

**Policy speech by H.E. Mr. Fumio Kishida,
Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
At the Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi
“Special Partnership for the Era of the Indo-Pacific”**

Ambassador Rajiv Kumar Bhatia, Director General of the Indian Council of World Affairs,

Ambassador Shashank, Former Foreign Secretary of India,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

(Opening Remarks)

Thank you very much, Ambassador Bhatia and Ambassador Shashank, for your kind introductory remarks.

I am very honored to have the opportunity to speak before the Indian Council of World Affairs today.

I was scheduled to visit India late last year, to participate in the Japan-India Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue with Her Excellency Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs. However, because of the general election in Japan where I also had to fight for my own seat, unfortunately, I was unable to visit on that occasion. As I assume that everyone in India, the largest democracy in Asia, or rather in the world, knows how challenging elections are, I hope you can understand the situation.

During two-weeks of campaigning, I was hardly able to go to my own constituency in Hiroshima. Instead, I travelled throughout the whole of Japan to ask for support and have as many of my colleagues as possible elected. As a result, the ruling parties gained the strong confidence and the third Cabinet of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was inaugurated. And I was reappointed as Minister for Foreign Affairs. Now, right after my reappointment, I am here in India, and it gives me great pleasure to be able to realize this visit, which I promised with Prime Minister Narendra Modi when he visited Japan last year.

(The Era of the Indo-Pacific)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I came to India with a specific purpose. I chose India as the first country to visit following my reappointment because of my belief that the partnership between Japan and India is a special one. It is a partnership that should drive the advent of the new era; an era when the Indo-Pacific region becomes the epicenter of global prosperity. The Pacific and Indian Oceans are beginning to link together as the oceans of freedom and prosperity. Countries across the region have been achieving remarkable economic development. At the same time, however, it is also true that the region still faces security vulnerabilities. Today, the peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region are becoming important not only for Japan and India, but for the entire world. Upon such recognition, I would now like to introduce my idea on what role I believe the special partnership between Japan and India should play in the Indo-Pacific region.

(Looking Back to the Path Japan and India have taken)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before I discuss the future, I would like to look back to the path Japan and India have taken.

As Prime Minister Abe stated in his New Year press conference, Japan, based on profound remorse regarding the war, has built a democratic state that has consistently upheld human rights and the rule of law over the 70 years since the end of the war, and has single-mindedly followed the path of a peace loving nation. In this way, Japan has been contributing to the peace and development of Asia and the world. India, also, has a long history of making enormous contributions to peace-building, sending one of the world's largest numbers of personnel on U.N. peacekeeping operations in various countries over many years. I believe that the foundations for the rapid advancement we see in the Indo-Pacific region today have been laid over the past 70 years by the endeavors of Japan and India, which aspire to build peace and prosperity, as well as the efforts of the region and the international community.

Based on the course it has taken, Japan will continue even more actively to contribute to the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region and the world, under the banner of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation. For example, on June 20th this year, Japan

will host the “High-Level Seminar on Peacebuilding, National Reconciliation and Democratization in Asia” to share its experiences and lessons of peacebuilding in Asia with the world. Furthermore, Japan intends to contribute to building a new era for the Indo-Pacific region, based on the special partnership with India.

(Toward the Future)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

How can Japan and India work to ensure peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region? I would like to propose strengthening the three bridges that link the region.

The first bridge is “values and spirit.”

Universal values, such as democracy, freedom, open economy and the rule of law, are indispensable for the Indo-Pacific region to remain stable and prosperous – and to shine as the center of the world. Japan and India are the most successful democracies and free nations in Asia. I would like to emphasize that leadership from both countries is essential for the Indo-Pacific region to foster an order supported by democratic values, open economy and the rule of law.

In addition, the ideas of tolerance, inclusiveness, non-violence and love for humanity are inherent in the traditional spirit of Asia. Because of such spiritual cultures, democracy has taken firm root in Asia. India, the birthplace of Buddhism, and Japan, which has adopted Buddhism and various other religions and harmonized them with its traditional spirit, can be described as the two major standard-bearers of Asian spirituality.

Japan and India represent the region in terms of both “values” and “spirit.” This enables them to adopt a leadership position in the region, and is one of the reasons why the partnership between the two countries is so special.

The second bridge is a “vibrant economy.”

When the economies of each country are organically connected within a region and between regions, a synergistic effect is generated and the vitality of each economy can be increased. The Japan-India economic relationship, which has grown stronger in recent years, should be further improved to facilitate an even greater contribution to the entire Indo-Pacific region.

Under Abenomics, the Government of Japan supports the overseas advancement of Japanese enterprises, while India has been strengthening its manufacturing industry by attracting investment under Modinomics. The “Japan-India Investment Promotion Partnership” agreed at the summit meeting held in September last year, seeks synergies between Abenomics and Modinomics. Japan will contribute to the “Make in India” initiative led by Prime Minister Modi so as to support India in becoming a base of economic growth for the Indo-Pacific region and ultimately of the world.

Moreover, it is important to strengthen connectivity between South Asia and Southeast Asia from both sea and land while strengthening economic connectivity within the South Asian region, so that these regions can form a vast economic network. In this way, it would become possible for the entire Indo-Pacific region to achieve vital economic growth. From this perspective, the Government of Japan intends to support the construction of an energy network within the SAARC region for enhancing regional connectivity. Furthermore, for the enhancement of connectivity between SAARC and ASEAN, Japan will strengthen its assistance by supporting development initiatives in North East India, which will serve as a connective node between the two regions.

In addition, investing in science and cutting-edge technology provides the basis for the diffusion of economic growth. Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister Modi have already agreed to strengthen cooperation in the fields of ocean technology, ocean observations and outer space, including expanding exchange programs for young researchers. We will sow the seeds that are vital to the regional economy, then nurture them through a stronger partnership in the fields of science and technology.

The third bridge is “Open and Stable Seas.”

This region is bound together by seas, extending from the Indian Ocean through the South China Sea to the Pacific Ocean. Both India and Japan are maritime countries whose interests depend on the safety of sea lanes. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has proposed the “three principles of the rule of law at sea.” These are; making and clarifying claims based on international law, not using force or coercion in trying to drive claims, and seeking to settle disputes by peaceful means. Needless to say, thorough application of these principles provides the foundation for peace and stability in this region.

Japan and India have been increasing cooperation in the field of maritime security, through efforts such as joint maritime exercises between defense authorities, as well as the implementation of dialogue and combined exercises between coast guards. It is important to further strengthen our cooperation through defense equipment cooperation including the US-2 amphibian aircraft and Japan's continued participation in the India-U.S. Malabar maritime exercises. Moreover, I believe that Japan-India cooperation in multilateral frameworks such as ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and East Asia Summit (EAS) will become increasingly important. Therefore, we should even more proactively assume our responsibilities to protect "Open and Stable Seas" under our special partnership.

(Efforts on Global Issues)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The significance of the Japan-India partnership is not limited to the Indo-Pacific region alone. This special partnership will also become increasingly important for solving global issues.

First of all, there is the issue of the United Nations Security Council reform. The United Nations commemorates its 70th anniversary this year. Since its inception, despite some twists and turns, the UN has made contributions to peace, development, and human rights throughout the world. Japan is one of the greatest beneficiaries and has continually emphasized the importance of the UN. However, in order to adequately respond to the rapidly increasing and evolving challenges of the 21st century, we must expand the number of both permanent and non-permanent members of the Security Council to reflect the realities of the current international community. Japan and India, with the intention and ability to assume the responsibilities of permanent members, will become driving forces of reform. To gain concrete outcomes on this issue in 2015, the 'G4' countries of Japan, India, Germany and Brazil will work together to garner support from the international community.

The shooting terrorism incident that occurred in Paris reinforced our conviction that the fighting against terrorism continues to be a great challenge for which the international community should make its all-out efforts. Japan resolutely condemns any forms of terrorism including the terrorism incident in Paris. Terrorism is a real danger to Japan and India.

Two years ago, terrorism incident in Algeria claimed the lives of many Japanese people. Also, I understand that tragic terrorism incidents have been occurring in various parts of India. Let us firmly confront terrorism.

Furthermore, 2015 is a milestone year for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, as it marks the 70th year since the atomic bombings. On behalf of the Government of Japan, particularly as foreign minister from Hiroshima Prefecture, I would like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Parliament of India for conveying its condolences to the Japanese victims of nuclear bombs in August every year. I believe that it is an important mission for Japan, as the only country to have suffered atomic bombings during the war, to lead the international community toward “a world free of nuclear weapons.” Although differences remain in our positions, Japan and India share this goal. In order to achieve this important goal, we would like to explore how Japan and India can further cooperate with the aim of strengthening the international disarmament and non-proliferation efforts under our “Special Strategic and Global Partnership.” Japan would also like to proceed with ongoing negotiations on the Agreement for Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy through combined efforts with India to pursue “a world free of nuclear weapons.”

(Conclusion)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region greatly contributes to the peace and prosperity of the world in the 21st century. As Prime Minister Modi stated when he visited Japan, Japan and India enjoy a special partnership that will determine the direction of Asia in the 21st century. Japan and India, whose bilateral relationship is the one blessed with the largest potential for development in the world, can strengthen the three bridges that connect the Indo-Pacific region and realize the potential of the region. Let us lead jointly the way for the peace and prosperity of the entire region and of the world.

If Japan and India work together, I am sure that we can bring a positive difference to the world.

Thank you very much for your attention.