

# Preface to the Diplomatic Bluebook 2017

The year 2016 was a very important year for Japanese diplomacy with serious responsibilities. As the G7 Presidency, Japan hosted the Isejima Summit (May) and the Hiroshima Foreign Ministers' Meeting (April), then the Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) was held in Kenya, first ever held in Africa in August. Moreover, Japan became a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council for the first time in five years, contributing proactively to a variety of discussions on issues of international peace and stability such as the North Korea issue.

With regard to Japan-United States (U.S.) relations, President Obama visited the bombsite of Hiroshima for the first time as a sitting U.S. president in May, making it a historical event in terms of revitalizing international momentum for realizing a world free of nuclear weapons. At the same time, the visit symbolized the strength of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, as an "Alliance of Hope." Moreover, Prime Minister Abe's visit to Pearl Harbor of Hawaii, in December, demonstrated strongly the power of Japan-U.S. reconciliation to the international community.

Furthermore, in relations with neighboring countries, an important step was taken toward the conclusion of a Japan-Russia peace treaty with President Putin's visit to Japan in December.

Chapter 1 of the Diplomatic Bluebook 2017 takes a brief look at the international situation surrounding Japan and Japan's diplomacy, Chapter 2 examines Japan's foreign policy that takes a Panoramic Perspective of the World Map, and Chapter 3 focuses on Japan's foreign policy to promote national and worldwide interests. Chapter 4, entitled "Japan's Diplomacy Open to the Public," explains the efforts of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to support Japanese society and people in deepening ties with the world, the enhancement of the diplomacy implementation structure, and the efforts for ensuring the safety of Japanese people overseas. Commentaries have been utilized together with charts and maps to aid readers' understanding, and themed "special features" and "columns" conveying voices from the diplomatic front lines are provided to make readers feel familiar with diplomacy.

For Japan to pursue vigorous diplomacy, it is an absolute necessity for us to gain the understanding and cooperation of all citizens. We sincerely hope that this Diplomatic Bluebook will help every one of you deepen your understanding of Japan's latest foreign policy and international affairs, and that it will provide an opportunity to disseminate the "right image" of a Japan working hard to address global issues, in order to ensure the peace and prosperity of the world.

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Minister for Foreign Affairs  
**Fumio Kishida**



In principle, this Diplomatic Bluebook 2017 describes an overview of the international situations and Japan's diplomatic activities between January 1 and December 31 of 2016; however, some important events that occurred through beginning of March 2017 are also included.

In this book we have tried to provide plain and easy-to-understand explanations that anyone would find easy to read. Some articles in columns were contributed by prominent persons who are internationally successful and others concerning activities which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) particularly put a strong effort in 2016.

Key speeches, communiques, and statistics which were listed in the Diplomatic Bluebook until 2002 are available on the MOFA website at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/index.html>. You will find an electronic version of this book and back numbers of Diplomatic Bluebook at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/index.html>.

For more details with respect to Chapter 3, Section 1, "4. Disarmament, Non-proliferation, and the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy," and Chapter 3, Section 2, "Japan's International Cooperation," please refer to the MOFA's publications, "Japan's Efforts on Disarmament and Non-proliferation," and "White Paper on Development Cooperation/Japan's ODA White Paper." These documents are also available on the MOFA website at <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/report.html>.

Please note that the titles of persons and names of countries appearing in this book are those as of 2016.