

# Message from the Minister for Foreign Affairs

The security environment surrounding Japan is becoming more severe. North Korea has advanced its nuclear and missile development and also conducted a nuclear test. Furthermore, Chinese Government vessels have repeatedly intruded into Japan's territorial waters, and a Chinese Government aircraft violated our airspace. There were also incidents of directing of fire-control radar by a Chinese Navy vessel. Also during this period, as we were confronted with the terrorist attack in Algeria, there were some incidents that Japanese nationals and companies faced various threats abroad.

Ever since assuming the post of Minister for Foreign Affairs, I realized these severe crises surrounding Japan. I will pursue policies that will secure Japan from crises and dangers threatening the peace and stability of Japan and the world, and that will ensure peace and prosperity for Japan.

To this end, I will make the greatest effort to promote our foreign policies from a broad perspective and based on the three pillars of Japan's foreign policy, which are strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance, deepening our cooperative relations with neighboring countries, and strengthening economic diplomacy as a means of promoting the revitalization of the Japanese economy.

The first pillar is to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance, the linchpin of Japan's diplomacy and security. At the summit meeting held during Prime Minister Abe's recent visit to the United States, both leaders showed the strong bonds that underlie the Japan-U.S. Alliance at home and abroad, and clearly indicated that Japan and the United States are working hand in hand for peace and stability of the world.

The second pillar of Japan's foreign policy consists of deepening our relations with neighboring countries. The Asia-Pacific region's peace and stability is indispensable in order to protect Japan's national interests. Enhancing cooperative relations and developing and strengthening relationships of trust with major neighboring countries like China, the Republic of Korea, Russia and Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries will lay the foundations for peace and stability of the region. Furthermore, relations with Australia and India that are becoming increasingly important are also essential as well as countries in other regions.

The third pillar of Japan's foreign policy is to strengthen its economic diplomacy. In order to ensure Japan's prosperity amid the ever-globalizing world economy, to enhance its economic diplomacy is essential as a means to promoting the revitalization of the national economy. The promotion of free trade is the pillar of Japan's economic diplomacy. Japan strategically promotes high level economic partnership with regions including the Asia-Pacific region, Europe, etc. Following the announcement by Prime Minister Abe of Japan's intention to participate in Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiations, we are now determined to join negotiations in a timely manner and do everything within our power to maximize national interests, while maintaining a strong bargaining position.

The terrorist attack in Algeria reminded us that global issues transcend borders and impact people throughout the world, and are issues that Japan too must address. There are numerous global issues that we must resolve such as terrorism, nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, climate change, and international peacekeeping and peace-building.

To tackle this multitude of diplomatic issues, the understanding and support of each and every individual in Japan is indispensable. The impact of public opinion in each country on foreign policy has been increasing in recent years with the rapid development of information and communications technology and the growth of democracy. In order for us to implement foreign policy effectively, it is essential that we promote interest in and affinity for Japan and build a positive image of Japan by providing information, not only to governments but also directly to citizens in each country, and by encouraging people-to-people exchanges at a general public level.

Chapter one “Overview: International Situation and Japanese Diplomacy in 2012” of this Diplomatic Bluebook 2013 presents a broad view of the international situation and Japan’s diplomatic efforts in 2012. Chapter two “Japan’s Foreign Policy by Region” and Chapter three “Japan’s Foreign Policy in Major Diplomatic Fields” note the important development during 2012 by region and issue. Additionally, Chapter four “Japan’s Diplomacy Open to the Public” explains the efforts by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan to support Japanese society and Japanese citizens deepening their ties with the world. Furthermore, the chapter also details our efforts to strengthen the structure of public relations that swiftly and effectively communicate Japan’s views and positions on various issues, and discusses the strengthening of our foreign policy implementation structure.

I sincerely hope that this Diplomatic Bluebook will help explain international situation and recent developments of Japan’s diplomacy and become a foothold for strong diplomacy driven by the entire nation.



**Fumio Kishida**  
Minister for Foreign Affairs