

Message from the Minister for Foreign Affairs

Just over 15 months have passed since I was appointed as Japan's 143rd Minister for Foreign Affairs. In that period of time, striving on the diplomatic front, what I have strongly sensed is the steady spread of international support for Japan's stance of upholding freedom, democracy, basic human rights and the rule of law and on earnestly endeavoring for the world peace and prosperity.

Tokyo's success in winning the vote to host the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games—a great source of joy shared among all Japanese citizens—proved the increasing support for Japan from the international community. Together with the recovery of the Japanese economy, I felt that 2013 was a year in which Japan showed again greater international presence and restored confidence.

To date, we have made steady progress with our foreign policy, furthering Japan's national interests, based on the three pillars of Japan's foreign policy—strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance, deepening our cooperative relations with neighboring countries, and strengthening economic diplomacy as a means to promoting the revitalization of the Japanese economy. With regard to global issues, Japan contributed in a diverse range of fields and achieved substantial results based on the country's unique strengths. This included such areas as nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, efforts to realize a society in which women shine, an international development agenda, improvement of the situation in Syria, and resolving Iranian nuclear issue.

Although the security environment surrounding Japan is becoming increasingly severe, Japan will contribute even more proactively to peace, stability and prosperity worldwide as a “Proactive Contributor to Peace” based on the principle of international cooperation as indicated in our National Security Strategy (NSS). In 2015, we will be marking the 70th anniversary of the end of World War II. Not just for Japan but also internationally, 2015 will be a major landmark year in various areas, including the development agenda, climate change, disarmament and disaster risk reduction. I believe that as Minister for Foreign Affairs, my continuing mission is to advance the national interests and the interests of the entire world, and strongly show the diplomatic presence of Japan in the international community.

The first three chapters of the Diplomatic Bluebook 2014 present information on key events in 2013. Chapter one, “Overview: International Situation and Japan's Diplomacy in 2013,” presents a broad view of the international situations and the development of Japan's strategic diplomacy. Chapter two explains “Japan's Foreign Policy that Takes a Panoramic Perspective of the World Map,” and Chapter three focuses on “Japan's Foreign Policy to Promote National and Worldwide Interests.” Chapter four, “Japan's Diplomacy Open to the Public,” explains the efforts by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to support Japanese society and people in deepening 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 contribute to better understanding of the recent international situation and development of Japan's foreign policy, and will become an opportunity to broaden the recognition of Japan as a nation that proactively contributes to world peace and prosperity more than ever before.



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