, the contents are designed to enable children to play while learning. The section contains mechanisms such as, if they answer the quiz questions correctly by using the illustrations, they will be presented with a moving “reward stamp.” As a result, the number of page hits has increased rapidly by about seven times compared to before the page renewal.

To facilitate greater knowledge about MOFA’s work, diplomatic policies, and international situation, as well as to support children’s “desire to learn more,” all those in charge of the site’s contents are working hard to create a fun site and to enhance the contents of “MOFA for Kids” more than ever before.

(Note) “MOFA for Kids” (URL and QR code)

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/kids/index.html> (Japanese only)



Roundtable dialogue, “Yamagata to Global” (December 11, Yamagata Grand Hotel)



“Lectures on the International Situations” (September 28, UN Association of Japan Fukuoka Head Office)



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Uesugi taking a commemorative photograph with children participating in the “Children’s Kasumigaseki Tour Day”



International Issues Presentation Contest (November 5, Nihonbashi Social Education Center)

schools throughout Japan were conducted both online and in person at the request of the participating organizations. These included “Lectures on the International Situations,” “Diplomatic Talks,” “Talks for High School,” and “Visits by elementary, junior and senior-high school students to MOFA.” The “International Issues Presentation Contest” for university students was held in person and broadcast online at the same time. Through these programs, MOFA promotes better understanding of foreign policy and international

affairs among young people, who will bear the future of Japan on their shoulders.

MOFA officials also give lectures on Japan’s ODA policies and specific measures to numerous schools in online “ODA Delivery Lectures.” Additionally, MOFA publishes the periodical journal “Diplomacy,” widely sharing information on international affairs relevant to Japan and discussions taking place in various areas at various levels concerning diplomacy. In 2022, the journal took up a range of diplomatic challenges as themes



Periodical journal "Diplomacy"

that offered an overview of the current international situation while examining Russia's aggression against Ukraine and its impact on the world from multifaceted viewpoints, and featured a large number of essays and other articles from renowned experts both inside and outside Japan.

Moreover, MOFA also produced various pamphlets and videos aimed at a broad readership in order to promote a deeper understanding on the organization and foreign policies of MOFA. In addition to the above, MOFA hears comments and opinions from the public through its website. Comments and opinions from the public are accordingly shared within MOFA and used as a reference in policy making and planning.

(5) Promotion of the Declassification of Diplomatic Records and Access to Information

To further enhance the public understanding of and

confidence in Japan's foreign policy, MOFA is actively engaging itself in the smooth transfer of records and their declassification, and in efforts to facilitate greater convenience in the public use of diplomatic documents.

MOFA preserves more than 120,000 historical materials, including 40,000 prewar historical documents in its Diplomatic Archives and has declassified its postwar diplomatic records since 1976 as a voluntary initiative. The Rules on the Declassification of Diplomatic Records, which were established in May 2010, stipulate: (1) the declassification of diplomatic documents created more than 30 years ago in principle, and (2) the establishment of the "Committee for the Promotion of the Declassification of the Diplomatic Records," which is chaired by the State Minister for Foreign Affairs or the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs as well as attended by external experts, to further promote the declassification of diplomatic records and improve its transparency. The number of files that have been transferred to the Diplomatic Archives and made public since then reached approximately 37,000 by the end of 2022.

Furthermore, MOFA discloses information pursuant to the Act on Access to Information Held by Administrative Organs, while giving consideration to national security, the relationship of mutual trust with other countries, the impact on diplomatic negotiations and the protection of personal information. In 2022, MOFA received 1,245 requests for disclosure, and documents totaling 81,068 pages were disclosed.

2 Strengthening the Foreign Policy Implementation Structure

As we fully enter an era of competition among nations, Russia launched aggressions against Ukraine and shook the very foundation of the international order. In the Indo-Pacific region as well, there are countries unilaterally changing, or attempting to change, the status quo by force, and Japan is facing the most severe and complex postwar security environment. To promote diplomatic power for maintaining and developing an international order based on universal values, it is vital to fundamentally strengthen the foreign policy implementation structure. To that end, MOFA is working on

strengthening its diplomatic missions overseas in both the aspects of quantity and quality, as well as advancing efforts to improve the organizational and personnel systems at MOFA itself.

Diplomatic missions overseas, such as embassies and consulates-general, not only represent Japan and engage in diplomatic activities, but also play a key role in areas such as information-gathering and strategic communication at the frontline of diplomacy. At the same time, overseas missions also carry out operations directly related to enhancing the interests of Japanese

nationals, such as protecting their lives and safety, providing support for Japanese companies, promoting investment and tourism, and securing energy and other resources.

In January 2023, Japan established the Embassy of Japan in Kiribati. As a result, the number of diplomatic missions overseas as of fiscal year (FY) 2022 is 231 (154 embassies, 67 consulates-general and 10 permanent missions).

Kiribati is a key junction in the South Pacific with an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) that is the largest among Pacific Island countries and the 12th largest in the world. Deepening Japan-Kiribati cooperative relations is essential for the realization of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” (FOIP). Furthermore, Kiribati is an important partner that has often supported Japan's position at international fora. It is vital that Japan establish an embassy there to continue maintaining and strengthening the favorable bilateral relationship and enhancing the system for more effective gathering of various information and provision of assistance in emergency situations.

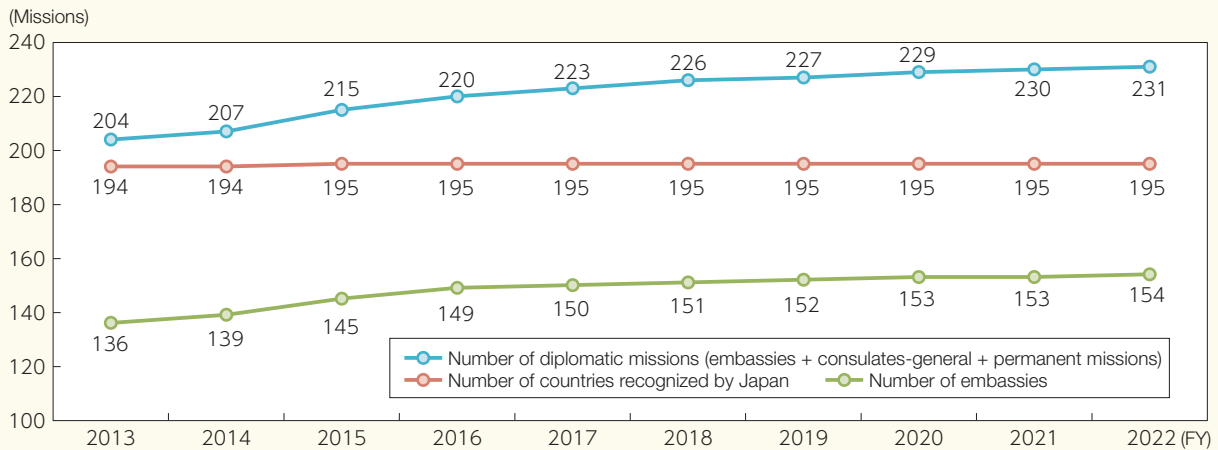
In FY2023, Japan will establish an embassy in Seychelles as well as a Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Rome, Italy (independent office). There are also plans to establish an independent office for the Mission of Japan to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

Seychelles is located along sea lanes that are important to the security and economy of the Indo-Pacific region, making it an important country for the realization of FOIP. Furthermore, it is positioned along a maritime route that connects Mombasa Port in Kenya, East Africa's largest commercial port, which Japan is helping to develop, the Nacala Corridor in Mozambique, and Toamasina Port in Madagascar. With its rich fishery resources, Japanese companies are also showing interest in expanding their businesses to Seychelles. Seychelles also supports Japan in areas such as important international elections. Hence, establishing an embassy in Seychelles is important not only for maintaining and strengthening the friendly bilateral relations between the two countries so far, but also for strengthening systems to enhance effectiveness in collecting information and providing various forms of support in emergencies.

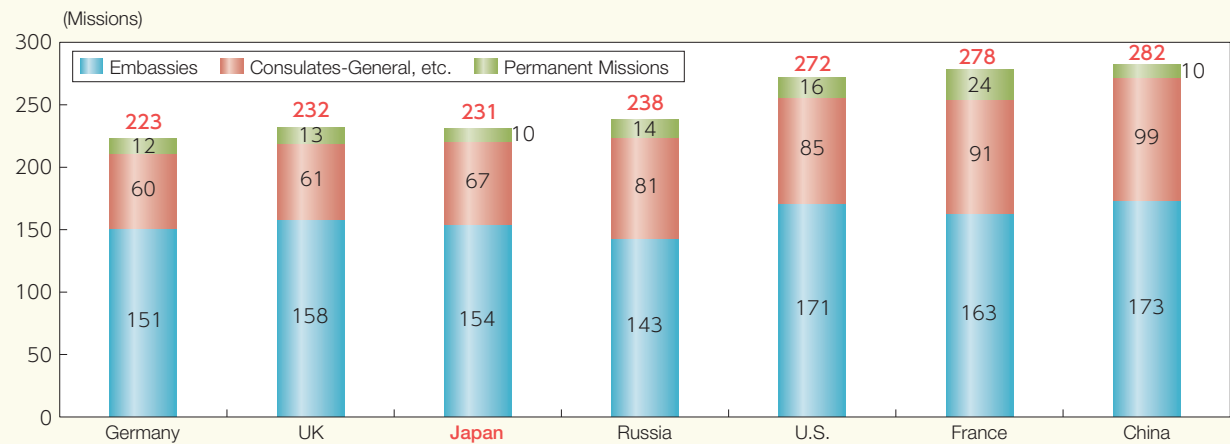
Rome is the base of international organizations working in the areas of food and agriculture, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). These three international organizations work in close cooperation with one another to secure global food security and reduce the number of hungry people, through initiatives to stabilize the global food markets and particularly by providing food support to countries vulnerable to factors that destabilize the food market and improving the production and distribution of agricultural produce. Amidst rising food prices due to the impact of disruptions in the food supply chain as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, destabilization of grain supply due to Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and other factors, it is vital for Japan, in advancing its diplomacy, to secure Japan's food security and help to stabilize the global food market, including facilitating access to food by countries that are particularly vulnerable to the impact of such factors. It is becoming increasingly important to cooperate with the three organizations in Rome that work to address food and agriculture issues, and establishing a Permanent Mission of Japan is important in contributing toward strengthening Japan's presence, and to the development of systems for cooperation and forming close networks with the three organizations.

The Mission of Japan to NATO has, till now, been based in the Embassy of Japan in Belgium as it worked to gradually strengthen Japan's relationship with NATO. NATO, too, has been increasing their interest in the Indo-Pacific region, as shown by their accord to expand cooperation with Asia Pacific partners, including Japan, at the NATO Summit Meeting held in June 2021. Against this backdrop, Russia's aggression against Ukraine, launched in February 2022, clearly showed that the security of Europe and of the Indo-Pacific regions are inseparable, a point that Japan emphasized through the attendance of Foreign Minister Hayashi and Prime Minister Kishida at a NATO Foreign Ministers' Meeting in April and a NATO Summit in June. Against the backdrop of challenges to the international order based on the rule of law, it is extremely important to strengthen cooperation among

Changes in the Number of Diplomatic Missions



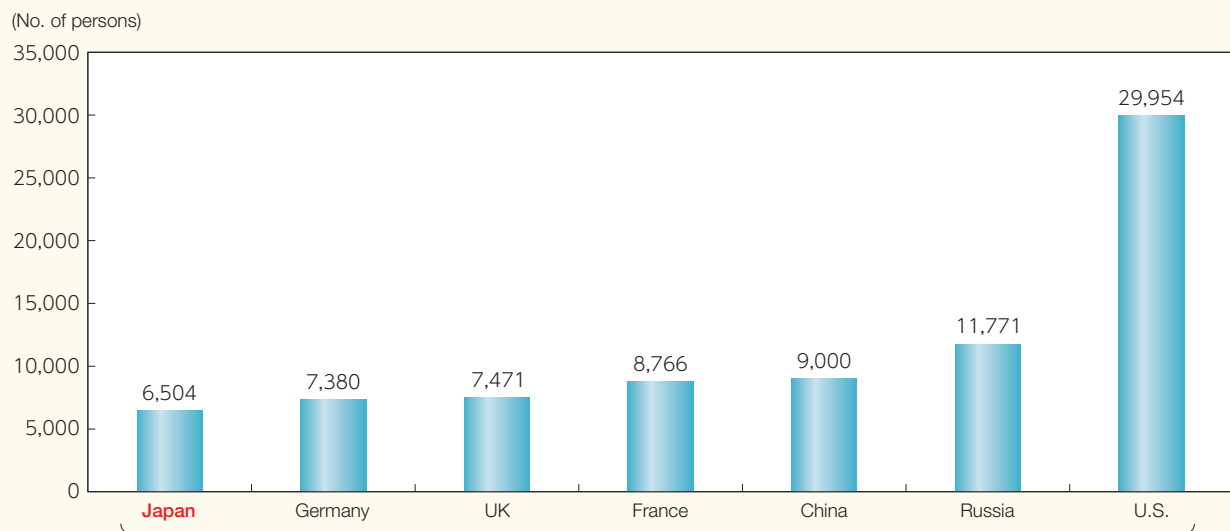
Comparison of the Number of Diplomatic Missions of Japan with Major Countries (P5 + Germany)



Note: As of January 2023

Average number of diplomatic missions among these seven countries: Approximately 251

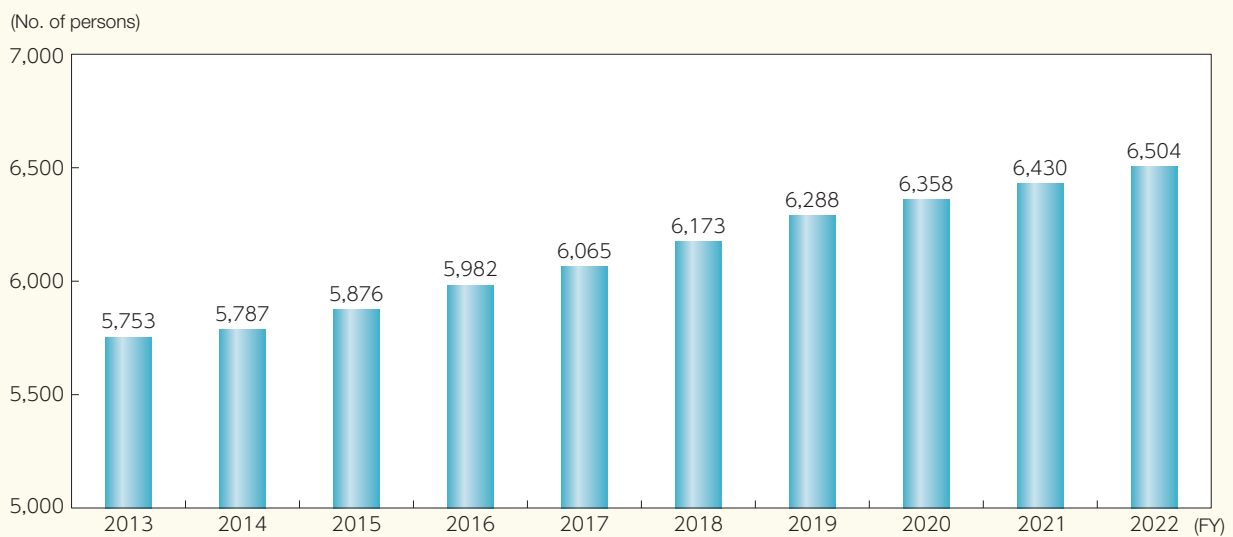
Comparison of the Number of Staff Members at Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Major Countries



Note: based on the FY2022 survey result, etc.

Difference is more than 20,000 members

■ Number of Staff Members at MOFA



like-minded countries that share fundamental values. In view of this growing need to further strengthen cooperation between Japan and NATO, and with the expectation of greater opportunities for Japan-NATO cooperation that will also contribute to the realization of FOIP, such as through the implementation of concrete cooperation across wide-ranging areas of partnership, it is important to establish the Mission of Japan to NATO.

In addition to establishing more diplomatic missions overseas, it is important to secure and increase the number of staff members to support diplomacy at the MOFA headquarters and diplomatic missions overseas. In the context of the Government's policy to reduce the overall personnel expenses due to the current severe budget situation, the number of staff members at MOFA was increased to 6,504 in FY2022 (6,430 in FY2021) in order to address bilateral relations and regional situations, secure peace and stability and conduct strategic communications, promote economic diplomacy, contribute to addressing global issues, and implement protection and safety measures for Japanese nationals abroad. The number of staff members, however, remains insufficient in comparison with other major countries. MOFA continues its efforts to build a structure that is commensurate with Japan's national power and diplomatic policy. In the meantime, based on the belief that enhancing the foreign policy implementation structure remains essential in FY2023, MOFA will increase its workforce by 100 staff.

In order to protect universal values in the international community and conduct diplomacy with a balanced and stable posture with a high level of responsiveness, MOFA appropriated 707.4 billion yen in the budget for FY2022 (of which 17 billion yen is appropriated in the budget of the Digital Agency). Furthermore, MOFA appropriated 267.3 billion yen in the supplementary budget for FY2022 (of which 2.57 billion yen is appropriated in the Digital Agency budget). The funding appropriated in the budget included funding for Japan to exercise its leadership as the G7 Presidency and a Non-permanent Member of the UN Security Council, to support Ukraine, and for measures to engage in flexible and firm diplomacy, particularly in the realization of FOIP. Furthermore, funding was also appropriated for measures to respond to the severe yen depreciation and high prices.

MOFA's FY2023 initial government budget proposal appropriated 756 billion yen (of which 12.5 billion yen is appropriated in the Digital Agency budget) based on the following priorities: (1) maintaining and developing an international order based on universal values in an era of competition among nations; (2) strengthening response to new forms of warfare, including information warfare; (3) strengthening initiatives to promote human security and address global issues; and (4) fundamentally strengthening the foreign and consular policy implementation structure. This includes budgets for holding the G7 Hiroshima Summit and projects to mark the 50th

Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, realizing FOIP including support to like-minded countries for capacity building in the field of security, supporting Ukraine and countries affected by the situation in Ukraine, promoting economic security, strengthening capacity to analyze the international

situation by using AI, and conducting flexible and proactive diplomacy.

In order to promote Japan's national interests, Japan will continue to proceed strategically to develop the foreign policy implementation structure and enhance it further, while making efforts to streamline operations.

3 The Roles of Think Tanks and Experts in Diplomacy

The roles of think tanks and experts in diplomacy include promoting public understanding of diplomatic and security issues in a way that is not constrained by official government views, making intellectual contributions that produce ideas for diplomatic and security policies, building global intellectual networks, and communicating Japan's perspectives to other countries. Seminars and news commentaries by think tanks and experts are essential for improving public understanding of diplomatic and security issues as well as the government's standpoint, and gaining public understanding can further enhance the effectiveness of the government's diplomatic activities. Moreover, gathering information, conducting analyses, and making policy recommendations by leveraging expertise and viewpoints that are different from the ones of the government also enrich discussions on diplomatic policies within the government. Global intellectual exchanges are also important in the sense that they promote understanding of Japan among various countries and regions, and contribute to shaping public opinions in the international community. With the growing complexity and uncertainty in the international community, the roles of think tanks and experts in diplomacy are becoming increasingly important.

Against this backdrop, MOFA provides subsidies to support Japanese think tanks' research activities in the field of foreign and security policy, in order to strengthen their capabilities to collect, analyze and disseminate information, to make policy proposals, and

to further promote Japan's comprehensive diplomacy. In FY2022, the scheme provided support to 13 projects under seven organizations, and it is effectively promoting policy proposals to policymakers that are in line with the ever-changing diplomatic and security environment, exchanges of opinions with overseas think tanks and experts, the publication of papers and dissertations activities by experts, and communications with the media. Furthermore, MOFA launched a new subsidy scheme in FY2017 that aims at supporting research and information dissemination activities of Japanese think tanks in the areas of territory, sovereignty and history. Under the scheme, the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA)¹ conducts such activities as the collection, organization and public release of materials found in Japan and overseas as well as the convention of open symposiums in Japan and in other countries. In 2022, as a part of the outcome, JIIA conducted a webinar on the name Sea of Japan by using old maps and archival materials. Furthermore, regarding the Takeshima dispute, JIIA unveiled the "Takeshima Old Map Collection," a collection of old maps that contain references to Takeshima, and published postwar maps of Japan issued by the Geospatial Authority of Japan as well as Aeronautical Charts produced in the U.S.. It is expected that the scheme will support Japanese think tanks in accumulating historical records and knowledge pertaining to Japan's territory, sovereignty and history, and enhancing their information dissemination domestically and abroad.

1 The relevant section of the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA) website can be found here: <https://www.jiia.or.jp/en/>



Column

Executive Chefs for Ambassadors/
Consuls-General of Japan: At the Forefront of Diplomacy

.....

Executive Chefs for Ambassadors/Consuls-general of Japan are licensed cooks or persons with considerable experience working as chefs, who have been recognized by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to engage in official catering work at official residences and other venues for the head of a diplomatic mission overseas (Ambassador/Consul-general). Diplomatic missions overseas are the center for diplomatic activities such as negotiations with governments, information gathering, and the development of personal networks. One of the most effective means of diplomacy is to create opportunities for meals at the official residence of the Ambassador/Consul-general, with guests such as influential politicians, businessmen and government officials from the country of assignment, as well as the diplomatic corps from various countries. For this reason, the head of the diplomatic mission is usually accompanied by the Executive Chef for the Ambassador/Consul-general, an exclusively appointed chef whose aim is to provide high-quality meals.

● ITO Satoshi, Executive Chef, Consul-General of Japan in Chicago

My name is ITO Satoshi, and I work as the executive chef at the Consulate-General of Japan in Chicago. I took up the position in Chicago in September 2021.

Although it is not as common as in New York and Los Angeles, there are still many Japanese restaurants in Chicago. There is deep understanding about Japanese cuisine among the people, and it is easy to purchase Japanese food such as *sushi*, soy sauce, *tofu*, and *matcha* at the local supermarkets. As a chef, it is very enjoyable and exciting to go to the supermarkets and marketplaces of other countries.

As Chicago is a large city, guests of different ethnicities with varied backgrounds are invited to meals at the official residence of the Consulate-General. In addition to food allergies, based on dietary restrictions due to religion, vegetarianism or veganism due to personal choices or other various reasons, I frequently need to prepare a few different menus for a single meal. Therefore, it is important to first determine the ingredients that cannot be offered to each guest before coming up with a menu to give them the greatest satisfaction.

When preparing a menu and selecting ingredients, I engage in elaborate discussions with the Consul-General, taking into consideration factors such as dietary restrictions, the purpose of the meal, the types of guests, and the season. For example, we may serve nostalgic Japanese cuisine even to Japanese guests, whose lives are deeply rooted to the local area, taking note of the Japanese prefectures where they are originally from. We may create menus that feature local ingredients such as Kansas beef or Iowa pork to those who are visiting the U.S. from Japan.

I have once prepared vegetable-based *sushi* tailored to the unique tastes of vegetarian guests. They said, "I will remember this for life, thank you!" and "It must have been hard as there are many things I cannot eat, yet you managed to produce such wonderful dishes. Thank you!" I feel genuinely happy and fortunate to be a chef when I receive such compliments in person.

In October 2022, I left the official residence with the Consul-General to conduct a *sushi* roll (*makizushi*) demonstration at the "Japan Day" event held at a university in Indiana. It was a new experience for me to teach American people, including children, to make *sushi* rolls while I demonstrated how to do it. During the question-and-answer session, there were participants who raised questions about crucian carp *sushi* (*funa-zushi*) and about the history of *sushi*. This made me realize that there are people who are even more deeply interested in Japanese cuisine than the Japanese people themselves.

Executive Chefs work alone to complete all the processes in the preparation of a meal, including creating the menu, procuring and preparing ingredients, managing inventory, translating the menu into English, as well as the actual meal preparation and plating of the dishes. Moreover, when a chef tries to wield their skills in a foreign



In the kitchen

Sushi roll (*makizushi*) demonstration on Japan Day

country, they frequently face language and cultural barriers. For Executive Chefs to demonstrate their ability at the highest level in such an environment, it is vital to have the support of those around them. I am fortunate to receive much advice and support from the Consul-General and the staff at his official residence, consular staff, as well as all those who provide support to the Consulate-General. This support makes it possible for me to focus on my job.

Being mindful of smooth communication can expand my knowledge as a chef and as an individual, and I think that being granted with the opportunity to learn many things, including languages, is one of the attractions of this job.

While working to improve my capabilities, I will continue to make utmost efforts to demonstrate the best performance possible and fulfill my job at the forefront of diplomacy.



Vegetable *sushi*



Autumn appetizer

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs accepts applications at any time from candidates who wish to serve in diplomacy as Executive Chefs for Ambassadors/Consuls-general of Japan. If you are interested, please inquire through the following website or the QR code.

[The International Hospitality and Conference Service Association (IHCSA)
<http://www.ihcsa.or.jp/zaigaikoukan/cook-1/>]



You can also read more about the activities of Executive Chefs for Ambassadors/Consuls-general of Japan through the “MOFA Japan Chef” social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter).

Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/MofaJapanChef>



Twitter:

https://twitter.com/mofa_japan_chef



Column

“Creating” overseas establishments such as embassies and consulates**- The work of technical officials of the building and repair section**

.....

Were you aware that there are roles at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that do not involve diplomacy, known as “technical officials?” As the “face of Japan,” overseas establishments such as Japanese embassies abroad provide the bases and settings for Japan’s diplomatic activities, and they serve as the last strongholds for protecting Japanese nationals during emergencies. Technical officials manage, design, construct, operate and maintain these facilities. It can be said that they support diplomatic activities behind the scenes, while partly shouldering the huge responsibility of protecting the lives of Japanese nationals. Here, we feature NAGAI Yuta, a technical official of the Building and Repair section, who is responsible for construction, maintenance and repair duties at the Embassy of Japan in Sri Lanka, who describes the work that technical officials do.

● Preserving and reviving a Historical Building

NAGAI Yuta, Technical Official of the Building and Repair Section, Embassy of Japan in Sri Lanka

It is often said that a building reflects the history and culture of its time. The old building of the Embassy of Japan, in Sri Lanka was built during the British colonial era, about 130 years ago. Its structure is brick, and the exterior features vertically long bay windows that are characteristic of brick buildings, while the front entrance has arched porticos (pilared porches). The creative artistry from those days has remained to the present day, largely unchanged. The interior features decorative ceilings and beautiful triple arches extending in the east-west direction. Described as a Renaissance style building, it was purchased by the Government of Japan in the 1970s for use as its embassy. However, as 130 years had passed since it was first built, there were various problems, such as deterioration over time and building safety issues. Hence, large-scale extension and renovation works are now being carried out to improve and reinforce the functions required for use as an embassy.



Front exterior of the old building



Triple arches and central staircase

In carrying out the extension and renovation works, we are required by the Department of Archaeology of Sri Lanka to restore some of the interiors, reuse materials, and preserve the exterior brick walls (front and both sides) in order to retain the historical value of the building. Retaining the old parts of a building, even partially, requires considerable information and knowledge about that building. However, because this is a very old building, as explained above, there are hardly any design blueprints left in existence. Amidst the constraints, I am working together with all other parties involved in the construction work to create an embassy that strikes a balance between functionality and design. We are moving forward with restoration and preservation work while constantly exploring ways to maintain harmony between the new and old parts of the building.

As is often the case when working on an old building, we found a reinforced concrete beam (a horizontal structural component) when dismantling the interior of the building. As this beam could not be removed for structural reasons, we had to work creatively to retain it without damaging the aesthetics of the interior. To partition out new rooms inside the building while preserving the exterior of the old building, it was necessary to partially retain the interior walls supporting the exterior walls, and to reinforce the foundation of the exterior brick walls to make them stronger. Furthermore, in

order to allow sufficient light to enter the building, we are examining methods of producing openings (cutouts in the wall to fit in windows) that can prevent the bricks at the top from falling down when new windows are installed in the brick walls.

As described so far, rather than taking the easy path of destroying everything to build something new, we are taking the route of *preservation* which enhances the depth and dignity of the building through its cumulative history, as with the old wooden architectures found in Kyoto and Nara in Japan. I believe the result will charm and fascinate people who visit the building after its renovation.

Against the backdrop of the current difficult social conditions in Sri Lanka, proceeding with such complex construction work is accompanied by great difficulties. However, everyone involved is working hard together to complete it on schedule, and to create a building that serves as a symbol of Japan. Featuring a multipurpose hall, library, and public relations and culture exhibition room, and it will be part of the important facilities for actively promoting Japan to the outside world. As a technical official, I take pride in the fact that after the completion of the works, this revived building will be used once again by a wide range of people as a stage for diplomacy.



Front of the old building: Group photograph with those involved in the construction work



In consultation with workers at the construction site (the author is on the far right)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs recruits technical officials from candidates who have passed the National Civil Service Examination for General Service (University Graduate Level), Technical Categories (Examination Categories: Architecture, Digital/Electrical/Electronics, Machinery). If you are interested, please visit the recruitment website via the following website or the QR code on the right.

[The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "National Civil Service Examination for General Service (University Graduates, Technical)"]

https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/ms/prs/page23_003447.html



Column

Research Activities Through the Diplomatic Bluebook

The Diplomatic Bluebook has been published every year since 1957 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and offers an outline record of the international situation and Japan's diplomatic activities of the previous year. This bluebook has significance not only from the perspective of promoting understanding of Japan's diplomacy within and outside Japan, but also as a historical record. This Column introduces some examples in which the Diplomatic Bluebook is used for research activities at universities.

● Sharing understanding of Japan's diplomacy through the Diplomatic Bluebook

Students from the seminar on contemporary Chinese politics and foreign policy,
Faculty of Policy Management, Keio University

TONOIKE Ai, ZHAO Liuxing, SAKAI Tomohiro, YEUNG Takming, MOGAMI Sora, LI Anqi

Our seminar brings together undergraduate students who are interested in contemporary Chinese politics and diplomacy, and Japan-China relations. As a part of the seminar's activities, we read the "Diplomatic Bluebook" in turns to understand changes in the views of (the Government of) Japan toward China. For example, we compare, from various angles, how China is depicted in the Bluebook, such as by analyzing the unique expressions used in relation to China, or by counting the number of times specific words appear in the text. Although it is somewhat tedious work, the Diplomatic Bluebook serves as the ideal material to deepen understanding of the multifaceted nature of Japan's diplomacy toward China (politics, security, economic cooperation, people-to-people exchanges), as well as to consider how Japan's diplomacy toward China has developed while thinking about how Japan has made use of Asia as a "space" to date. It is also useful material to engage in critical discussions about Japan's diplomacy today.

Above all, what attracts us the most is that the Diplomatic Bluebook is authored by officials of MOFA, who are working in the frontlines of Japan's diplomacy. Moreover, as it provides an overall picture of Japan's diplomacy, it allows readers to learn about the international environment Japan faces - lying between the two superpowers: the U.S. and China - and to expand our horizons. These make it a very interesting document.

There is strong impression that the Diplomatic Bluebook is a dry and uninteresting book, and we do actually feel this at times. It felt like something distant from our lives. However, it can be quite interesting if we read it from the perspective that it is a book explaining international relations to its readers (Japanese citizens), and with a desire to interpret its message. As a typical example, by counting the number of times and analyzing the periods in which the phrase "Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests" appears in the text, it is possible to grasp the changing process of Japan-China relations. Furthermore, by comparing it to other government publications with overlapping policy areas, such as "Defense of Japan," it is possible to grasp the differences in views between the respective ministries, and to get a glimpse into the government's adjustments to policy areas that it places importance on.

Of course, there are also some points that we are not satisfied with. Unlike the media, the Diplomatic Bluebook is a document that provides accurate and detailed information about Japan's diplomacy from the government's point of view. However, when the question arises of what a "Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests" actually means, for example, the Diplomatic Bluebook does not seem to offer a clear explanation. In such cases, we have to check other government documents for clarification, and that gives us an impression that it narrows its own door to readers.

In our seminar, which comprises students of multiple nationalities, it is an interesting experience to use the Diplomatic Bluebook as a material to understand Japan's stance toward China, and to reach an understanding among everyone. Studying the Diplomatic Bluebook, a public document that everyone can access, in our seminar is very meaningful in the sense that it not only facilitates individual understanding, but also allows us to gain mutual understanding of knowledge and engage in lively discussions.



Discussions among seminar students, using the Diplomatic Bluebook as the study material

References

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References

The Issue of Comfort Women

Announcement by Foreign Ministers of Japan and the Republic of Korea at the Joint Press Occasion

December 28, 2015



(Scan here for publications
on the Ministry of Foreign
Affairs website)

1. Foreign Minister Kishida

The Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) have intensively discussed the issue of comfort women between Japan and the ROK at bilateral meetings including the Director-General consultations. Based on the result of such discussions, I, on behalf of the Government of Japan, state the following:

(1) The issue of comfort women, with an involvement of the Japanese military authorities at that time, was a grave affront to the honor and dignity of large numbers of women, and the Government of Japan is painfully aware of responsibilities from this perspective. As Prime Minister of Japan, Prime Minister Abe expresses anew his most sincere apologies and remorse to all the women who underwent immeasurable and painful experiences and suffered incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women.

(2) The Government of Japan has been sincerely dealing with this issue. Building on such experience, the Government of Japan will now take measures to heal psychological wounds of all former comfort women through its budget. To be more specific, it has been decided that the Government of the ROK establish a foundation for the purpose of providing support for the former comfort women, that its funds be contributed by the Government of Japan as a one-time contribution through its budget, and that projects for recovering the honor and dignity and healing the psychological wounds of all former comfort women be carried out under the cooperation between the Government of Japan and the Government of the ROK.

(3) While stating the above, the Government of Japan confirms that this issue is resolved finally and irreversibly with this announcement, on the premise that the Government will steadily implement the measures specified in (2) above. In addition, together

with the Government of the ROK, the Government of Japan will refrain from accusing or criticizing each other regarding this issue in the international community, including at the United Nations.

2. Foreign Minister Yun

The Government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Government of Japan have intensively discussed the issue of comfort women between the ROK and Japan at bilateral meetings including the Director-General consultations. Based on the result of such discussions, I, on behalf of the Government of the ROK, state the following:

(1) The Government of the ROK values the GOJ's announcement and efforts made by the Government of Japan in the lead-up to the issuance of the announcement and confirms, together with the GOJ, that the issue is resolved finally and irreversibly with this announcement, on the premise that the Government of Japan will steadily implement the measures specified in 1. (2) above. The Government of the ROK will cooperate in the implementation of the Government of Japan's measures.

(2) The Government of the ROK acknowledges the fact that the Government of Japan is concerned about the statue built in front of the Embassy of Japan in Seoul from the viewpoint of preventing any disturbance of the peace of the mission or impairment of its dignity, and will strive to solve this issue in an appropriate manner through taking measures such as consulting with related organizations about possible ways of addressing this issue.

(3) The Government of the ROK, together with the Government of Japan, will refrain from accusing or criticizing each other regarding this issue in the international community, including at the United Nations, on the premise that the Government of Japan will steadily implement the measures it announced.

**Regarding the Confirmation of the Judgment of the Seoul Central District Court of the Republic of Korea in the Lawsuit Filed by Former Comfort Women and Others
(Statement by Foreign Minister MOTEGI Toshimitsu)**



(Scan here for publications
on the Ministry of Foreign
Affairs website)

January 23, 2021

1. In the lawsuit filed by former comfort women and others against the Government of Japan on January 8, 2021, the Seoul Central District Court of the Republic of Korea rendered a judgment which ordered the Government of Japan, *inter alia*, to pay compensation to the plaintiffs, denying the application of the principle of State immunity under international law. On January 23, 2021, this judgment was confirmed.
2. Under international law, a state is, in principle, not to be subject to the jurisdiction of other states, as each state has sovereignty and states exist on an equal basis with each other. Japan has repeatedly expressed its position that this lawsuit therefore must be dismissed because it is not acceptable for the Government of Japan to be subject to the jurisdiction of the Republic of Korea in accordance with this principle of State immunity in international law. The fact that the Seoul Central District Court of the Republic of Korea recently rendered the judgment denying the application of the principle of State immunity is clearly contrary to the international law which was also articulated in the judgment of the International Court of Justice.
3. The Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea of 1965 stipulated that the issue concerning property and claims between Japan and the Republic of Korea, including the issue of comfort women, was “settled completely and finally” and no contention shall be made (Article II). As such, this Agreement has provided the basis for the bilateral relationship up until now.
4. In addition, it is confirmed that the issue of comfort women was “resolved finally and irreversibly” with the agreement reached at the Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in December 2015. The Government of Japan has implemented all measures it committed to under this agreement.

The Government of the Republic of Korea also acknowledges that this agreement is an official agreement between the two governments and the international community has been closely following the implementation of the agreement by the Government of the Republic of Korea.

5. This judgment is extremely regrettable and absolutely unacceptable, as it is clearly contrary to international law and agreements between the two countries.
6. Japan once again strongly urges the Republic of Korea to immediately take appropriate measures to remedy the status of its breaches of international law on its own responsibility as a country.

(Reference 1) Agreement on the Settlement of Problem Concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea (entered into force on December 18, 1965)

Article II

1. The Contracting Parties confirm that problem concerning property, rights and interests of the two Contracting Parties and their nationals (including juridical persons) and concerning claims between the Contracting Parties and their nationals, including those provided for in Article IV, paragraph (a) of the Treaty of Peace with Japan signed at the city of San Francisco on September 8, 1951, is settled completely and finally.
- ...
3. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 2, no contention shall be made with respect to the measures on property, rights and interests of either Contracting Party and its nationals which are within the jurisdiction of the other Contracting Party on the date of the signing of the present Agreement, or with respect to any claims of either Contracting Party and its nationals against the other Contracting Party and its nationals arising from the causes which occurred on or before the said date.

(Reference 2) Announcement by
Foreign Ministers of Japan and the
Republic of Korea at the Joint Press
Occasion

[https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/
page4e_000364.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/page4e_000364.html)



(Reference 3) Japan's Efforts on the
Issue of Comfort Women (PDF)
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/
files/100104783.pdf](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/100104783.pdf)



Please see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website for other related documents.

https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/page22e_000883.html



The Issue of Former Civilian Workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs)

Failure of the Republic of Korea to comply with obligations regarding arbitration under the Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea (Statement by Foreign Minister Taro Kono)



(Scan here for publications on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website)

July 19, 2019

1. Japan and the Republic of Korea have built a close, friendly and cooperative relationship based on the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea and other relevant agreements that the two countries concluded when they normalized their relationship in 1965. The Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea (the “Agreement”), which is the core of these agreements, stipulates that Japan shall supply to the Republic of Korea 300 million USD in grants and extend loans up to 200 million USD (Article I), and that problem concerning property, rights and interests of the two Contracting Parties and their nationals (including juridical persons), as well as concerning claims between the Contracting Parties and their nationals, are “settled completely and finally,” and no contention shall be made thereof (Article II). As such, the Agreement has provided the basis for the bilateral relationship up until now.
2. In spite of the above, a series of judgments of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea last year ordered respondent Japanese companies, *inter alia*, to pay compensation to the plaintiffs. These decisions are extremely regrettable and totally unacceptable. The decisions clearly violate Article II of the Agreement and inflict unjustifiable damage and costs on the said Japanese companies. Above all, the decisions completely overthrow the legal foundation of the friendly and cooperative relationship that Japan and the Republic of Korea have developed since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1965.
3. Japan has long placed an emphasis on the rule of law in the international community. Consistent with its strong belief in the importance for States, irrespective of domestic circumstances, to abide by their commitments under international law, the Government of Japan, on 9 January 2019, requested diplomatic consultations with the Government of the Republic of Korea under the Agreement. This was the initial step to settle the issue of breaches of international law by the Republic of Korea due to the judgments of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea rendered last year, as well as related judgments and proceedings.
4. However, the Government of the Republic of Korea failed to respond to the request for diplomatic consultations, taking no action as the Korean claimants took steps to attach assets of the respondent Japanese companies in satisfaction of the judgments of the Korean Supreme Court. Given that failure by the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Government of Japan transmitted a Notification and Statement of Claim to the Republic of Korea on 20 May 2019 (“Notification”). By this Notification, the Government of Japan invoked the arbitration clause in the Agreement, referring the dispute to arbitration in accordance with Article III.2 of the Agreement; and Japan has proceeded with the arbitration process up to the present. The Government of the Republic of Korea, however, did not follow the procedures set forth in Article III of the Agreement and failed to comply with its obligation not only to appoint an arbitrator, but also to choose a third country, the government of which is to appoint an arbitrator for the Contracting Party, within the period provided for in the Agreement.
5. Japan deeply regrets that, as a consequence, an arbitration board under the Agreement referred to on 20 May could not be constituted.
6. The repeated failures of the Republic of Korea to take the steps toward the constitution of the arbitration board, which is the agreed dispute settlement procedure provided under the Agreement,

constitute further breaches of the Agreement, in addition to the breaches already caused by the series of judgments of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea last year, as well as related judgments and proceedings.

7. Given the severe situation surrounding the Japan-Republic of Korea relationship caused by the Republic of Korea side, including the aforementioned, the Government of Japan will be taking necessary measures against the Republic of Korea.
8. The settlement of this dispute requires the Republic of Korea to remedy its accumulated breaches of international law. Japan renews its request for the Republic of Korea to take concrete actions for that purpose immediately.

(Reference 1) Agreement on the Settlement of Problem Concerning Property and Claim on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea (entered into force on December 18, 1965)

Article II

- 1 The Contracting Parties confirm that problem concerning property, rights, and interests of the two Contracting Parties and their nationals (including juridical persons) and concerning claims between the Contracting Parties and their nationals, including those provided for in Article IV, paragraph (a) of the Treaty of Peace with Japan signed at the city of San Francisco on September 8, 1951, is settled completely and finally.

...

- 3 Subject to the provisions of paragraph 2 above, no contention shall be made with respect to the measures on property, rights and interests of either Contracting Party and its nationals which are within the jurisdiction of the other Contracting Party on the date of the signing of the present Agreement, or with respect to any claims of either Contracting Party and its nationals against the other Contracting Party and its nationals arising from the causes which occurred on or before the said date.

Article III

- 1 Any dispute between the Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation and implementation of

the present Agreement shall be settled, first of all, through diplomatic channels.

- 2 Any dispute which fails to be settled under the provision of paragraph 1 shall be referred for decision to an arbitration board composed of three arbitrators, one to be appointed by the Government of each Contracting Party within a period of thirty days from the date of receipt by the Government of either Contracting Party from the Government of the other of a note requesting arbitration of the dispute, and the third arbitrator to be agreed upon by the two arbitrators so chosen within a further period of thirty days or the third arbitrator to be appointed by the government of a third country agreed upon within such further period by the two arbitrators, provided that the third arbitrator shall not be a national of either Contracting Party.
- 3 If, within the periods respectively referred to, the Government of either Contracting Party fails to appoint an arbitrator, or the third arbitrator or a third country is not agreed upon, the arbitration board shall be composed of the two arbitrators to be designated by each of the governments of the two countries respectively chosen by the Governments of the Contracting Parties within a period of thirty days and the third arbitrator to be designated by the government of a third country to be determined upon consultation between the governments so chosen.
- 4 The Governments of the Contracting Parties shall abide by any award made by the arbitration board under the provisions of the present Article.

(Reference 2) Background and Position of the Government of Japan Concerning the issue of former civilian workers from the Korean Peninsula (FACT SHEET)

English (PDF)

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000499948.pdf>

Japanese (PDF)

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000499946.pdf>



Please see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website for other related documents.

https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/page4e_000947.html

