Diplomatic Bluebook 2018

Japanese Diplomacy and
International Situation in 2017

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

Preface to the Diplomatic Bluebook 2018

It is no exaggeration to say that the security environment surrounding Japan is most severe since the end of World War II, including the increasingly tense North Korean issues. In addition, the international order based on fundamental values, such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, that have underpinned global stability and prosperity is now being challenged by the rise of terrorism and violent extremism. Under these circumstances, in order to maintain the existing international order and address the issues facing the international community, Japan must take on an even greater responsibility and role while collaborating with other countries.

Based on this recognition, ever since I was appointed Foreign Minister in August 2017, I have visited countries around the world to proactively convey Japan's position, and have sought to further enhance Japan's cooperation with other countries.

In this endeavor, I have been strengthening our efforts especially in the following six priority areas. First is to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to promote the networking of allies and friendly nations. Second is to enhance cooperative relationships with neighboring countries, including China, the Republic of Korea (ROK), and Russia. Third is for Japan to play a more proactive role as a standard-bearer of free trade. Fourth is to make active contributions to the resolution of global issues, including disarmament, climate change, development, promotion of women's empowerment, and advancement of health. Fifth is to enhance Japan's contributions to peace and stability in the Middle East. Sixth is to promote the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy."

In this period of change in the international order, Japan must not be a "follower." Together with the U.S. and other allies, as well as friendly nations, Japan is determined to become a "beacon" to bring peace and prosperity to the world. I will further strengthen my relationships of trust and networks with Foreign Ministers and others, and at the same time, address diplomatic issues one at a time with my sights firmly set on the happiness of the Japanese people and the future of Japan.

The Diplomatic Bluebook 2018 presents an overview of the international situation in 2017 and the diplomatic activities Japan has been engaged in, including the efforts mentioned above. Specifically, Chapter 1 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 and to assist Japanese people overseas, and the enhancement of the diplomacy implementation structure to strengthen the foundation of diplomatic activities. 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.

We hope that the publication of this Diplomatic Bluebook will help deepen the people's understanding of Japan's foreign policy, and that it will provide an opportunity to disseminate the image of Japan contributing proactively to global peace and prosperity, to a broad domestic and overseas readership.

Minister for Foreign Affairs
Taro Kono

In principle, this Diplomatic Bluebook 2018 describes an overview of the international situations and Japan's diplomatic activities between January 1 and December 31 of 2017; however, some important events that occurred through mid-April 2018 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 2017.

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 2017.

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Chapter 1

International Situation and Japan's Diplomacy in 2017

International Situation and Japan's Diplomacy in 2017

In order for Japan to ensure its national interests in the political, security, and economic domain, and to continue to maintain and develop an international order desirable for Japan based on fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and rule of law, it is essential to conduct strategic diplomacy, while rationally grasping changes in the international situation and responding to those changes.

Below is a broad overview of the international situation surrounding Japan and Japan's diplomacy in 2017.

1 Overview of the International Situation

The security environment surrounding Japan is facing extremely severe conditions, including the increasingly tense situation in North Korea. Furthermore, as a backlash to the advance of globalization, protectionism is rising even in countries that have been enjoying the benefits of free trade. Such an inward-looking tendency is becoming conspicuous in Europe as well. In addition, the international order based on fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law which have underpinned the peace and prosperity of the world, including that of Japan, is being challenged by attempts to unilaterally change the status quo by force or coercion and the spread of terrorism and violent extremism.

(1) Changes in the International Situation in the Mid to Long-term

A Change in the Balance of Power

Since the turn of the 21st century, the rise of the so-called emerging countries, including China and India, and the shift of the center of the global economy from the Atlantic to the Pacific is pointed out. While the rise of the emerging countries has become the driving power of the global economy, changes are also being brought about in the balance of power.

Furthermore, non-state actors including international terrorist organizations are wielding greater influence in the international community. Simultaneously, examples of state actors themselves utilizing military means by methods that are difficult to identify definitely as "armed attack" and cases involving intervention in democracy from foreign countries through the manipulation of information and other

methods are also being pointed out.

B Diversification and Complexification of Threats

The security environment has become complicated with concerns regarding the increase of "gray-zone" situations that are neither pure peacetime nor contingencies over territorial sovereignty and interests in the context of insufficient institutionalization of cooperative security frameworks, especially in the Asia region.

As can also be seen from the unprecedented frequency of ballistic missile launches, nuclear tests and other provocations by North Korea, issues related to the transfer, proliferation and improvement of weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles, including the possibility of acquisition and use of such weapons by terrorist organizations, etc., constitute a major threat to the entire international community, including Japan.

Regarding terrorism, there is a growing concern of large-scale acts of terrorism targeting so-called soft-targets in recent years. Advances in communication tools, including social networking services (SNSs), are also being used in the diffusion of violent extremism, one of the primary causes of terrorism, and the expansion of the range of activities by terrorist organizations.

Recent advances in science and technology are invigorating activities in new spheres such as cyberspace and outer space. While this presents big opportunities, it also brings about new risks and threats, with the establishment of applicable norms under development.

Furthermore, it has been pointed out that innovations in unmanned and automated weapons technology and cyber technology have the possibility of changing the nature of security in the future.

C Global Economic Trends (the Emergence of Protectionist and Inward-Looking Trends)

In the world economy, interdependence has been strengthened more than ever through the development of the global supply chain and financial systems, in line with the progress of globalization and innovation such as digital technology. While these create further opportunities for growth, they also make it easier for an economic shock in one region or fluctuations in commodity prices and other factors to simultaneously impact other regions and the entire world economy. Furthermore, to facilitate crossborder economic activities even more smoothly, there is an increased need for the maintenance and formulation of an economic order based on rules. In the short term, the global economy in 2017 is on a track to recovery, but downward risks continue to exist in the medium to long-term in the form of financial fragility, geopolitical tension, political uncertainty and other factors.

On the other hand, mounting protectionist and inward-looking trends in the U.S. and major countries in Europe run counter to globalization, and these tendencies remain pronounced. The backgrounds of those trends may vary, from the increasing domestic income inequality, job losses, the increase in imports, and a rise in migrants to the global environmental problem. In Europe, the influx of migrants and refugees is slowing, but at the same time no improvement is being witnessed in the economic disparity between the south and the north. In the U.S., President

Trump reemphasized his "America First" campaign policy, and the protectionist trend has grown stronger, including moves to encourage consumers to buy American goods and companies to hire Americans.

D Growing Concern over Global Issues

While the proportion of the so-called poorest segment has been decreasing in the world as a whole in recent years, some data indicates that the poorest living on less than 1.9 US dollars a day still account for about 10% of the world's population[1]. Poverty limits freedom and the abundant potential of individual human beings, and concurrently becomes a source of social injustice, political instability and violent extremism.

Furthermore, the number of refugees, internally displaced persons (IDPs), and asylum-seekers has increased in recent years due to such factors as frequent occurrences of new crises and protracted conflicts and persecutions, and the number has now reached approximately 65.6 million people[2], the largest number since the end of World War II. The issue of refugees and other displaced persons is a serious humanitarian problem and has brought about friction in the international community, and there is a concern that the issue will be further prolonged and aggravated.

Furthermore, there is a concern that global warming will have a serious impact on the global environment, including an increase in natural disasters and damages caused by such disasters. The number of people crossing borders has now increased dramatically due to globalization, posing an increasingly serious threat of the outbreak and transmission of infectious diseases. It has also been pointed out that the increase in global population, industrialization and urbanization in the future may aggravate issues over water, food, and health.

As a means of addressing these problems, it will be important to steadily implement the "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)." It is said that promoting the SDGs will generate a value of 12 trillion US dollars and create 380 million jobs worldwide, and momentum is being witnessed on all fronts, including not only national governments but local governments, business communities and civil society.

E The Situation in the Middle East Faced with Destabilizing Factors / The Escalation of Terrorism and Violent Extremism

The Middle East is located in a geopolitically important position and is an important region that supplies energy resources to the world, including Japan. Its stability is crucial for the peace and stability of the international community, including Japan. On the other hand, the Middle East is facing several challenges that are destabilizing the region, including the existence of violent extremism such as the "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)," mass flows of refugees and their influx into neighboring regions, the prolongation of the Syrian crisis, the Iraq situation, the Middle East peace process, the tension between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the situation surrounding Qatar, and the domestic situations in Afghanistan, Yemen and Libya.

1 World Bank (WB) website
2 United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) website

Although the territory controlled by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq and Syria has shrunk, the return or relocation of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) who had been under the influence of ISIL to their home countries or to third countries has spread the threat of terrorism, and this threat is also growing in Asia. In May 2017, a group self-professed to be "ISIL East Asia" occupied a part of the Marawi City in the Philippines. While the military operations have been completed, there is still a need to continue closely monitoring the situation in Mindanao including the Marawi City.

(2) The Increasingly Severe Security Environment in East Asia

A The Unprecedented, Grave and Imminent Threat of North Korea

It is no exaggeration to say that the security environment surrounding Japan is most severe since the end of World War II. In 2017, North Korea conducted the sixth nuclear test, and launched more than 15 ballistic missiles, including the two that flew over Japan. North Korea's growing nuclear and missile capabilities pose an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat towards the peace and stability of Japan and the international community.

B China's Strengthening of Military Force which Lacks Transparency and Unilateral Attempts to Change the Status Quo

The peaceful development of China should be welcomed by Japan and the entire international community. However, China continues to expand its defense budgets and strengthen its military power without transparency. China continues actions and unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion at sea and in the airspace in areas such as the East and South China Sea based on its own assertions which are incompatible with the existing order of international law of the sea.

In the East China Sea, amid the ongoing intrusions by Chinese Government-owned vessels into Japan's territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands, Chinese naval vessels and aircraft have been conducting intense activities. In addition, China has been continuing unilateral development of resources in the maritime areas pending delimitation of the Exclusive Economic Zone and continental shelves. Furthermore, in recent years China has been carrying out numerous surveys in the territorial waters around Japan, including the East China Sea, without Japan's consent, or surveys that differ in the details of those agreed upon.

In the South China Sea, China has conducted large-scale and rapid land reclamation and built outposts on the disputed features, and utilized them for military purposes. From 2016 to 2017, there were developments seen such as test flights to the Spratly Islands carried out by private Chinese aircraft, the deployment of surface-to-air missiles on Woody Island, patrols in the airspace above Scarborough Shoal carried out by bombers and other aircraft and the sailing of an aircraft carrier of the Chinese Navy to the South China Sea. According to an announcement by a U.S. think tank, China is steadily moving to transform the disputed features in the South China Sea into military bases, and the total area covered by permanent facilities that completed or commenced construction in 2017 has reached around 290,000 square

meters[3].

With regard to the dispute between the Philippines and China over the South China Sea, China continues to make its own assertions concerning its territorial rights in the South China Sea, including rejecting the legally binding force of the final award rendered by the Arbitral Tribunal, which confirmed the illegality of China's land reclamations and other actions in July 2016.

2 Japan's Diplomacy

Amid the various challenges facing the international order based on fundamental values that have underpinned global stability and prosperity, Japan must take on a greater responsibility and role than before, while collaborating with other countries. Based on this recognition, Japan, while making the utmost efforts to promote its national interests in the increasingly severe international situation, including North Korea's nuclear and missile development, will contribute to the peace and prosperity of the international community and will further consolidate Japan's position as a peace-loving nation.

(1) Diplomacy Taking a Panoramic Perspective of the World Map and "Proactive Contribution to Peace"

In order to create a stable and predictable international environment, which is desirable for Japan, it is important to build trust and cooperative relationships with countries worldwide and the international community through diplomatic efforts, to strengthen the basis for stability and prosperity of the international community and to prevent the emergence of threats in advance. From such a perspective, since the inauguration of the Abe administration, the Government of Japan has advanced diplomacy, from a panoramic perspective of the world map, under the policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has thus far visited 76 countries and regions (135 countries and regions in total), and since being appointed in August 2017, Foreign Minister Taro Kono has visited 26 countries and regions (31 countries and regions in total) (as of January 29, 2018). As a result, Japan's presence in the international community has steadily risen, and the relationship of trust between Prime Minister Abe and foreign leaders as well as between Foreign Minister Kono and other foreign ministers and the heads of international organizations have also been greatly deepened.

In 2017 leadership changes took place in several major countries including the U.S. As a stable force in the international community, Japan will continue to build relationships of trust with countries' leaders, and while promoting its national interests, lead the international community for peace and prosperity of the world.

(2) The Six Priority Areas of Japan's Foreign Policy

In order to protect and promote Japan's national interests, Japan intends to continuously strengthen the following six priority areas of its foreign policy: (1) strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance and promote the networking of allies and friendly nations; (2) enhance relations

3 Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS)

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's official visits abroad

⑤⑤July 5 to 11, 2017
・Belgium (Brussels)
(5th visit during his term of office)
* Japan-EU Summit
・Germany
(5th visit during his term of office)
* G20 Summit
・Sweden (1st visit in 11 years)
・Finland (1st visit in 11 years)
・Denmark (1st visit in 15 years)

④①May 1 to 7, 2016
・Italy (Florence) (3rd visit during his term of office)
・France (Paris) (3rd visit during his term of office)
・Belgium (Brussels)
(3rd visit during his term of office)
・Germany (Berlin) (4th visit during his term of office)
・United Kingdom (London)
(3rd visit during his term of office)
・Russia (Sochi) (4th visit during his term of office)

⑥June 15 to 20, 2013
・Poland (1st visit in 10 years)
・United Kingdom
(Northern Ireland)
* G8 Summit
・Ireland (1st visit ever)
・United Kingdom (London)
(1st visit in 5 years)

⑲April 29 to May 8, 2014
・Germany (1st visit in 5 years)
・United Kingdom
(2nd visit during his term of office)
・Portugal (1st visit ever)
・Spain (Santiago de Compostela)
(1st visit in 11 years)
・France (1st visit in 3 years)
・Belgium (1st visit in 3 years)

⑫October 28 to 30, 2013
・Turkey (Istanbul)
(2nd visit during his term of office)
㊱November 13 to 17, 2015
・Turkey (Istanbul, Antalya)
(3rd visit during his term of office)

⑰February 7 to 9, 2014
・Russia (Sochi)
(3rd visit during his term of office)
* 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi
㊺September 2 to 3, 2016
・Russia (Vladivostok)
(5th visit during his term of office)
㊻September 6 to 8, 2017
・Russia (Vladivostok)
(7th visit during his term of office)
* Eastern Economic Forum

⑩September 23 to 27, 2013
・Canada (1st visit in 7 years)
・United States
(2nd visit during his term of office)
* UN General Assembly

㉜June 5 to 9, 2015
・Ukraine (1st visit ever)
・Germany (Elmau)
* G7 Summit
(3rd visit during his term of office)

㊳November 29 to December 2 2015
・France
(2nd visit during his term of office)
* Attending COP21
・Luxembourg
(1st visit excluding international conferences)

㊸April 27 to 30, 2017
・Russia (Moscow)
(6th visit during his term of office)
・United Kingdom (London)
(4th visit during his term of office)

④April 28 to May 3, 2013
・Russia (1st visit in 1 year)
・Saudi Arabia
(1st visit in 6 years)
・United Arab Emirates
(1st visit in 6 years)
・Turkey (1st visit in 7 years)

㊻September 4 to 8, 2016
・China (2nd visit during his term of office)
* G20 Summit
・Laos (2nd visit during his term of office)
* ASEAN-related Summit Meeting

③March 30 to 31, 2013
・Mongolia
(1st visit in 7 years)
㉞October 22, 2015
・Mongolia
㊷July 14 to 16, 2016
・Mongolia

㊹May 25 to 28, 2017
・Italy (Taormina)
*G7 Summit
(5th visit during his term of office)
・Malta (1st visit ever)

⑱March 23 to 26, 2014
・Netherlands (The Hague)
(1st visit in 9 years)
* Nuclear Security Summit

㉞October 22 to 28, 2015
・Turkmenistan (1st visit ever)
・Tajikistan (1st visit ever)
・Uzbekistan (1st visit in 9 years)
・Kyrgyz Republic (1st visit ever)
・Kazakhstan (1st visit in 9 years)

⑯January 25 to 27, 2014
・India (1st visit in 2 years)
㊴December 11 to 13, 2015
・India (2nd visit during his term of office)
㊼September 13 to 15, 2017
・India (3rd visit during his term of office)

㉗November 9 to 17, 2014
・China (1st visit in 2 years)
* APEC Summit Meeting
・Myanmar (2nd visit during his term of office)
・Australia (2nd visit during his term of office)

②February 21 to 24, 2013
・United States (1st visit in 1 year)
㉕September 22 to 26, 2014
・United States (3rd visit during his term of office)
* UN General Assembly
㉛April 26 to May 3, 2015
・United States (4th visit during his term of office)
* Speech to Congress, etc.
㉝September 26 to 30, 2015
・United States (5th visit during his term of office)
* UN General Assembly
㊵March 30 to April 3, 2016
・United States (6th visit during his term of office)
* Nuclear Security Summit
㊾December 26 to 28, 2016
・United States (Hawaii)
(9th visit during his term of office)
㊶February 9 to 13, 2017
・United States (10th visit during his term of office)
㊽September 18 to 22, 2017
・United States (11th visit during his term of office)

㊷March 19 to 22, 2017
・Germany
(5th visit during his term of office)
・France (4th visit during his term of office)
・Belgium (4th visit during his term of office)
・Italy (4th visit during his term of office)

⑮January 21 to 23, 2014
・Switzerland (1st visit in 3 years)
* WEF Annual Meeting in Davos

㊵January 12 to 17, 2018
・Estonia (1st visit ever)
・Latvia (1st visit ever)
・Lithuania (1st visit ever)
・Bulgaria (1st visit ever)
・Serbia (1st visit ever)
・Romania (1st visit ever)

㉟October 31 to November 2, 2015
・ROK (1st visit in 3 years)

㉖October 15 to 18, 2014
・Italy (Milan)
(2nd visit during his term of office)
* ASEM Summit

⑤May 24 to 26, 2013
・Myanmar
(1st visit in 36 years)

⑬November 15 to 16, 2013
・Cambodia (1st visit in 13 years)
・Laos (1st visit in 13 years)

⑨September 4 to 9, 2013
・Russia (Saint Petersburg)
(2nd visit during his term of office)
* G20 Summit
・Argentina (1st visit in 54 years)
* The IOC General Assembly

⑦July 25 to 27, 2013
・Malaysia (1st visit in 6 years)
・Singapore (1st visit in 4 years)
・Philippines (1st visit in 6 years)

⑪October 6 to 10, 2013
・Indonesia (Bali)
(2nd visit during his term of office)
* APEC Summit
・Brunei (1st visit in 12 years)
* ASEAN Summit

㉝September 30 to October 2, 2015
・Jamaica (1st visit ever)

㉑June 3 to 7, 2014
・Belgium
(2nd visit during his term of office)
* G7 Summit
・Italy (1st visit in 5 years)
・Vatican (1st visit in 5 years)

⑧August 24 to 28, 2013
・Bahrain (1st visit ever)
・Kuwait
(1st visit in 6 years)
・Djibouti (1st visit ever)
・Qatar
(1st visit in 6 years)

㉔September 6 to 8, 2014
・Bangladesh
(1st visit in 14 years)
・Sri Lanka (1st visit in 24 years)

⑳May 30 to 31, 2014
・Singapore
(2nd visit during his term of office)
㉙March 29 to 30, 2015
・Singapore
(3rd visit during his term of office)

㉚April 21 to 23, 2015
・Indonesia (3rd visit during his term of office)
* 60th Anniversary of Asian-African Conference

㊼September 18 to 24, 2016
・United States
(7th visit during his term of office)
* UN General Assembly
・Cuba (1st visit ever)

⑭January 9 to 15, 2014
・Oman (1st visit in 24 years)
・Cote d'Ivoire (1st visit ever)
・Mozambique (1st visit ever)
・Ethiopia (1st visit in 8 years)

㊿January 12 to 17, 2017
・Philippines
(3rd visit during his term of office)
・Australia
(3rd visit during his term of office)
・Indonesia
(4th visit during his term of office)
・Viet Nam
(2nd visit during his term of office)

㊲November 17 to 22, 2015
・Philippines (2nd visit during his term of office)
* APEC
・Malaysia (2nd visit during his term of office)
* ASEAN

㊽November 18 to 23, 2016
・United States
(8th visit during his term of office)
・Peru (APEC) (1st visit in 8 years)
・Argentina
(2nd visit during his term of office)

①January 16 to 18, 2013
・Viet Nam (1st visit in 2 years)
・Thailand (1st visit in 4 years)
・Indonesia (1st visit in 4.5 years)

㊹August 25 to 29, 2016
・Singapore (4th visit during his term of office)
・Kenya (1st visit in 15 years)
* TICADVI

㉘January 16 to 21, 2015
・Egypt (1st visit in 8 years)
・Jordan (1st visit in 9 years)
・Israel (1st visit in 9 years)
・Palestine
(1st visit in 9 years)

㊸August 20 to 23, 2016
・Brazil (Rio de Janeiro)
(2nd visit during his term of office)
* Rio Olympic Games
Closing Ceremony

㉓July 25 to August 2, 2014
・Mexico (1st visit in 2 years)
・Trinidad and Tobago (1st visit ever)
・Colombia (1st visit ever)
・Chile (1st visit in 10 years)
・Brazil (1st visit in 10 years)

㊾November 9 to 15, 2017
・Viet Nam (3rd visit during his term of office)
* APEC Summit
・Philippines (4th visit during his term of office)
* ASEAN Summit

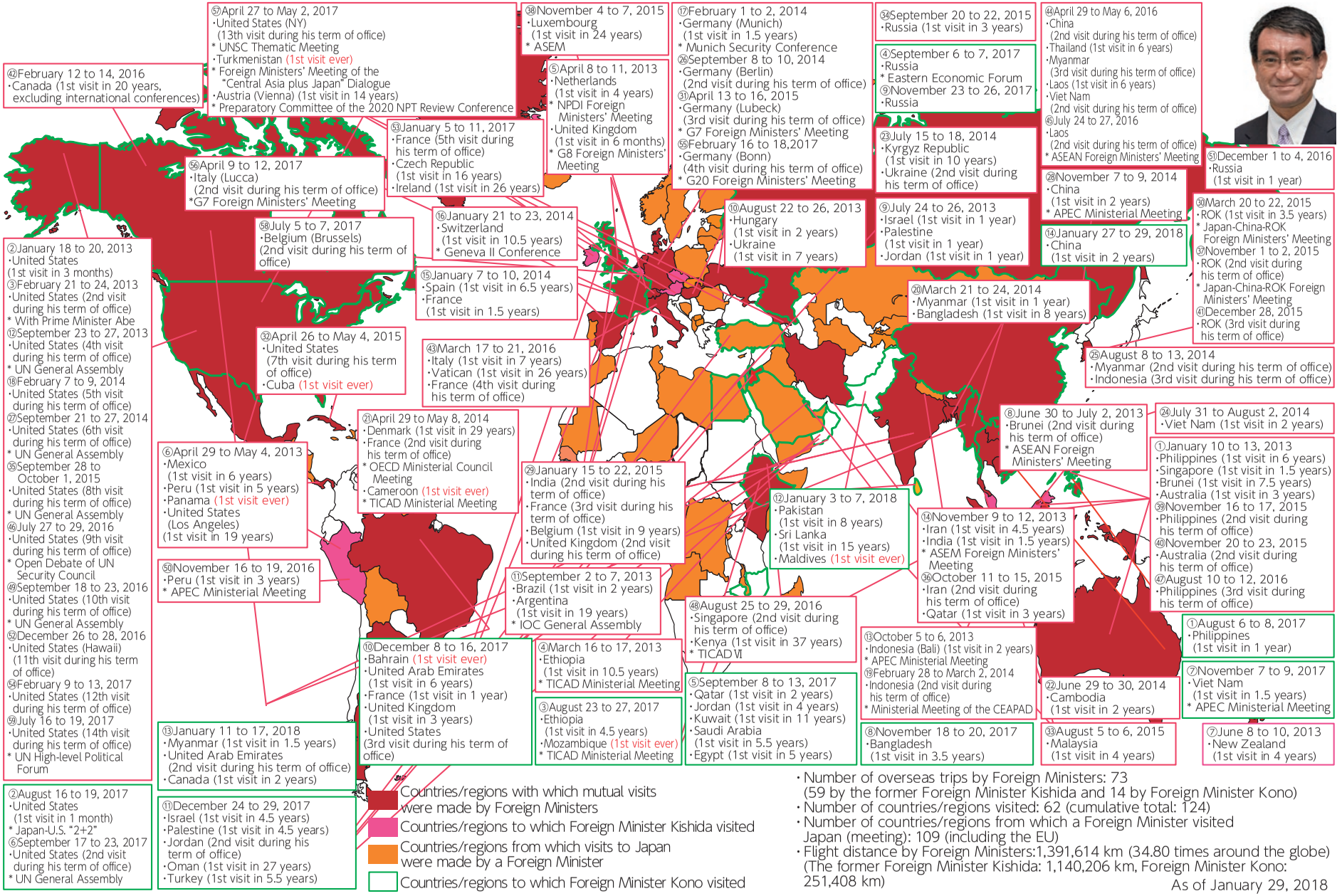
㉒July 6 to 12, 2014
・New Zealand (1st visit in 12 years)
・Australia (1st visit in 7 years)
・Papua New Guinea
(1st visit in 29 years)

Countries/regions with which mutual visits were made by national leaders
Countries/regions to which Prime Minister Abe visited
Countries/regions from which visits to Japan were made by a national leader

- Number of overseas trips: 60
- Number of countries/regions visited: 76 (cumulative total: 135)
- Number of countries/regions from which a national leader visited Japan: 119 (including EU)
- Prime Minister Abe's flight distance: 1,205,701 km (30.14 times around the globe)

As of January 29, 2018

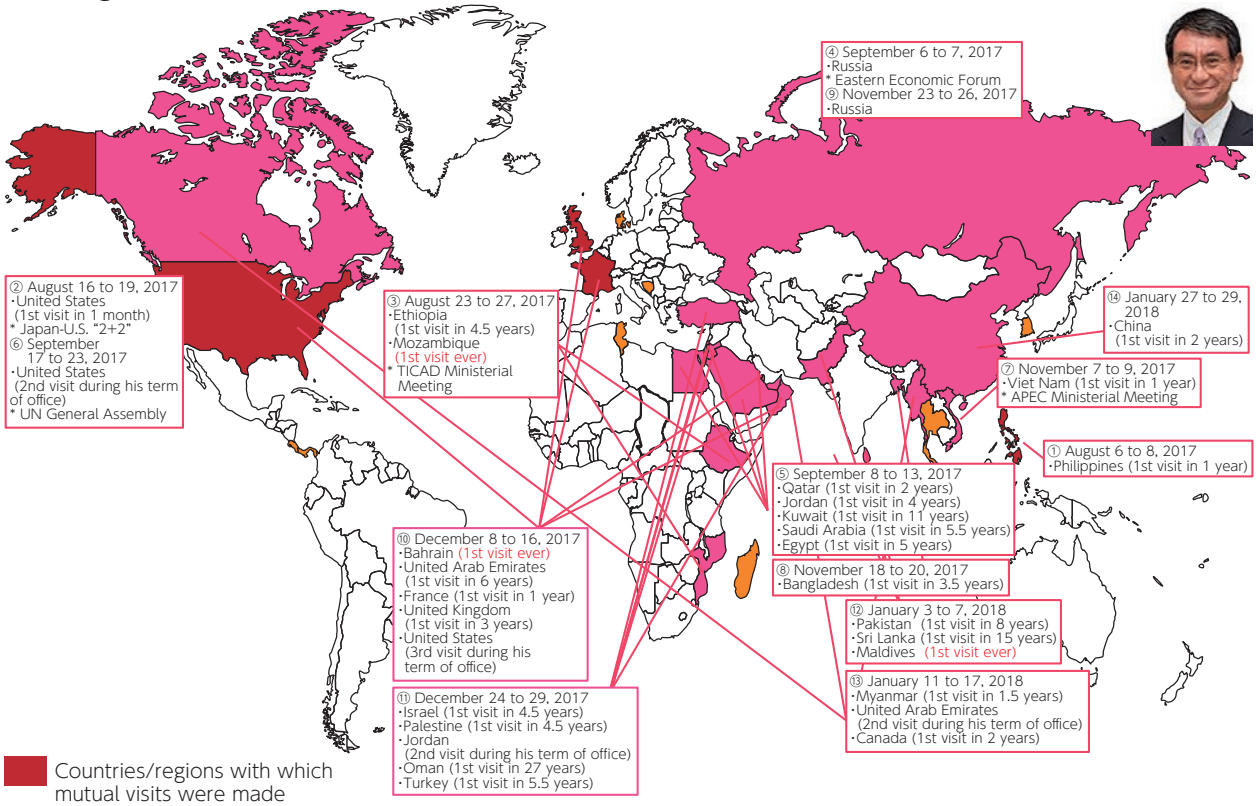
Foreign Minister Taro Kono's (and the former Foreign Minister Kishida's) official visits abroad



- Number of overseas trips by Foreign Ministers: 73
  (59 by the former Foreign Minister Kishida and 14 by Foreign Minister Kono)
- Number of countries/regions visited: 62 (cumulative total: 124)
- Number of countries/regions from which a Foreign Minister visited Japan (meeting): 109 (including the EU)
- Flight distance by Foreign Ministers:1,391,614 km (34.80 times around the globe)
  (The former Foreign Minister Kishida: 1,140,206 km, Foreign Minister Kono: 251,408 km)

As of January 29, 2018

Foreign Minister Taro Kono's official visits abroad



- Number of overseas trips: 14
- Number of countries/regions visited: 26 (cumulative total: 31)
- Number of countries/regions from which a Foreign Minister visited (meeting): 14
- Foreign Minister Kono's flight distance: 251,408 km (6.29 times around the globe)

As of January 29, 2018

with neighboring countries; (3) promote economic diplomacy; (4) contribute to the resolution of global issues; (5) contribute to the peace and stability of the Middle East; and (6) the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy."

【1 Strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance and Promote the Networking of Allies and Friendly Nations】

The Japan-U.S. Alliance is the cornerstone of Japan's diplomacy and security. It also plays a substantial role in regional and international peace and prosperity. As the security environment surrounding Japan is becoming increasingly severe including North Korea, the Japan-U.S. Alliance is becoming more and more important.

In January 2017, Mr. Donald Trump was inaugurated as the President. In February, immediately after President Trump's inauguration, Prime Minister Abe visited the U.S. to hold a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting. The two leaders issued a joint statement affirming their strong determination to further strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance and economic relations. Furthermore, in November President Trump chose Japan as the first destination on his first tour of Asia since his inauguration. The two leaders affirmed that both countries are 100 percent together on the issue of North Korea, and that the U.S.' commitment to the region is unwavering, backed by the U.S. presence that is based on the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and they shared the view that they will work together on implementing the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy." In addition,

the two leaders met with the families of abductees, and promised that Japan and the U.S. would cooperate closely in order to swiftly resolve the abductions issue. This visit demonstrated the unwavering bond of the Japan-U.S. Alliance to the world amid increasing regional tension, including North Korea. (See Special Feature "Visit by President Trump to Japan").

Japan, under the Legislation for Peace and Security and the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation (the Guidelines), is implementing a "seamless" response covering from peacetime to contingencies. It will further enhance the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance by continuing to promote security and defense cooperation, through the Japan-U.S. Extended Deterrence Dialogue held in June, the "2 + 2" talks in August, and interpersonal exchange between high-level officials.

Mitigating the impact on local communities including Okinawa is one of the most important issues for the Government. In July, approximately four hectares of lands along the eastern side of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma was returned. Additionally, the relocation of carrier air wing squadrons from Naval Air Facility Atsugi to Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni began in August. Japan will continue to make all efforts to mitigate the impact on local communities including Okinawa, while working on the relocation of MCAS Futenma to Henoko as soon as possible, in order to ensure the stable stationing of U.S. forces in Japan.

Alongside security and interpersonal exchange, Japan-U.S. cooperation in the economic field is one of three pillars underpinning the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and 2017 was a year that presented opportunities to build new Japan-U.S. economic relations. The Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held in February saw the launch of the Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Aso and Vice President Pence. The first round of Dialogue was held in Tokyo in April and the second round was held in Washington D.C. in October. Japan's cumulative direct investments in the U.S. occupies the second highest after the UK (approximately 421.1 billion US dollars by Japanese companies (2016)). The activities of Japanese companies have created jobs for approximately 860,000 people (2015). (See Special Feature "Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue").

Furthermore, it is important to construct the alliance network by strengthening multilayered cooperative relationships with allies and partners, with the Japan-U.S. Alliance as the cornerstone. In this perspective, along with the Japan-U.S.-Australia and Japan-U.S.-India frameworks, the foreign affairs authorities of Japan, Australia, India, and the U.S. held director-general-level talks on the Indo-Pacific in Manila in November 2017, and discussions took place on initiatives for ensuring a free and open international order based on the rule of law in the Indo-Pacific.

【2 Enhancing Relations with Neighboring Countries】

Enhancing our relations with neighboring countries constitutes an important basis for making the environment surrounding Japan stable.

The Japan-China relationship constitutes one of the most important bilateral relationships for both countries, which

are the world's second and third-largest economies respectively. Japan and China both share a responsibility to work shoulder to shoulder and jointly engage with challenges facing the regional and international communities, including the North Korea issues. 2017 marked the 45th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China. It was a year in which high-level dialogues were actively held, including by the two countries' leaders and foreign ministers, and momentum for improving the relationship increased greatly. 2018 will mark the 40th anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and China. In 2018, it will be important to accelerate this trend towards improved relations by continuing to move forward with realizing mutual visits by the countries' leaders, promoting exchanges between their citizens, and strengthening economic relations, from a broad perspective under the concept of a "Mutually Beneficial Relationship based on Common Strategic Interests."

At the same time, attempts by China to unilaterally change the status quo in the East China Sea by force or coersion are absolutely unacceptable, and Japan will continue to respond calmly and resolutely while strengthening coordination with the relevant countries, along with strengthening communication in order to make the East China Sea a "Sea of Peace, Cooperation and Friendship."

Good relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK) are essential in ensuring peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region. Following the appointment of President Moon Jae-in in May 2017, communications at summit and foreign minister levels continued to take place frequently in 2017. On the other hand, the report by the Taskforce to Review the Agreement on Comfort Women Issue, which assessed the 2015 Japan-ROK agreement on the comfort women issue, was published in December 2017, and in January 2018, the Government of the ROK announced its position on the Japan-ROK agreement. It is completely unacceptable for Japan that the ROK would seek additional measures from Japan. The Government of Japan will continue to strongly urge the ROK Government to steadily implement the agreement, which confirmed the "final and irreversible" resolution of the comfort women issue. Difficult issues exist between Japan and the ROK, but it is important to move the Japan-ROK relationship forward in a future-oriented manner, while managing these issues appropriately.

Japan is building up close dialogue with Russia at various levels, including four Summit Meetings and five Foreign Ministers' Meetings. Regarding the issue of the Northern Territories, which is the outstanding issue of concern between Japan and Russia, both countries will realize joint economic activities on the Four Northern Islands based on the agreements between the two leaders. Japan will also implement humanitarian measures for the former island residents. Japan will continue to build up dialogue at various levels, and will continue to persistently negotiate with Russia based on its basic policy of resolving the issue of the attribution of the Four Northern Islands and concluding a peace treaty.

The nuclear tests and repeated ballistic missile launches by North Korea pose an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat,

and are totally unacceptable. In order to urge North Korea to change its policies, Japan is cooperating closely with the U.S. and the ROK, and coordinating with relevant countries including China and Russia to maximize pressure on North Korea by all available means. Through these efforts, Japan aims to comprehensively resolve the outstanding issues of concern, such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues. As well as being a critical issue concerning the sovereignty of Japan and the lives and safety of Japanese citizens, abduction by North Korea constitutes a universal issue among the international community as a violation of basic human rights. Japan has positioned its resolution as the most important issue and is making utmost efforts towards the resolution while working closely with relevant countries including the U.S.

Japan held three Summit Meetings with India, including the Summit Meeting held when Prime Minister Abe visited India in September, and has substantially advanced the bilateral relationship, including making steady progress with the high-speed railway plan, as can be seen by the holding of the ceremony to launch the construction of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail.

As demonstrated by the visit to Japan by Australian Prime Minister Turnbull in January 2018 and the visit to Australia by Prime Minister Abe in January 2017, Japan and Australia share fundamental values and strategic interests based on a "Special Strategic Partnership." Japan will steadily strengthen its cooperation with Australia in a wide range of areas, including security, economic issues, and regional affairs.

The further integration, prosperity, and stability of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are vital for the peace and stability of the region. Japan will continue to support the centrality and unity of ASEAN, and strengthen its relationship with ASEAN and each of the ASEAN countries.

While utilizing organizations such as the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Japan continues to strengthen its relationship with Europe in a multilayered approach. Japan also continues to promote security and defense cooperation with the UK and France. Furthermore, Japan is further strengthening its relationships with the Pacific island countries through the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) process. Japan is strengthening its relationships with Central Asia and the Caucasus, and Latin America and the Caribbean as well.

【3 Promoting Economic Diplomacy】

In 2017, the Government of Japan continued to advance economic diplomacy from the three aspects of: (1) rule-making to bolster free and open global economic systems; (2) supporting the overseas business expansion of Japanese companies through promotion of public-private partnerships; and (3) promoting resources diplomacy along with inward investment towards Japan.

For Japan, which has promoted economic growth on the basis of free trade, it is critically important to maintain and develop the open, stable and rules-based international economic order. At the G7 Taormina Summit in Italy and the G20 Hamburg Summit in Germany, Japan led the consensus-building efforts among the leaders of G7 and G20 regarding the response to the global economy, trade, and

the problem of excess capacity. Furthermore, as the pressure of protectionism continues to increase, Japan led the discussions on free-trade and inclusive growth through frameworks such as the World Trade Organization (WTO), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

As an initiative to promote free trade, regarding the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement signed in February 2016, the Trump Administration in the U.S. announced the withdrawal from the TPP in January 2017. Nevertheless, as a result of Japan's leadership, an agreement in principle on the TPP was reached by 11 nations in Da Nang, Viet Nam in November 2017, and in March 2018 the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP11) was signed in Santiago, Chile. Furthermore, the negotiations on the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) were concluded in December 2017 (See Special Feature "The Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement"). Along with aiming to have these agreements signed and enter into force, Japan will continue to vigorously pursue negotiations for the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Japan-China-ROK Free Trade Agreement in parallel, and will spread 21st century-rules for free and fair trade and investment throughout the world.

In order to support the steady growth of the Japanese economy by capturing the momentum of economic growth overseas including emerging countries, the ministry has proactively carried out activities such as offering counseling to Japanese companies, working to sell Japanese infrastructure and technologies overseas through public-private collaborations, and holding events to promote Japanese products, at diplomatic missions overseas, thus providing support for Japanese companies' cultivation of foreign markets. Regarding the import restrictions in response to the Great East Japan Earthquake and Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant accident, Japan is issuing accurate information to the Governments and general public of relevant countries in a prompt manner, and making efforts for the relaxation and abolition of the restrictions based on scientific evidence. In addition, from the perspective of connecting Official Development Assistance (ODA) to Japanese economic growth, the Government of Japan is achieving win-win cooperation that contributes both to the development of Japanese companies' business overseas and socioeconomic development of recipient countries, including by proactively promoting the placement of orders for ODA projects with Japanese companies, and by using ODA for the development of overseas business by Japanese small and medium-sized enterprises.

In the area of resources, Japan engaged in strengthening Japan's and the world's energy, resources and food security. On the basis of the major changes in the world's energy supply and demand structure, which could be described as tectonic, in July 2017, the ministry came out with a new vision of energy and resource diplomacy that attaches importance to contributing to resolving global challenges. Furthermore, in January 2018 the ministry announced a decision to develop diplomacy that is based on the importance of renewable energy.

Regarding foreign tourists, Japan is working to promote visits to Japan through

the strategic relaxation of visa requirements and by promoting the attractions of Japan. The number of overseas visitors to Japan reached 28.69 million in 2017.

【4 Response to Global Issues】

The issues of disarmament and non-proliferation, peace-building, sustainable development, disaster risk reduction, environment and climate change, human rights, women's empowerment, and the consolidation of the rule of law are related to the peace, stability and prosperity of the international community, including Japan. These issues cannot be solved by one country alone, and require a united response by the international community, and the initiatives for these issues are one critical part of Japan's "Proactive Contribution to Peace" initiative.

In order to take care of socially vulnerable people in the international community with respect for human rights, freedom and democracy as the fundamental values, and realize a society where individuals can make the most use of their potential, Japan is advancing international contributions under the notion of "human security."

(Promotion of International Peace Cooperation)

Japan has placed importance on cooperating in the field of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, including United Nations (UN) Peace Keeping Operations (PKOs) from the standpoint of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation. Since 1992 Japan has dispatched more than 12,500 personnel to 27 UN missions including UN PKO. Most recently, Japanese staff officers have been dispatched to the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) since 2011 while the engineering units had been dispatched since 2012. The engineering units concluded their activities in May 2017, but four staff officers (Japan Ground Self-Defense Force officials) are still on active duty at the UNMISS headquarters.

(Measures to Counter-Terrorism and Violent Extremism)

Based on the "G7 Action Plan on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism" that Japan compiled at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit in 2016 in response to the growing threat of terrorism and violent extremism, Japan is engaging in comprehensive counter-terrorism measures. Those efforts consist of initiatives for (1) Improvement of counter-terrorism capacity; (2) Measures to counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism; and (3) Social and economic development assistance for creating a foundation for moderate society. Furthermore, Japan is striving to further strengthen information-collecting through the International Counter-Terrorism Intelligence Collection Unit, and is strengthening cooperation on counter-terrorism with the relevant countries. In parallel to these initiatives, Japan is also engaged in strengthening measures for the safety of Japanese nationals overseas working on international cooperation projects, along with personnel at Japanese companies, tourists and students studying abroad.

(Proactive Initiatives for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation)

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings, Japan has a mission to lead the international community's efforts

concerning nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, with the aim of realizing "a world free of nuclear weapons." Japan attaches importance to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime, and in which both nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States participate. Japan is engaging in realistic and practical nuclear disarmament measures, while appropriately addressing actual security threats.

In May, Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida attended the First Session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2020 NPT Review Conference and announced Japan's pathway toward elimination of nuclear weapons. In September, Foreign Minister Kono attended the Tenth Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), as well as co-hosted the 9th Ministerial Meeting of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) with Germany. Subsequently Japan submitted a draft of resolution regarding the elimination of nuclear weapons to the UN General Assembly that received wide support. In November, Japan held the first meeting of a Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament in Hiroshima aiming to rebuild trust and cooperation among countries having differing approaches towards a world free of nuclear weapons, and to make recommendations, which contribute to achieve substantive advancement of nuclear disarmament.

(Strengthening Cooperation with the UN and Other Organizations and UN Security Reform)

Japan was elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council (UNSC) for the 11th time, which is more frequent than any other UN Member State, and served as a non-permanent member of the UNSC for a two-year period from 2016 to 2017 (See Special Feature "Summary of Japan's contribution during its 11th term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council").

Japan is also putting efforts into the UN Security Council reform, including Japan's entry as a permanent member of the Council, with the pressing need to reform the Council in a way that reflects the realities of the international community in the 21st century, so that the Council can deal more effectively with contemporary challenges. Furthermore, in order to continue contributing to the maintenance of peace and security in the international community as a member of the Council prior to its admission as a permanent member, Japan is running for the UNSC non-permanent membership election in 2022.

In addition, in response to the issues addressed by the UN and other international organizations, Japan has been providing financial and policy contributions as well as making personnel contributions through the activities of Japanese personnel, and is also making efforts to encourage the employment and promotion of more Japanese staff at international organizations.

(Proactive Efforts to Strengthen the Rule of Law)

Japan is working to maintain and

promote "Free, Open and Stable Seas" based on the "Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea." Furthermore, Japan is strengthening its cooperation with various countries by actively participating in the efforts of the international community in areas that include initiatives for promoting and entrenching freedom of navigation and overflight, initiatives to ensure the security of sea lanes through anti-piracy measures off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden as well as support for the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) Information Sharing Center, international rule-making to strengthen the rule of law in outer space and cyberspace, and strengthening the rule of law in the Arctic.

(Human Rights)

Human rights, freedom and democracy are fundamental values, and their protection and promotion serve as the cornerstone of peace and stability in the international community. In this field, Japan proactively participates in bilateral dialogues and a number of multinational fora, such as the UN, and makes contributions, including constructive dialogue with the UN human rights mechanisms, in order to improve the human rights situation globally.

(Toward a Society in Which All Women Shine)

At the G20 Hamburg Summit held in Germany in July, the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) was launched by the World Bank and 13 participating countries, and Japan announced its intention to contribute 50 million US dollars to the fund. The Fourth World Assembly for Women (WAW!2017) was held in November, gathering together leaders active in women's fields from various countries and international organizations. The content of the discussions at the assembly was compiled as a proposal known as the "WAW!2017 Tokyo Declaration."

(Development Cooperation Charter and ODA Utilization)

Under the Development Cooperation Charter decided by the Cabinet in February 2015, Japan has been continuing to make proactive and strategic utilization of Official Development Assistance (ODA) in formats that contribute both to the development of Japanese companies' businesses overseas and recipient countries' economic and social development, in order to contribute to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community and to secure Japan's national interests through that.

(TICAD VI)

Since 1993, Japan has taken the initiative to support the development of Africa through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD). In August 2017 Japan hosted the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in Maputo, Mozambique, with Foreign Minister Kono attending (as the co-chair), and confirmed the state of progress with the initiatives announced at TICAD V and VI.

(Quality Infrastructure)

Reflecting the belief that infrastructure development should contribute to "quality growth" in developing countries, and on the basis of the "G7 Ise-Shima Principles for Promoting Quality Infrastructure Investment" adopted at the G7 Ise-Shima

Summit in 2016, Japan is promoting the development of "quality infrastructure" in which open access transparency, economic efficiency in view of life-cycle cost, safety, local employment and technology transfer, social and environmental considerations alignment with economic and development strategies, including the fiscal soundness of the recipient countries, and the effective mobilization of capital are ensured. In order to make this "quality infrastructure" concept widely known in the international community, in April the Ministry of Foreign Affairs co-organized the "First International Economic Forum on Asia" with the OECD Development Centre and Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA), and in September it co-hosted a High-Level Side Event on "Promoting Quality Infrastructure Investment" with the EU and the UN.

(2030 Agenda and SDGs)

The "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda)" adopted in September 2015 lays out a set of "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)" which are to be undertaken by all countries. In July 2017 Foreign Minister Kishida attended a UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF) and presented SDGs initiatives through public-private partnerships, and international cooperation on the SDGs. In addition, at the fourth meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters held in December 2017, Japan decided on the SDGs Action Plan 2018, which aims to convey Japan's SDGs model to the world and incorporates the direction of that model and its key initiatives.

(Global Health)

Health holds an important position when it comes to realizing the concept of "human security." Based on the "Basic Design for Peace and Health" formulated in September 2015, Japan is engaging in enhancing health systems, including the promotion of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), which contributes to crisis responses and to bolstering the capacity to respond to public health crises. (UHC: To ensure affordable access to basic health services for all whenever they need them throughout their lives). In December the UHC Forum 2017 was held in Tokyo with the participation of senior government officials from various countries, representatives of international organizations and international health specialists. The Forum contributes to responding to public health emergencies such as infectious diseases and, left a deep impression about Japan's leadership in this field on the international community (See Special Feature "The UHC Forum 2017").

(Climate Change)

The Paris Agreement is a fair and effective framework that provides for the submission of greenhouse gas emission reduction targets by each country independently, with no distinction between developing and developed countries, and for the implementation of measures toward the achievement of these targets. Negotiations are currently underway with the aim of adopting the relevant guidelines in 2018, and Japan participated actively in discussion to that end at the COP23 held in Germany in November 2017 as well as on other occasions.

(Utilizing Science and Technology for Diplomacy)

Science and technology constitute the foundational elements of peace and prosperity, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is advancing initiatives that utilize the power of science and technology in diplomacy in both bilateral relationships and multinational frameworks. The Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs gathers domestic expertise through the Advisory Board for the Promotion of Science and Technology Diplomacy, for which the advisor serves as chair, while advising the Minister for Foreign Affairs and relevant departments as well as promoting public relations and networking overseas. In May, the Recommendation for the Future aimed at the implementation of the SDGs was drawn up under the advisory board and submitted to Foreign Minister Kishida.

【5 Contributing to the Peace and Stability of the Middle East】

The Middle East and North Africa are situated in a geopolitically important location and is also an important supplier of energy resources such as crude oil and natural gas to the world. On the other hand, the region faces a number of destabilizing issues such as ISIL and other violent extremist groups and the refugee issue. Achieving the peace and stability in this region is of great importance to the world as a whole, including Japan, and the international community is working to resolve these issues.

Japan coordinates with the global community to undertake humanitarian assistance and support stabilization, and to implement development cooperation from a mid to long-term perspective. Alongside that Japan is also encouraging countries to play a constructive role in realizing stability in the Middle East. The first Japan-Arab Political Dialogue was held in Egypt in September 2017, and based on Japan's achievements so far, it came out with the "Kono Four Principles" ((1) intellectual and human contribution, (2) investment in "people," (3) enduring efforts, and (4) enhancing political efforts).

【6 Promoting the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy"】

A free and open maritime order based on the rule of law is a cornerstone of the stability and prosperity of the international community. In particular, the Indo-Pacific region, which stretches from the Asia-Pacific through the Indian Ocean to the Middle East and Africa, is the core of the world's vitality and supports more than half the world's population. Maintaining and strengthening the Indo-Pacific region's free and open maritime order as "international public goods" will bring stability and prosperity.

In order to promote this strategy in practice, Japan is advancing (1) the promotion and establishment of fundamental principles such as the rule of law and freedom of navigation, (2) the pursuit of economic prosperity through enhancing connectivity, including through Quality Infrastructure development in accordance with international standards, and (3) initiatives for ensuring peace and stability that include assistance for capacity building on maritime law enforcement, anti-piracy measures, disaster reduction and non-proliferation.

Japan has reached a consensus with the

relevant countries on pursuing collaboration and cooperation in order to realize the free and open Indo-Pacific, including as a result of Prime Minister Abe's visit to India in September 2017, U.S. President Trump's visit to Japan in November 2017, and Australian Prime Minister Turnbull's visit to Japan in January 2018 (See Special Feature "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy").

(3) Strengthening Strategic Communication and the Foreign Policy Implementation Structure

【Strategic Communications】

Public understanding and support on Japan's policy and initiatives both domestically and from the international community are indispensable for the implementation of Japan's foreign policy. Sharing Japan's various charms, such as culture and food, serves to increase understanding for Japan in the international community, and is also important in the economic aspect such as tourism and exports. Particularly in regard to sharing the attractiveness of Japan's regional areas, MOFA has been working to promote such attractiveness from "Local to Global," and attract tourists and domestic investment from "Global to Local."

In 2017 as well, MOFA provided information both in and outside Japan by using various tools including MOFA websites and social media. In addition, progress is also being made with establishing "Japan Houses" in London, Los Angeles and São Paulo to promote Japan's attractiveness through an All-Japan initiative. Japan House São Paulo opened in Brazil in April, part of Japan House Los Angeles opened in advance in the U.S. in December, and preparations are underway to open Japan House London in the UK as well.

【Strengthening the Foreign Policy Implementation Structure】

To address wide-ranging diplomatic issues, MOFA continues to enhance its comprehensive foreign policy implementation structure in order to build a stronger foundation for policy execution. While continuing its streamlining efforts, MOFA will further reinforce the diplomatic missions overseas and its personnel both in quantity and quality.

Special Feature

Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy

A free and open maritime order based on the rule of law is a cornerstone of the stability and prosperity of the international community. In particular, the Indo-Pacific region stretches from the Asia-Pacific through the Indian Ocean to the Middle East and Africa, and is the core of the world's vitality, supporting more than half the world's population. Prime Minister Abe has been emphasizing the importance of a free and open Indo-Pacific, including presenting a speech on the "Confluence of the Two Seas" – the Indian and the Pacific Oceans – to the Indian Parliament in 2007. Prime Minister Abe once again advocated this concept as the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" on the occasion of the TICAD VI in August 2016.

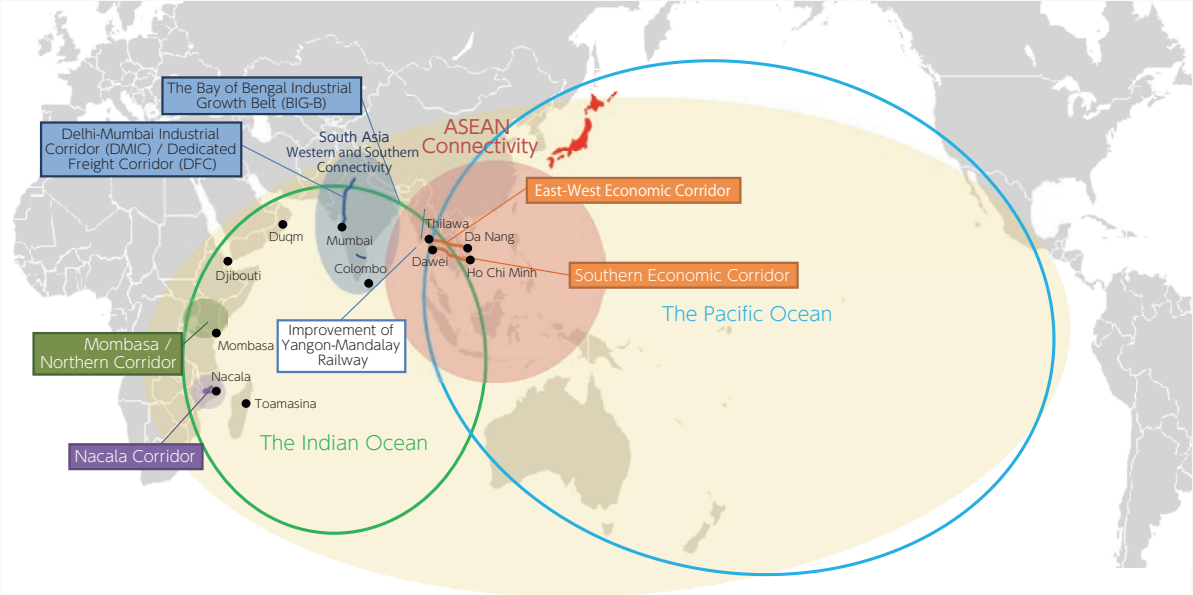
The maritime order in the Indo-Pacific region is facing various challenges such as piracy, terrorism, proliferation of WMD, natural disasters and illegal fishing. Japan is promoting the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" in order to make the Indo-Pacific region "international public goods" that bring stability and prosperity. This Strategy involves maintaining and strengthening a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law across the region through addressing of those challenges, as well as through enhancing connectivity within the region by developing Quality Infrastructure in accordance with international standards.

More specifically, Japan is advancing (1) the promotion and establishment of fundamental principles such as the rule of law and freedom of navigation; (2) the pursuit of economic prosperity through enhancing connectivity, including through Quality Infrastructure development in accordance with international standards; and (3) initiatives for ensuring peace and stability that include assistance for capacity building on maritime law enforcement, disaster risk reduction and non-proliferation. The Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy is open to every country that supports this idea and is ready to work with us.

Many countries support the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy." For example, when Prime Minister Abe visited India in September 2017, he and Prime Minister Modi shared the view that they will encourage further alignment between Japan's "Free and Open-Indo Pacific Strategy" and India's "Act East Policy," and will

Joint press conference held when U.S. President Trump visited Japan (November 6, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

deepen concrete cooperation, including strengthening connectivity of the regions and cooperating on maritime security. Furthermore, when U.S. President Trump visited Japan in November 2017, the two leaders shared the view that Japan and the U.S. will promote the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," with Japan leading the initiative. Japan intends to strengthen cooperation while coordinating closely with partners, in order to further implement initiatives for realizing a free and open Indo-Pacific.



Chapter 2

Japan's Foreign Policy that Takes a Panoramic Perspective of the World Map

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Section 1 Asia and Oceania

Overview

(General overview)

The Asia-Oceania region is blessed with an abundance of human resources. It is the world's growth center and has been enhancing its presence. Of the world population of 7.6 billion, approximately 3.6 billion people live in East Asia Summit (EAS) member states (excluding the U.S. and Russia)[1]. This represents about 48% of the world's population[2]. The combined nominal gross domestic product (GDP) of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states, China and India grew 300% over the last ten years, as compared to the world average of 150%. Total exports and imports of EAS member states (excluding the U.S. and Russia) is 10.2 trillion US dollars, making it the second largest market behind the European Union (10.6 trillion US dollars)[3]. There are close economic ties among these nations and they have a high degree of economic interdependence. As the middle class expands, overall purchasing power is expected to rise sharply. This will support strong economic growth within the region, and the huge demand for infrastructure and massive purchasing power of the large middle class will also help to bring renewed affluence and vitality to Japan. Realizing affluence and stability throughout Asia and Oceania is indispensable for Japan's peace and prosperity.

Meanwhile, the security environment in the Asia-Oceania region is becoming increasingly severe as seen in the following developments: provocation such as nuclear tests and launch of ballistic missile development by North Korea; modernization of military forces in a manner that lacks transparency and attempt to change the status quo by force or coercion in countries in the region; and tension within the region growing over maritime domain, including in the South China Sea. Other factors hindering the stable growth of the region include immature economic and financial systems, environmental pollution, unstable demand and supply of food and resources, natural disasters and aging population.

1 ASEAN (member states: Indonesia, Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand, the Philippines, Brunei, Viet Nam, Malaysia, Myanmar and Laos), Japan, China, the ROK, India, Australia and New Zealand
2 The State of World Population 2017
3 International Monetary Fund (IMF)

(Japan-U.S. Alliance and Asia-Oceania region)

The Japan-U.S. Security Arrangement is the foundation of peace, prosperity, and freedom, not only for Japan but also the entire Asia-Pacific region. Amid the increasing severity of the regional security environment including North Korea, the Japan-U.S. Alliance is more important than ever. Since the inauguration of the Trump administration in January 2017, Prime Minister Abe and President Trump held more than 20 Summit Meetings including telephone calls by the end of the same year, and the two leaders have been working to build a robust relationship of trust, coordinating closely on various issues of the Asia-Pacific region, including the one of North Korea.

In February 2017, a month after the inauguration of the Trump administration, Prime Minister Abe visited the U.S. to hold a meeting with President Trump. They shared their concerns about the increasingly severe security environment in the Asia-Pacific region and held discussions on this trend, including North Korean nuclear and missile development and the unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the East China Sea and South China Sea. The two leaders shared their understanding of the importance of building a network of allies and strengthening multilayered cooperative relationships between allies and like-minded nations, situating the Japan-U.S. Alliance at its center, and the necessity of continuous efforts to strengthen the alliance. Prime Minister Abe and President Trump agreed to pursue together a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," during President Trump's visit to Japan in November 2017, underscoring the importance of stability and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region—a core region of vitality for the entire world. Japan and the U.S. will continue to play leading roles in facilitating regional peace and prosperity, including activities based on the abovementioned strategy.

(China)

Japan and China are neighbors across the East China Sea. The Japan-China relationship is one of the most important bilateral relationships characterized by close economic relations, and people-to-people and cultural exchanges. In 2017, the number of Chinese travelers to Japan was about 7.36 million (Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO)), setting a record high for two consecutive years, following the previous year which was 6.37 million.

2017, which was the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and China, saw frequent high-level dialogues including three Summit Meetings and four Foreign Ministerial Meetings. The Chinese Embassy in Tokyo held a reception celebrating the anniversary, and Prime Minister Abe and Foreign Minister Kono attended the reception. On September 29, the day of the anniversary, the leaders of state and foreign ministers of both countries exchanged congratulatory telegrams.

Japan and China share responsibility for regional and global peace and stability, and stable Japan-China relations are crucial when responding to regional and global issues, including the North Korea issue. Although difficult issues exist between Japan and China, from the fact that they are neighboring countries,

Japan and China will continue to follow the approach of sustaining a "Mutually Beneficial Relationship based on Common Strategic Interests," pursue cooperation and exchange in all manners of fields while dealing with concerns in an appropriate manner, and develop friendly and cooperative bilateral relations in a stable manner based on a broad perspective.

(Taiwan)

Taiwan is an important partner which has intimate people-to-people exchanges and close economic ties with Japan and is a friend of Japan. Working relations between Japan and Taiwan are also deepening, and in 2017, cooperation documents regarding mutual assistance in customs matters and cultural exchanges between the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association and the Taiwan-Japan Relations Association were signed. In line with the 1972 Japan-China Joint Communique, the relationship between Japan and Taiwan continues to be maintained as working relations at the non-governmental level, under which both sides are cooperating on building closer ties.

(Mongolia)

Mongolia is an important regional partner for Japan. 2017, which was the 45th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Mongolia, saw the first-ever reciprocal visits by the head of the two countries' parliaments- Chairman of State Great Hural Enkhbold (who visited Japan in March); and Speaker of the House of Representatives Oshima in the Diet (who visited Mongolia in July). Based on the mid-term Action Plan signed by the two countries' Foreign Ministers in March, Japan is going to work to support the efforts of Mongolia to achieve economic recovery and fiscal rehabilitation through an International Monetary Fund assistance program, while also building a truly mutually beneficial strategic partnership covering a wide range of fields.

(Republic of Korea)

Good relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea (ROK) are essential for the peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region. The year 2015 marked the 50th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-ROK diplomatic relations, and there have been vigorous exchanges between two countries. In 2017 the number of people traveling between Japan and the ROK reached an all-time high. Economic relations are also close. On the political front, Japan-ROK Summit Meetings between Prime Minister Abe and President Moon Jae-in (inaugurated in May 2017) were held in July and September. A Summit Meeting was also held in February 2018 when Prime Minister Abe visited the ROK to attend the Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games Opening Ceremony. On the other hand, in December 2017, the Taskforce to Review the Agreement on Comfort Women Issue, which reviewed the agreement between the Governments of Japan and the ROK in 2015 published a report, and the Government of the ROK announced its position on the Japan-ROK agreement in January 2018. For the Government of Japan, it is completely unacceptable that the ROK would seek additional measures from Japan. The Government of Japan will continue to strongly urge the Government of the ROK to steadily implement the agreement, which confirmed that the issue is "resolved

finally and irreversibly." Although difficult issues exist between Japan and the ROK, it is important to move Japan-ROK relations forward in a future-oriented manner while managing these issues appropriately.

(North Korea)

In 2017, North Korea conducted the sixth nuclear test and launched 15 ballistic missiles, including the two that flew over Japan. North Korea's build-up of its nuclear and missile capabilities poses an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat towards the peace and stability of Japan and the international community. Japan is cooperating closely with the U.S. and the ROK and coordinating with relevant countries including China and Russia to maximize pressure on North Korea by all available means. Through such efforts, Japan is working for the comprehensive resolution of outstanding issues of concern, such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues. As well as being a critical issue concerning the sovereignty of Japan and the lives and safety of Japanese citizens, abduction by North Korea constitutes a universal issue among the international community as a violation of basic human rights. 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. The Inter-Korean Summit is scheduled on April 27, 2018, and the U.S.-North Korea Summit is scheduled in May or early June. Japan will continue to cooperate closely with the U.S. and the ROK to urge North Korea to abandon all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile of all ranges.

(Southeast Asian countries)

Against the backdrop of their high rates of economic growth, Southeast Asian countries have been increasing their importance and presence in the international community. Japan has further strengthened relations with these countries, based on friendly relations over many years. Following Prime Minister Abe's visits to the Philippines, Indonesia, and Viet Nam in January as a part of efforts to strengthen coordination with major Southeast Asian nations, in 2017, Japan welcomed the leaders of a large number of nations from the region. In November, Prime Minister Abe visited Viet Nam to attend an Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit Meeting and visited the Philippines to attend an ASEAN Summit Meeting. While in the Philippines, Prime Minister Abe served as the chair of the 9th Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting. There were also frequent ministerial visits. Foreign Minister Kono engaged in intensive communication with counterparts in the region including a visit to the Philippines in August to attend an ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and a visit in November to Viet Nam to attend an APEC Ministerial Meeting. Japan will continue to reinforce its framework for dialogue and cooperation with Southeast Asian countries in the fields of politics and security to achieve peace and prosperity in the region. Moreover, Japan will promote "quality infrastructure investment" in cooperation with each country and international institution aimed

at realization of a sustainable "quality growth" and will accelerate initiatives for improving both hard and soft connectivity of the Southeast Asia region. At the Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting held in November 2017, the leaders shared the intention to further accelerate software-related initiatives. Furthermore, 2017 was also the 130th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Thailand and the 60th anniversary for Japan and Malaysia, and initiatives were implemented to promote friendship and goodwill to mark these milestones. People-to-people exchange and cultural exchange was also further enhanced through the youth exchange programs, such as JENESYS2017 program.

Japan's initiatives such as these have firm support from Southeast Asian countries. According to a survey on public opinion about Japan conducted in ten ASEAN countries[4] in March 2017, the overall figures for ASEAN showed that 91% replied that Japan was either "very trustworthy" or "somewhat trustworthy." In addition, in response to the question of which G20 country (or region) had contributed the most to the development of ASEAN over the last 50 years (multiple answers allowed), Japan's contribution to ASEAN countries was the most highly regarded with 55% of respondents selecting Japan, while 40% selected China.

(Oceania countries)

(1) Australia

With the region facing a wide range of issues, the "Special Strategic Partnership" between Japan and Australia, which share fundamental values and strategic interests, is more important than ever. The strategic visions of Japan and Australia concerning the establishment of a free and open Indo-Pacific region based on the rule of law are increasingly converging, and the two countries need to demonstrate leadership and coordinate toward regional stability and prosperity. Japan-Australia relations are becoming increasingly close, with annual mutual prime ministerial visits and close coordination between the Foreign Ministers of each country. Progress is also being made with cooperation in the areas of security and defense with regularly held the Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations ("2+2") and progress in negotiations on a reciprocal access agreement. On the economic front, Japan and Australia are coordinating closely on the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement and East Asia's Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in order to facilitate free and open trade, and mutually complementary economic relations are being further advanced by the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Coordination is also steadily being strengthened through participation in multilateral frameworks including Japan-U.S.-Australia and Japan-Australia-India.

(2) New Zealand

New Zealand is a strategic cooperative partner with which Japan has been maintaining friendly relations for many years, and the cooperative relations of the two countries are being strengthened through ways such as exchanges at a variety of levels. In May, Prime Minister Bill English visited Japan and held a Summit Meeting.

4 The MOFA website

The general election held in September led, the following month, to the first change in administration in nine years. Immediately after this, at the time of the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting and the APEC Ministerial Meeting in November, the first Summit Meeting with the new Prime Minister and the first Foreign Ministerial Meeting were held and it was agreed that the two countries would continue coordinating closely and work on strengthening bilateral ties.

(3) Pacific Island Countries (PICs)

The PICs and Japan are bound by the Pacific Ocean, have deep historical ties, and are important partners in areas such as cooperation in the international arena and the supply of fisheries and mineral resources. They are becoming increasingly important from a geographical perspective as they are located at the heart of the Pacific Ocean. The Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) 3rd Ministerial Interim Meeting (MIM3) was held in Tokyo in January 2017 and the 4th Japan-Pacific Islands Summit Meeting was held in New York in September, and it was confirmed to further strengthen the partnerships between Japan and the PICs.

(South Asia)

High economic growth rates and latent economic potential mean that the South Asia region is growing increasingly important, in addition to its geopolitical importance as an intersection of Asia, the Middle East and Africa. On the other hand, the region faces challenges such as poverty, democratic consolidation, terrorism, and vulnerability to natural disasters. Japan is working to strengthen not only economic relations but also cooperation in a wide range of fields with countries in the region, including India, with which Japan has traditionally enjoyed friendly and cooperative relations. Of particular note is Japan's relationship with India, which is referred to as "the bilateral relationship with the most potential in the world." Through exchanges of different levels including annual reciprocal visits by the leaders, the relationship is developing in a manner that is apt for the "New Era for Japan-India Relations." Japan is also working proactively with India to facilitate regional and global peace and prosperity, including cooperation toward the achievement of a free and open Indo-Pacific region based on "Special Strategic and Global Partnership." Japan will continue to promote the strengthening of the connectivities in the region and surrounding regions including India, and cooperation in the global arena with and between these countries. Japan will also continue its efforts to address the various issues of countries in the region including the issues of national reconciliation and democratic consolidation.

(Measures on the comfort women issue)

The Government of Japan has sincerely dealt with issues of reparations, property and claims pertaining to the war, including the comfort women issue, under the San Francisco Peace Treaty and through international agreements including bilateral treaties. Japan is of the view that these issues have been legally settled with the respective parties to these treaties, agreements and instruments. However, from the perspective of facilitating feasible remedies for the former comfort women, the Government and people of Japan collaboratively established the "Asian

Women's Fund" in 1995, through which they carried out various medical and welfare projects and provided "atonement money." Successive Prime Ministers sent letters expressing "apologies and remorse" directly to each former comfort woman. The Government of Japan has made every effort as mentioned above. Furthermore, it was confirmed between the Foreign Ministers of Japan and the ROK in late December 2015 that the comfort women issue between Japan and the ROK is "resolved finally and irreversibly." The two 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. (See Announcement by Foreign Ministers of Japan and the ROK at the Joint Press Occasion)

In spite of this Japan-ROK agreement, a comfort woman statue was installed on the sidewalk facing the Consulate General of Japan in Busan on December 30, 2016. On January 6, 2017, the Government of Japan announced measures in response to this[5]. In addition, the Taskforce to Review the Agreement on Comfort Women Issue under the direct supervision of Minister of Foreign Affairs of the ROK published a report on its review on the agreement reached between the Governments of Japan and the ROK on December 27, and in response to this, the Government of Japan issued a Statement by Foreign Minister Kono claiming that should the Government of the ROK attempt to change the agreement, which has already been implemented, Japan-ROK relationship would become unmanageable, that such an attempt cannot be accepted under any circumstances, and that the Government of Japan strongly urges the Government of the ROK to steadily implement the agreement, which confirmed that the issue was "resolved finally and irreversibly."

In January 2018, the Government of the ROK announced its position on the Japan-ROK agreement. For the Government of Japan, it is completely unacceptable that the ROK would seek additional measures from Japan, despite the confirmation in the Japan-ROK agreement that the comfort women issue is "resolved finally and irreversibly." The Government of Japan will continue to strongly urge the Government of the ROK to steadily implement the agreement.

Furthermore, there is a move to install comfort woman statues[6] in other countries as well, including the U.S., Canada, Australia, China, the Philippines, and Germany. Such a move is extremely regrettable and incompatible with the position of the Government of Japan. The Government of Japan is of the view that claims such as "forceful taking away of comfort women by the Japanese military and government authorities," "several hundred thousands of comfort women existed," and "sex slaves" are not recognized as historical facts. The Government of Japan will continue reaching out to various people involved in this issue to explain this position.

(Strengthening Regional Cooperation)

The strategic environment surrounding

5 Specifically, Japan decided to take interim measures such as (1) postponing participation of members of the Consulate-General of Japan in Busan in municipal events in Busan; (2) temporary recall of the Ambassador of Japan to the ROK, Yasumasa Nagamine, and Consul-General of Japan to Busan, Yasuhiro Morimoto; (3) suspending Japan-ROK consultations on the bilateral swap arrangement; and (4) postponing Japan-ROK high-level economic consultations.

6 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.

the Asia-Oceania region is changing rapidly, and it is becoming critically important for Japan to cooperate and strengthen its relations with the countries of this region. While continuing to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance, Japan will play an active role in promoting peace and prosperity in the region by reinforcing its relations of trust and cooperation with its partners in and outside Asia-Oceania. In addition to strengthening bilateral cooperation, Japan is actually engaging in trilateral arrangements for dialogue, such as Japan-China-ROK, Japan-U.S.-ROK, Japan-U.S.-Australia, Japan-U.S.-India, and Japan-Australia-India arrangements, as well as larger multilateral frameworks, such as Japan-ASEAN, ASEAN+3, East Asia Summit (EAS), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Japan-Mekong cooperation and others. Furthermore, the process of trilateral cooperation among Japan, China and the ROK has an important value, and Japan has been seeking to develop this process as the chair country.

ASEAN exerts its centrality in regional cooperation in East Asia, therefore realizing a more stable and prosperous ASEAN as the motive force is absolutely essential to the stability and prosperity of the region as a whole. Based on this recognition, Japan has announced that it will actively support ASEAN's efforts for further integration even after the establishment of the ASEAN Community in the end of 2015.

Japan-ASEAN relations were raised to a new level through the Japan-ASEAN Commemorative Summit in 2013. Through meetings such as the JPN-ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in August 2017 (Manila, the Philippines) and the 20th Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting in November (Manila, the Philippines), cooperative relations have been further strengthened in a wide range of fields including the strengthening of unity in ASEAN, sustainable economic growth, enhancing living standards, and securing regional and global peace and security. With regard to the South China Sea issue, a chairman's statement expressing concern and underscoring the importance of non-militarization in the South China Sea, maintaining the freedom of navigation and overflight, and peaceful resolution of conflict in accordance with international law including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea was released at the 12th East Asia Summit (EAS) held in November. In light of these circumstances, Japan is proactively working on activities aimed at contributing to regional stability, including providing capacity building assistance for maritime security through its Overseas Development Aid, and joint exercises with the navies and maritime law enforcement organizations of coastal countries.

At the EAS, leaders reviewed cooperation within the EAS and discussed its future directions, as well as regional/international issues. Prime Minister Abe announced that Japan will, under the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," maintain and strengthen the rule based, free and open maritime order in the Indo-Pacific and make them international public goods that bring stability and prosperity.

Prime Minister Abe also announced that with the aim of further promoting the policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace," Japan would expand human resource development, provision of supplies and equipment, and intellectual contribution in

three areas: maritime safety; humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR); and peacekeeping operations (PKO). With regard to the North Korea issue, Prime Minister Abe also stressed that it was necessary for the international community to maximize pressure on North Korea and that it was important for EAS to issue a clear message on strengthening pressure on North Korea. In response to this, almost all the leaders raised the issue of North Korea, and many expressed concern over the development of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles, and urged compliance with the UN Security Council resolutions by North Korea given that the series of provocative actions by North Korea were violations of UN Security Council resolutions and a threat to the peace and stability of the international community.

With regard to the issue of the South China Sea, Prime Minister Abe also explained that, based on Japan's stance of supporting the centrality of ASEAN, Japan wholeheartedly supported basic principles laid out in the Joint Communiqué of the ASEAN Foreign Minister's Meeting issued in August. Prime Minister Abe also called on the countries concerned to strictly adhere to the "three principles of the rule of law on the seas." He expressed Japan's continuing concerns over the situation in the South China Sea, and emphasized that easing tensions through forward-looking efforts by China and ASEAN should lead to "demilitarization." In response, most of the leaders raised the issue of the South China Sea and emphasized the importance of securing freedom of navigation and peacefully resolving disputes according to international law including UNCLOS. In addition, some countries expressed concern over the recent situation in the South China Sea and advocated the importance of non-militarization and self-restraint

1 Korean Peninsula

(1) North Korea (including the abductions issue)

Under its policy of "dialogue and pressure" and "action for action," the Government of Japan has been continuing various efforts 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, while working closely with relevant countries, including the U.S., the ROK, China and Russia.

North Korea's build-up of its nuclear and missile capabilities poses an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat towards the peace and stability of Japan and the international community. In order to urge North Korea to change its policies, Japan is cooperating closely with the U.S. and the ROK and coordinating with relevant countries including China and Russia to maximize pressure on North Korea by all available means including the full implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions. 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) and to press North Korea for the early resolution of the abductions issue through leveraging the international community's pressure on North Korea.

A North Korea Nuclear and Missile Issues

The nuclear and missile development by North Korea is a clear violation of a series of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and challenge to the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and is totally unacceptable. In spite of the fact that the international community, including Japan, has repeatedly and strongly pressed North Korea for its self-restraint, North Korea has continued its nuclear and missile development. Since January 2016, North Korea has conducted three nuclear tests and may have reached the stage, being able to produce miniaturized nuclear warheads. North Korea has also launched as many as 40 ballistic missiles.

Between February and May 2017, on nine separate occasions, North Korea launched a total of 12 ballistic missiles. Four of them fell within Japan's exclusive economic zone (EEZ). In response, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2356 in June. However, in July, North Korea launched two ballistic missiles with an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) range both of which landed within Japan's EEZ. In response to these provocative actions by North Korea, the Government of Japan took further autonomous measures against North Korea in July and August, designating additional entities subject to asset freezing measures. The UN Security Council also adopted Resolution 2371, which included measures such as a total ban on the import of coal from North Korea. On August 29 and September 15, North Korea launched two ballistic missiles that flew over Japan and, in September, North Korea carried out the sixth nuclear test, which was the first nuclear test since September 2016 and the scale of which is estimated to be the largest in its history. In September, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2375, which included measures that restrict the supply of oil related products and ban providing work authorizations to North Korean overseas workers. North Korea also launched a ballistic missile with an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) range in November, which landed within Japan's EEZ, demonstrating that North Korea had continued its nuclear and missile development over the past 75 days since the previous launch. In response, Japan implemented further autonomous measures against North Korea in November and December, and Resolution 2397 was adopted by the UN Security Council in December.

Among the four UN Security Council resolutions adopted in 2017 in response to North Korea's nuclear and missile development, Resolution 2397, which was adopted unanimously at the UN Security Council session chaired by Japan in December, further enhanced the sanctions measures against North Korea to an unprecedented level and virtually eradicated North Korea's foreign currency revenues through export. Specifically, the Resolution included provisions for further restriction on the supply in the oil sector, imposition of stricter procedures through the establishment of reporting obligations, the repatriation of North Korean overseas workers within 24 months and severer measures related to maritime transport.

With the implementation of four autonomous measures between July and December 2017, Japan designated 104 organizations and 110 individuals subject to asset freezing measures.

As North Korea continues to take provocative actions, in disregard of the protests and warnings of the international community, on December 15, as the chair of the UN Security Council, Japan hosted the UNSC Ministerial-Level Meeting on the North Korean issue. Foreign Minister Kono emphasized that full implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions is essential and that it is necessary to make North Korea change its policies by maximizing pressure on North Korea. As international community's pressure on North Korea increases, in his new year's address in January 2018, the Chairman of State Affairs Commission Kim Jong-un stated that the "historic accomplishment of finalizing national nuclear capabilities" was achieved and declared his intention to continue nuclear and missile development. The Co-chairs' summary of the Foreign Ministers' Meeting on Security and Stability on the Korean Peninsula, held in Vancouver on January 16, 2018, confirmed that continued pressure will be exerted on North Korea until it changes its policies and takes decisive and irreversible steps to denuclearize. Foreign Minister Kono visited the ROK on April 10 and 11, 2018, and reaffirmed close coordination of their policies towards the Inter-Korean Summit and the U.S.-North Korea Summit. Following Foreign Minister Kono's visit to the U.S. in March, Prime Minister Abe visited the U.S. for the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting on April 17 and 18. The leaders conducted concrete and in-depth discussion on the close coordination of their policies and reaffirmed that they will work absolutely together. They also reaffirmed that North Korea needs to abandon all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner.

It is crucial that the international community responds to North Korea's sanctions evasion and ensures the effectiveness of the UN Security Council resolutions. As part of the Japan Coast Guard's patrolling activities and the Self Defense Force's surveillance activities, Japan has been conducting information gathering on the activities of vessels suspected to be violating the UN Security Council resolutions. When the Government of Japan strongly suspects that ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean vessels banned by the UN Security Council resolutions are conducted, Japan has been taking measures such as notification to the Security Council Committee established pursuant to Resolution 1718, sharing of information with related countries, and releasing of information to the public. In January and February 2018, Japan revealed four cases to the public through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) website and through other media.

B The Abductions Issue

(A) Basic Position

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 eight of these 12 abductees have died and that it is unable to confirm that the other four 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, abduction by North Korea constitutes a universal issue among the international community as a violation of basic human rights. 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.

(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 nationals 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. During the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministerial Meeting held in the Philippines in August 2017, Foreign Minister Kono had contact with the North Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs Ri Yong-ho and raised the issue of the abductions and security including North Korea's nuclear and missile development and conveyed Japan's basic position. During the reception of the Pyeongchang Olympic Winter Games Opening Ceremony hosted by President Moon Jae-in, on February 9, 2018, Prime Minister Abe brought up the abductions, nuclear and missile issues and conveyed Japan's basic position to Kim Yong-nam, the 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 July, August, November, and December 2017, Japan also announced the introduction of further autonomous measures against North Korea toward the comprehensive resolution of outstanding issues of concern, such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues.

(C) Cooperation with the International Community

Japan has taken all possible diplomatic opportunities to raise the abductions issue and other issues concerning North Korea, including at summit meetings, foreign ministers' meetings and international conferences such as the G7 Taormina Summit in Italy, Japan-U.S.-ROK trilateral Summit Meetings and Foreign Ministers' Meetings, ASEAN-related Summit Meetings, and UN Security Council Ministerial-Level Meetings, and succeeded in gaining understanding and support of other countries. Japan will continue to work with the international community to urge North Korea to take concrete measures.

At the UN, the Resolution on the Situation of Human Rights in the DPRK co-tabled by Japan and the European Union (EU) was

adopted at the Human Rights Council in March 2017 and the UN General Assembly in December 2017. (The resolution has been adopted in the Human Rights Council for the tenth time in ten consecutive years and adopted at the UN General Assembly for the 13th time in 13 consecutive years). At the UN Security Council meeting on the situation in the DPRK, held for four consecutive years, the participating countries expressed serious concerns about human rights violations in North Korea, including the abductions issue, and sent a clear message to North Korea, urging North Korea to improve the situation. Furthermore, the unanimous adoption of UN Security Council Resolutions 2371, 2375, and 2397 demonstrated strong concerns of the international community, including the UN Security Council, about the issue of human rights in North Korea including the abductions issue.

As for the U.S., President Trump referred to Megumi Yokota, one of the abductees, in his address at the UN General Assembly in September 2017. During his visit to Japan in November 2017, President Trump, together with Prime Minister Abe and Minister in Charge of the Abductions Issue Katsunobu Kato, met with the family members of the abductees and stated that he will work together towards the resolution of the abductions issue. The abductions issue was also raised at the Foreign Ministers' Meeting on Security and Stability on the Korean Peninsula held in Vancouver, Canada, in January 2018, and the reference was made in the Co-chairs' summary. In response to the request by Prime Minister Abe during the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held on April 17 and 18, 2018, the two leaders agreed that the abductions issue will be raised during the U.S.-North Korea Summit Meeting.

Japan will continue to closely coordinate and cooperate with relevant countries, including the U. S. toward the early resolution of the abductions issue.

C North Korea's External Relations, etc.

(A) U.S.-North Korea Relations

Since the inauguration of the Trump administration in 2017, the U.S. has been increasing its pressure on North Korea under the policy that "all options are on the table." The U.S. introduced sanctions measures on North Korea in January, April, June, August, September, October and November 2017, as well as in February 2018, for North Korea's involvement in human rights violations and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The sanctions targeted entities and individuals in North Korea, as well as those in third countries, including Russia and China. Furthermore, in November 2017, the U.S. decided to redesignate North Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism.

Furthermore, the U.S. has declared that it will maintain its defense commitments to Japan and the ROK, including the provision of extended deterrence. In September 2017, the U.S. completed the installation of six launch pads for the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) system in the ROK and began to operate. In November, three U.S. aircraft carriers were deployed to the Sea of Japan, displaying strong commitment by the U.S. to the peace and stability of the region.

On March 6, 2018, Chairman Kim expressed his willingness to the special envoy from the ROK that he wishes to meet President Trump soon. In response,

on March 9, President Trump expressed his intention to hold a U.S.-North Korea Summit Meeting by the end of May.

(B) Inter-Korean Relations

Under the Park Geun-hye administration, the ROK increased pressure on North Korea, including by the total shutdown of the Gaesong Industrial Complex, and thus inter-Korean talks and interactions were not active. However, the Moon Jae-in administration inaugurated in May 2017 showed willingness to improve inter-Korean relations. Specifically, President Moon Jae-in announced "the Korean peninsula peace initiative" in his speech in Berlin in July 2017 and proposed (1) the resumption of the reunions of separated families and revisits to ancestral graves, and holding of Inter-Korean Red Cross talks to this end, (2)North Korea's participation in the Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games, (3) the mutual cessation of hostile action along the Military Demarcation Line, and (4) the resumption of inter-Korean exchanges and dialogue. However, North Korea did not respond immediately. In the meantime, the ROK is maintaining pressure on North Korea, while closely coordinating with both Japan and the U.S., through such measures as a U.S.-ROK joint military exercise in August, the deployment of six launch pads for the THAAD system in September, and the imposition of autonomous measures on North Korea in November and December.

In the New Year's Address on January 1, 2018, Chairman Kim made reference to the improvement of inter-Korean relations and the dispatch of the delegation to the Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games. Furthermore, against this backdrop, the Inter-Korean High Level Official Meeting was held on January 9, where both sides agreed on several issues including (1) North Korea's participation in the Pyeongchang Winter Olympics Games, (2) holding of an inter-Korean meeting between the military authorities, and (3) promoting contact, interaction, movement and exchanges of people in a variety of fields.

North Korea dispatched Kim Yong-nam, Presidium of the Supreme People's Assembly of North Korea, and Kim Yo-jong, the Deputy Director of the Workers' Party of Korea Propaganda and Agitation Department among others, along with the athletes to represent North Korea at the Opening Ceremony of the Pyeongchang Winter Olympic Games. On February 10, President Moon Jae-in held a meeting with the delegation, where Deputy Director Kim Yo-jong delivered a letter from Chairman Kim in which Chairman Kim's willingness to improve inter-Korean relations was expressed. She also conveyed a message of invitation from Chairman Kim that he is ready to meet President Moon soon and that he would like to request President Moon to visit North Korea whenever it is convenient for the President." In response, President Moon stated that he would like to achieve a success by setting an appropriate condition. In particular, President Moon stated that early dialogue between North Korea and the U.S. is necessary for the improvement of inter-Korean relations and called on North Korea to engage in dialogue with the U.S. more proactively.

On March 6, 2018, President Moon Jae-in's special envoy was sent to Pyongyang to attend a meeting with Chairman Kim. On the same day, the Presidential Executive Office of the ROK announced that both sides made it clear that they will hold the

3rd Inter-Korean Summit in Panmunjom at the end of April. On March 12, Mr. Seo Hoon, Director of the National Intelligence Service of the ROK visited Japan to give a detailed explanation about the discussion between the ROK's special envoy and North Korea, and Japan and the ROK closely coordinated their future policies.

At the Inter-Korean High Level Officials' Meeting on March 29, both sides agreed that they will hold an Inter-Korean Summit at the Peace House on the South Korean side of Panmunjom on April 27.

(C) China-North Korea Relations

In November 2017, Song Tao, Minister of the International Department of the Communist Party of China visited North Korea as General Secretary Xi Jinping's special envoy. Following the visit, from March 25 to 28, 2018, Chairman Kim visited China to hold a China-North Korea Summit for the first time with President Xi Jinping.

China has kept close economic ties with North Korea. For example, trade between China and North Korea accounts for approximately 90% of North Korea's entire external trade excluding inter-Korean trade. However, at the same time, China has agreed on a series of UN Security Council Resolutions, issuing a number of notices by the Ministry of Commerce. The Ministry of Commerce has adopted specific measures including bans and restrictions on imports and exports of designated items in order to implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

(D) Other Countries

In 2017, a total of 104 drifting or wrecked wooden vessels presumed to be from North Korea were discovered (66 in 2016). In November 2017 in particular, eight and ten survivors were discovered in Yurihonjo City of Akita Prefecture and Matsumaekojima Island of Hokkaido respectively. Japan extradited the survivors to North Korea in accordance with the relevant laws and regulations working closely with relevant government agencies in both cases.

D Domestic Political Affairs and Economy

(A) Political Affairs

In North Korea, the power base of the regime centered on Kim Jong-un, the Chairman of the State Affairs Commission is being enhanced. In May 2016, the seventh Party Congress of the Workers' Party of Korea was held, and the "byungjin policy," under which North Korea simultaneously pursues economic construction and the build-up of nuclear armed forces, was positioned as a permanent strategic policy. At the same time, the National Five-Year Strategy for Economic Development (2016-2020) was announced. Furthermore, through the revision of the party constitution, the post of Chairman of the Party was newly established and, Kim Jong-un, First Secretary of the Party, was appointed as the Chairman of the Party, establishing a new party structure centered on Chairman Kim. Moreover, in June 2016 the same year, the Fourth Session of the 13th Supreme People's Assembly was held. The National Defense Commission (NDC) was reorganized into the State Affairs Commission, and Kim Jong-un, First Chairman of the NDC, was appointed as Chairman of the State Affairs Commission.

A plenary session of the Central Committee of the Workers' Party of Korea was held in October 2017, and the "byungjin

policy," the policy of the simultaneous pursuit of economic construction and the build-up of nuclear armed forces, was firmly reconfirmed.

(B) Economy

For North Korea, the rebuilding of its economy is regarded as an issue of great importance. In 2017, as North Korea continued its nuclear and missile development, it is believed that a series of UN Security Council Resolutions, virtually eradicating North Korea's foreign currency earnings from exports, will severely damage the country's economy. Under these conditions of economic hardship as the result of sanctions and economic blockades imposed by the international community, Chairman Kim expressed his intention to improve and raise the standard of living of the people in his New Year's Address in January 2018, as North Korea entered the third year of its national five-year strategy for economic development.

Meanwhile, North Korea's economic growth rate in 2016 was 3.9% (Bank of Korea estimate), recovering from the negative growth of -1.1% in the previous year. Increased production in agriculture, forestry and fisheries industries, mining and manufacturing industry, electricity, gas and water industries, and other infrastructure industries is considered to have contributed to this growth.

Trade with China continues to account for the largest share of North Korea's external trade. In 2016, the total value of North Korea's external trade (excluding inter-Korean trade) was 6.25 billion US dollars (Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency (KOTRA) estimate), of which trade with China accounted for over 90%.

E Other Issues

Defectors who have fled North Korea have to be kept in hiding to avoid being cracked down by the authorities in the countries where they are staying or 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 working together closely to promote measures aimed at helping the defectors accepted by Japan to become settled.

(2) Republic of Korea (ROK)

A Japan-ROK Relations

(A) Bilateral Relations

The partnership and cooperation between Japan and the ROK are essential in ensuring the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region. Furthermore, Japan and the ROK have worked together on a variety of regional and global issues, including nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, peacebuilding, poverty reduction, in addition to dealing with issues related to North Korea. The Government of Japan will continue to develop a good understanding of each other at a variety of levels in all fields such as politics, economy and culture and move toward developing a new era of future-oriented Japan-ROK relations based on mutual trust.

At a time when the enhancement of nuclear and missile capabilities by North Korea constitutes an unprecedented,

grave and imminent threat to Japan and the entire international community, coordination between Japan and the ROK as well as between Japan, the ROK and the U.S. regarding North Korea issues has become more important than ever before. In response to the nuclear test on September 3, 2017 and repeated launches of ballistic missiles by North Korea, Japan and the ROK promptly held teleconferences between their top leaders and Foreign Ministers, in which they confirmed the close coordination between the two as well as between Japan, the ROK and the U.S.

After the inauguration of the Moon Jae-in administration in May 2017, Japan-ROK Summits were consecutively held in Hamburg, Germany in July, and Vladivostok, Russia in the following September. Moreover, Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha visited Japan for the first time after the appointment as Foreign Minister, from December 19 to 20, and held a Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Kono.

Upon his visit to Pyeongchang to attend the Pyeongchang Olympics Opening Ceremony, Prime Minister Abe held a Summit Meeting with President Moon Jae-in. Prime Minister Abe gave a clear and detailed explanation of Japan's position to President Moon Jae-in, stating that the comfort women issue is "resolved finally and irreversibly" and that the agreement between the two countries, is a foundation of bilateral ties. Both sides shared the recognition that the two leaders must build future-oriented bilateral relations. With regards to the issue concerning North Korea, Prime Minister Abe conveyed a clear message to President Moon Jae-in that dialogue for the sake of dialogue is meaningless. Moreover, the two leaders shared the view to maximize pressure on North Korea through close coordination between Japan, the ROK and the U.S., in order to make North Korea change its policies and seek dialogue from its end.

Japan-ROK Summit Meeting (February 9, 2018, PyeongChang, the ROK; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting (December 19, Tokyo)

(B) Exchange

Mutual understanding and exchange between the people of both Japan and the ROK are steadily deepening and broadening. The year 2015 marked the 50th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-ROK diplomatic relations, and a wide range of exchanges were actively conducted between the two countries. In Japan, K-POP and South Korean TV dramas, etc., are widely accepted by people of all ages. Japanese culture such as

the manga, anime, and novels of Japan in particular has become popular in the ROK.

Furthermore, the number of people traveling between the two countries has grown from around 10,000 people a year at the time that diplomatic relations were normalized to approximately 9.45 million people a year in 2017, the highest number ever recorded[7].

The Nikkan Koryu Omatsuri (Japan-Korea Festival), an annual cultural exchange event in Japan and the ROK, took place in Tokyo on September 23 and 24 and in Seoul on September 24.

Moreover, regarding exchanges programs between Japan and the ROK, Japan attempted to promote mutual understanding and build a friendly and cooperative relationship for the future through the promotion of Japan's Friendship Ties Programs (JENESYS 2017).

(C) Takeshima Dispute

Regarding the dispute between Japan and the ROK concerning the territorial sovereignty over Takeshima, Takeshima is indisputably an inherent part of the territory of Japan in light of historical facts and based on international law. Japan has repeatedly made it clear that the ROK's occupation of Takeshima is illegal and has no international legal basis, Japan has been mobilizing various media to keep the rest of the world informed about Japan's position on the Takeshima dispute[8], and has repeatedly lodged strong protests against the ROK over matters such as landings on the island by members of the ROK's National Assembly and others, the ROK's military exercises and the construction of buildings[9]. Moreover, for a peaceful settlement of the Takeshima dispute, Japan has proposed to the ROK that the Takeshima issue be refered to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on three occasions from 1954 to present. However, the ROK has rejected three proposals in all instances. Japan is determined to continue to make persevering diplomatic efforts tenaciously to settle the Takeshima issue in a peaceful manner in accordance with international law[10].

(D) The Issue of Comfort Women

The issue of comfort women has been a major diplomatic issue in Japan-ROK relations since the 1990s, yet Japan has been sincerely dealing with this issue. The issue concerning property and claims between Japan and the ROK were legally settled in 1965 through the Agreement on the Settlement of Problems Concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Cooperation between Japan and the

7 Number of visitors in 2017: Number of people from the ROK visiting Japan: 7,140,200 people (Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO))
Number of people from Japan visiting the ROK: 2,311,447 people (Korea Tourism Organization (KTO))

8 In February 2008, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs created a pamphlet entitled "Takeshima: 10 points to understand the Takeshima Dispute." Currently, it is available on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website in 11 languages: Japanese, English, Korean, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabian, Russian, Chinese, and Italian. Furthermore, since October 2013, videos and flyers about Takeshima have been available on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website and currently they are available in the above 11 languages. In addition, Japan has taken initiatives such as distributing a smartphone app providing education about the Takeshima issue.

9 After Moon Jae-in, former Chairman of The Minjoo Party of Korea, landed on the island in July 2016, a delegation of ten ROK parliamentarians led by Na Kyung-won, a member of the National Assembly for the Saenuri Party, landed on the island in August 2016, and Kim Kwan-yong, Governor of North Gyeongsang Province in the ROK, landed on the island in January 25, 2017. Following each of these instances, 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.

10 Japan has so far proposed three times (September 1954, March 1962 and August 2012) to the ROK that the Takeshima issue be referred to the International Court of Justice.

ROK. However, from the perspective of facilitating feasible remedies for former comfort women, the "Asian Women's Fund" was established in 1995, which carried out medical and welfare projects and provided "atonement money" to each former comfort woman in Asian and other countries, including the ROK. In addition, successive Prime Ministers have sent letters expressing their "apology and remorse" to the former comfort women. The Government of Japan has made every effort as mentioned above. As a result of great diplomatic efforts, the Governments of Japan and the ROK confirmed that the issue of comfort women is "resolved finally and irreversibly" with the agreement reached at the Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting on December, 2015 (See Announcement by Foreign Ministers of Japan and the ROK at the Joint Press Occasion). However, on December 30, 2016, a new comfort woman statue[11] was installed on the sidewalk facing the Consulate-General of Japan in Busan by a civic group in the ROK. On January 6, 2017, the Government of Japan announced measures in response to this[12]. Meanwhile, on July 31, 2017, after the inauguration of the Moon Jae-in administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the ROK launched the Taskforce to Review the Agreement on Comfort Women Issue that renews the agreement reached between the Governments of Japan and the ROK at the end of 2015 under its direct supervision. The Taskforce published a report stating the results of its assessment on December 27, 2017 and in response to this, the Government of Japan issued a Statement by Foreign Minister Kono claiming that: should the Government of the ROK attempt to change the agreement which has already been implemented, the Japan-ROK relationship will become unmanageable; that such an attempt cannot be accepted under any circumstances; and that the Government of Japan will strongly urge the ROK to ensure that the Government of the ROK to steadily implement the agreement, which confirmed that the issue is "resolved finally and irreversibly." (See "The Announcement of the Results of the Assessment by the Taskforce to Review the Agreement on Comfort Women Issue reached between the Governments of Japan and the ROK (Statement by Foreign Minister Taro Kono)) In January 2018, the Government of the ROK announced its position on the Japan-ROK agreement[13]. For the Government of Japan, it is completely unacceptable that the ROK would seek additional measures from Japan, despite the confirmation in the Japan-ROK agreement that the comfort women issue is "resolved finally and irreversibly." The Government of Japan will continue to strongly urge the Government of the ROK to steadily implement the agreement. From these

11 For the sake of practical convenience, the statues in front of the Embassy of Japan in Seoul and the Consulate-General of Japan in Busan 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.

12 Specifically, the Government of Japan decided to take interim measures such as (1) postponing participation of members of the Consulate-General of Japan in Busan in municipal events in Busan; (2) temporary recall of Ambassador of Japan to the ROK Nagamine and Consul-General of Japan to Busan Morimoto; (3) suspending Japan-ROK consultations on the bilateral swap arrangement; and (4) postponing Japan-ROK high-level economic consultations.

13 On January 9, 2018, in announcing the ROK Government's position on the Japan-ROK agreement, Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha stated that the Government of the ROK "will not ask for a renegotiation with Japan," adding that the Government of the ROK "hopes Japan on its own accord would recognize the truth as it is, and continue to strive to restore the honor and dignity of the victims and to heal their psychological scars, based on universal standards from an international perspective," and that "what the victims seek is a voluntary and sincere apology."

Announcement by Foreign Ministers of Japan and the Republic of Korea at the Joint Press Occasion (December 28, 2015 in Seoul, ROK)

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.

The Announcement of the Results of the Assessment by the Taskforce to Review the Agreement on Comfort Women Issue reached between the Governments of Japan and the ROK (Statement by Foreign Minister Taro Kono)

December 27, 2017

1. On December 27 the Taskforce to Review the Agreement on Comfort Women Issue reached between the Government of Japan and the ROK under the direct jurisdiction of Ms. Kang Kyung-wha, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea (ROK), published a report stating the results of its assessment of the December 28, 2015 Japan-ROK agreement on the comfort women issue. The report criticizes the negotiation structure in the ROK in the lead-up to the agreement and also the content of the agreement, and presents to the Government of the ROK a way of thinking that casts doubt on the agreement that has already been implemented in both countries.
2. Regarding the Japan-ROK agreement at the end of 2015, as a result of efforts led by the democratically chosen leaders of Japan and the ROK at every level including Director-General level talks between the diplomatic authorities, then Minister for Foreign Affairs Fumio Kishida and then Minister of Foreign Affairs of the ROK Yun Byung-se confirmed the "final and irreversible" resolution of the comfort women issue and announced the agreement at a joint press conference. Furthermore, the "final and irreversible" resolution was confirmed in the Summit Telephone Talk held the same day, so this agreement is also an agreement between the leaders of the two countries. This agreement was formed through a legitimate negotiating process between the Japanese and ROK Governments, so we cannot conclude that there was any problem in the process leading up to the agreement.
3. The Japan-ROK agreement is an agreement between the governments of Japan and the ROK, and it is highly appreciated by the international community as well. The position of the Government of the ROK regarding the Japan-ROK agreement is not included in the report, but the position of the Government of Japan is that if the Government of the ROK attempts based on this report to change an agreement which has already been implemented, the Japan-ROK relationship will become unmanageable; therefore such an attempt cannot be acceptable whatsoever. The Government of Japan will strongly urge the ROK to ensure that the Government of the ROK continues to steadily implement the agreement as a "final and irreversible" agreement.

Extraordinary Press Conference by Foreign Minister Taro Kono (Opening Remarks)

January 9, 2018

I understand that today, January 9, Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha of the Republic of Korea (ROK) has announced her position regarding the Japan-ROK agreement. This Japan-ROK agreement is a commitment between two countries, and it is an international and universal principle that it must be implemented responsibly even if the government changes within one of the countries. I recognize that steady implementation of the agreement is the duty of both countries to the international community. As the government of Japan, it is completely unacceptable that the ROK would seek additional measures from Japan, despite the confirmation in the 2015 Japan-ROK agreement that the comfort women issue is "finally and irreversibly" resolved. At a time when both countries are facing the threat of North Korea, the Japan-ROK agreement is an indispensable foundation for advancing cooperation between Japan and the ROK in a variety of fields, and building a future-oriented relationship. Japan will continue to strongly urge the ROK to ensure that the Government of the ROK steadily implement the agreement as a final and irreversible agreement.

perspectives at the Japan-ROK Summit held on February 9, 2018, Prime Minister Abe stated that the Japan-ROK agreement on the comfort women issue is a commitment between the two countries, and that it is an internationally and universally recognized principle to honour such commitment regardless of change of administration. Prime Minister Abe also conveyed that the Government of Japan has been fully implementing its commitment, and that Japan expects the ROK to likewise fully implement its own commitment under the agreement, given that the ROK side has also confirmed in the Japan-ROK agreement that the comfort women issue is "resolved finally and irreversibly."

(E) Other Issues

With regard to matters arising from the judicial decisions in the ROK concerning "requisitioned civilians" from the Korean Peninsula[14], Japan continued to hold the position that the property and claims between Japan and the ROK were settled completely and finally through the Agreement on the Settlement of Problems Concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the ROK, thus Japan will continue to deal appropriately with these issues based on this position. Moreover, civic groups are currently trying to install a "Statues of Workers" in front of the Japanese embassy in Seoul as well as Consulates General in other cities, and Japan will continue to urge the Government of the ROK to take appropriate measures to deal with the matter.

"Sea of Japan" is the only internationally established name for the sea area concerned and the United Nations and

14 Some civilians of the ROK said to have been subjected to "forced requisition" by predecessor companies of Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Corporation and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd. during World War II, when the Korean Peninsula was under Japan's rule, brought claims for the payment of compensation and unpaid wages against the two companies. The Seoul High Court found in favor of the plaintiffs against Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Corporation on July 10, and the Busan High Court ruled against Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Ltd. on July 30, with both courts ordering the respective defendants to compensate the plaintiffs.

Governments of major countries such as the U.S. adopt "Sea of Japan" as its 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 Conference on the Standardization of Geographical Names, 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.

Furthermore, Japan has made requests to the Government of the ROK through diplomatic channels to return cultural properties that were stolen and are currently in the ROK[15] to Japan as soon as possible. Japan will continue to call upon the Government of the ROK for their prompt return.

Other than these issues, Japan has provided as much humanitarian support as possible in a wide range of fields, including the issue of remains of people originally from the Korean Peninsula[16], support for ethnic Koreans in Sakhalin[17], addressing the issue of atomic bomb survivors living in the ROK[18] and helping Hansen's disease patients admitted to sanitariums in the ROK[19].

Moreover, Japan and the ROK have engaged in several rounds of negotiations over the delimitation of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ).

B Japan-ROK Economic Relations

Japan and the ROK continue to maintain close economic relations. The total value of trade between Japan and the ROK amounted to approximately 9.13 trillion yen in 2017. Japan is the ROK's third-largest trading partner and the ROK is Japan's third-largest trading partner. The ROK's trade deficit with Japan increased by approximately 23% from a year earlier, reaching 2.83 trillion yen (Trade Statistics of Japan, Ministry of Finance). Japanese direct investment in the ROK totaled approximately 1.84 million US dollars (down 47% from the previous year) (figures published by the ROK Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy), making Japan the ROK's third-largest source of foreign direct investment.

Thus, Japan and the ROK are important trade and investment partners for each other. In addition to the progress in integration of supply chains in the manufacturing sector, the two countries have developed new cooperative relationships, such as joint expansion of business into third countries

15 In April 2016, Buseoksa Temple in the ROK called for the Government of the ROK to return to Buseoksa Temple a Seated Kanzeon Bodhisattva statue, which had been stolen from Tsushima City in Nagasaki Prefecture and not returned to Japan, and filed a suit in the Daejeon District Court. On January 26, 2017 the court issued the verdict in the first instance which awarded the statue to the plaintiff (Buseoksa Temple).

16 The issue of the return of the remains of people originally from the Korean Peninsula which were left in Japan after the end of World War II. Japan is steadily repatriating the remains whose return has been requested by the Government of the ROK and which are able to be returned.

17 For various reasons, before the end of World War II, the people from the Korean Peninsula traveled to what was then known as Minami Karafuto (South Sakhalin), but 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 to enable them to return home temporarily, and also to visit Sakhalin.

18 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.

19 People who were admitted to Hansen's disease sanatoriums built overseas by Japan before the end of the war had demanded the payment of compensation in accordance with the Act on Payment of Compensation to Inmates of Hansen's Disease Sanatorium. The Act was revised in February 2006, allowing compensation to be paid to those formerly resident in sanatoriums overseas for the first time.

among Japanese and Korean companies.

In order to further strengthen the close economic relations between the two and also to ensure that the two countries play a leading role in regional economic integration in Asia, Japan is in the position that economic partnership between Japan and the ROK is of vital importance. Japan and the ROK continue to make every effort for progress in negotiations concerning the Japan-China-ROK Free Trade Agreement (FTA) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP).

Concerning the environment, the 19th Japan-ROK Joint Committee on Environmental Cooperation was held in June, 2017. The two sides exchanged views on Japan-ROK environmental cooperation and global environmental issues, such as climate change, confirming that Japan and the ROK will closely cooperate on such subjects.

With respect to the issue of restrictions on import of Japanese marine products by the ROK, a panel was established at the WTO in September 2015, in response to Japan's request, and after examining the issue for around two years, a panel report was submitted in February 2018 recognizing Japan's claims. In addition to the WTO response, the Government of Japan has been taking various opportunities to request the ROK to repeal the increased restriction measures promptly.

C Situation in the ROK

(A) Domestic Affairs

In December 2016, the ROK National Assembly passed the resolution regarding the impeachment of President Park Geun-hye. Her power was suspended, and then, on March 10, 2017, the constitutional court declared her removal from office. After her power was suspended, Prime Minister Hwang Kyo-ahn took over as the Acting President. On May 9, 2017, the presidential election was held and Mr. Moon Jae-in was elected as the 19th President.

(B) Foreign Policy

On July 19, 2017, the Executive Office of the President of the ROK (Blue House) announced a "Five-year Plan for the Administration of State Affairs," compiled by a president's council "The State Affairs Planning Advisory Committee" to be presented to Moon Jae-in administration. Regarding foreign diplomacy, the plan declared that the ROK would promote diplomatic cooperation with all four neighboring countries in a dignified manner. It declared that the ROK would "strive to promote the ROK-U.S. alliance based on the trust and cooperation, restoration of trust between the ROK and China, the ROK-Japan relations as a cooperative partnership in a future-oriented and mature manner and strategic cooperation between the ROK and Russia."

Since the inauguration, President Moon Jae-in has visited Washington DC, U.S. (in June), Germany (in July at the G20 Hamburg Summit), Vladivostok, Russia (in September at the Eastern Economic Forum), New York, U.S. (in September at the UN General Assembly), Indonesia (in November), Da Nang, Viet Nam (in November at the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting), Manila, the Philippines (in November for the ASEAN-related Summit Meetings) and China (in December).

(C) Economy

In 2017, the GDP growth rate of the

ROK was 3.1%, increasing from 2.7% the previous year. The total amount of exports increased 15.8% year-on-year to around 573.9 trillion US dollars, while the total amount of imports increased 17.7% year-on-year to around 478.1 trillion US dollars, resulting in a trade surplus of around 95.77 trillion US dollars (figures published by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy).

As for domestic economic policies, the Moon Jae-in administration inaugurated in May 2017, has stressed the importance of "income-led growth" and "an employment-centered economy" revolving around people. In October of the same year, the government announced a five-year job creation plan. Regarding energy policies, including the use of nuclear energy, it was decided that construction of the nuclear power plant (Shin Kori 5 and 6) that had been temporarily placed on hold would resume in October of that same year. On the other hand, it was also made clear that all plans and construction of new nuclear power plants would be canceled.

2 China / Mongolia, etc.

(1) China

A The Situation in China

(A) Domestic affairs

In October, the 19th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) (Party Congress), held every five years, was held. The report on the 19th Party Congress described the "Xi Jinping thought on socialism with Chinese characteristics for a new era" as a guiding principle to "achieve the Chinese dream of great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation," which was laid down in the party protocol. The report gave a summary of China's history since the founding of the nation, describing how it "stood up" under Mao Zedong, and "grow rich" under Deng Xiaoping, arriving at the current stage at which it "becomes strong." The report described the setting of a new goal of developing the country into a modernized socialist country by 2035, and a great modern socialist country by the middle of this century. The CPC's new leadership was inaugurated after the Party Congress, and the Politburo Standing Committee of the CPC (the top seven members of the party) in order of ranking were named as Mr. Xi Jinping and Mr. Li Keqiang, who remained in office, followed by the newly appointed Mr. Li Zhanshu, Mr. Wang Yang, Mr. Wang Huning, Mr. Zhao Leji and Mr. Han Zheng. Mr. Xi Jinping was simultaneously reappointed as General Secretary and Chairman of the Central Military Commission. Many members of the Politburo of the CPC (top 25 members) are said to be close to Mr. Xi Jinping, resulting in his further consolidation of power.

China's anti-corruption crackdown which has been promoted since the birth of the Xi Jinping administration continued in 2017. Just prior to the 19th CPC National Congress, in July, Mr. Sun Zhengcai, who was the Chongqing Communist Party Secretary, touted to be one of the next-generation leaders, was placed under investigation for suspicion of "serious violations of the law," and he was stripped of his title at the end of September. The 19th CPC National Congress reaffirmed the bolstering of governance in the party, and this trend has been continuing after the Party Congress.

Regarding social affairs, Mr. Liu Xiaobo, a Nobel Laureate who had been incarcerated for inciting subversion of state power, passed away in July. The

Chinese authorities were criticized by the Governments and media of other countries for their treatment of Mr. Xiaobo and his family. The clampdown on activists and ethnic minorities by the authorities continues to be bolstered, and concerns are being aired in the international community for the situation of human rights in China.

In July, Hong Kong celebrated the 20th anniversary of its handover to China, and Ms. Carrie Lam was inaugurated as the first female and 4th Chief Executive of Hong Kong. The inauguration ceremony was attended by President Xi Jinping, who tried to subdue democracy advocates by stating, "any attempt to endanger national sovereignty and security, challenge the power of the central government... is an act that crosses the red line." At the same time, he requested more patriotic education in the youth. It was reported that a major demonstration was held by democracy advocates who opposed the central government on the day of the ceremony.

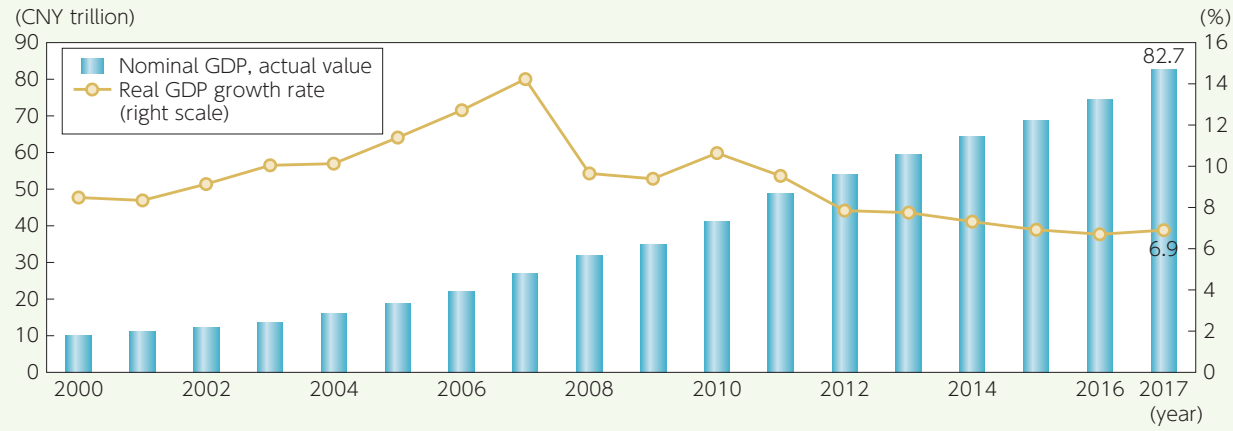
(B) Economy

The economy in China has continued recovering, and the real GDP for 2017 increased 6.9% year-on-year, and total trade value increased 11.4% year-on-year. On the other hand, in the short term the business trends vary greatly among regions and industries. For example, in the secondary industries, the mining industry with excess production capacity is slowing down, while tertiary industries including the service industry has been growing steadily demonstrating an inconsistent pattern.

Looking at the financial trends, stocks on the Shanghai stock market remain stable at around 3,200 to 3,400 points. Moreover, the change in the way exchange rates are calculated in May 2017 led to a rise in the value of the yuan against the US dollar. However, after autumn, the easing of fears of capital outflow, which had continued since 2014, led to a drop in the value of the yuan against the US dollar, stabilizing at around 6.6 yuan to the US dollar.

As mentioned earlier, the policy of developing China into a great modern socialist country, becoming a global leader in terms of composite national strength and international influence and achieving common prosperity for everyone by the middle of this century, was laid down at the 19th CPC National Congress. As for economic policies, realizing high-quality economic growth by supply side reform and making China a country of innovators, and eliminating social disparity by raising incomes, strengthening the social security and withdrawing from poverty was delivered. Moreover, at the Central Economic Work Conference held in December, it was decided to firmly stick to the key policy of striving in pursuit of progress within stability, with 2018 being the first year in implementing the spirit of the 19th Party Congress. Achieving high-quality growth and eliminating social disparity requires long-term efforts with both the public and private sectors sharing the economic burden, and there is also expected to be opposition from parties with vested interests. On the other hand, the stable short-term operations of the party and administration require stable economic growth and domestic support. There will be a need to deal with the issues while balancing out these factors. Attention has been focusing on the economic and financial policies and trends in the specific actions taken by the new party leadership.

Development of China's GDP



Source : National Bureau of Statistics of China

(C) Foreign Policy

In 2017, China engaged proactively in foreign diplomacy based on the "Belt and Road Initiatives" and 19th Party Congress. In May, Beijing hosted a high-level international cooperation forum, dubbed "One Belt, One Road," which was attended by leaders from 29 countries. Moreover, in September, a BRICS Summit was held in Xiamen of Fujian Province, and then in November, a CPC in Dialogue with World Political Parties High-Level Meeting was held in Beijing for exchanging of opinions, attended by political party leaders from 120 countries throughout the world.

Regarding the U.S.-China relationship, the two countries agreed at the U.S.-China Summit Meeting held in April in the U.S. to hold comprehensive dialogues consisting of four cabinet-level dialogues. In November, President Trump paid a visit to China as a State Guest, and was given a warm reception, being invited to a dinner party at Gugong by President Xi Jinping. Business negotiations worth a total of 2.8 trillion yen were also concluded on the occasion.

On foreign policy in the future, it was decided at the 19th Party Congress that China would contribute more proactively to the forming of an international order based on the concept of building "a community with a shared future for mankind."

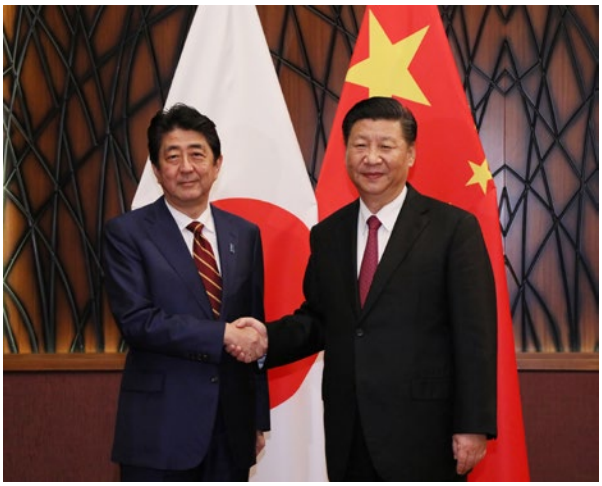
(D) Military Affairs and Security

China has continued to increase defense expenditures at a high level. However, the breakdown of the budget and the intention behind the increase has not been disclosed sufficiently. Under such circumstances, its nuclear and missile capabilities and military power centered on naval and air forces have been enhanced extensively and rapidly. Such expansion of military capability lacking transparency, and unilateral actions to change the status quo in, e.g., the East China Sea, are common concerns in the region and international community.

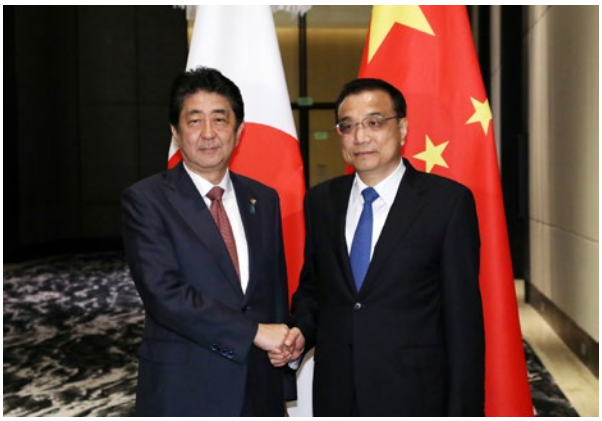
On the other hand, in the field of nontraditional security, China has been demonstrating a cooperative and proactive stance, taking an active part in United Nations PKOs, providing various kinds of humanitarian aid and disaster support, etc., for which it has won high appraisal in the international community.

At the 19th Party Congress, President Xi Jinping stated that China would transform

its armed forces into a world-class military by the middle of this century. In recent years, China has grown to have a great influence on the international community, not only politically and economically, but also militarily. To dispel any fears of China, there is a pressing need for China to increase transparency regarding its national defense policies and military power through specific and accurate disclosure of information. Japan intends to further promote mutual trust in Japan-China relations through dialogue and exchanges, including the Japan-China Security Dialogue, while cooperating with other countries concerned. Japan also intends to urge China to improve its transparency and encourage its positive involvement in the international order based on the rule of law.



Japan-China Summit Meeting with President Xi Jinping (November 11, Da Nang, Viet Nam; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



Japan-China Summit Meeting with Premier Li Keqiang (November 13, Manila, the Philippines; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

B Japan-China Relationship

(A) Bilateral Relations - General

The relationship with China, the neighboring country across the East China Sea, is one of Japan's most important bilateral relationships, and the two countries have close economic relations, as well as people-to-people and cultural exchanges[20]. 2017 marked the 45th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China diplomatic relations, and the opportunity was taken to hold high-level dialogues including Summit Meetings and Foreign Ministers' Meetings. It was a year in which momentum for improvement in Japan-China relations greatly increased.

China-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meetings were held in February (G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting) and April (UN Security Council Meeting). State Councilor Yang Jiechi also visited Japan in May. At the G20 Hamburg Summit (Germany) in July, a Summit Meeting was held with President Xi Jinping, and it was reaffirmed that the two countries would further promote people-to-people exchanges and deepen cooperative

20 Since 1979, Japan has extended Official Development Assistance (ODA) of a cumulative total of more than three trillion yen to China. Approximately ten years ago, however, Japan terminated implementing new projects under Loan Aid and General Grant Aid, which had accounted for a large share of Japan's ODA to China, recognizing that ODA had already achieved a certain role in light of the economic development and improved technology level of China. Currently, ODA projects have been implemented to a limited degree in areas in which strict necessity for cooperation is acknowledged. Such areas include cross-border pollution, infectious diseases, and food safety, which directly affect the lives of the Japanese people. Technical Cooperation is the main form of cooperation (disbursements of 500 million yen in FY2016), while Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Projects have also been implemented (disbursements of 29 million yen in FY2016). Furthermore, recently Japan has been proceeding with a new form of cooperation, in which China bears part of the costs.

ties in various economic fields in an effort to improve relations. Moreover, Japan-China Foreign Ministers' Meetings were held immediately after the inauguration of Foreign Minister Kono, in August (ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meeting) and September (UN General Assembly), where opinions were exchanged on how Japan-China relations could be improved, and on the North Korea issue. As relationships of trust between the leaders and Foreign Ministers improve through active dialogue, a reception was held in Tokyo on September 28 to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations with China organized by the Chinese Embassy. There, Prime Minister Abe stated the need of realizing leaders' mutual visits that consist of Premier Li Keqiang's visit to Japan on the occasion of the Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit, Prime Minister Abe's visit to China and President Xi Jinping's subsequent visit to Japan, indicating a path toward further improvement in Japan-China relations. On September 29, the anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations with China, congratulatory telegrams were exchanged between Prime Minister Abe and Premier Li Keqiang, and Foreign Minister Kono and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. The APEC Summit Meeting (Da Nang, Viet Nam) and the ASEAN-related Summit Meeting (Manila, the Philippines) in November provided opportunities to hold Japan-China Summit Meetings with President Xi Jinping and Premier Li Keqiang, where there were exchanges of forward-looking opinions regarding the leaders' mutual visits, promoting people-to-people exchanges, bolstering of economic ties, etc., to mark the 40th anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and China, in 2018. The meetings marked the start of renewed efforts for a total improvement in relations. With the frequent holding of high-level dialogues, steady progress has been made by the two Governments toward the holding of practical dialogue and the cultivation of trust between Japan and China, including talks between the diplomatic authorities in April, the Japan-China High-Level Consultation on Maritime Affairs in June and December, and the Japan-China Security Dialogue in October.

Both Japan and China share a major responsibility for the peace and stability of the region and the international community, and a stable relationship between Japan and China is essential not only to the citizens of both countries but also to, e.g., dealing with regional and international issues, including the North Korean issue. Founded on the idea of building "a Mutually Beneficial Relationship based on Common Strategic Interests" in which it is important to develop the relations of the two countries by expanding their common interests in the context of contributing together to the international community, the Japanese Government will continue to promote a friendly relationship with China from a broad perspective through continued dialogues and cooperation at various levels.

(B) Japan-China Economic Relations

Economic relations between Japan and China, including trade and investment, are close and interdependent. The total trade between Japan and China (excluding Hong Kong) amounted to about 296.8 billion US dollars in 2017 (9.8% increase year-on-year), and China has been the largest

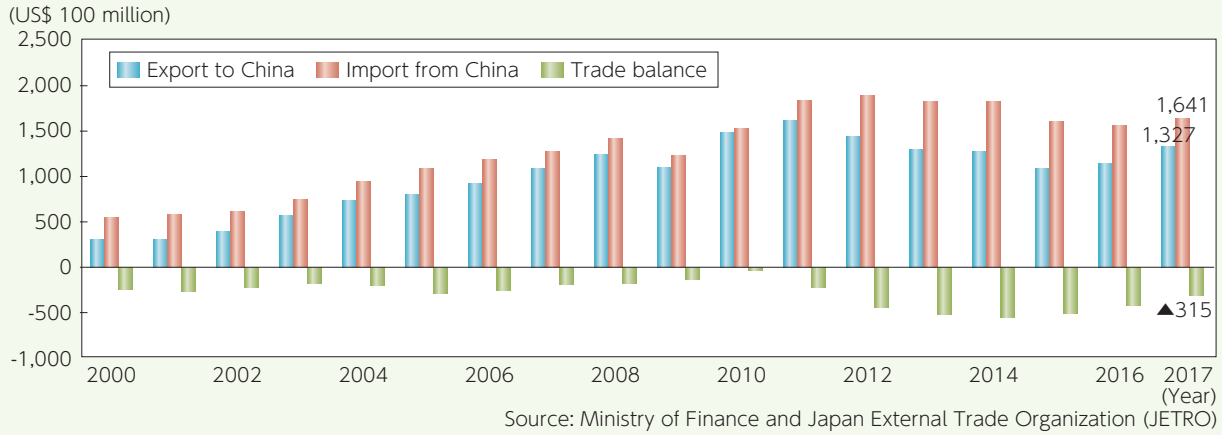
trading partner for Japan for 12 consecutive years. Moreover, according to Chinese statistics, Japan's direct investment in China increased to about 3.27 billion US dollars (5.1% increase year-on-year (estimated from officially published information on investment)) in 2017, due to a continued trend of recovery in the Chinese economy. By country, Japan ranks third in terms of the amount of direct investment to China (Singapore ranks first, the ROK is second, and the U.S. is fourth).

In 2017, the necessity for dialogue and cooperation between Japan and China in the economic area was reaffirmed through active dialogue at the summit and foreign minister levels. At the Summit Meeting during the G20 Hamburg Summit (Germany) in July, the two countries agreed to further promote economic cooperation, and bolster cooperation in various fields including finance, tourism, trade, environment and energy-savings. The countries also agreed to hold discussions on how they can contribute to stability and prosperity in the region and throughout the world, including the "Belt and Road Initiatives" proposed by China. These matters were discussed at the Japan-China Summit Meetings held during the APEC Summit Meeting (Da Nang, Viet Nam) and the ASEAN-related Summit Meeting (Manila, the Philippines) in November, in addition to agreeing that promoting businesses in the private sector, and expanding them into third countries would not only benefit Japan and China, but it would also be beneficial to the growth of those third countries.

In response to these developments, a range of active dialogue and exchanges were held in the economic field. To attend the opening event for the "Project to Support the Overseas Promotion of Regional Charms," Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Kotaro Nogami visited China in February. In May, Finance Minister Xiao Jie visited Japan for a Japan-China Finance Dialogue, followed by Minister of Science and Technology Wan Gang in July, who held meetings with Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy Yosuke Tsuruho and Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology Hirokazu Matsuno. Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Yuji Yamamoto also visited China in July to meet Minister of General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine Zhi Shuping, and Vice Minister for the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs Yu Xinrong. Then in August, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Ken Saito attended a food expo in Hong Kong. The Japan-China Economic Partnership Consultation in which high-ranking officials of relevant ministries and agencies get together from the two countries was held in November (Beijing, China), and wide-ranging views were exchanged on Japan-China bilateral issues and cooperation, as well as on regional and multilateral issues and cooperation. Furthermore, regarding the import restrictions placed on food and agricultural products from Japan by the Government of China, Japan has taken every opportunity, particularly the Japan-China Economic Partnership Consultation held in November, to urge the Chinese side to carry out an evaluation based on scientific evidence, and has lobbied for the abolition and relaxation of the restrictions.

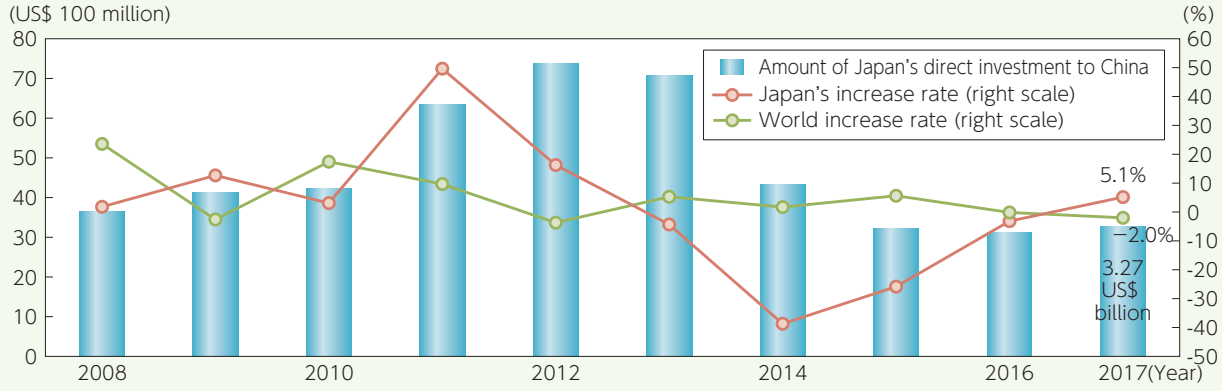
Economic exchanges at the private sector level were also carried out actively. In November, the Japan-China Economic

Change in Japan's Value of Trade with China



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

Change in Japan's Direct Investment to China



Source: Ministry of Commerce of China
Note: Increase rate is estimated based on published amounts of investment

Association, Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) and Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry jointly dispatched a delegation to China to hold a meeting with top officials from the Government of China, including Premier Li Keqiang. At a summit of CEOs, etc., from Japan and China held in Japan in December, views were exchanged between the executives of major companies in Japan and China, and the reception was also attended by Prime Minister Abe and Foreign Minister Kono.

On the working-level, various dialogues took place, including Japan-China governmental negotiations for Agreement on Social Security (April in Beijing and October in Tokyo).

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

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

The number of Chinese visitors to Japan has continued to increase since 2013. The number of visitors in 2017 reached around 7.36 million people (estimated by JNTO), with a 15.4% increase year-on-year. This marked a decline in the rate of increase, but set a new record in terms of the number of visitors. There was a further shift from group tourism to individual tourism, and there was also an increase in the number of repeat visitors as a result of relaxed visa requirements. It is thought that this is leading to diversification of the destinations and needs of visitors to Japan.

A group of Chinese high school students visit Japan for exchanges. Exchange upon visiting Towanomori Sanai High School affiliated to Rakuno Gakuen University (September 11, Hokkaido; Photo: Japan-China Friendship Center)

Japan City of Art PR Seminar (August 18, The Embassy of Japan in China, China)

(Japan-China youth exchange, etc.)

In 2017, Japan invited around 1,600 Chinese high school students and young adults under the program, "JENESYS (Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths) 2.0." and "JENESYS 2017." Young Chinese people who visited Japan experienced various cultures, lifestyles and the charms of Japan through school exchanges and tours of companies, while deepening mutual understanding with Japanese youth. They also actively exchanged opinions about what the future of Japan-China relations should be. Furthermore, under the Japan-China International Solidarity Project on Afforestation and Tree-Planting[21], a thousand or so people were invited to the exchange event for promoting understanding of Japan based on the theme of the "Three KAKEHASHI (Bridge) Projects ((1) Regional exchanges (2) Youth exchanges, and (3) Culture and sports exchanges)"

(Exchanges in various fields)

To develop Japan-China stable relations that will continue in the future, the Government of Japan endeavors to invite people at various levels in all walks of life to Japan, such as leaders of central and local governments in China, people who have certain influence in the political, economic, public and academic sectors, and next-generation leaders and opinion leaders, in addition to young people who will carry the next generation, such as high school students and university students, thereby making efforts for a wide range of relationship building and strengthening. Through exchanges including the exchanging of views with various circles and experts in Japan, and inspection tours, it is expected that good relationships will be built between the participants, promoting a more accurate understanding of Japan.

Furthermore, in 2017 which is the 45th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China diplomatic relations, 370 approved events were held including a variety of cultural exchange programs, promoting the building of friendly relations.

21 Size of budget: 9 billion yen (FY2015 supplementary budget)

Special Feature

45th Anniversary of the Normalization of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and China

Logo

Forty-five years ago, on September 29, 1972, Prime Minister Kakuei Tanaka signed the Joint Communique of the Government of Japan and the Government of the People's Republic of China with Premier of the State Council Zhou En-lai in Beijing, thus realizing the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China. From then on, the relationship between Japan and China, countries that have a history of exchange extending for more than 2,000 years, entered a new era. Since then, the relationship between the two countries has progressed steadily, and today, broad exchanges are being made between the people of the two countries. In 2017, in commemoration of the 45th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations, various events were held to further promote exchanges and cooperation between Japan and China.

In March, performances of the Shochiku Grand Kabuki were held in Beijing by the Japan Foundation, and the tickets sold out immediately after going on sale. The program featured performances of "*Yoshitsune and the Thousand Cherry Trees*," "*The Love Messenger of Yamato*," and "*Wisteria Maiden*," which are also popular in Japan, and simultaneous commentary through headphones in Chinese was also provided. Shouts of joy rang out during the shows' climaxes, and the performances served as a perfect opportunity for the audience to get familiar with traditional Japanese culture.

Poster for the Shochiku Grand Kabuki performances in Beijing ©Shochiku

In June, the Japan-China Green Expo was held in Beijing for the first time in six years, in order to promote cooperation in the field of environment. The Expo was jointly hosted by business organizations from Japan and China, and approximately 40 Japanese companies participated. The environment is a field in which Japan and China, as two of the world's largest economies, should work cooperatively, and the Expo is expected to be a precursor for cooperation on various global issues.

On September 8 at the Great Hall of the People in Beijing, and on September 28 in Tokyo, receptions were held to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China, and the latter event was attended by Prime Minister Abe and Foreign Minister Kono among others. Furthermore, on September 29 on the anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations, congratulatory telegrams

were exchanged between Prime Minister Abe and Premier of the State Council Li Keqiang, and Foreign Minister Kono and Foreign Minister Wang Yi respectively. The two sides exchanged positive messages on advancing the Japan-China relationship.

In addition, in the field of sports, the "Japan-China Friendship Cities' Junior high School Students Table Tennis Exchange Tournament" was jointly held in Beijing in August by friendship organizations in both China and Japan, and junior high school students from both countries attended. In the field of film, an agreement in principle on the Film Co-Production Agreement between Japan and China was announced at the Tokyo International Film Festival in October. Exchanges and cooperation between Japan and China are moving ahead in a broad range of fields.

Prime Minister Abe making remarks at the reception to celebrate the 45th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China (September 28, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japan and China are important partners in Asia that are located next to one another across the East China Sea. In order to advance the two countries' amicable and cooperative relationship stably, it is essential to deepen exchanges and dialogue in various fields and at various levels, including in areas such as youth exchanges, culture, film, tourism, sports, economy and inter-regional exchanges. In 2018, taking the opportunity of the 40th anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship between Japan and the People's Republic of China, Japan and China will also continue to work cooperatively to develop the relationship under the concept of "Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests."

(D) Dealing Appropriately with Pending Issues

(Situation surrounding the East China Sea)

In the East China Sea, Chinese Government-owned vessels continue to intrude into Japanese territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands. Also, the Chinese military has been rapidly expanding and increasing its activities in quality and quantity in the area. Furthermore, China continues unilateral development of resources in the maritime area pending delimitation between Japan and China, and has repeatedly carried out maritime surveys without Japan's consent.

The Senkaku Islands are indisputably an inherent part of the 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 Japan obtained territorial title over the Senkaku Islands 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.

Regarding trends in the presence of Chinese Government-owned vessels and fishing boats in the waters around the Senkaku Islands, no incidents occurred in 2017 similar to the incident in August 2016, when huge numbers of Chinese Government-owned vessels and fishing boats gathered around the islands. However, Chinese Government-owned vessels continue to intrude into Japanese territorial waters, recording 29 incidents a year (the numbers were 36 in 2016, and 35 in 2015). In response to such unilateral attempts by China to change the status quo, the Government of Japan has repeatedly lodged strong protests and requested the withdrawal of Chinese vessels. To defend Japan's territorial land, sea and airspace, Japan will deal with the situation with resolute and calm determination.

Chinese naval vessels and aircraft have also been accelerating their activities in the sea and airspace around Japan. Aircraft activity in particular is on the increase, and since the 19th Party Congress, the frequency of flights over international waters between Okinawa Island and Miyako Island has increased. Then in December, a Chinese fighter plane flew over international waters in the Tsushima Channel for the first time. Under these circumstances, a new record was set in the number of times the Air Self-Defense Force had to scramble jets in FY2016 in response to Chinese military aircraft. In response to these recent activities by the Chinese military, Japan has been raising the issues in an appropriate manner through diplomatic routes.

Furthermore, in recent years, China has accelerated its activities to develop natural resources in the East China Sea. The Government of Japan has confirmed 12 new structures built between June 2013 and May 2016, making a total of 16 structures including those confirmed before then, on the Chinese side of the geographical equidistance line. The Exclusive Economic Zone and the continental shelf in the East China Sea have not yet been delimited, and it is extremely regrettable that China is advancing unilateral resource development. Every time such moves by China are recognized, Japan has strongly requested China to cease its unilateral development and to resume negotiations as soon as possible on the implementation of the "June 2008 Agreement" regarding the cooperation between Japan and China on the development of natural resources in the East China Sea.

Moreover, in recent years numerous activities by China to carry out surveys in the waters around Japan, including the East China Sea, without obtaining Japan's approval, or surveys that differ from those agreed upon have been confirmed.

In order to deal with these concerns appropriately, both Japan and China have been promoting dialogue and exchanges between the authorities concerned. Japan-China High-Level Consultation on Maritime Affairs Round Meetings were held in June and December, in Fukuoka and Shanghai. At the meeting in December, Japan and China agreed to bolster communication regarding the "June 2008 Agreement," and positive progress was made in the building and operation of a "Maritime and Air Communication mechanism between Japan-China defense authorities" to avoid unexpected situations. Furthermore, in

October, the Japan-China Security Dialogue was held in Tokyo, and opinions were exchanged on cooperation, exchanges, etc., in the field of security.

As Prime Minister Abe stated at the Japan-China Summit Meeting during the APEC Summit Meeting (Da Nang, Viet Nam) in November, 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 meet in person and exchange opinions frankly, such as at the Japan-China High-Level Consultation on Maritime Affairs Round Meetings, or the Japan-China Security Dialogue. The Government of Japan will strive to improve relations with China, while asserting Japan's position on individual issues through steady dialogue and continued bolstering of communication, in an effort to turn the East China Sea into the "Sea of Peace, Cooperation and Friendship."

A Chinese maritime platform confirmed to have been built near the geographical equidistant line between Japan and China (Photo: Ministry of Defense)
See the link below for details; http://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/c_m1/page3e_000356.html

(Abandoned chemical weapons issue)

The Government of Japan, pursuant to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), has been working on the disposal of chemical weapons which were abandoned by the Imperial Japanese Army in China. In 2017, a survey was carried out on the status of chemical weapons in various regions around China. Weapons were excavated and recovered, and test disposal took place in Haerbaling District in Dunhua, Jilin Province. The disposal of a cumulative total of about 50,000 abandoned chemical weapons has been completed (as of December 2017).

(2) Taiwan

A Internal Affairs

The Tsai Ing-wen administration has entered its second year, passing a pension reform bill to change the favorable treatment of public officials and teachers in successfully dealing with internal affairs. However, her popularity has dropped, and the Premier was replaced in September.

On the economic front, the real GDP growth rate in 2017 increased by 2.86% (calculated from estimates) year-on-year due to foreign demand and steady private consumption.

B Cross-strait Relations and Foreign Affairs

Since the inauguration of the Tsai Ing-wen administration, exchanges and communications by the liaison institutions in both China and Taiwan (the Association

for Relations Across the Taiwan Strait, and the Straits Exchange Foundation) have been discontinued, and the number of tourists from China to Taiwan has decreased. Moreover, Taiwan was unable to attend numerous meetings held by international organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO), due to opposition from China. In June, Panama established diplomatic relations with China, decreasing the number of countries with diplomatic ties with Taiwan to 20.

C Japan-Taiwan Relationship

For Japan, Taiwan is a crucial partner and an important friend, with which it shares fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, basic human rights, and the rule of law, and enjoys close economic relations and people-to-people exchanges. The relationship between Japan and Taiwan is maintained on the basis of working relations at the non-governmental level in accordance with the 1972 Joint Communiqué between Japan and China. In November, cooperation documents regarding (1) mutual assistance in custom matters and (2) cultural exchanges between the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association and the Taiwan-Japan Relations Association were signed. Then the 2nd dialogue on maritime cooperation was held in December, resulting in the signing of a cooperation document on maritime search and rescue cooperation.

In September, Taiwan lifted the ban on imports of Japanese beef for the first time in 16 years. On the other hand, Taiwan has continued to impose import restrictions on Japanese food products after the Great East Japan Earthquake, and Japan has repeatedly requested the removal and relaxation of the restrictions.

(3) Mongolia

A Domestic Affairs

In the presidential election held in June (direct election with a four-year term of office), none of the three candidates could acquire the majority of votes, and after a runoff election between the top two candidates held for the first time in the history of Mongolia, the opposition Democratic Party candidate, Mr. Battulga, won and was inaugurated as President in July.

On the other hand, there was a confrontation within the ruling People's Party as the result of its candidate, Chairman of State Great Hural (Parliament) Enkhbold, losing the election, and the Erdenebat Cabinet, inaugurated in July 2016, stepped down in September. In October, former Deputy Prime Minister Khurelsukh, was appointed as the new Prime Minister, and in November, he was chosen as the leader of the People's Party.

The Khurelsukh Cabinet prioritizes the consistency and continuity of policies. In particular, it aims to achieve the economic and fiscal reconstruction of Mongolia through steady implementing of the Extended Fund Facility (EFF) agreed upon with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

B Japan-Mongolia Relations

Mongolia is an important regional partner sharing fundamental values with Japan, so Japan will continue to strengthen friendly ties with the country in a "Strategic Partnership," so that the relationship will truly be mutually beneficial.

2017 marked the 45th anniversary of the

establishment of Japan-Mongolia diplomatic relations, and a variety of memorial events were held in both countries.

The Governments of the two countries engaged in active dialogue, holding the 2nd Japan-Mongolia Strategic Dialogue in February (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia), a Foreign Ministers' Meeting in March (Tokyo), the 4th Japan-Mongolia Diplomatic Defense and Security Coordination Meeting in August (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia), and a Summit Meeting in September (Vladivostok, Russia). Moreover, the 2nd Japan-U.S.-Mongolia Trilateral Dialogue was held in August (Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia).

After Chairman of State Great Hural (Parliament) Enkhbold's visit to Japan in March, Speaker of the House of Representatives Oshima visited Mongolia for the first time in July as an incumbent Speaker of the House of Representatives. Furthermore, in September, the Japan-Mongolia Friendship Parliamentarian's Union (Leader: Speaker of the House of Representatives Motoo Hayashi (Chairman)) visited Mongolia, resulting in the further bolstering of bilateral ties through extensive exchanges.

Other than that, the Japan-Mongolia Mid-term Action Plan for a Strategic Partnership (2017–2021) was signed by the Foreign Ministers of both countries in March as a specific policy on cooperation, and as part of an international assistance package formulated by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), it was decided that Japan would provide financial support to Mongolia of up to 850 million US dollars over three years, and the first disbursement (32 billion yen) was made in December. Moreover, in November, it was decided that a grant aid (around 2.4 billion yen) would be provided to build or expand four model schools for children with disabilities, or for use in disaster prevention, using Japanese knowledge.

Japan-Mongolia Summit Meeting with President Battulga (September 6, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Both Foreign Ministers signed the Japan-Mongolia Mid-term Action Plan for a Strategic Partnership witnessed by Chairman of State Great Khural (Parliament) Enkhbold (March 29, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo)

Ceremony to commemorate the inauguration of President Battulga (July 10, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

3 Southeast Asia

(1) Indonesia

The Joko administration inaugurated in October 2014 has so far increased its support from the people by implementing three cabinet reshuffles, reforms of the social welfare system, reforms of the education system, development of infrastructure, and other economic policies, and the administration is gaining further stability. On the other hand, as it could be seen in the runoff Jakarta gubernatorial election held in April 2017, the political forces have been stepping up their activities in preparation for the upcoming presidential and general elections in 2019, signaling the start of the season for politics in Indonesia.

In relations with Japan, meetings between the leaders and ministers were also held in 2017, and in preparation for the 60th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-Indonesia diplomatic relations in 2018, there were exchanges of opinions to further bolster cooperative ties between the two countries. In January 2017, Prime Minister Abe visited Indonesia to hold a Summit Meeting with President Joko at Bogor Palace, and issued a Japan-Indonesia Joint Statement on Strengthening Strategic Partnership. At the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meeting (Manila, the Philippines) in August, Foreign Minister Kono held a meeting with Foreign Minister Retno to exchange opinions on the enhancement of bilateral relations and regional affairs including the South China Sea and North Korea. They agreed to continue working in close cooperation. Furthermore, Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries Susi paid Foreign Minister Kono a courtesy visit, and expressed her wish to cooperate with Japan, with advanced technology, to manage fisheries resources and to deal with illegal fishing boats. At the ASEAN-related Summit Meeting (Manila, the Philippines) in November, another Summit Meeting was held, and both leaders agreed to further strengthen bilateral ties, including the current infrastructure cooperation, in preparation for 2018, the upcoming 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. In December, on the occasion of the visit of Coordinating Minister for Maritime Affairs Luhut, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kazuyuki Nakane held the 1st Japan-Indonesia Maritime Forum with Minister Luhut and maritime ties between the two countries have deepened further.

Summit Meeting held with President Joko when Prime Minister Abe visited Indonesia (January 15, Bogor, Indonesia; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

(2) Cambodia

Cambodia is located in a strategic point of the Southern Economic Corridor and serves as a key country in strengthening connectivity in the Mekong region and narrowing the regional development gap in the ASEAN region. The country has been promoting a development policy with emphasis on the enhancement of governance, with the aim of entering the group of Upper Middle-Income Countries by 2030.

Japan has been cooperating actively with Cambodia, including through the Cambodian peace process in the late 1980s and in its subsequent reconstruction and development process. In 2013 the relations between the two countries were elevated to a "Strategic Partnership." On the occasion of the Official Working Visit by Prime Minister Hun Sen in August 2017 a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Abe was held. Prime Minister Abe stated that Japan will enhance assistance in areas including improvement of logistics, industrial human resource development and reinforcement of urban functions, with a view of assisting Cambodia in becoming a upper middle income country by 2030. In response, Prime Minister Hun Sen expressed his gratitude for Japan's assistance, and expressed his support for Japan's policies: "Proactive Contribution to Peace" and "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy." Other than that, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nobuo Kishi and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwao Horii visited Cambodia in May and October respectively.

In recent years, an expansion of the bilateral relationship has been seen in a variety of areas such as an increase in the number of Japanese residents and Japanese companies in Cambodia, and vitalized exchanges between local governments. The Consular Office of Japan in Siem Reap was opened in January 2018, the 65th anniversary year of the establishment of the diplomatic relations.

Regarding domestic affairs, political discord between the ruling and opposition parties has increased since the opposition party, the Cambodian National Rescue Party(CNRP), became much stronger in the National Assembly (lower house) election in 2013. Then in November 2017, CNRP was dissolved due to a violation of the law on Political Parties. The future issue is how the will of the people of Cambodia can be reflected in the general elections to be held in July 2018.

In the Khmer Rouge Tribunal which Japan has been supporting for many years, two former leaders of the Khmer Rouge regime, including a former head of state, were given sentences of life imprisonment by the Supreme Court Chamber in November 2016. Subsequently, the hearings for the other cases against them were conducted in the Trial Chamber.

(3) Singapore

For many years, bilateral ties between Japan and Singapore have been extremely good, and there have been active exchanges of senior officials.

In Singapore the People's Action Party (PAP), led by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, occupies an overwhelming majority of seats in the Parliament. In the 2015 general elections, the ruling party succeeded in overturning the downward trend in support for the ruling party. Singapore has been proactive in the appointment of young cabinet members many of whom are in their 40s, known as "the fourth generation," making steady progress toward a change of generations.

In relations with Japan, there were continued high-level exchanges in 2017. During his visit to Germany to attend the G20 Summit in July, Prime Minister Abe held a meeting with Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong. Based on the variety of achievements by Japan and Singapore, as the two countries commemorated their 50th anniversary of the establishment of

Japan-Singapore Summit Meeting (July 8, Germany; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

diplomatic relations in 2016, the leaders agreed to further deepen bilateral ties. Furthermore, in the meeting between Foreign Minister Balakrishnan and Special Adviser to the Prime Minister Kentaro Sonoura, in December, they confirmed the importance of ensuring rule of law and freedom of navigation, enhancing connectivity, promoting free trade, regional economic integration, etc., as Singapore is set to be the ASEAN Chair in 2018.

On the economic front, many Japanese companies have established regional headquarters in Singapore, and cooperation between companies from the two countries continues to progress in areas such as infrastructure. The Japan-Singapore Economic Partnership Agreement (JSEPA), signed and enacted in 2002, was the first bilateral EPA signed by Japan.

Furthermore, the two countries work together to carry out technical cooperation through the "Japan-Singapore Partnership Program for the 21st Century (JSPP21)," targeting developing countries. The two countries also enjoy active intellectual and cultural exchanges through establishment of the Japan Creative Center, a base for disseminating information on Japan's culture.

(4) Thailand

Thailand is located in the center of the Mekong region and has a "Strategic Partnership" relationship with Japan. A lot of production bases of Japanese companies are in Thailand as a consequence of investment accumulated over the years. Nowadays, they serve as an essential part of global supply chains for the Japanese economy. Under the parliament and interim cabinet established by the military government, a process to restore democracy had been under way, and a new constitution was promulgated and put into effect in April 2017. The restoration of democracy is expected to be achieved through the implementation of parliamentary elections around February 2019.

As a consequence of the demise in October 2016 of His Majesty King Bhumibol, the country went into mourning until October 2017. A royal cremation ceremony for His Majesty the late King Bhumibol was held in October.

Various levels of exchanges, including political and economic ones, have been continued between Japan and Thailand on the foundation of the close relationship between the imperial and royal families. In particular, this year marked the 130th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Thailand, and extensive exchanges and celebratory events were held in both the public and private sectors, reconfirming close and friendly ties between the two countries, and the importance of further promoting them. In September, Foreign Minister Don and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwao Horii visited each other's countries to attend commemorative events and exchange

celebratory commemorative messages between the leaders and foreign ministers.

Three Japan-Thailand Foreign Ministers' Meetings were held in 2017. Other than that, there were continued high-level exchanges in 2017. Deputy Prime Minister Somkid visited Japan in June, and along with Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshide Suga co-chaired the Third Meeting of the Japan-Thailand High Level Joint Commission attended by the cabinet ministers concerned and seven memorandums on cooperation were signed.

(5) Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste, the first country which achieved independence this century, has realized peace and stability with the support of the international community and has been building the nation based on democracy. In the Timor-Leste presidential election held in March 2017, Mr. Lu Olo, the leader of the opposition party, Fretilin, ran for president for the third time. He was elected in the first ballot, becoming the fourth president of the country in May. Prime Minister Abe sent him a congratulatory letter, and expressed his intention to continue providing total support to the development of Timor-Leste. The inauguration ceremony held on the same day was attended by Special Envoy of Prime Minister Gen Nakatani. Furthermore, a parliamentary election was held in July to elect members of the National Parliament. Japan dispatched a group of observers to oversee the election. In September, Mr. Alkatiri was elected as the new Prime Minister, marking the inauguration of the 7th Constitutional Government.

In July 2011, a "Strategic Development Plan (SDP)" (long- term guidelines for development policy up until 2030) was formulated in Timor-Leste, and the country is currently proceeding from the stage of post-conflict reconstruction to the new stage of full-scale development. Japan will continue to fully boost the efforts of Timor-Leste as it proceeds to this new stage, while continuously maintaining close cooperation in the international arena. In May, the two countries exchanged the documents regarding the "Economic and Social Development Programme," a grant aid of up to 200 million yen through providing medical equipment with the aim of improving healthcare services. Furthermore, Japan has been supporting Timor-Leste's aim of acceding to ASEAN smoothly and assisting in human resources development toward the accession.

(6) The Philippines

In the Philippines, the Duterte administration, in the second year since its inauguration, ran the country with stability backed by a high approval rating. On the other hand, an armed conflict broke out with an Islamic extremist group in Marawi City on the island of Mindanao, and President Duterte placed the entire island under martial law. The conflict came to an end in October, but the challenges remained are to ensure security and order, implement counter-terrorism measures, and revitalize the city. Regarding the economy, the Philippines maintained strong economic growth, while actively promoting policies in accordance with a socio-economic development agenda, including infrastructure development and tax system reform. Furthermore, as the ASEAN Chair in 2017, the Philippines held summit meetings, foreign ministers' meetings and other related meetings.

Prime Minister Abe greets President Duterte at the banquet hosted by the Prime Minister (October 30, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japan-Philippines Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 6, Manila, the Philippines)

Japan and the Philippines witnessed frequent exchanges as "Strategic Partners" in 2017. In January, Prime Minister Abe became the first overseas leader to visit Davao, President Duterte's hometown, and pledged to provide the support of 1 trillion yen over five years. Secretary of Foreign Affairs Cayetano visited Japan in June to hold a Japan-Philippines Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Furthermore, in October, President Duterte visited Japan for the second time as President. A joint statement on bilateral cooperation for the next five years was issued. Japan and the Philippines agreed to further enhance cooperation in a variety of fields including the infrastructure development such as the subway projects in Metro Manila, providing assistance in Mindanao, and combatting illegal drugs. Japan-Philippines Foreign Ministers' Meeting was also held on the same occasion. Furthermore, Foreign Minister Kono visited the Philippines in August for the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meetings, and Prime Minister Abe visited the Philippines in November to attend the ASEAN-related Summit Meetings.

(7) Brunei

Brunei achieved high economic levels, thanks to rich natural resources. However, the economic growth rate has fallen in the past few years, caused by falling prices of crude oil and natural gas, so the Government of Brunei is aiming for economic diversification to avoid overreliance on energy resources.

Japan and Brunei have maintained friendly relations over a long period of time. Around 60% 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, making Brunei an important country for the stable supply of energy resources to Japan. Through "JENESYS 2.0," launched in 2013, Japan and Brunei witness frequent exchanges of young people who carry the future of Japan-Brunei relations on their shoulders. Sports exchanges, represented by badminton, are extremely important in promoting bilateral ties. Judo and karate are also steadily becoming popular in Brunei.

In 2017, various ministers, including Minister at Prime Minister's Office and Second Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Lim Jock Seng and Minister of Energy and Industry of Prime Minister's Office Yasmin visited Japan. During the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in August in Manila, the Philippines,

Japan-Brunei Summit Meeting (November 13, Manila, the Philippines (representative photo); Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Foreign Minister Kono met with Minister Lim Jock Seng, which led to a Japan-Brunei Foreign Ministers' Meeting in November in Da Nang, Viet Nam. Furthermore, during the ASEAN-related Summit Meeting held in November in Manila, the Philippines, a Japan-Brunei Summit Meeting was held, and Prime Minister Abe congratulated Sultan Bolkiah on the 50th anniversary of the accession to the throne in 2017, and exchanged opinions on further bolstering bilateral ties through supporting Brunei's efforts toward economic diversification. Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Lim Jock Hoi, who will be assigned as the next ASEAN Secretary-General from January 2018, visited Japan in December to hold a meeting with Foreign Minister Kono, who expressed his support for promoting cooperation with Brunei in the integration of ASEAN. Brunei has been serving as the ASEAN Country Coordinator for Japan for three years since 2015.

(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 becoming a promising market. After the inauguration of the new leaders of the Communist Party of Viet Nam in January 2016, the country has been striving to realize stable economic growth through the stabilization of the macro-economy including control of inflation, the promotion of foreign investment by the development of infrastructure and the improvement of the investment environment. Moreover, the Government has been engaging actively in anti-corruption measures and administrative reform.

In 2017, Viet Nam acted as APEC Chair, and at the APEC Summit and Ministerial meeting held in Da Nang in November achieved major diplomatic results, including the agreement in principle to TPP11. Furthermore, Viet Nam welcomed President Trump of the U.S. followed by President Xi Jinping of China as State Guests after the meeting, demonstrating a well-balanced diplomatic policy.

There have been active mutual high level exchanges, including the visit to Viet Nam by Prime Minister Abe in January, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Oshima in May, the visit to Japan by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Minh, the visit to Japan by Prime Minister Phuc and his spouse as an Official Visit in June, and the attendance of Prime Minister Abe and Foreign Minister Kono at the APEC Viet Nam Summit and Ministerial Meeting in Da Nang in November. 2018 marks the 45th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-Viet Nam diplomatic relations, and a variety of cultural exchange programs are planned

in both countries to further deepen the "Extensive Strategic Partnership" between them.

(9) Malaysia

In 2015, the Najib administration announced the "11th Malaysia Plan (a five-year plan from 2016 to 2020)," and with the aim of entering the group of advanced countries by 2020, the country has implemented deregulation and liberalization to strengthen international competitiveness, while maintaining steady growth at home, supported by investment and domestic consumption.

2017 marked the 60th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-Malaysia diplomatic relations, and a variety of commemorative events were held in both countries, deepening friendly ties between the people of the two countries. The leaders of both countries have also been communicating closely. A telephone Summit Meeting was held after the House of Representatives election in October, and a Summit Meeting on the occasion of the ASEAN-related Summit Meeting in Manila, the Philippines was also held in November. It was confirmed in the Summit Meeting that the two countries would further deepen the "Strategic Partnership."

Official logo for the 60th Anniversary of the Establishment of Malaysia-Japan Diplomatic relations in 2017

Japan-Malaysia Summit Meeting (November 12, Manila, the Philippines; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

The Look East Policy, which serves as a foundation for the good bilateral relationship between Japan and Malaysia, celebrated its 30th anniversary in 2012. In this program, about 16,000 people have studied or have been trained in Japan so far. Currently, the Look East Policy has been named "Look East Policy 2.0," and efforts are being made to expand the fields covered and improve the quality of the initiative. The two countries are cooperating in making the Malaysia Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIIT), which was opened in September 2011, a base for Japanese-style engineering education in ASEAN countries.

On the economic front, Japan is the biggest investor to Malaysia, and 1,400 Japanese companies have been operating in Malaysia, demonstrating continued close cooperation between the two countries. The two countries have been studying the possibility of cooperation in a high-speed railway project between Malaysia and Singapore.

(10) Myanmar

In March 2016 in Myanmar, a democratic administration was established for the first

Special Feature

Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress Visit to Viet Nam and Thailand

Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress visited Viet Nam for a period of six days from February 28, 2017. The visit was realized with a long-held invitation from Viet Nam. In addition, on their way home from Viet Nam, Their Majesties paid a condolence visit to Thailand in order to show their respect for His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej, who passed away on October 13, 2016.

Viet Nam is a country located east of the Indochina peninsula with a population of around 93.7 million people. Although it has no royal family, it is a pro-Japanese country with deep relations to Japan.

This was Their Majesties' first visit to Viet Nam. Their Majesties heard stories about visits of His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince and His Imperial Highness Prince Akishino, and Their Majesties had been looking forward to visiting Viet Nam.

At a welcome ceremony and banquet held at the Presidential Palace, Their Majesties received a magnificent welcome from President Quang and his spouse. Central Committee of the Communist Party General Secretary Trong and his spouse, Prime Minister Phuc and his spouse, and National Assembly Chairwoman Ngan were received in audience by Their Majesties. Their Majesties also spoke with Japanese nationals living in Viet Nam, such as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers who are active locally, and former exchange students to Japan, as well as met with the families of former Japanese soldiers in Viet Nam. Furthermore, Their Majesties visited a museum where a goby specimen that was presented to the country by His Majesty in 1976 is on display.

In the ancient capital city of Hue, Their Majesties appreciated Viet Nam's Nha Nhac court music, which shares a common source with *gagaku* ancient Japanese court music, and visited the memorial hall of Phan Bôi Châu, the nationalist leader of the "Đông-

Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress attending a welcoming ceremony at the Presidential Palace (March 1, Hanoi, Viet Nam, Photo: Vietnam News Agency)

Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress conveying their condolences over the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej at the Grand Palace (March 5, Bangkok, Thailand, Photo: The Office of His Majesty's Private Principal Secretary, Kingdom of Thailand)

du Movement," whose objective was to have young Vietnamese study in Japan at the beginning of the 20th Century. There, Their Majesties learned the history of exchange between the two countries.

During their visit, Their Majesties were warmly welcomed by the people of Vietnamese including many of those gathered along the roadside bearing the national flags of both countries in their hands.

On their way home from Viet Nam, Their Majesties also paid a visit to Thailand in order to convey their condolences to His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej. A close relationship between Their Majesties, the late King and Her Majesty Queen Sirikit have been maintained exchanges for over half a century. The Imperial Family and the Thai Royal Family have a deep relationship – when the Thai Royal Family visits Japan they are frequently invited to the Imperial Palace, for example. The former King was always the symbol of the people of Thailand's respect and affection for a period of 70 years, and he also performed an extremely major role in promoting friendship and goodwill between Japan and Thailand. Their Majesties made a deep bow in front of the Grand Palace's altar in order to express their respect for the former King, and showed the depth of their sadness.

Their Majesties also met His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun at Amphorn Sathan Residential Hall. This meeting between Their Majesties and the new King represents a new chapter in Japan-Thailand relations, and it is hoped that the amicable relations between the two countries will deepen further.

time in half a century with support by the majority of the people. Under the leadership of State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, who had been leading a democratization movement for a long time, the country is making efforts for consolidation of democracy, national reconciliation, and economic development. Japan is providing full-fledged support to the Government of Myanmar's democratic nation building in collaboration between public and private sectors, based on recognition that stability of Myanmar, which has traditional friendship with Japan, geopolitical importance and huge potential for economic development, is directly related to stability and prosperity throughout the entire region. When State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi visited Japan in November 2016, Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention that Japan would contribute 800 billion yen over five years in total by public and private sectors. Since then, the Japanese Government has been accelerating efforts to cooperate in broad fields, including urban development, electricity and transportation infrastructure. In November 2017, at the meeting between Prime Minister Abe and State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi in Manila, the Philippines, Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention that Japan would implement development assistance programs which amount to 125 billion yen. Furthermore, in December, President Htin Kyaw visited Japan and a Japan-Myanmar Summit Meeting was held.

In Myanmar, achieving peace with ethnic armed groups, who have been fighting against the Government armed forces since Myanmar's independence, has been a pressing issue. In October

2015, eight ethnic armed groups, including Karen National Union (KNU), signed the Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA), and the remaining issue had been to reach an agreement with the remaining groups, including New Mon State Party (NMSP). Then in February 2018, NMSP and the Lahu Democratic Union (LDU) finally signed the NCA. The Government of Japan had supported the progress of peace negotiation through Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for National Reconciliation in Myanmar Yohei Sasakawa, who also signed the NCA as a witness during the signing ceremony. The Government of Japan has also been providing support for rebuilding livelihoods, by cooperating with Japanese NGOs, in the area under the control of the armed groups who have signed the NCA, such as in Kayin State, including construction of houses, schools, hospitals and bridges, so that the people residing in those areas can feel improvement in their living standards after the ceasefire.

In the western state of Rakhine, over 700,000 people were displaced to Bangladesh as a result of destabilization after the armed groups attacked security forces' bases in August. The international community expressed serious concern to the Government of Myanmar. Japan expressed serious concern over security and humanitarian and human rights situations in Rakhine State. Japan also expressed its intention to offer maximum support to the Government of Myanmar's efforts for providing humanitarian assistance, ensuring return of the displaced people, and peace and stability, encouraging Myanmar to ensure restoring security in accordance with the law and reopening humanitarian access.

(11) Laos

Laos is a land locked country bordering the five countries of China, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Viet Nam and, therefore, is a key country in connecting the Mekong region. With regard to domestic affairs, being the year after the holding of the 10th Congress of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party and the 8th National Parliamentary Elections, there were no major changes under the single-party rule of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party. It was a year of stability for the Government. On the economic front, the Government strived to stabilize finances, which was the most pressing issue. On the other hand, economic growth remained steady at around 7%, which was about the same level as the previous year, driven by electricity and mineral resources. Japan and Laos formed a "Strategic Partnership" in 2015, and the countries have been deepening cooperative ties in extensive fields. Laos has been drawing the attention of Japanese companies in recent years for its investment potential, and in March Deputy Prime Minister Sonexay visited Japan, followed by Prime Minister Thongloun in June, who held investment seminars and economic forums. In the field of economic cooperation, steady progress was made in the Japan-Lao PDR Joint Development Cooperation Plan for the Sustainable Development of Lao PDR, which was announced by the Prime Ministers of both countries in September 2016. Particularly in regard to the strong request by the leaders of the Government of Laos for support in financial stability, Japan cooperated at multiple levels in the public and private sectors by dispatching experts, holding various seminars, etc. In June, a Japan-Lao PDR Summit Meeting

Special Feature

His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince's First Visit to Malaysia

The year 2017 marked the 60th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Japan and Malaysia which was established in the same year as the independence of the Federation of Malaya in 1957. His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince's visit to Malaysia on this important milestone proved to be an excellent opportunity to showcase the friendly relations between Japan and Malaysia to people inside and outside Japan.

His Imperial Highness received a warm welcome from His Majesty The Yang di-Pertuan Agong XV Sultan Muhammad V, the Royal Families of Malaysia, government officials and the people of Malaysia. The meeting with His Royal Highness Sultan Dr. Nazrin Muizzuddin Shah, Deputy Yang di-Pertuan Agong of Malaysia, and luncheon hosted by The Honorable Dato'Sri Mohd Najib bin Tun Haji Abdul Razak, Prime Minister of Malaysia and his spouse left a strong impression of the continued and further developing relationship between the Imperial Family of Japan and the Royal Families of Malaysia as well as the advancements seen in the multilayered friendly relationship between the two countries.

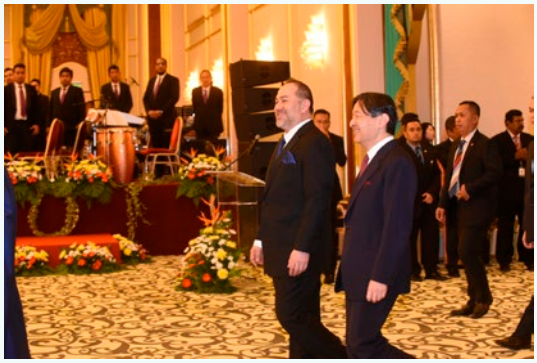
Moreover, His Imperial Highness visited the University of Malaya, a cornerstone of the Government of Malaysia's Look East Policy initiated in 1982 (a human resources development program in which people of Malaysia learn the work ethic and will to learn/work from Japan and the Republic of Korea in order to develop Malaysia's economy and society and establish the country's industrial base). Through the programs of Look East Policy, approximately 16,000 Malaysian youth had been sent to Japan to study or train. In the remarks, His Imperial Highness noted that Japanese nationals studying in Malaysia can learn a great deal from Malaysia's society that respects diversity where multiple ethnicities, cultures and religions co-exist with one another.

On the final day of the visit, His Imperial Highness, who has long been studying water issue, visited the SMART Tunnel in Kuala Lumpur (a tunnel with the dual purpose of alleviating traffic congestion and preventing flooding) that His Imperial Highness introduced in his keynote address at the UN Special Thematic Session on Water and Disasters in 2016. During the visit, His Imperial Highness listened intently to the explanation on the tunnel's history, its mechanisms combining drainage function and transportation system to alleviate traffic congestion in the city, and its disaster risk reduction capabilities.

His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince listening to an explanation about the tunnel's mechanisms during a visit to the SMART Tunnel Control Center (April 15, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Photo: Ministry of Communications and Multimedia Malaysia)

His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince's visit to Malaysia left a strong impression of the truly friendly relationship between Japan and

Malaysia. The visit reminded both nations of the great efforts and hard work of forerunners from both countries over the years in building the friendly relationship between Japan and Malaysia today. It also got both nations to recognise the importance of people-to-people exchanges, particularly youth exchanges, in order to maintain and strengthen this friendly relationship. The visit proved to be deeply meaningful to both countries in the sense of entrusting the next 60 years of Japan-Malaysia relations to the next generation, based on friendship over the last 60 years.



His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince attending a dinner reception with His Majesty The Yang di-Pertuan Agong XV Sultan Muhammad V (April 16, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, Photo: Ministry of Communications and Multimedia Malaysia)

Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara attends the ceremony to handover Namsang Secondary School built under the Grass-Roots Human Security Projects (July 13, Vientiane, Laos)

Prime Minister Abe and his spouse receive a warm welcome from Prime Minister Modi and local residents of India (September 13, Ahmedabad, India; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office (Prime Minister's Office of Japan Facebook Page))

and Foreign Ministers' Meeting were held. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara visited Laos in July, followed by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwao Horii in September, representing momentum maintained in close and high-level exchanges between the two countries in recent years. Other than that, a memorandum of cooperation regarding Foreign Technical Intern Training Programs was signed in December between the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare of Japan, and the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare of Lao PDR.

4 South Asia

(1) India

Geopolitically speaking India is an extremely important country as it faces the Indian Ocean connecting Asia and Africa and is positioned in the center of sea lanes. Moreover, India has the 3rd largest economy in Asia, with the world's 2nd largest population and a huge middle-income group. Japan and India are the two largest democratic countries in Asia, sharing common fundamental values, such as democracy and the rule of law, as well as strategic interests.

The Indian economy has been

maintaining a high economic growth rate of around 7% since Prime Minister Modi took office in May 2014. In addition to the booming stock market, consumption and production have been increasing, and the foreign direct investment emphasized by Prime Minister Modi has also been rising steadily against a backdrop of deregulation.

In diplomatic relations, Prime Minister Modi has put forward active diplomacy through the "Act East" policy that promotes concrete cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region, thereby enabling India to gain more influence in the international arena as a global power.

Regarding relations with Japan in 2017, three summit meetings were held. In particular, Prime Minister Abe was invited to Gujarat State in September, where Prime Minister Modi comes from, during his third visit to India under the current administration. He was given an exceptionally warm welcome. Upon arriving at the airport, he was welcomed by around 50,000 people who lined the streets for 8 km. He attended a ceremony to launch the construction of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High Speed Rail, and held a Summit Meeting for the tenth time with Prime Minister Modi. At the Summit Meeting, the Prime Ministers agreed to further promote coordination between Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" and India's "Act East" policy. They agreed to cooperate in connectivity, and defense equipment and technology, promote Japan-U.S.-India trilateral cooperation, continue support through ODA, promote the spread of Japanese education, and fundamentally expand tourism and people-to-people exchanges. Moreover, opinions were exchanged on regional affairs, including the North Korea issue, and the Prime Ministers agreed to maximize pressure on North Korea.

(2) Pakistan

Pakistan is located in a strategic location connecting Asia and the Middle East. Thus, its political stability and economic development are essential for the stability and growth of the region. Pakistan is also the most important country in the context of international counter-terrorism measures. Furthermore, the country embraces a population of around 200 million, and approximately 60% of the total population is under 25 years old, thus making its economic potential high.

In security, Prime Minister Abbasi, who took office in August 2017, has decided to maintain the policy of former Prime Minister Sharif, identifying security improvement as a top priority. Since June 2014, the Pakistani military has conducted operations against armed forces including Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), and the Government of Pakistan has announced that the number of terrorist incidents has been greatly reduced.

In foreign affairs, the former Prime Minister Sharif had been engaged in improving relations with neighboring countries including India, but after the terrorist attack on an Indian Air Force base in January 2016, India-Pakistan relationship has been tense. Furthermore, under the "All-Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership," relationship with China has been enhanced in a wide range of fields toward the construction of an economic corridor between China and Pakistan, which is an important constituent element of China's "Belt and

Road" initiative. Regarding the relationship with Afghanistan, the Quadrilateral Coordination Group (QCG: with the participation of Pakistan, Afghanistan, the U.S., and China) has begun discussions on the peace and reconciliation process since January 2016, but there remain many issues to be addressed between the two countries, including border control, and refugee problems.

On the economic front, structural reforms have been completed under the International Monetary Fund (IMF) program since September 2013. Though there are remaining issues, such as further reduction of official debt, and increases in tax revenues, the growth rates in FY2016/2017 marked around 5%, making them the highest in the past ten years.

The year 2017 marked the 65th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and Japan, and in May, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kishi visited Islamabad and Karachi. During the visit, he held meetings with the former Prime Minister Sharif and other leading figures to exchange views on efforts to further bolster bilateral ties, and on regional affairs. They also discussed measures to enhance economic ties through business associates in Japan and Pakistan.

(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.

The Awami League administration led by Prime Minister Hasina has been stable. However, a terrorist attack occurred in October 2015 in which a Japanese national was murdered. Moreover, another terrorist attack occurred in Dhaka in July 2016. Although measures to combat terrorism have been advanced by the security authorities, including through exposing Islamic extremist groups and setting up numerous checkpoints, the threat of terrorism still remains throughout the country. Furthermore, with the deterioration in peace and order in Rakhine State of Myanmar since August 2017, more than 600,000 displaced persons have flooded into the country, thus causing deterioration in humanitarian conditions.

On the economic front, the country, though classified as a least developed country, maintained a steady economic growth rate of around 7.24% in 2017, thanks to robust exports mainly of textile products. With a population of around 160 million people, Bangladesh has a production base with abundant low cost and high-quality labor, and the high potential of its market including considerable infrastructure demand is attracting attention. The number of Japanese-affiliated companies developing business in the country has increased from 61 (2005) to 270 (October 2016). However, the stable supply of

Tour of Kutupalong Refugee Camp (November 19, Kutupalong, Bangladesh)

electric power and natural gas as well as infrastructure improvement remain as challenges for foreign companies.

In the relationship with Japan, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei visited Bangladesh in January, followed by visits of Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwao Horii, in September, and Foreign Minister Kono in November. A Ministerial Meeting was held with Foreign Minister Ali and it was confirmed that relations would be strengthened under the Japan-Bangladesh Comprehensive Partnership. In addition, Minister Kono took a tour of the camp of displaced persons who had flooded into Bangladesh from Northern Rakhine State of Myanmar.

(4) Sri Lanka

Sri Lanka is situated at a strategic point on the sea lanes in the Indian Ocean. The country is traditionally pro-Japanese and its geopolitical and economic importance is note-worthy. Since the end of the conflict in 2009, the security situation has greatly improved. Japanese tourists roughly quadrupled as compared with 2008 to over 40,000 (as of 2016).

In domestic politics, President Sirisena, who was elected at the presidential election in January 2015, maintained the grand coalition of the United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) established after the general election in August the same year, and is running the Government together with Prime Minister Wickremesinghe (UNP).

The current administration set up a National Reconciliation Bureau to address this important task after the end of the conflict, and has been working in a variety of ways including the establishment of a mechanism consisting of a four-layer system to correspond to the investigation of the truth related to alleged human rights violations, rights for justice, rights for compensation, and prevention of recurrence of conflict.

After the end of the conflict, the economy of Sri Lanka was growing at an annual rate of 7%, and it continues to maintain an annual growth of over 4% in recent years. Its GDP per-capita was recorded at 3,887 US dollars in 2016, and given the geopolitical importance of the country and its access to the Indian market, an even higher growth rate is expected.

In the relationship with Japan, Prime Minister Wickremesinghe visited Japan in October 2015, and in April 2017 for the second time since the inauguration of the current administration. A Summit Meeting was held with Prime Minister Abe, and the Prime Ministers agreed to deepen and strengthen the Comprehensive Partnership, issuing a joint statement after the meeting. Furthermore, in November 2017, State Minister of Defence Wijewardene visited Japan and held meetings with Defense Minister Itsunori Onodera and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane, to exchange opinions on further bolstering cooperation in the field of maritime security.

(5) Nepal

Nepal has geopolitical importance as an inland state between the great powers of China and India. For many years, Japan has been a major donor to Nepal and the two countries keep traditionally friendly relations through a variety of exchanges including between the imperial family and the former royal family, and through

Visit to Nepal by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwao Horii (December 7, Kathmandu)

mountaineering.

In domestic affairs, Prime Minister Dahal expressed his intention to step down in May 2017, and Mr. Deuba, leader of the Nepali Congress (NC), was elected as the new Prime Minister in June, giving birth to a new administration. In 2017, to shift to the three-tiered administrative system of dividing Nepal into provinces, districts and municipalities, as enacted under the new constitution of September 2015, local elections were held in May, June and September, and the elections of the House of Representatives and Provincial Assemblies were held in December. For many years, Japan has been supporting Nepal to consolidate democracy, and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwao Horii, was dispatched to ensure freedom, fairness and transparency of the elections of the House of Representatives and Provincial Assemblies held on December 7. The Japanese Government Election Observer Mission visited polling stations in the Kathmandu Valley: voting was carried out without major confusion in a generally peaceful manner. With the end of the elections stipulated by the new constitution, future political processes are expected to be carried out smoothly.

In August 2017, Nepal's representative soccer team, which had experienced the earthquake in April 2014, was invited to Japan for an earthquake reconstruction exchange. The team visited environmental and disaster prevention facilities, and deepened understanding for related initiatives in Japan through experts. At the same time, they played a disaster relief friendly match with Vissel Kobe U-18 to disseminate cooperation between Japan and Nepal in striving to recover from the earthquake (See the Column "Cooperation with Sports Associations - Soccer Exchanges between Japan and Nepal").

(6) Bhutan

Bhutan peacefully shifted from a monarchy to a constitutional monarchy in 2008. Currently, efforts are being made to establish a democracy under the Tobgay administration. The Government sets Gross National Happiness (GNH) as a guideline of the administration and is particularly working on economic independence, food production, and the reduction of youth unemployment rate under the 11th Five-Year Plan (until June 2018).

With regard to the relationship with Japan, since His Majesty and Her Majesty of Bhutan visited Japan as State Guests in 2011, bilateral exchanges have become active in a variety of fields and at various levels. His Royal Highness Prince Jigyel Ugyen Wangchuck, President of the Bhutan Olympic Committee, visited Japan in April to strengthen cooperative ties in the field of sports for the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games. In October, Her Royal Highness Princess Sonam Dechan Wangchuck visited Japan to attend a forum organized by Kyoto University among other

Special Feature

Japan Week in Bhutan and the Royal Bhutan Flower Exhibition

- Graced by Her Imperial Highness Princess Mako of Akishino -

1. Japan Week 2017 in Bhutan

Singing of "*Hana wa Saku*" by Bhutanese children (June 2, Thimphu, Bhutan)

Judo throwing techniques and Karate kumite demonstrations to powerful background music. Energetic voices of local children echoing under the blue Himalayan sky with the roar of loud applause of the audience each time a technique was demonstrated. The opening event of Japan Week was held at Clock Tower Square located in the heart of Thimphu, the capital of Bhutan, graced by Her Imperial Highness Princess Mako of Akishino and important Bhutanese Government officials including Foreign Minister Damcho Dorji. The symbolic opening event that marked the start of the four-day Japan Week from June 2 included Judo and Karate demonstrations presented by Bhutanese elementary and junior high school students, along with performance of a Japanese song '*Hana wa Saku*' by young students. In addition, a Japanese traditional performing arts group was invited to demonstrate the '*Magisawa Kagura*', an Intangible Folk Cultural Property of Ichinoseki City, Iwate Prefecture.

Bhutan is situated in a mountain range with large differences in altitude from a few hundred meters above sea level to 7,000 meters. The country has approximately the same land area as Kyushu Island and is home to a population of around 800,000. Some similarities can be found between Japan and Bhutan from idyllic scenes, formed mainly by rice cultivation, reminiscent of Japan's farm villages, to similar facial features of the two people, and to traditional dress such as "*gho*" and "*kira*" which look like the Japanese kimono.

The friendly relationship between Japan and Bhutan began through cooperation initiated by the agricultural expert the late Mr. Keiji Nishioka, dispatched by the Overseas Technical Cooperation Agency (now JICA) long before the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1986. Japan and Bhutan have established a very friendly relationship through mutual exchanges in various levels and fields including ones between the Imperial Family of Japan and the Royal Family of Bhutan. The year 2016 marked the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Japan Week has been co-hosted by the Embassy of Japan in India, the Japan Foundation, New Delhi, and JICA Bhutan Office since 2012 with the aim of promoting cultural exchanges and mutual understanding between the two countries given the long history of friendship.

This year, Japan Week included events such as projection of Japanese short films at City Cinema in Thimphu as well as Japanese language teacher training and Japan workshop.

2. Royal Bhutan Flower Exhibition

On June 4, concurrently with Japan Week, the opening ceremony for the 3rd Royal Bhutan Flower Exhibition was held in Thimphu. Her Imperial Highness Princess Mako of Akishino attended the ceremony as the Guest of Honor at the invitation of the Government of Bhutan, together with Their Majesties the King and Queen of Bhutan as well as other members of the Royal Family and important government officials including cabinet members. Following the commemorative ceremony, Her Imperial Highness had a look around the beautifully decorated exhibition with colorful flowers, and observed the Japanese garden designed by a Japanese landscape designer and *Bonsai* collection provided by His Majesty the King.

Her Imperial Highness Princess Mako of Akishino interacting with the performers following the event (June 2, Thimphu, Bhutan)

The Royal Bhutan Flower Exhibition, launched in 2015 at the proposition of His Majesty the King, is a horticulture exhibition as a national memorial event held by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forests. The exhibition this time, held at National Memorial Chorten in Thimphu as a tribute to the late His Majesty the Third King, was inaugurated on June 4, the same date of Her Majesty the Queen's birthday. On this special occasion of particular importance to the Bhutanese people, the invitation extended to the member of the Imperial Family as the Guest of Honor symbolizes a close friendly relationship between the two countries.

The visit of Her Imperial Highness Princess Mako of Akishino was extensively reported not only in Bhutan but also in Japan, serving to further enhance the mutual interests of the two people. It is expected that the friendly relationship between Japan and Bhutan will be further deepened.

Her Imperial Highness Princess Mako of Akishino observing the Japanese garden (June 4, Thimphu, Bhutan, Photo: Royal Office for Media Bhutan)

Commemorative photo with His Majesty the King of Bhutan and the members of the Royal Family (June 4, Thimphu, Bhutan, Photo: Royal Office for Media Bhutan)

events.

In the area of economic cooperation, the two countries exchanged letters in December for grant aid of a maximum of 979 million yen under the Project for the Construction of a Disaster-Resilient Emergency Mobile Network. It is expected that this network will improve communication conditions to allow quick sharing of information in case of emergency and mitigate risks during natural disasters.

(7) The Maldives

The Maldives is an island country in the Indian Ocean and its economic growth is mainly led by fishing and tourism, which account for about 30% of GDP. The country graduated from a least developed country in 2011, and its per-capita GDP reached approximately 9,792 US dollars, marking the highest in South Asia.

In domestic affairs, the administration has been relatively stable since President Yameen took office. However, a motion of no confidence was passed against the Speaker of the People's Majlis Maseeh in March and July 2017, under sustained cooperation between the four opposition parties, testifying to antipathy to President Yameen. Regarding foreign policy, importance has long been placed on relations with neighboring countries including India, but the country has recently been strengthening relations especially with Saudi Arabia and China. In December 2017, President Yameen visited China as a State Guest, and signed various agreements including a free trade agreement.

Regarding the relationship with Japan, 2017 marked the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. In November, Foreign Minister Asim visited Japan to hold a Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Kono. Moreover, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwao Horii visited the Maldives to make a courtesy visit to President Yameen and Foreign Minister Asim, and attended a ceremony to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. During the meeting and courtesy visit, the two countries agreed to promote cooperation in a wide range of fields, including maritime security, disaster prevention, tourism, sports and culture. Furthermore, in commemoration of the anniversary, a performance was given by a Japanese drum group in Malé in October to promote active cultural exchanges between the two countries.

5 Oceania

(1) Australia

A Brief Summary and Overview

In Australia, Prime Minister Turnbull's administration entered its third year since its inauguration. In November 2017, the Australian Government issued a diplomatic white paper for the first time in 14 years. It was announced that as the guidelines of future foreign policy, Australia will promote an open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific region, oppose protectionism, promote and protect international rules, etc., while also strengthening cooperation with partners including Japan.

With the region facing a wide range 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 towards maintenance 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' mutual visits and close coordination between the Foreign Ministers serving as the basis, the two countries have been further deepening political and security cooperation and collaboration towards stability and prosperity of the international community.

On the economic front, the two countries are promoting free trade, including the TPP agreement. Australia is the sixth largest trading partner for Japan and Japan is the second largest trading partner for Australia, and the two countries are further developing mutually complementary economic relations based on the Japan-Australia EPA. Furthermore, multilateral coordination and partnerships such as the Japan-U.S.-Australia, Japan-Australia-India and Japan-U.S.-Australia-India relations are being steadily strengthened.

Special Meeting of the National Security Council (Meeting among Four Ministers) (January 18, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Both leaders visit JGSDF Camp Narashino (January 18; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office (Prime Minister's official Twitter account))

In January 2017, Prime Minister Abe visited Sydney as part of mutual visits made by the Prime Ministers of the two countries, and confirmed the deepening of the "Special Strategic Partnership" in a wide range of areas including the deepening of security and defense cooperation, economic issues and people-to-people exchanges, while also strengthening the personal relationship between the two leaders. In January 2018, Prime Minister Turnbull visited Japan to hold a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Abe, and attended a Special Meeting (Four Ministers' Meeting) of the National Security Council. The Prime Ministers agreed to further strengthen the "Special Strategic Partnership," and confirmed the need to strengthen coordination and cooperation in order to realize their vision on the Indo-Pacific region. Furthermore, the two Prime Ministers confirmed close cooperation in dealing with regional affairs, including the North Korea situation, and agreed to strengthen cooperation in a wide range of areas such as security and defense, economy including TPP agreement and people-to-people exchanges. Moreover, the Foreign Ministers held meetings at the Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultation ("2+2"), as well as on the occasion of the UN General Assembly in September, and the APEC Ministerial Meeting in November (Da Nang, Viet Nam). The two countries shared their views on the increasingly severe regional situations and confirmed that they would continue to cooperate closely toward the peace and stability of the region.

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. 2017 marked a milestone of the 10th anniversary since the 2007 Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation. In January, the leaders of both countries attended the signing of the new Japan-Australia Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) (the agreement entered into force in September). At the same time, the two countries expressed their expectations for the early conclusion of an agreement to mutually improve the administrative, policy and legal procedures for facilitating joint operations and exercises between Japan's Self-Defense Forces and Australia's Defense Forces.

At the 7th Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultation ("2+2") held in April, the two countries agreed to further strengthen security and defense cooperation between Japan and Australia, in order to maintain and strengthen a free and open regional and international order, based on the rule of law. At the same time, the two countries confirmed strengthening coordination regarding North Korea, maritime security including the South China Sea and the East China Sea and the Pacific region.

Furthermore, Japan and Australia, both of which are allies of the U.S., are continuing to work on further enhancing Japan-U.S.-Australia cooperation. The Japan-U.S.-Australia Trilateral Strategic Dialogue (TSD) was held for the first time since the inauguration of the Trump administration in the U.S., and views were exchanged on various regional issues such as North Korea, the South China Sea, the East China Sea and measures countering violent extremism. It was also agreed that the three countries of Japan, the U.S. and Australia would coordinate and cooperate closely including these issues. Moreover, in November, a Japan-U.S.-Australia Summit Meeting was held with discussions centered on North Korea, and confirmed the unwavering solidarity between Japan, the U.S. and Australia to ensure peace and prosperity in the region.

C Economic relations

Japan and Australia have taken the lead in promoting a system of free trade in the region through close cooperation, including the TPP agreement and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). During the Summit Meeting in November (Manila, the Philippines) and the Foreign Ministers' Working Dinner (Da Nang, Viet Nam), the two countries agreed to cooperate for an early conclusion of TPP11. Between Japan and Australia, mainly industrial products such as automobiles are being exported to Australia, while mainly energy resources such as coal and natural gas, and agricultural products such as beef are being imported into Japan, in a mutually

Japan-U.S.-Australia Summit Meeting (November 13, Manila, the Philippines; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japan-Australia Working Dinner (November 7, Da Nang, Viet Nam)

complementary economic relationship that has been developed steadily over the years. 2017 marked the 60th anniversary of the signing of the Australia-Japan Agreement on Commerce, and major commemorative events were held in various places. Japan is the second biggest investor for Australia, and since the entry into force of the Japan-Australia EPA in January 2015, there have been active exchanges of goods, funds and people between the two countries. Moreover, efforts are being made to further develop economic relations between Japan and Australia under the Conference for Promotion of Exchanges between Japan and Australia, with an innovation-led reform of industrial structures and region-led promotion of relationships serving as the two pillars.

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 360,000 people in Australia learn the Japanese language (the highest number of learners per population in the world), and that there are over 100 sister city relations. In order to strengthen the foundation of Japan-Australia relations, various initiatives have been implemented, including the promotion of mutual understanding through JENESYS 2017, the exchange program including young people, and the "New Colombo Plan," as well as the promotion of reconciliation through the invitation program of former Australian prisoners of war (POWs), and the Young Political Leaders Exchange. Particularly, in light of the decrease in the number of the Australian former POWs who can travel to Japan, a commemorative event was held in December to reflect on the achievements of this 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, the nuclear and missile development, and the abductions issue by North Korea. Other than that, there has also been close coordination on Pacific Island countries where Australia plays an important role. In December, the Second Japan-Australia Pacific Policy Dialogue (Tokyo) was held, and exchanged views on regional affairs, which confirmed coordination toward the Eighth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM8) in May 2018. Furthermore, the two countries are working together as important partners on global issues, such as UN peacekeeping operations, disarmament and non-proliferation, climate change, and UN Security Council reforms.

(2) New Zealand

A Brief Summary and Overview

A parliamentary election was held in New Zealand in September, and the National Party failed to attain the majority of seats on its own, resulting in negotiations for the forming of coalitions between different parties. This led to the forming of a coalition between the New Zealand Labour Party and New Zealand First Party, which was inaugurated in October. It was the first time in nine years, since 2008, for a change in Government. 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 and defense cooperation, and people-to-people exchanges and also cooperative relations on issues facing the region and the international community.

B Mutual VIP Visits

From Japan, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kishi visited New Zealand in February to hold a meeting with Foreign Minister McCully. He also attended the commemorative ceremony to mark the 6th anniversary of the Christchurch earthquake, and held meetings with the top government officials.

From New Zealand, Prime Minister English visited Japan in May to hold a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister Abe. The two countries agreed to promote peace and stability based on the rule of law, and free trade and investment based on rules, as well as actively build on the partnership between the two countries.

Moreover, during the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting (Da Nang, Viet Nam), Prime Minister Abe held the first Summit

Prime Minister Abe exchanges a handshake with Prime Minister Ardern (November 10, Da Nang, Viet Nam; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japan-New Zealand Foreign Ministers' Meeting (November 8, Da Nang, Viet Nam)

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kishi, offers flowers at Avonhead Park Cemetary (February 22, Christchurch, New Zealand)

Meeting since the change of Government with Prime Minister Ardern. At the APEC Ministerial Meeting held just prior to the Summit Meeting, Foreign Minister Kono also held a Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Peters, where it was confirmed that Japan-New Zealand relations would be strengthened.

C Economic Relations

The two countries enjoy a complementary economic relationship, and the Prime Ministers of Japan and New Zealand confirmed the importance of the TPP Agreement during the Summit Meeting in November. The two countries agreed to cooperate in its early entry into force. Furthermore, in the fields of food and agriculture, the two-year extension of the "New Zealand Hokkaido Dairy Collaboration Project" was decided in June 2016 after the completion of a two-year pilot project which began in 2014, and is under implementation. This project is designed to identify methods of improving the profitability of dairy farming in Japan.

D Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges

In FY2017, 20 university students from New Zealand visited Japan as part of JENESYS 2017. More than 1,100 young people from New Zealand have now visited Japan through youth related programs.

In addition, networking between sister cities is making progress with an aim to promote mutual understanding among the youth. Furthermore, the New Zealand Government sponsored "Game On English" which extends support to English language education for Japanese students through rugby, in which New Zealand won the World Cup twice in a row. Under this program, 24 Japanese students visited New Zealand in 2017.

E Cooperation in the International Community

The two countries are cooperating closely for the peace and stability of the international community, including the United Nations. Furthermore, Japan and New Zealand have been playing active roles in the stability and prosperity of the region, including collaboration in regional cooperation frameworks such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). As for Pacific island countries, the two countries have also been cooperating through the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM).

(3) Pacific Island Countries (PICs)

A Brief Summary and Overview

The PICs and Japan are bound by the Pacific Ocean, have deep historical ties, and are important partners for Japan in areas such as cooperation in the international arena and the supply of fisheries and mineral resources. They are becoming increasingly important from a geographical perspective as they are located at the heart of the Pacific Ocean. Japan has been holding the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) once every three years since 1997, and the Eighth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM8) will be held in May 2018. Japan has also been holding PALM Ministerial Interim Meetings roughly every three years since 2010, and since 2014, Japan has been holding Japan-Pacific Islands Leaders Meetings every year on the occasion of the

UN General Assembly held in September, in New York. Furthermore, Japan has been constantly attending the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Post Forum Dialogue at a high level since its inception in 1989. Japan has been further strengthening relations with PICs through visits at various levels using the occasion of these international conferences, ODA projects, and active people-to-people exchanges.

B Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM)

The Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) marked its 20th anniversary in 2017. On May 18 and 19, 2018, the Eighth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM8) will be held in Iwaki City, Fukushima Prefecture. Leaders from 14 PICs, including Samoa which will serve as co-chair, and cabinet level participants from Australia and New Zealand are expected to attend the Summit.

Prior to this in January 2017, the PALM Third Ministerial Interim Meeting of the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting was held in Tokyo. Foreign Minister Kishida and Secretary of Foreign Affairs of the Federated States of Micronesia Robert served as co-chairs, and exchanges of views were held on the follow-up of the PALM7 and the direction towards the PALM8, and the participants agreed to cooperate closely to ensure the success of the PALM8. Furthermore, Prime Minister Abe, who visited New York in September on the occasion of the UN General Assembly, held the fourth Japan-Pacific Islands Summit Meeting and confirmed their coordination on the North Korean affairs, and in preparation for the PALM8, exchanged views on self-sufficient and sustainable growth including the areas

The 4th Japan-Pacific Islands Summit Meeting (September 19, New York, the U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

such as climate change, the environment, disaster prevention, trade, investment and tourism, invigoration of people-to-people exchanges, and various maritime issues. Various countries expressed their gratitude for Japan's contributions through PALM and other initiatives, and confirmed that they would accelerate preparations to ensure the success of the PALM8.

C Mutual VIP Visits

In January, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara visited Palau to attend the inauguration ceremony of the President, and held meetings with President Remengesau and others. President Remengesau visited Japan in September and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Kono. In October, President Christian of Micronesia visited Japan and held meetings with Prime Minister Abe and Foreign

Visit by President Christian of Micronesia (October 25, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Minister Kono, and exchanged views on the strengthening of bilateral ties, cooperation toward the PALM8, regional issues including North Korea, and cooperation in the international arena including the UN Security Council reform. In November, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwao Horii visited the Marshall Islands as the head of the Public-Private Joint Economic Mission and attended a trade and investment seminar and held a meeting with President Heine. In the same month, Vice President and Minister of Justice of Palau Oilouch was invited to Japan to hold the Meeting with Foreign Minister Kono, while Minister of Communication and Information Technology of Samoa Afamasaga and the former President of Micronesia Urusemal held meetings with Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwao Horii respectively.

D Relationship with Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)

In September, the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting was held in Samoa, and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwao Horii attended the summit as a Special Envoy of the Prime Minister. Japan expressed its intention to cooperate with PICs in ensuring free and open maritime order based on the rule of law, the sustainable use of ocean resources, and the management and conservation of the marine environment as priority issues in the region. Furthermore, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Iwao Horii held meetings with Prime Minister Tuilaepa of Samoa and various other leaders from PICs.

E Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges

As part of efforts to bolster the "assistance for human resource development to 4,000 people in three years" as pledged at the PALM7 in 2015, people-to-people exchanges were implemented between students, through JENESYS. Furthermore, from FY2016 Japan commenced the Pacific-Leaders' Educational Assistance for Development of State (Pacific-LEADS) for young government administrators of PICs, and in FY2017 the program accepted 41 trainees.

F Establishment of a Liaison Office in Vanuatu

Vanuatu is an island nation located in the Melanesia region of the South Pacific, and it is an important country that has been supporting Japan's position in the UN Security Council reform and in international organization elections. In light of this fact, Japan established a liaison office in Vanuatu in January 2018.

6 Regional and Inter-regional Cooperation

The Asia-Pacific region is one of the world's growth centers and the realization of a peaceful and prosperous region is one of the priority issues in Japan's diplomacy. From this perspective, Japan places a high priority on working with its neighbors to create a rules based peaceful and stable regional community based on international law and a free, open and prosperous regional economy through various regional cooperative frameworks, including Japan-ASEAN, Japan-Mekong cooperation, ASEAN+3, 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.

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

At the ASEAN-related Summit Meeting held in November 2015 (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), it was declared that the three councils of the "ASEAN Political-Security Community Council," the "ASEAN Economics Community Council," and the "ASEAN Socio-Cultural, Community Council" (Kuala Lumpur Declaration on Establishment of ASEAN Community) would be established by the end of 2015. In addition, "ASEAN2025: Forging Ahead Together" was adopted as a guiding policy for the ASEAN Community for the ten years from 2016 to 2025. In 2017, the 50th anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN, the commitment to developing the ASEAN Community was reconfirmed.

ASEAN also plays an important role as a center of regional cooperation in East Asia. A multi-layered regional cooperation centered on ASEAN such as ASEAN+3, EAS and ARF is operating and cooperative relationships in a wide range of areas including politics, security, and the economy is established. On the economic front, ASEAN has concluded the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), as well as other economic partnership agreements (EPAs) and free trade agreements (FTAs) with various countries including Japan, China, the ROK, and India, creating an ASEAN centered network of Free Trade Agreements (FTAs). With regard to the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), the negotiations started in 2013, and are being advanced with the aim to conclude a high-quality agreement in such fields as trade in goods, trade in services, investment, intellectual property, and e-commerce.

Since ASEAN is situated in a geopolitically important location and constitutes important sea lanes and its stability and prosperity directly affects those of not only the East Asian region but also the international community, it is important for the entire international community that ASEAN advances its integration in accordance with values such as the rule of law.

In the South China Sea, China has been further conducting unilateral actions that change the status quo and increase tensions such as the large-scale and rapid building of outposts for military use, and attempts to create a fait accompli. Many countries including Japan have expressed concern over such actions by China. Japan has so far consistently shown support for the rule of law, and underscored the importance of striving for a peaceful resolution of disputes based on international law in the South China Sea. Furthermore, the Government of Japan takes note the negotiations on the South China Sea issue between China and ASEAN countries, and taken the position that eased tensions caused by such forward-looking efforts should be led to demilitarization.

Regarding the arbitration instituted by the Government of the Philippines concerning the disputes between the Philippines and China over the South China Sea under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the Arbitral Tribunal rendered the final award on July 12, 2016. Japan issued a statement by the Foreign Minister on the same day, stating that

the Tribunal's award is final and legally binding on the parties to the dispute under the provisions of UNCLOS, therefore the parties to this case are required to comply with the award, and that Japan strongly expects that the award will eventually lead to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea.

The issues surrounding the South China Sea are important matters of concern for Japan which depends most of its resources and energy on sea transport and places importance on freedom of navigation and overflight as well as securing safe sea lanes. It is necessary for the international community to cooperate towards the maintenance and development of "Open and Stable Seas" (see 1-1 (2), 2-1-2 (1) and 3-1-3 (4)).

(2) Japan-ASEAN Relations

ASEAN exerts its centrality and is the engine of various regional cooperation that gathers diverse countries within the Asia-Pacific region. Therefore, realizing a more stable and prosperous ASEAN as the motive force is absolutely essential to the stability and prosperity of the region as a whole. Based on this recognition, Japan has announced that it will actively support 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 and the "Joint Statement" that were both adopted at the 2013 ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit Meeting.

Japan-ASEAN relations which were elevated to new heights by the Commemorative Summit Meeting in 2013 were further strengthened in a wide range of areas including the integration of ASEAN, ensuring sustainable economic growth, improving people's lives, and ensuring peace and safety in the region and the international community through meetings such as the Japan-ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting in August (Manila, the Philippines) and the 20th Japan–ASEAN Summit Meeting (Manila, the Philippines) in November 2017. At this same Summit Meeting, Prime Minister Abe congratulated the 50th anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN, and expressed his expectations for Japan and ASEAN to jointly lead the world in advancing the free and open international order based on the rule of law over the next 50 years.

On the security front, the ASEAN countries supported and appreciated Japan's contribution to the region and the international community under the policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace," and mentioned Japan's cooperation in countering terrorism, violent extremism and transnational crimes, as well as cooperation in maritime security. With respect to the South China Sea issue, which may undermine peace, safety, and stability in the region, they shared recognition of the importance of maintaining and promoting the freedom of navigation and over-flights, finding peaceful resolutions to disputes in accordance with international law including UNCLOS, self-restraint in all activities which may increase tensions, and non-militarization. Furthermore, regarding North Korea, the ASEAN Member States expressed their grave concern for missile development by North Korea and mentioned the importance of complying with the UNSC resolutions, while sharing

Japan's concerns on matters including the abductions issue.

On the economic front, through Official Development Assistance (ODA) and the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), Japan will continue to support the deepening of ASEAN integration, including support for enhancing ASEAN Connectivity and narrowing the economic disparities within the region. At the 20th Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting held in November (Manila, the Philippines), in regard to Japan's policy on cooperating with ASEAN in the future, Japan expressed its intention to cooperate in realizing a more integrated community by bolstering initiatives under the "four pillars of partnerships" announced at the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit Meeting in 2013 and utilizing various tools including the ADB. In regard to being "Partners for Peace and Stability," Japan announced support to implement cooperation to strengthen and build maritime law enforcement capabilities in order to advance the free and open international order based on the rule of law, and the reconstruction of Marawi City, etc. As for being "Partners for Prosperity," Japan expressed its intention to bring the TPP Agreement into force expeditiously, pursue a comprehensive, balanced, high quality RCEP, promote high-quality investment in infrastructure, etc. Moreover, regarding being "Partners for Quality of Life," Japan emphasized its intention to realize a healthy longevity society through the "Asia Health and Wellbeing Initiative," and cooperate in building a recycling society through the "Japan-ASEAN Environmental Cooperation Initiative." Furthermore, regarding being "Heart-to-Heart Partners," Japan expressed its will to promote exchanges through JENESYS, and cultural exchanges through the "WA Project," as well as provide support for, e.g., sports. In response to this, numerous countries on the ASEAN side praised Japan's cooperation so far, in addition to expressing a desire to further strengthen their partnerships with Japan. They also expressed high appraisal for various Japanese initiatives in building high-quality infrastructure, fostering human resources, etc.

In other areas, Japan has been promoting the "Japan-ASEAN Health Initiative," to support human resources development with the aim to promote health, prevent illness, and improve the standard of medical care. Japan has also been promoting Japan-ASEAN Disaster Management Cooperation through the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance on Disaster Management (AHA CENTRE).

(3) Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting (Participating Countries: Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam and Japan)

The Mekong region (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, and Viet Nam), situated in a strategic location for land and sea transport, is a promising partner for further growth, which has been achieving strong economic growth. Peace and prosperity in the Mekong region are extremely important to Asia as a whole, including Japan, for it will contribute to narrowing economic disparity and promoting regional integration within ASEAN. The building of hardware infrastructure has progressed in recent years in the Mekong region, and there has been a steady increase in the number of Japanese companies expanding businesses in the region, as well as direct investment from Japan, which testifies to great expectations

for the further stimulation of economic activities in the future.

At the 9th Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting held in November 2017 in Manila, the Philippines, the Mekong countries expressed their appreciation and gratitude to Japan for the solid progress in shaping cooperation under the "New Tokyo Strategy 2015" adopted at the 7th Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting held in July 2015 in Tokyo, where it was announced that 750 billion yen would be provided as ODA, of which two-thirds have been provided. Japan will continue to contribute to the prosperity and development of the Mekong region as a trusted partner in the region.

(4) East Asia Summit (EAS) (participating countries: ten ASEAN countries and Japan, China, ROK, Australia, New Zealand, India, U.S., and Russia)

Launched in 2005, the EAS is a significant leaders' level regional forum, 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 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 in the region, including democracy and the rule of law, as well as to the strengthening of international rules and norms concerning trade and investment.

A 7th EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting

The 7th EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in August (Manila, the Philippines), was attended by Foreign Minister Kono from Japan, where EAS cooperation was reviewed and discussions were held on the future direction of the EAS as well as regional and international issues including North Korea and the South China Sea. Foreign Minister Kono expressed Japan's views on North Korea and the South China Sea. Moreover, he explained Japan's initiatives and ideas in regard to countermeasures against terrorism and violent extremism, strengthening the EAS, maritime cooperation and the sustainable economic development of East Asia.

Regarding the North Korea issue, Foreign Minister Kono stated that two ICBM-class missile launches by North Korea showed that North Korea is a top priority of the international agenda and that it is a significant and real threat to the region and the international community. Against this backdrop, Foreign Minister Kono insisted that the level of response from EAS participating countries needed to be taken up to the next level, and that effective pressure on North Korea must be further enhanced. At the same time, he called for the vigorous and full implementation of all relevant UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. Furthermore, he stressed that the EAS should send a strong message concerning human rights and humanitarian situations in North Korea, especially the abductions issue.

Foreign Minister Kono expressed serious concern over the continued rapid and large-scale building of outposts in the South China Sea. He emphasized that Japan strongly opposes any unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force or coercion, including those through threat or use of force. He expressed his view that it is significant for the international community to collaborate with each other to ensure peace and stability by a free and open

maritime order based on the rule of law.

B The 12th EAS

At the 12th EAS held in November (Manila, the Philippines), leaders reviewed cooperation within the EAS, and discussed its future direction as well as regional and international issues. Prime Minister Abe expressed his intention to (1) seek to establish fundamental values such as freedom of navigation and the rule of law, (2) strengthen connectivity through the development of "high quality infrastructure" and (3) engage in cooperation for peace and stability such as support for capacity building in maritime law enforcement and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) under the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," and shared the importance of promoting these efforts with participating countries.

In addition, Prime Minister Abe stated that Japan will implement its assistance worth 15 billion yen over two years to improve security in the southern part of the Philippines and Sulu-Celebes Seas in order to realize "Asia resilient to terrorism." Prime Minister Abe also announced that with the aim of further promoting the policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace," Japan would expand human resource development, provision of supplies and equipment, and intellectual contribution in three areas: maritime safety; humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR); and peacekeeping operations (PKO).

Regarding the issue of North Korea, Prime Minister Abe stated that North Korea has persistently continued its nuclear and missile programs, conducting nuclear tests and two ballistic missile launches that flew over Japan, and emphasized that there could be no peace in the region without the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. Prime Minister Abe also stressed that it was necessary for the international community to maximize pressure on North Korea and that it was important for the EAS to issue a clear message on strengthening pressure on North Korea. He further advocated that the resolution of the issue of the abductions by North Korea was the most important issue for his administration and increasing pressure on the country was important for its early resolution.

Regarding the issue of South China Sea, Prime Minister Abe stressed that Japan has always supported ASEAN centrality and wholeheartedly supported the basic principles laid out in the Joint Communiqué of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting issued in August, and all the countries concerned should strictly adhere to the "three principles of the rule of law on the seas" which he has consistently advocated for and solve conflicts peacefully in accordance with international law and not by force. Furthermore, he expressed Japan's continuing concerns over the situation in the South China Sea. In addition, he welcomed the recent development of forward-looking efforts by China and ASEAN including dialogues to finalize the Code of Conduct on the South China Sea, and emphasized that easing tensions through such efforts should lead to "demilitarization."

Regarding the situation in Rakhine of Myanmar, Prime Minister Abe advocated that restoring public safety while taking the rule of law and human rights into consideration, expanding humanitarian access, and progress in consultations among the parties concerned towards the return and resettlement of the displaced

East Asia Summit (EAS) (November 14, Manila, the Philippines; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

people were necessary. He also announced that Japan would be encouraging the Myanmar Government by implementing humanitarian assistance through the AHA and other means.

(5) ASEAN+3

The Asian financial crisis in 1997 prompted the launch of ASEAN+3, in the form of adding the three countries of Japan, China, and the ROK to ASEAN. ASEAN+3 has been developed focusing on areas such as finance and food security. It currently covers cooperation in 24 fields, including finance, agriculture and food, education, culture, tourism, public health, energy, and the environment. The year 2017 marked the 20th anniversary of the cooperation and "ASEAN+3 Cooperation Work Plan (2018-2022)" was adopted in August. ASEAN+3 member states have been making further progress in cooperation in various fields based on the adoption of the work plan.

In the financial area, the Agreement Establishing ASEAN+3 Macroeconomic Research Office (AMRO) entered into force in February 2016, and in the same month, AMRO opened in Singapore.

At the 18th ASEAN+3 Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in August (Manila, the Philippines), Foreign Minister Kono reviewed ASEAN+3 cooperation and explained its future direction centered on the initiatives of Japan. In addition, he explained Japan's concerns over the abductions issue, and nuclear and missile development by North Korea, the threat of terrorism in Asia, as well as regional and international affairs including Japan-China-ROK trilateral cooperation.

At the 20th ASEAN+3 Summit Meeting held in November (Manila, the Philippines), Prime Minister Abe praised the strengthening of practical cooperation among the ASEAN+3 nations as the result of the "Manila Declaration on the 20th Anniversary of ASEAN+3 Cooperation" and the "ASEAN+3 Leaders' Statement on Food Security Cooperation" adopted in commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN+3. He also made statements about the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," the "Expanded Partnership for Quality Infrastructure Initiative," the early conclusion of RCEP negotiations, and the strengthening regional energy security for the sustainable development. Furthermore, in regard to enhancing people-to-people connectivity, Prime Minister Abe declared that he would engage in the development of high-level human resources and promote their circulation between Japan and ASEAN under the "Innovative Asia Project" launched in 2017. He also declared that Japan would take a leading role in ASEAN+3 cooperation in higher education through Working Group on Mobility of Higher Education and Ensuring Quality Assurance of Higher Education among ASEAN+3 Countries and other efforts. He also stated collaboration would be promoted between ASEAN City of Culture and East Asiana Cultural Cities based on

ASEAN+3 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 6, Manila, the Philippines)

the "Kyoto Declaration 2017."

Regarding North Korea, Prime Minister Abe stressed the need to maximize pressure on North Korea, while stating his intention for Japan-China-ROK and ASEAN coordination to ensure the full implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions. In response, many countries expressed concerns regarding developments such as its nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches in North Korea.

(6) Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Cooperation

Trilateral cooperation among Japan, China, and the ROK continues to be vital on the ground that it promotes exchange 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 motive force driving the prosperity of the East Asian region, trilateral cooperation among Japan, China, and the ROK is one of the areas of cooperation which has huge latent potential in efforts to tackle various issues in the international community.

In August 2016, the Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held (Tokyo), and Foreign Minister Kishida chaired the meeting. The Foreign Ministers from the three countries discussed cooperation in a wide range of fields and regions, such as disaster management, the environment, youth exchanges, counter-terrorism, the Middle East and Africa, and agreed to further strengthen cooperation. Moreover, there were frank exchanges of opinions on regional issues such as the situation in Northeast Asia including North Korea and cooperation in East Asia. The Trilateral Summit Meeting was not held in 2017 due to scheduling difficulty. However, Japan continues to make its efforts to realize the Summit Meeting in Japan in 2018 under Japan's chairmanship.

(7) Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

Consisting of 21 countries and regions (economies) in the Asia-Pacific region, APEC promotes regional economic integration and intra-regional cooperation among the member economies on a voluntary basis. The Asia-Pacific region is positioned as the "world's growth center," so strengthening economic cooperation and relationships of trust in the APEC economic realm in this region is extremely important in pursuing Japan's further development.

At the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Da Nang, Viet Nam in 2017, extensive discussion took place on a wide range of topics, including deepening regional economic integration, strengthening MSME's competitiveness and innovation in the digital age, promoting sustainable, innovative and inclusive growth. Prime Minister Abe commented Japan's proactive stance for establishing "free and fair" trade rules, as well as Japan's initiatives such as the "productivity revolution," the "human

resources development revolution," and "digital trade" to the world. (see 3-3-1 (3)).

(8) 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, cooperation and collaboration in economic and social development and cultural areas. As of 2016, SAARC has eight member states and nine observer countries and institutions including Japan. SAARC is working primarily on economic, social, and cultural areas, through summit meetings and meetings of the Council at the ministerial level (foreign ministers' meetings). It is rather a loose framework of regional cooperation but SAARC is regaining importance recently from the viewpoint of regional connectivity. Japan is making efforts to strengthen relations with SAARC through cooperation in a wide range of fields such as democratization and peacebuilding, infrastructure, energy, disaster risk reduction, and child welfare. As part of youth exchange between Japan and the SAARC, Japan has invited around 3,000 people to date (236 people in FY2017).

Section 2 North America

Overview

(United States)

The Japan-U.S. Alliance is the cornerstone of Japan's diplomacy and security. It also plays a substantial role in regional and international peace and prosperity. Amid the increasing severity of the regional security environment including North Korea, the Japan-U.S. Alliance is becoming more and more important.

In January, Mr. Donald Trump was inaugurated as president. Under his "America First" stance, President Trump is implementing his policies, such as strengthening the economy through tax reform, etc., increasing the defense budget and reforming the immigration system.

The relationship between Japan and the U.S. is stronger than ever, against the backdrop of the close trusting relationship between Prime Minister Abe and President Trump. The two leaders have been working to closely align their policies and are closely coordinating on the North Korea issue and other issues, having conducted five summit meetings and 19 telephone conferences (as of February 2018). Their close coordination and rigorous discussion on issues such as

Prime Minister Abe and President Trump shaking hands (November 6, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

North Korea has continued in 2018 with frequent high level visits, including Vice President Pence's visit to Japan in February, Foreign Minister Kono's visit to the U.S. in March, and Prime Minister Abe's visit to the U.S. in April. On the economic front, progress has been made with cooperation under the Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue framework launched under an agreement between the leaders in February.

(Canada)

Japan and Canada are both G7 members, and cooperate closely in a wide range of fields as important partners in the Asia Pacific Region. In 2017, progress was made with cooperation between Japan and

Canada in a wide range of fields, including the field of security with, for example, a substantial agreement on an Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), as well as in the economy.

1 United States

(1) Situation of the U.S.

A Politics

On January 20, Mr. Trump was inaugurated as the 45th President of the United States. In his inaugural speech, he reemphasized his "America First" and "Make America Great Again" campaign policies and explained that he would move forward with "Buy American" and "Hire American" policies. On February 28 President Trump made a speech to a joint session of the Congress again, expressing his determination to make the U.S. a great country by, among other things, repealing the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (the so-called "Obamacare"), tax reform, investing in infrastructure, and creating a stronger economy through regulatory reform, expanding the defense budget, and reforming the immigration system.

With regard to domestic politics, President Trump took action immediately after his inauguration through administrative measures to work on repealing and reducing regulations, improving welfare for military veterans, implementing stricter immigration and refugee policies, and so on. Concerning the enactment of legislation and budgetary measures, factional conflicts sometimes forced President Trump to compromise, and slowed progress on certain measures. This is partly because the Republicans, although holding the majority in both Houses, have only a slight advantage in seats at the Senate. In May, the American Health Care Act, which was aimed at reforming and repealing Obamacare, was passed by the House of Representatives, but effectively shelved in late September due to internal conflicts of views within the Republicans in the Senate. On the other hand, with regard to tax reform, cooperation between the White House and the Republican Party helped the bill to pass in both Houses and be signed into law by President Trump on December 22.

Along with deliberations on the spending bill, the major issue in Congress in 2018 is expected to be the reform of the immigration system, including relief measures for the recipient of the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA)[1], which President Trump announced to terminate in September, and expansion of illegal immigration countermeasures including securing a budget for the construction of the wall on the border with Mexico. President Trump and Republicans in the Congress have indicated their intention of moving ahead with legislation relating to investment in infrastructure as a key part of their agenda. With factional conflict worsening as the mid-term elections approach, it is garnering interest how much Congress can achieve.

In 2017, debate on gun control was roused by a series of shooting incidents with large numbers of victims, including a shooting incident at an outdoor concert in Las Vegas in October, in which 59 people

1 The Differed Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) is a program for differing the compulsory repatriation of illegal immigrants who were children when they entered the U.S. This program was implemented by the Obama administration as an administrative measure. President Trump announced the repeal of DACA on September 5, 2017.

were killed, and another in November at a church in Sutherland Springs, Texas, in which 27 people were killed.

On the diplomatic front, the Trump administration's position of overturning the policies of the Obama administration has become increasingly evident, through withdrawing from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement, withdrawing from the Paris Agreement, changing the policy of "strategic patience" with North Korea, declining to recertify the Iran nuclear agreement, overturning the policy on Cuba, and recognition of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. President Trump has also eliminated mandatory caps on defense spending, increased the national defense budget, and is focused on rebuilding the U.S. military. On the other hand, President Trump has largely maintained the direction of the previous administration with regard to coordination with Japan and other allies; the commitment to peace, stability, and prosperity in the Asia Pacific region; and the fight against ISIL. The National Security Strategy published on December 18 indicated that the following "four pillars" would be pursued: (1) Protecting the homeland, the American people, and the American way of life; (2) Promoting American prosperity; (3) Preserving peace through strength; (4) Advancing American influence.

Although President Trump has to a certain extent implemented his campaign policies, his approval rates from May onwards have largely trended between 35% and 39%, with the 45% approval rate immediately after his inauguration remaining his highest. The administration's first-year approval rates have been relatively low compared with those of past administrations[2]. There has been a tendency for mainstream media to report on the administration's negative factors in a critical manner. One of such factors is the so-called "Russia-gate," an investigation into whether or not there was collusion between the Trump team and the Russian Government over the 2016 presidential elections. Statements by President Trump concerning conflict between white supremacists and their opponents, as well as confusion in the White House with the resignations and conflicts of core high-ranking officials were also negatively portrayed. On the other hand President Trump maintains a stable approval rate of close to 80% among Republican Party supporters.

Midterm elections will be held in 2018. Following primaries that will be held from March until September, general elections will be held on November 6. All 435 seats of the House of Representatives, 34 of the 100 seats in the Senate[3], and 36 state governorships will be contested. Regional and state government elections and public official elections will also be held. With election-related moves gaining momentum, attention is turning to whether President Trump and the Republican Party implement their policies in line with the expectations of voters, and whether the Democratic Party develops as an effective counterweight to boost their influence as an opposition party at the midterm elections.

2 According to weekly average approval rates in polling data from Gallup, Inc.
3 This includes the special election, held concurrently with the mid-term elections, to replace Senator Al Franken (Democrat, Minnesota), who resigned on January 2, 2018, for the remainder of his term (until January 2021). The interim replacement for Mr. Franken is Lieutenant Governor Smith (Democrat), who was appointed by the state governor. The number of seats up for re-election is accurate as of February 2018.

B Economy

(A) Current economic situation

The U.S. economy continued to recover steadily in 2017. The annualized real GDP growth rate for the October to December quarter (secondary estimated figures) increased by 2.5% year on year. The unemployment rate also continues to improve, dropping from 4.8% in January to 4.1% in December. While the U.S. economy's recovery is expected to continue, attention will need to be paid to future policy moves and their impact.

(B) Economic policy

Since his inauguration, President Trump has implemented policies that have considerable influence on the global economy. These include: Signing a presidential memorandum concerning withdrawal from the TPP agreement; renegotiation of the North America Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA); initiatives aimed at rectifying unfair trade including measures based on the provisions of Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act relating to iron, steel, and aluminum, and investigations into intellectual property infringement based on Section 301 of the Trade Act; withdrawal from the Paris Agreement; enactment of a tax reform bill which includes a reduction in the corporate tax rate; and negotiating revisions to the U.S.-ROK Free Trade Agreement (FTA). In his State of the Union address in January 2018, President Trump outlined the economic policy targets for the second year of his administration, including new investment in infrastructure, and stricter enforcement of the Trade Act.

With regard to financial policies, the 2007 subprime loan issue led to the incremental lowering of target policy rates, and a zero-interest-rate policy with target policy rates being set between 0% and 0.25% continued for seven years from 2008. In December 2015 the U.S. Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) decided to raise the target policy rate and end the zero-interest-rate policy. The target policy rate has been raised four times since then (in December 2016, and March, June, and December 2017). As of January 2018 the target policy rate range was between 1.25% and 1.50%. The FOMC has also announced that the stance of monetary policy remains accommodative. When making decisions on monetary policy the FOMC will look into the economic conditions and take into account a wide range of information including measures of labor market condition, indicators of inflation pressures and inflation expectations, as well as financial trends and global conditions.

(2) Japan-U.S. Political Relations

On November 10, 2016, immediately after Mr. Trump's election victory, Prime Minister Abe held a telephone talk with the president-elect to offer his congratulations. On November 17 (U.S. time) they also held a meeting in New York. These early discussions were highly significant in forming the subsequent personal relationship of trust that exists between the two heads of state.

In February, immediately after President Trump's inauguration, Prime Minister Abe visited the U.S. to hold the first Japan-U.S. summit meeting of Mr. Trump's presidency in Washington D.C. The two leaders issued a joint statement affirming their strong determination to further strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance and economic

Joint Japan-U.S. press conference (February 11, Palm Beach, U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

relations. With regard to political and security-related matters, they also issued documents affirming: (1) The commitment of the U.S. towards defending Japan including nuclear capabilities; (2) The application of Article 5 of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty to the Senkaku Islands; and (3) The relocation to Henoko is the only solution to the Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma issue. Regarding the economy, the leaders affirmed that they would continue to strengthen the economic relationship between the two countries and their respective regions based on the rules of free and fair trade. They also agreed that proactive cooperation would be pursued in individual fields that accord with the interests of both countries.

Based on this, the two heads of state decided to launch rounds of economic dialogue between Deputy Prime Minister Aso and Vice President Pence. Following the summit meeting in Washington D.C., the two heads of state travelled to Palm Beach, Florida to play golf, spent time with each other's family members, engaged in in-depth discussions, and built a robust relationship of trust.

Foreign Minister Kishida visited Washington D.C. with Prime Minister Abe and held the first Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Tillerson. The two ministers affirmed the importance of the Japan-U.S. Alliance as the cornerstone of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region, and agreed to strengthen Japan-U.S. cooperation in addressing the issues in the region. Furthermore, the two ministers shared the view that the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region is becoming increasingly severe, and in particular agreed on the importance of Japan-U.S., as well as Japan-U.S.-ROK cooperation for responding to the issues regarding North Korea's nuclear and missile development. Furthermore, Foreign Minister Kishida explained Japan's position regarding the abductions issue and affirmed that Japan and the U.S. would continue to coordinate in responding to the North Korea issue. Moreover, Secretary Tillerson reaffirmed that Article 5 of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty covered the Senkaku Islands. In addition, the two sides exchanged views regarding the relocation of MCAS Futenma and Japan-U.S. economic relations.

Secretary of State Tillerson visited Japan from March 15 to 17. Japan was the first destination on his first trip to Asia since taking office. The two countries affirmed that, based on the results of February's summit meeting, concrete cooperation between Japan and the U.S. would be pursued yet more vigorously. The two sides agreed to accelerate coordination in order to hold Japan-U.S. "2+2" talks as soon as possible, and to cooperate on reducing the burden placed on Okinawa Prefecture. The two sides also affirmed the intention to coordinate on the issue of North Korea's nuclear and missile development and the

abductions issue. Discussions were also held on the situation in East Asia, the building of a network of allies, and the economy. Foreign Minister Kishida explained that Japan would like to coordinate with the U.S. on the climate change issue, including the Paris Agreement, as a global issue that needs to be tackled by the global community, and both sides affirmed the intention to continue communicating on the issue.

In April, Foreign Minister Kishida travelled to Lucca, Italy, to attend the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and during his stay he held talks with Secretary of State Tillerson on April 10. In response to the U.S. strike against Syria on April 7, Foreign Minister Kishida communicated Japan's support for the U.S. decision to take responsibility for preventing the proliferation and use of chemical weapons, and they affirmed the intention to continue Japan-U.S. coordination on the issue. With regard to responding to the North Korea issue, the two sides reaffirmed their understanding of the vital importance of China's role and the need for close Japan-U.S. and Japan-U.S.-ROK coordination.

Vice President Pence visited Japan on April 18 and 19. Vice President Pence held the first round of the Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue with Deputy Prime Minister Aso, made a courtesy call to Prime Minister Abe, and gave a rousing speech to the U.S. military and Japanese Self Defense Force personnel on the aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. Ronald Reagan. During his courtesy call to Prime Minister Abe, Prime Minister Abe expressed Japan's approval of the Trump administration's stance of "keeping all options on the table" in its response to the North Korea issue. They agreed on the importance of close Japan-U.S. coordination on the North Korea issue, the importance of China's role, and the need to urge China to play an even larger role. They also agreed to continue Japan-U.S. coordination aimed at resolving the abductions issue as soon as possible.

Prime Minister Abe and President Trump held their second summit meeting on May 26, on the occasion of the G7 Summit in Taormina, Italy. The two leaders renewed their determination to unite against the threat of terrorism following the May 22 Manchester Arena bombing in the UK. The two leaders also discussed issues on North Korea, maritime matters including the South and East China Seas, China, and coordination at the G7 Summit.

Prime Minister Abe also held a summit meeting with President Trump on July 8 at the G20 Hamburg Summit in Germany. The leaders agreed to continue to coordinate closely on the North Korea issue and exchanged opinions on the regional situation including matters relating to China. They also affirmed their shared understanding of the fact that work by Japan and the U.S. to enhance and strengthen their relationships with other countries in the region is founded on the strong ties between Japan and the U.S. and a solid Japan-U.S. Alliance.

On August 7, while in Manila, the Philippines, to attend an ASEAN-related foreign ministerial meeting, Foreign Minister Kono held his first talks with Secretary of State Tillerson since assuming his new post. They agreed to cooperate closely to further strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance. They also agreed to continue coordinating closely on ensuring the viability of Security Council resolutions concerning sanctions on North Korea.

Foreign Minister Kono visited Washington D.C. to participate in the Japan-U.S. "2+2" talks on August 17 and met Secretary of State Tillerson. They agreed to strengthen Japan-U.S. cooperation to facilitate the maintenance of stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region based on an order characterized by freedom and openness. They also shared understanding that the international community is facing such adverse conditions that continued contact and dialogue with Russia is important. They also agreed on the importance of the rule of law on the seas. Foreign Minister Kono also stated he looks forward to seeing proactive efforts from the U.S. relating to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), including the early ratification of the said treaty, and Foreign Minister Kono and Secretary of State Tillerson agreed on Japan-U.S. cooperation aimed at preventing nuclear proliferation. They also agreed on the need to apply maximum pressure on North Korea.

On September 21, Prime Minister Abe held his fourth Summit Meeting with President Trump during a visit to New York to attend the UN General Assembly. The two leaders reaffirmed their shared understanding that North Korea's string of provocative actions pose a more serious and immediate threat to Japan and the whole global community than ever before, that the U.S. remained committed to the policy of defending Japan with all kinds of military power including both nuclear and conventional capabilities, and that the U.S. and Japan are 100 percent together. The leaders also confirmed that Japan-U.S. and Japan-U.S.-ROK would continue coordination on the issue, such as on urging collaboration on relevant countries, including China and Russia. Prime Minister Abe also asked for support and cooperation toward resolving the abductions issue as soon as possible, and President Trump gave his support.

Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministerial talks (August 7, Manila, the Philippines)

President Trump's eldest daughter, Advisor to the President of the United States Ivanka Trump, visited Japan from November 2 to 4 to attend a special seminar at a meeting of the World Assembly for Women (WAW!). Prime Minister Abe held a dinner meeting and Foreign Minister Kono and his wife held a lunch meeting with Ms. Ivanka Trump and held discussions covering a wide range of topics concerning Japan-U.S. relations including women's issues.

From November 5 to 7 President Trump and First Lady Melania Trump visited Japan—the first destination on their first tour of Asia since his inauguration (See Special Feature "President Trump's Visit to Japan"). Prime Minister Abe and President Trump affirmed once again that Japan and the U.S. are 100 percent together on the pressing issue of North Korea. They also agreed to work together on implementing the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy." President Trump and his spouse, and Prime Minister Abe and his spouse met with the families of the abduction victims and the

Special Feature

President Trump's Visit to Japan

From November 5 to 7, 2017, U.S. President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump visited Japan as the first stop on his first visit to Asia since his presidential inauguration.

Upon his arrival on November 5, President Trump joined Prime Minister Abe for lunch at Kasumigaseki Country Club in Kawagoe, Saitama Prefecture, and later played a round of golf with professional golfer, Hideki Matsuyama. Later that evening, the two leaders and their spouses had dinner at a restaurant in Tokyo. The two leaders discussed various topics concerning Japan-U.S. relations over golf and dinner, and also exchanged pleasantries in a casual manner on topics including their hobby of playing golf as well as their families.

Prime Minister Abe and President Trump taking a commemorative photograph (November 5, Saitama; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

The two leaders and their spouses attending dinner (November 5, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

On November 6, Prime Minister Abe and President Trump held a summit meeting and working lunch at the State Guest House in Akasaka. The two leaders confirmed that the two countries are 100 percent together with regard to the pressing issues on North Korea. In addition, the two leaders agreed to jointly promote the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy." Following this, both leaders and their spouses met with the families of Japanese abductees and listened attentively as the families shared their thoughts. The two leaders agreed to cooperate closely in aiming to resolve the abduction issue promptly. Subsequently, both leaders held a joint press conference and announced the results of this official visit. At night of that day, a banquet was hosted at the State Guest House in Akasaka by Prime Minister Abe and his spouse. The reception was attended by active members in the context of Japan-U.S. relations spanning various fields, who enjoyed conversations following the speeches by the two leaders.

Meeting with the families of Japanese abductees (November 6, State Guest House Akasaka Palace, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

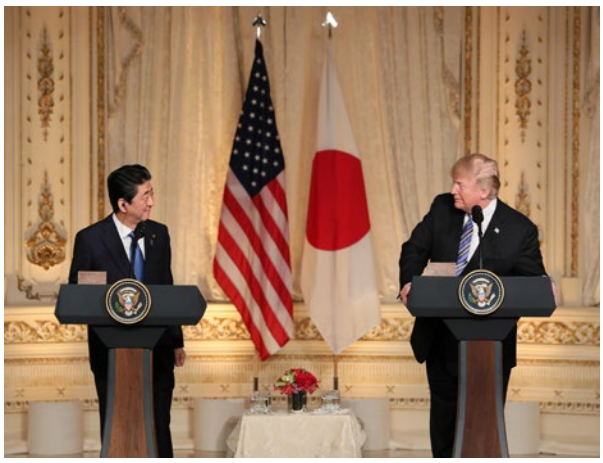
In the morning of November 7, President Trump and the First Lady wrapped up their visit

to Japan and headed for the next country on the itinerary, the Republic of Korea.

The visit to Japan by President Trump served as an opportunity to demonstrate to the world the unwavering Japan-U.S. bond amidst the increasingly severe security environment in the region, including North Korea.

The agreement to jointly promote the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" as well as the profound exchanges of ideas and adequate coordination toward President Trump's later visits to the Republic of Korea and China, and summit meetings of APEC and ASEAN, carried great significance for the Japan-U.S. alliance to assume a leading role in ensuring peace and prosperity of the region. Moreover, through the time spent together, the two leaders further deepened their personal relationship as well as their mutual trust.

Salute by the guard of honor (November 6, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



Joint press conference (April 18, 2018, Florida, U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

two leaders promised that Japan and the U.S. would cooperate closely in order to swiftly resolve the abductions issue.

Foreign Minister Kono held separate meetings with U.S. Secretary of State Tillerson and U.S. Trade Representative Lighthizer, and also received a courtesy call from Senior Advisor to the President of the United States Kushner. Discussions at the meeting with Secretary of State Tillerson involved North Korea, the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," and maintaining and enhancing the relationship of trust between Okinawa and the U.S. Forces in Japan. During Senior Advisor to the President Kushner's courtesy call, Foreign Minister Kono explained that the Middle East is one of the pillars of Japan's diplomacy and that Japan intends to become even more deeply involved than ever in the Middle East. Discussions were centered on the situation in the Middle East including Middle East peace and Iran, and they both affirmed that Japan and the U.S. would continue to coordinate on matters relating to the region.

Foreign Minister Kono visited New York in December to attend the UN Security Council Ministerial-Level Meeting on non-proliferation (North Korea). While there, Foreign Minister Kono held talks with U.S. Secretary of State Tillerson. They reaffirmed their recognition that denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is vital for the

peace and security of the region and the global community, and that it is necessary to increase the pressure on North Korea. They also affirmed that Japan and the U.S. would cooperate even more closely in their dealings with the UN Security Council.

In addition to these meetings in person, there were 17 telephone summit conferences, as well as 12 telephone conferences between Japan's Foreign Minister and the U.S. Secretary of State in 2017. Through these telephone conferences, the heads of state and the Foreign Ministers were able to directly and rapidly discuss North Korea's nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches, and facilitated a close coordinated Japan-U.S. response.

(3) Japan-U.S. Economic Relations

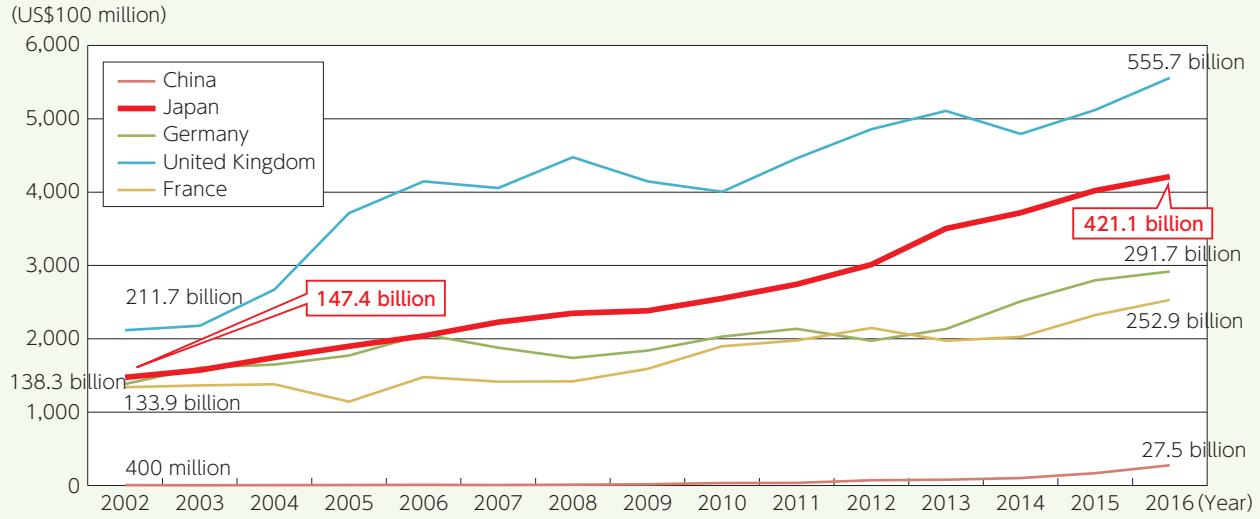
Close coordination and rigorous discussions on the North Korea issue, etc. continued in 2018 as well, with frequent high-level visits between Japan and the U.S., including Vice President Pence's visit to Japan and Foreign Minister Kono's visit to the U.S. in March.

Prime Minister Abe also visited Palm Beach, Florida in the U.S., from April 17 to April 20, 2018, and during summit talks there with President Trump, President Trump agreed that the abductions issue would be raised during the U.S.-North Korea Summit Meeting. Both leaders also affirmed the necessity of maintaining maximum pressure, and the necessity of complete, verifiable, and irreversible abandonment by North Korea of their plans concerning all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles. With regard to economic matters, the two leaders agreed to begin talks for "free, fair, and reciprocal trade deals."

Japan-U.S. economic relations are, together with security and people-to-people exchanges, one of the three pillars of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and 2017 was a year that provided an opportunity to build a new kind of Japan-U.S. economic relationship. The Japan-U.S. summit meeting held on February 10 saw the launch of the Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue chaired by Deputy Prime Minister Aso and Vice President Pence with the aim of further boosting Japan-U.S. economic relations. In the first round of Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue meetings subsequently held in April, Deputy Prime Minister Aso and Vice President Pence agreed to structure the Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue on the three pillars of shared strategies on trade and investment rules/issues, cooperation in the fields of economic and structural policy, and cooperation in other separate fields, and forge ahead with discussions based on this structure.

At the second round of meetings held in October, it was affirmed that, with the increasingly adverse security situation in the Asia-Pacific region, it is important to continue moving ahead with constructive discussion to further deepen Japan-U.S. economic relations, which are also crucial from a strategic perspective. A joint press release concerning the progress and fruits of the discussions between Japan and the U.S. was also issued. President Trump held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Abe on November 6 during his first trip to Japan. The two leaders welcomed that the importance of the strengthening of Japan-U.S. economic, trade, and investment relations was affirmed at the second round of Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue meetings, and it was agreed that the two countries would take the initiative

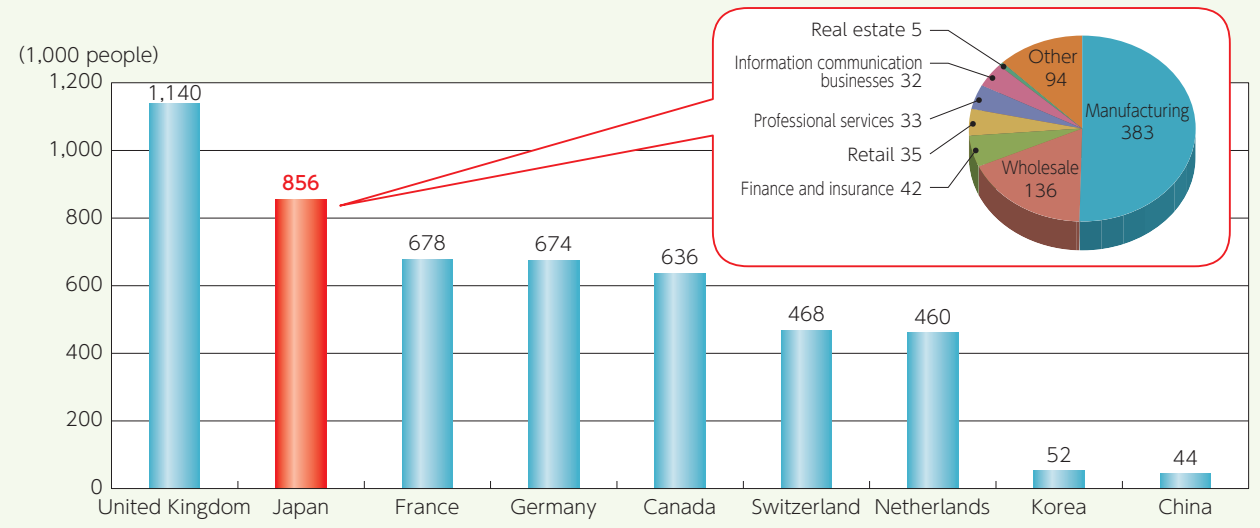
Japan ranks second in the world for cumulative FDI in the United States



(Note: Cumulative FDI in the United States by the top five countries ranked by GDP, excluding the United States)

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Department of Commerce

Japan ranks second in the world for the number of people employed by Japanese companies in the United States

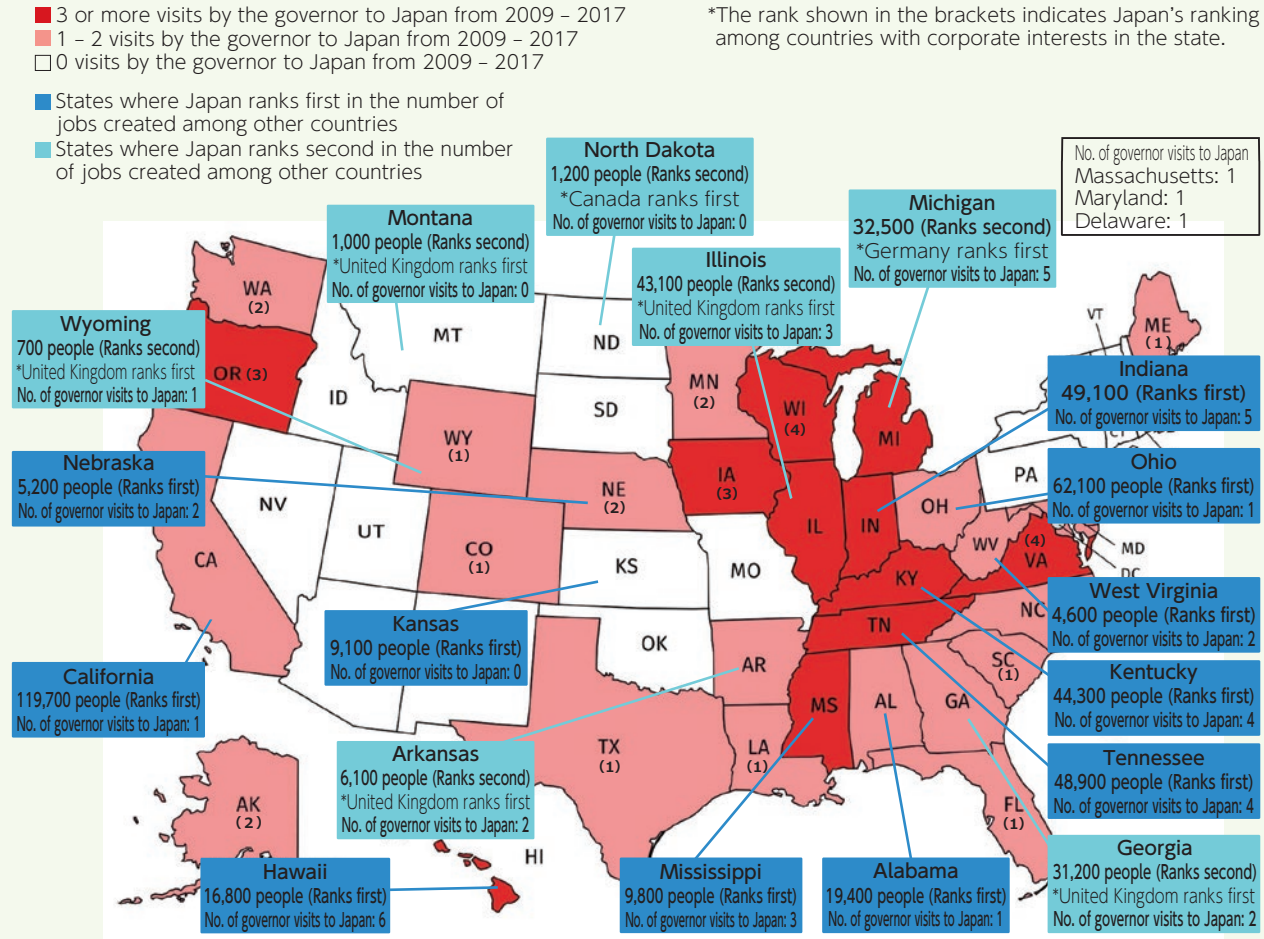


Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, Department of Commerce

Second round of Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue meetings (October 16, Washington D.C., U.S.)

in setting high standards for trade and investment throughout the Asia-Pacific region and move ahead with cooperation on law enforcement issues. It was also affirmed that initiatives in fields such as life science innovation and automobiles would be pursued. Furthermore, it was affirmed that the countries would cooperate in fields such as energy, infrastructure development in third countries, space exploration, and healthcare, and it was agreed to promote

Creation of employment by Japanese companies in each state, and visits by the governor of each state to Japan



Note: The number of visits by the governor of Guam to Japan was 5 times.

two-way investment and grassroots-level initiatives.

Of particular note in the Japan-U.S. economic relations is the investment by Japanese companies in the U.S. Currently, Japan's cumulative direct investment in the U.S. occupies the position of second highest after the UK (approximately 421.1 billion U.S. dollars (2016)). This kind of direct investment is contributing to the regional economy of the U.S. in the form of employment creation by Japanese companies in the U.S. (approximately 860,000 people (2015)), and the strengthening of the multilayered relationship of the two countries through this kind of vigorous investment and employment creation has become a rock-solid foundation for good Japan-U.S. relations that are better than ever before.

With respect to infrastructure development, Japan is working on three separate U.S. high-speed railway projects. Japan and the U.S. are cooperating on promoting the Northeast Corridor Superconducting Maglev technology, with Washington D.C. officials taking a test ride in September. In addition to a decision by the U.S. Government to provide a federal subsidy for the project, Japan has also allocated survey expenses for the project. Public and private sector lobbying for the California High-Speed Rail Project is continuing. Support is also being provided

Special Feature

Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue

Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue is an initiative undertaken to further enhance the strong economic ties between Japan and the United States led by Deputy Prime Minister Aso and Vice President of the United States Pence.

This dialogue was launched as a result of the first Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting that took place in Washington, D.C. on February 10, 2017 following the inauguration of U.S. President Trump, where the two leaders shared a mutual recognition of the importance of the Japan-U.S. economic partnership, and agreed to greatly enhance this relationship and further implement dialogue and cooperation in order to drive worldwide economic growth.

The first round of dialogue was held in April. Deputy Prime Minister Aso and Vice President Pence shared the view to conduct the dialogue following the three principle categories of common strategy on trade and investment rules and issues, cooperation in economic and structural policies, and sectoral cooperation. Following this, each task force engaged in active discussion in order to yield specific results for each of the three categories.

In the second round of dialogue in October, the two chairmen shared the importance of proceeding with productive discussions going forward in order to further enhance the critically important Japan-U.S. economic relationship from a strategic perspective, given the increasingly severe security environment in the Asia-Pacific region, followed by affirming the progress and results from the dialogue between the two countries based on the three categories initially determined in the first round. The results were announced in a joint press release.

Among the common strategies on trade and investment rules and issues, progress was seen in the fields of automotive, agriculture, life science innovation with regard to bilateral trade matters, while progress was also seen in the improved effectiveness of enforcement of unfair trade practices and discussions at the expert level concerning the promotion of advanced trade and investment standards. As for economic and structural policy cooperation, active utilization of the three arrows approach of the G7 was reaffirmed. Both countries agreed that regulatory costs for financial regulations should be adjusted while ensuring soundness and accountability. Furthermore, both Japan and the U.S. discussed ongoing collaboration for promoting sustainable and inclusive development. As for sectoral cooperation, practical, broad-based discussions were held on fields where both countries can mutually promote their economic interests and job creation, including infrastructure, energy and the digital economy. Both countries welcomed the concrete achievements for further building the win-win relationship between Japan and the U.S.

Results of the Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue were approved once again on the occasion

of the official visit by U.S. President Trump in November 2017 between the two leaders, which are becoming increasingly significant. This dialogue will continue to be held in cooperation with the U.S. Government in order to further strengthen the economic relationship between the two countries.

The first round of Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue (April 18, Tokyo)

The second round of Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue (October 16, Washington D.C., U.S.)

for realization of the Texas Central Railway Project, with the private U.S. company working on the project, Texas Central Partners (TCP), concluding a technology transfer agreement with HTeC, a subsidiary of the Central Japan Railway Company.

With regard to the energy field, progress is being seen in the areas in which Japan has been lobbying. With regard to U.S.-produced oil, an FY2016 omnibus spending bill was passed enabling the importation into Japan of U.S.-produced oil based on short-term contracts, with the first importation since the embargo was lifted occurring in May 2016. Import into Japan has been taking place intermittently since then. The first liquefied natural gas (LNG) exportation base on the U.S. mainland launched operations in February 2016 and exports to Japan began in January 2017. The first long-term contract importation of LNG is expected to begin as early as the first half of 2018. It is hoped that these achievements will contribute significantly to Japan's energy security and the stability of Japan's energy supply.

With regard to the technology field, Japan-U.S. cooperation on supporting startups and innovation creation is being strengthened in addition to Japan-U.S. cooperation in scientific technology fields such as cyber-technologies, life sciences, robotics, and space. Of particular note was the 5th round of Japan-U.S. Cyber Dialogue meetings held in July which provided an opportunity for discussions on wide-ranging Japan-U.S. cooperation on issues such as cooperation in the international arena and support for capacity-building. At the 8th U.S.-Japan Policy Cooperation Dialogue on the Internet Economy director-general level meetings in September, discussions covered issues such as cross-border data distribution, privacy protection, and digital trade, and the results of the discussions were issued in a joint press release and were also reported at the 2nd round of Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue meetings.

With regard to the investment and tourism fields, during Prime Minister Abe's visit to New York in September to attend the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister

Abe attended a social gathering for U.S. CEOs, which world-famous businesspeople, investors, and others were invited. At the gathering Prime Minister Abe engaged in discussions concerning the kinds of measures the Government of Japan ought to take to encourage foreign investment in Japan. Prime Minister Abe also attended a food and tourism reception organized by the Government of Japan and the Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO) to help promote the charms of Japan's regions and food culture.

Progress is also being made with regional-level cooperation in the U.S. State-level relations have been strengthened with the drafting of a memorandum of cooperation with the State of Indiana in September in addition to memoranda of cooperation with the states of California, Washington, and Maryland. Based on the idea that easing the acquisition of local driving licenses is an important aspect in helping Japanese citizens to prepare themselves for life in the U.S., memoranda of cooperation concerning reciprocal exemptions of parts of driving license tests were drafted with the state of Maryland in November 2015 and the state of Washington in November 2016. As a result, from January 2017, applicants holding Japanese driving licenses are exempted from the academic and technical test sections of driving license tests in the state of Washington. This initiative will be expanded to other areas based on comprehensive evaluations of traffic conditions in each locality.

Based on the understanding that devising grassroots initiatives that reach members of the general public is an important way to further strengthen Japan-U.S. ties, a "Grassroots Government Taskforce on Strengthening Japan-U.S. Ties" was launched in April. The task force so far has had three rounds of discussions under Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Koichi Hagiuda, and drafted an action plan setting out guidelines for the implementation of specific initiatives. At a follow-up meeting held on December 8 under Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Nishimura, reports were made on specific initiatives implemented in accordance with the abovementioned action plan and discussions were held on measures to enhance those initiatives. Based on the understanding, set out in the action plan, that a tailor-made approach that accords with the characteristics of each region and the level of interest in Japan of the target regions is necessary, a wide range of initiatives are being implemented in different parts of the U.S. including a "regional caravan" that travels to areas in which multiple Japanese companies operate, combined events that promote understanding of Japan, and sports days. A wide range of initiatives will be implemented to further boost Japan-U.S. relations and further strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

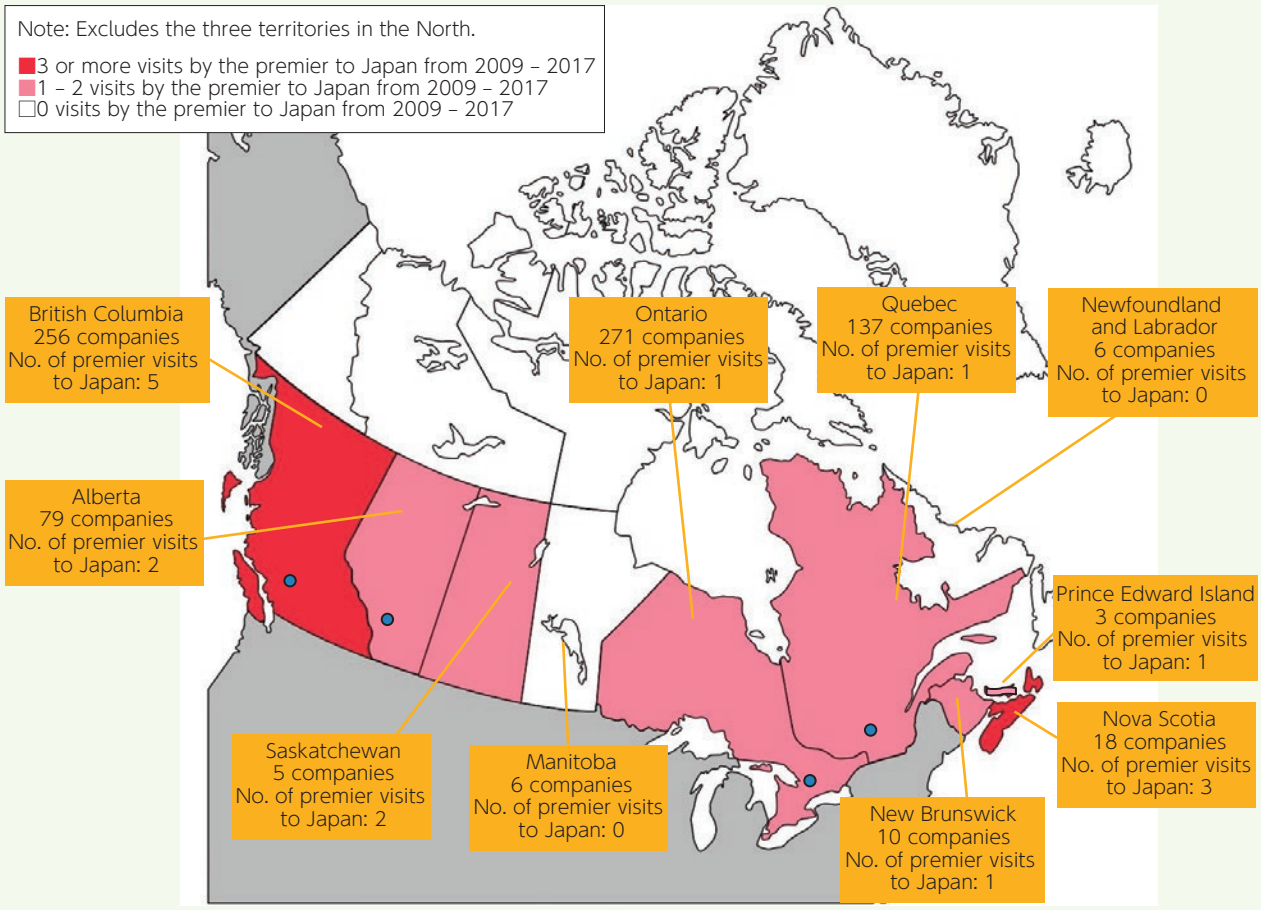
2 Canada

(1) Situations of Canada

The Trudeau administration, inaugurated in November 2015, is running the Government steadily backed by a stable approval rating.

On the diplomacy front, Canada has traditionally engaged in diplomacy in multinational venues such as the UN, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the G7, the G20, and the Organization of American States (OAS), based on close U.S.-Canada relations. The Trudeau

Number of Japanese companies in each province, and visits by the premier of each province to Japan



Data source: Surveys conducted by the respective diplomatic and consular missions (February 2018)

administration, in particular, has based its diplomatic policies on multilateralism, and is returning to multinational diplomacy through active engagements in humanitarian and international cooperation efforts, such as accepting Syrian refugees and the ratification of the Paris Agreement on climate change. At the same time, the administration is showing a proactive stance towards bilateral diplomacy through high-level foreign visits and dialogues with foreign leaders.

On the economic front, against the backdrop of favorable economic conditions, the Trudeau Government is moving ahead with proactive policies in principle aimed at the creation of employment and wealth for the middle class, as well as enhancement of investment in domestic infrastructures, including through the establishment of the Canada Infrastructure Bank. With regard to international economic matters, Canada is advancing its basic policy of progressive trade aimed at the creation of employment for the middle class, under which it has worked to promote the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA), to strengthen North American economic relations and economic relations with emerging markets such as China and India.

(2) Japan-Canada Relations

Japan and Canada are important partners for each other in the Asia-Pacific region. As G7 members, the two countries also cooperate closely in a wide range of fields

Prime Minister Abe shaking hands with Prime Minister Trudeau (November 10, Danang, Vietnam; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japan-Canada Foreign Ministerial talks (November 8, Danang, Vietnam)

including politics, economics, security, and people-to-people exchanges.

In May, Prime Ministers Abe and Trudeau spoke briefly at the G7 Summit held in Taormina, Italy, and welcomed the agreement in principle on the Japan-Canada Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) and agreed to continue working towards signing the agreement as soon as possible. The two leaders also held three telephone conferences in February, June, and October, during which they engaged in intensive discussion centering on the regional situation, including the North Korea issue, and trade-related issues such as the TPP agreement.

In September, Foreign Minister Kono held talks with Foreign Minister Freeland in New York on the occasion of the UN General Assembly. The two ministers agreed to engage in bilateral coordination on maximizing pressure on North Korea and cooperation aimed at resolving the abductions issue. The ministers also exchanged their views on the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and reform of the UN Security Council, and affirmed that Japan and Canada would promote bilateral and international cooperation under the "A New Era for Cooperation between Japan and Canada" framework. The ministers also held talks on November 8 during the APEC ministerial meetings in Danang, Vietnam, and reaffirmed the need to maximize pressure on North Korea. They also discussed the strengthening of bilateral relations and issues in the international arena such as the promotion of free trade, nuclear disarmament, and reform of the UN Security Council.

In March 2018, Canada, together with ten other countries, signed the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (The TPP 11), in Chile, where Canada announced that it will move ahead with necessary domestic processes for an early ratification. This means the establishment of an economic partnership agreement between Japan and Canada is expected, and that economic relations between the two countries will be further strengthened.

The 10th Japan-Canada Political-Military and Military-Military (PM/MM) talks were held in Ottawa in December, and the two countries affirmed the continuation of bilateral coordination on security. The 15th Japan-Canada Symposium on Peace and Security Cooperation, also held in Ottawa,

was attended by government officials from both countries and saw a vigorous exchange of opinions.

There have also been frequent high-level Japan-Canada visits, with visits to Japan from members of the federal Government of Canada, such as Minister of International Trade Champagne, Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities Qualtrough, and the premiers of Alberta, British Columbia, and Nova Scotia.

Column

50th Anniversary of the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden

A large number of Nikkei people were forcibly relocated from British Columbia to Lethbridge, Alberta during World War II. As a result, there remains a large Nikkei population living in Lethbridge today. The city is also home to The Nikkei Cultural Society of Lethbridge and Area.

The Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden first opened in 1967, marking the 100th anniversary of the confederation of Canada, to commemorate the contribution of Nikkei people to the multicultural society of Lethbridge. Since then, as a symbol of the friendship between Japan and Canada, the garden has become an important tourist resource for the city of Lethbridge as well as a place of recreation for local people.

During the construction of this garden, utmost care was taken to incorporate a traditional Japanese aesthetic philosophy as well as the local vegetation, topography and culture of Alberta. Today, the garden represents an amalgamation of Japanese culture and the natural beauty of Alberta. The garden is used to host a variety of Japanese cultural events, including tea ceremony demonstrations and *Bonsai* exhibitions.

The Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden has close ties with Japan's Imperial Family. The garden's opening ceremony in 1967 was graced by Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Takamatsu, and the 25th anniversary celebration held in 1992 was graced by Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Takamado. In 2017, a large celebration was held for two days on July 14 and 15 to commemorate the garden's 50th anniversary, which was graced by Her Imperial Highness Princess Ayako of Takamado. In remarks at the festivities, Her Imperial Highness extolled the achievements of Japanese-Canadians who have overcome a great deal to establish their current position in society, and indicated that the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden—long maintained and cared for by the people of Lethbridge—stands as a symbol of the friendship of not only Japan and Canada but also Japanese-Canadians and both countries, sharing her hope that this relationship will continue forever.

In addition, Consul General Kunihiko Tanabe of the Consultate-General of Japan in Calgary awarded the 2017 Foreign Minister Commendation to the Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden, lauding the garden's role in promoting friendly relations between Japan and Canada as well as promoting understanding of Japan.

Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden

Unveiling ceremony for the 50th anniversary commemorative monument at Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden graced by Her Imperial Highness Princess Ayako of Takamado
(July 14, Lethbridge, Canada, Photo: Nikka Yuko Japanese Garden)

Section 3 Latin America and the Caribbean

Overview

(Situations in Latin America and the Caribbean)

Latin American and the Caribbean (hereafter referred to as "LAC") region consists of 33 countries that have a population of more than 600 million and a GDP of roughly 5.2 trillion US dollars. Accounting for nearly 17% of the United Nations (UN) membership, it has a huge presence in the international arena. Moreover, it has a large production of food, minerals, energy, natural resources as well as a rapidly growing market and considerable economic potential.

While some parts of the region recorded negative economic growth in 2016 due to the declining price of natural resources in recent years, it was predicted that they would recover a positive growth in 2017. Although they struggle with the plunge of the price of natural resources, LAC region is enhancing its profile with its free trade policy among the global value chain, especially the countries promoting economic reform and an open market. LAC countries are important partners for Japan, a standard-bearer of free trade. As LAC countries are beginning to "graduate" from recipient countries, support and triangular cooperation in the fields of high-demand will be required to expand.

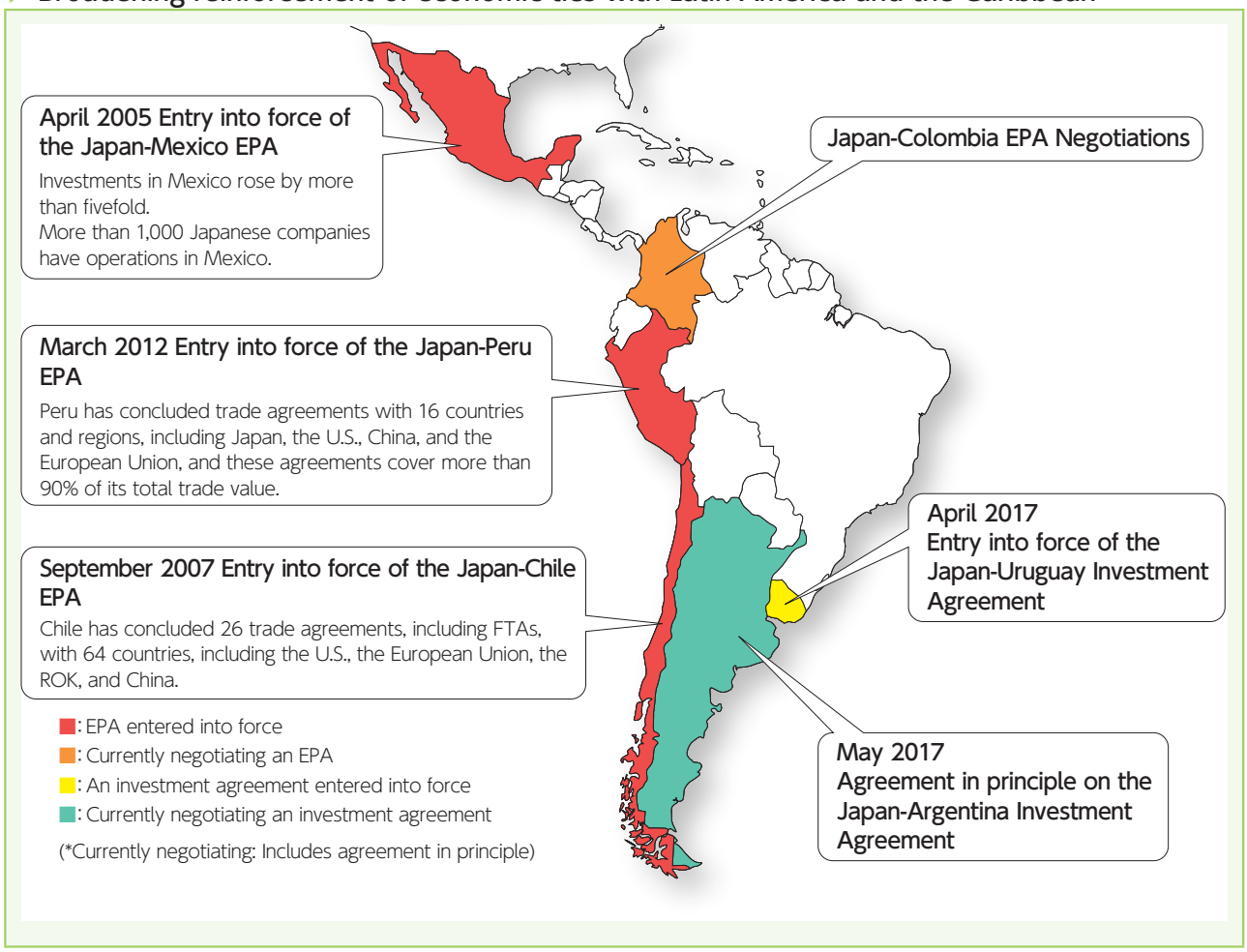
Many LAC countries share fundamental values with Japan, such as liberalism and democracy. The great majority of LAC countries have been working together with Japan on the international pressure campaign against North Korea by means of immediately issuing a number of statements criticizing North Korea's nuclear tests and its launches of ballistic missiles. This includes collaboration with other global issues such as environment, climate change, disarmament, and non-proliferation.

LAC region is a home to the community of Japanese immigrants and descendants (the Nikkei community) numbering 2.1 million, 60% of the whole world's Nikkei population. This is a bond that is unique to Japan. Contributions by Nikkei people to the local community for more than 100 years have established a traditional affinity towards Japan.

(Japanese Diplomacy towards Latin America and the Caribbean countries)

Japan's diplomacy towards LAC region

Broadening reinforcement of economic ties with Latin America and the Caribbean



Japan-CELAC Extended Troika Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September 21, New York)

Grand opening of the Japan House (April 30, São Paulo, Brazil; Photo: Marcos Corrêa / PR)

has developed under the guiding principle of the three "Juntos" ("progress together," "lead together," and "inspire together") announced by Prime Minister Abe during the visit to the region in 2014. The number of the mutual visits have never been greater than that of recent years. In 2017, Japan welcomed numerous dignitaries from LAC countries while Japanese high-ranking officials from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other ministries carried out more than 50 visits to that region.

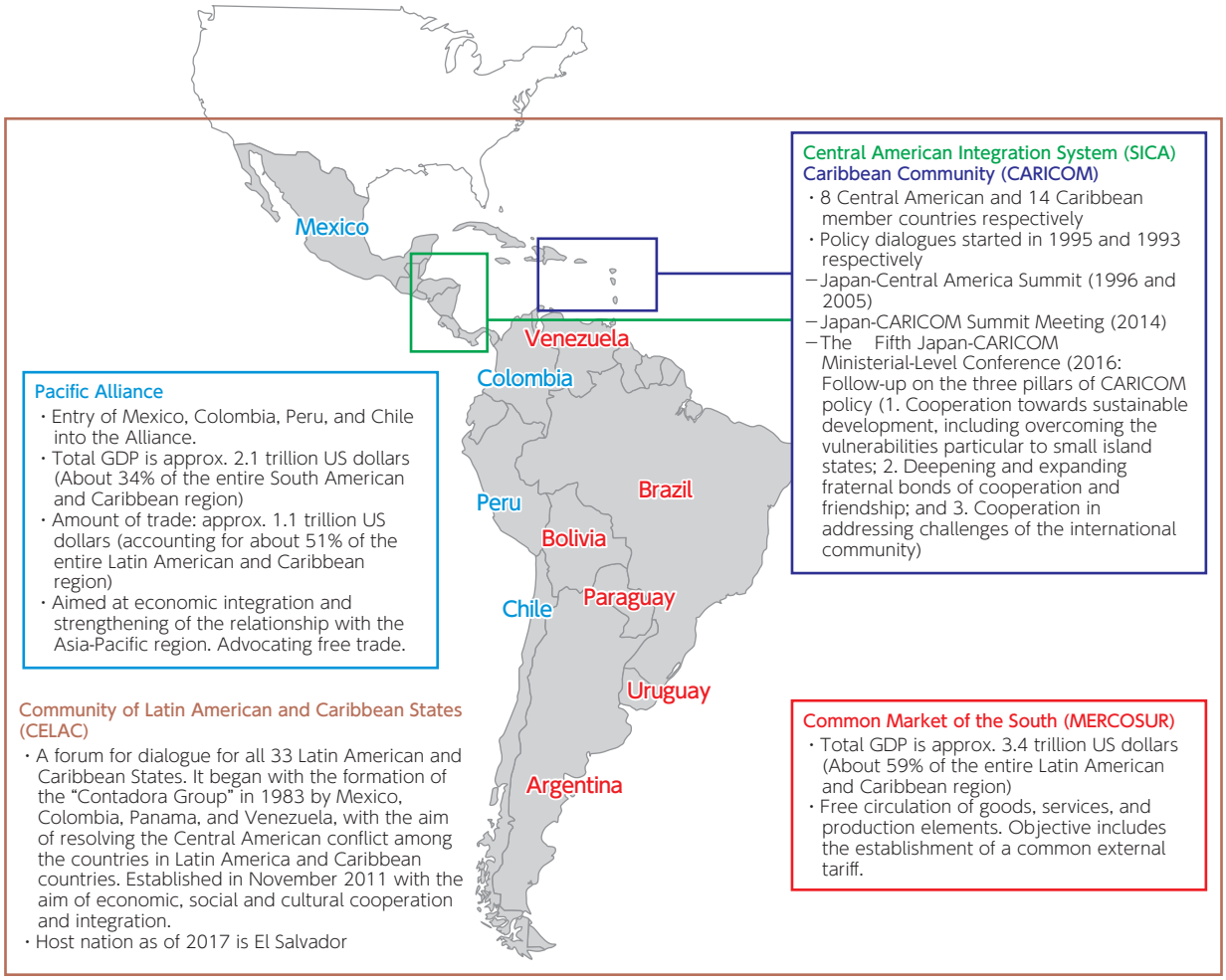
On the economic front, Japan is working with those countries aiming at "progressing

together." In 2017, Japan worked hard with LAC countries for reaching an agreement in principal of TPP11, and held a range of policy dialogue on Japanese companies operating in the region and its business environment. Moreover, under the "lead together" principle, Japan is working with LAC countries as a partner in solving common issues of the international community. In 2017 many meetings were held; bilateral meetings including the three summits, Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the Forum for East Asia–Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC) in August, and the Japan-CELAC (Community of Latin America and Caribbean States) Extended Troika Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Regarding the efforts on the "inspire together" principle, Japan is strengthening collaboration especially with the Nikkei community, and amplifying further its efforts in the areas of business, culture, science, and technology. In addition to promoting people-to-people exchange through a range of invitation programs, Japan opened Japan House in São Paulo (Brazil) in April 2017.

1 Regional Organizations

Japan is collaborating with the regional organizations in LAC region such as CELAC, FEALAC and other organizations below;

Regional Organizations in Latin America and the Caribbean



(1) Pacific Alliance

The Pacific Alliance (Mexico, Colombia, Peru, and Chile; hereafter referred as "PA") was established by the agreement signed in June 2012.

With the goal of integrating the markets of member countries, the PA immediately eliminated tariffs of the 92% of products traded within the region in accordance with the Additional Protocol to the Framework Agreement (of the PA), which entered into force in May 2016. At the summit held in June 2017, the Alliance announced that it would launch a negotiation with Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and Singapore so that they are to be "associate members" when they conclude a comprehensive agreement with the PA members.

Japan has been an observer nation since 2013. With three, Japan concluded EPAs and with the other one, Japan is negotiating EPAs in order to strengthen collaboration across the Pacific ocean.

(2) Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR)

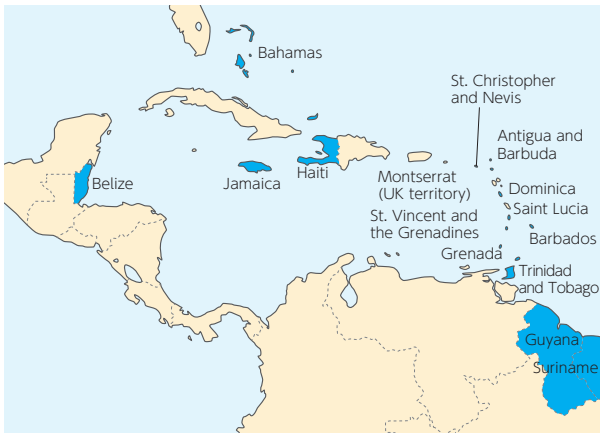
The Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) is a customs union established in 1995 in order to eliminate tariffs within the region, among other goals. Its members are Argentina, Bolivia[1], Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay, and Venezuela[2]. With a few exceptions, tariffs have been eliminated for all goods traded within the region since January 1995.

Regarding the relationship between Japan and MERCOSUR, the first "Dialogue to Strengthen the Economic Relationship between Mercosur and Japan" was held in November 2012 and four dialogues in total have been held up to the present. The most recent dialogue was held in May 2017, where Japan and MERCOSUR nations exchanged views on recent trade policies and experiences.

(3) Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) was founded by 14 Caribbean nations (See the figure) for its economic integration and foreign policy coordination. It shows a big presence in the international arena for their coordinated actions. On the other hand, this region suffers from catastrophic hurricanes almost every year. For the damages, Japan provided emergency relief goods to Antigua and Barbuda for those affected by Hurricane Irma and to the Commonwealth of Dominica for those hit by Hurricane Maria in September 2017.

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



CARICOM member states and regions

1 Accession protocol was signed in December 2012. Ratification by each country's congressional assembly is currently underway.
2 Membership currently suspended as of December 2017.

community) announced by Prime Minister Abe in 2014 during a visit to Trinidad and Tabago. Japan is also providing support to high income level countries based on their development needs and economic capabilities. Japan also took a number of other opportunities to further develop its relationship with CARICOM in 2017, including the attendance of Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei at the meeting of the Council of Foreign and Community Relations of CARICOM (COFCOR) in May and the visit of Secretary-General of CARICOM Secretariat, LaRocque to Japan in July.

2 Situation in Latin America and the Caribbean Region

(1) Mexico

By promoting a free and open market system through economic reforms, free-trade agreements, and participation in the global value chain, Mexico plays an important role in the international community with its embracing values such as democracy and liberalism. Regarding the issue related to North Korea, Mexico took measures to step up pressure on North Korea issuing "persona non grata" to the "Ambassador" of North Korea. In 2017 Japan and Mexico collaborated on various areas such as the follow-up of the renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and an early entry into force of TPP11.

Japan-Mexico Summit Meeting (November 10, Da Nang, Viet Nam; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Foreign Minister Kono shaking hands with Secretary of Foreign Affairs Videgaray (September 20, New York)

2018 marks the 130th anniversary of the diplomatic relations between Japan and Mexico which has been cherished by the traditional friendship. Mexico has become the region's biggest economic base for Japan; over 1,100 Japanese companies now operate in the country. In 2017, the Foreign Ministers' meeting (July) and the summit (November) provided the two countries with opportunities to strengthen coordination on common agendas. Japan also dispatched the Japan Disaster Relief teams in response to the earthquake in September, whose activities moved Mexican people after being widely publicized in the news and on social media.

(2) Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Panama, Belize, and Honduras)

Central America is drawing international attention for its geopolitical importance; located between two oceans and the North and South American continents, and its population of 58 million. Central American

Japan-Panama Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September 1, Tokyo)

countries are currently pursuing economic integration within the region through the Central American Integration System (SICA) as well as the external trade connections. In recent years, democracy is being rooted in this region and stable economic growth is being achieved. However, they still have to tackle with the unstable safety attributable to crimes committed by drug trafficking organizations and youth violent crime organizations (called "MARAS").

Japan is strengthening relations with Central American countries through SICA, setting its principal policy on development cooperation. Japan continuously holds policy dialogues; such high-level dialogue includes Foreign Ministers' visit to Japan from Panama and Costa Rica (both in September).

(3) Cuba

In Cuba, on one hand, former President of the Council of State Castro maintained a stable administration, on the other hand, it faces some challenges; Cuba-U.S. relations, and a need to boost foreign investment and develop domestic industries. For the good bilateral relationship, Japan and Cuba have had active high-level exchange in recent years. In addition to a visit to Cuba by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sonoura in March, Japan-Cuba policy dialogue was held in Tokyo in September.

(4) Brazil

Along with being the top power in Latin America, Brazil has a Nikkei community of approximately 1.9 million, the largest of such community in the world. Because of this, the country has become known as one of the world's most pro-Japanese countries. Brazil has established strong bilateral relations as a Strategic Global Partnership that shares fundamental values with Japan and works with Japan in many areas in the international arena.

While domestic political upheaval, stagnant resource prices, and other factors led to negative economic growth for two consecutive years in 2015 and 2016, Japanese companies continue to have a strong faith in the Brazilian market. Evidence of this is clear from the participation of nearly 130 people in a joint meeting of the Japan-Brazil Economic Cooperation Committees in August, and the holding of a Japan Brazil Meeting for Cooperation on Infrastructure Improvements that same month.

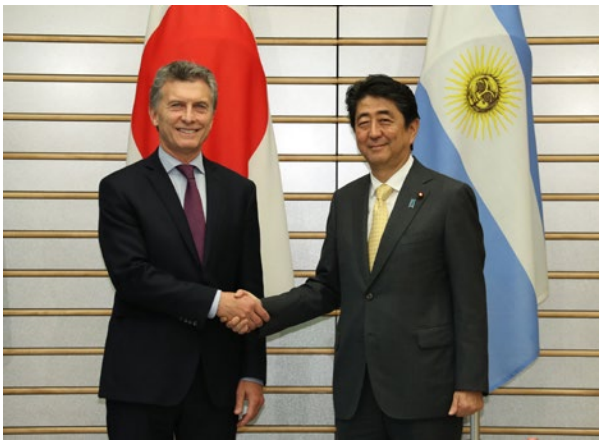
In April, Japan House São Paulo, a new base of information dissemination for Japan,

Japan - Brazil Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September 20, New York; Photo: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil)

was established with an event attended by VIPs from both countries, including Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aso, President Temer and Foreign Minister Nunes. Moreover, Japan-Brazil Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in New York in September. In January 2018, a Consulate-General was opened in Recife.

(5) Argentina

The Macri administration, which has conducted liberal and open policies, was recently strengthened by the results of a midterm congressional election held in October 2017, which saw the ruling party advance to being the dominant political force in the country. In terms of relations with Japan, President Macri made a visit to Japan in May that resulted in leaders of both countries expressing an intent to step up collaboration in a range of fields as "strategic partners" that share the fundamental values, as well as to bolster exchange on the occasion of attaining 120 years of diplomatic relations in 2018.



Japan-Argentina Summit Meeting (May 19, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

(6) Peru

The Kuczynski administration has practiced liberal economic policies since its inception in July 2016. A resolution

Prime Minister Abe shaking hands with President Kuczynski (November 10, Da Nang, Vietnam; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

to impeach President Kuczynski was submitted to the Peruvian Congress in December 2017 but was rejected. In terms of bilateral relations, VIPs made frequent mutual visits, including a visit to Japan by First Vice President Vizcarra. In November, Summit and Foreign Ministers' Meeting were held to coincide with APEC Viet Nam 2017. Participants confirmed that consistent progress was being made concerning strategic partnerships and that exchange would be further expanded in a wide range of areas in preparation for 2019, dubbed the "Japan-Peru Friendship Year." Regarding the issues concerning North Korea, Peru has taken measures to increase pressure on North Korea's including by notifying the North Korea's "ambassador" to Peru to leave the country.

(7) Chile

2017 marked 120 years of diplomatic relations between Japan and Chile, and saw frequent mutual high-level visits. Various commemorative events were also held. During a visit to Japan by President Bachelet, in February 2018, the two countries expressed their intent to step up collaboration in various ways both

Japan-Chile Summit Meeting (February 23, 2018, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

bilaterally and internationally as "strategic partners" that share fundamental values. In domestic affairs, presidential candidate Piñera (a former president) was elected in a runoff to the presidential elections in December, and the new administration began in March 2018.

(8) Uruguay

The Vazquez administration has been actively promoting policies concerning society, education, and hygiene. On the economic front, Japan and Uruguay signed an investment agreement in April 2017. In the international arena, both countries worked closely as non-permanent members of the UN Security Council in 2016 and 2017.

(9) Paraguay

Since the inauguration of President Cartes in 2013, Paraguay has been aiming at the eradication of poverty as a priority of the administration, as well as actively promoting foreign investments. Japan and Paraguay maintain a friendly and cooperative relationship that has been built on economic cooperation and a Nikkei community with approximately 10,000 people.

Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Okamoto attending the dedication ceremony for the Project for road improvement in Yaguarón through Grant Assistance for Grass-Roots Human Security Project (September 1, Yaguarón, Paraguay)

(10) Colombia

Along with the disarmament of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia that followed the agreement in the peace negotiations, 2016 saw the beginning of peace negotiations with the National Liberation Army. Progress has since been made in the peace process. In June, Japan and Colombia exchanged notes concerning provision of demining equipment, etc., with Japan agreeing to provide grant aid amounting to 1 billion Japanese yen. To coincide with 110 years of diplomatic relations between the two countries, Colombia plans to open the Center for Japanese Culture, Economics, and Academics in 2018.

(11) Venezuela

Social stability faltered as street demonstrations were widely held in response to the decision by Venezuela's Supreme Court to assume legislative functions in place of the country's legislative body. The results of Constituent Assembly elections in July prompted increased criticism and sanctions against the current administration by the U.S. and

other countries. While seeking a return to democracy in Venezuela, Japan continues to provide public welfare support in order to promote human security in the country.

(12) Bolivia

Now in its 11th year, the President Morales administration continues its extended rule. During this time, an abundance of natural resources have led to an average annual growth rate of 5%. With regard to Japan-Bolivia relations, Sports Minister Montano paid a visit to Japan in October, signing a Memorandum of Cooperation in the field of Sports between the Ministry of Sports of the Plurinational State of Bolivia and the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan

(13) Ecuador

The Moreno administration was inaugurated in May. In December, Minister of International Trade Campana made a visit to Japan to brief Japanese leaders on the new administration's economic policies and new investment opportunities in Ecuador. 2018 marks 100 years of diplomatic relations between Japan and Ecuador.

(14) Collaboration with Nikkei Communities

With a Nikkei community of approximately 2.1 million, Latin America has the world's largest Nikkei community outside Japan. The diligent and reliable nature that Nikkei people have consistently demonstrated has won the respect and trust of people in the region and has formed the foundation for the trust that LAC countries place in Japan today.

It has been more than 100 years since Japanese immigration to LAC began. As transitions from one generation to the next among Nikkei communities advance, the generation of young people with little connection to Japan grows in number. At the same time, an increasing number of non-Japanese locals are taking part in Nikkei community activities, giving rise to border-transcending networks of Nikkei people among the new generations.

These circumstances prompted the formation of the "Panel of Experts on Collaborating with Communities of Japanese Immigrants and Descendants ("Nikkei") in Latin America and the Caribbean," which issued a report in May.

In line with the basic approach announced by Prime Minister Abe ((1) Nikkei communities are the foundation of the trust felt by Latin America and the Caribbean towards Japan, (2) Strengthening coordination with young Nikkei leaders, and (3) Making Japan into a country that Nikkei people can be proud of) during his visit to LAC in 2014, the report laid out "All-Japan" initiatives and other specific efforts aimed at strengthening coordination between Japan and Nikkei communities in LAC.

Special Feature

120th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Chile - Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino's Visit to Chile -

1. 120 Years of History Between Japan and Chile

Chile is located in South America, on the opposite side of the globe from Japan. Japan and Chile established their diplomatic relations through the signing of the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation in 1897. Japan was the first country in Asia with which Chile established diplomatic relations. The two countries, which share fundamental values, have deepened their friendship in a number of fields over the years.

For Japan, Chile is an important country as a supplier of resources including minerals and foods. For example, Chile is the largest supplier of copper in the world, accounting for a 30% share of world copper production, and the largest supplier to Japan. In recent years, products from Chile, such as salmon, wine, as well as fresh fruits are often found at Japanese supermarkets. Technical cooperation provided by Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) starting in the 1970's, has contributed considerably to the development of salmon farming in Chile.

The Easter Island of Chile is famous for statues of *moai*, and a statue made with rocks from Easter Island was donated to Minamisanriku Town in Miyagi Prefecture. This relationship originally started from the *tsunami* that reached Minamisanriku Town following the major earthquake in Chile in 1960. Japan and Chile are "neighboring countries" across the Pacific Ocean, and share the common challenge of threats from natural disasters, including earthquakes and *tsunami*.

2. 120th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Chile

Japan and Chile celebrated the 120th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations in 2017.

In Chile, many commemorative events were held with the cooperation of Japanese companies and the Japanese Nikkei communities, including a concert by Tokyo Geidai Philharmonia Orchestra at Teatro Municipal de Santiago. Those cultural events were held with great support from the Japanese Chapter of the Japan-Chile Business Cooperation Committee comprised of private businesses from both Japan and Chile.

The highlight of the 120th anniversary celebration was the visit to Chile by Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino. At the invitation from the Chilean Government, Their Imperial Highnesses spent time in Chile from September 26 to October 2, with a courtesy call to President Bachelet, and they graced the 120th anniversary Commemoration of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Chile. A luncheon to

welcome Their Imperial Highnesses was hosted by President Bachelet with Chilean government officials and Chileans who were deeply connected to Japan. Their Imperial Highnesses also visited the regions of Valparaiso and Los Lagos, where they were warmly welcomed.

Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino meeting with President Bachelet at the commemorative ceremony of the 120th Anniversary of diplomatic relations (October 27, Santiago, Chile, Photo: The Asahi Shimbun)

The visit by Their Imperial Highnesses Prince and Princess Akishino to Chile marked a new page for exchanges between the two countries and served as an important opportunity to further enhance the existing friendly relationship. It is hoped that based on the strong foundation of trust and friendship between the Governments and people of Japan and Chile, the bilateral relationship in the next 120 years will be further developed.

Section 4 Europe

Overview

(The Importance of Europe)

The European Union (EU), composed of 28 member states, is pursuing common policies across a broad spectrum of fields that range from diplomacy to security, economy, and state finance. The EU, among which are permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, G7 member states, and other member states of major international frameworks, plays a major role in formulating standards in the international community. In economic terms, the EU accounts for roughly 22% of global gross domestic product (GDP) and has considerable influence on international public opinion due to its languages, history, cultural and artistic activities, and prominent media groups and think tanks, among other things. Although the effects of Brexit, for which negotiations are currently taking place, will need to be continuously monitored, Europe will remain an important region even after the UK withdraws from the EU.

(Issues Faced by Europe)

For Europe, 2017 was a year of rising out of former crises and achieving moderate economic growth, and of making a certain measure of progress towards problems the region faces - progress that included a significant drop in numbers of immigrants and refugees entering the region. At the same time, due to factors such as continued levels of high debt and the unemployment rate in southern European countries, no improvement was made in closing the economic gap between northern and southern Europe. In addition, certain Eastern European countries are reacting against the EU's immigration and refugee policies, while the entire region faces rampant terrorist attacks, cyber attacks, and other such hybrid threats that involve multiple means of attack. The Ukrainian crisis also remains a critical issue for Europe as it has serious implications for Europe's security environment. Furthermore, the UK and the EU have currently been conducting Brexit negotiations. Thus, how to address problems within Europe is an important issue for the EU.

European countries and the EU are therefore stepping up collaborative efforts towards problems concerning immigrants, refugees, terrorism and security including

those approached through NATO, while making efforts to maintain and strengthen alliances with the United States. Along with security-related cooperation through efforts that include establishment of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), a defense cooperation framework under the Treaty on European Union, EU member states are having discussions on a new trajectory for European integration to coincide with the 60 year anniversary of the Treaty of Rome[1].

Meanwhile, European countries are facing the rise of populism due to the rise of voters' discontent towards political establishments in the EU and its member states. Populist parties demonstrated a certain level of influence in the national elections held in France, the UK, Germany, and other European countries in 2017, and such impacts on the European situations needs to be continuously monitored.

(The Threat of Terrorism)

Frequent indiscriminate terrorist attacks in Europe remain a threat. A terrorist attack in London (UK) in March was followed by an April attack in Stockholm (Sweden), a May attack in Manchester (UK), August attacks in Turku (Finland) and Barcelona (Spain), and another terrorist attack again in London in September, respectively. Consequently, there is a pressing need for EU member states to formulate domestic legislation in accordance with a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on combating terrorism adopted by the European Parliament on February 16.

(Diplomatic Relations with Europe)

In sharing fundamental values and principles concerning things such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, Japan and Europe are strengthening ties based on a strong commitment to maintaining and bolstering a free and open international order. Japan strengthened cooperation with European countries that have leadership roles in the international community, such as Italy and Germany, the chair countries of G7 and G20 respectively, towards maintaining and advancing a free and open international order at the top level. Prime Minister Abe visited Germany, France, Belgium (EU), and Italy in March, followed by the visits to Russia and the UK in May. Prime Minister Abe had rounds of talks with these G7 members for the G7 Summit in Taormina, Italy, which he attended at the end of May. After that, he visited Malta as the first Japanese Prime Minister to visit there. He also visited Hamburg, Germany to attend the G20 Summit at the beginning of July. On that occasion, he visited Belgium (the EU and NATO), Sweden, Finland, and Denmark as well. These were followed by his visits to Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Bulgaria, Serbia, and Romania in January 2018. Foreign Minister Kishida visited France, the Czech Republic, and Ireland at the very beginning of the year, followed by his visits to Bonn, Germany for the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in February, and to Lucca, Italy for the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in April. During these visits, Foreign Minister Kishida also visited Belgium in July and reached an agreement in principle of the Japan-EU Economic

1 Treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC) and treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM). These were signed by Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and West Germany in 1957.

Partnership Agreement (EPA). To coincide with the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly, Foreign Minister Kono held the Foreign Ministers' Meeting with the EU and European countries in September. Then in December he visited France to attend the One Planet Summit and the UK to attend the Third Japan-UK Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2").

These quite frequent ministerial-level and top-level mutual visits led to strengthened trust-based relationships between ministers and heads of state, promoted a better understanding among European countries concerning Japan's standpoint and efforts on subjects such as security, economy, regional affairs, and global issues, and saw progress made with specific cooperative initiatives between Japan and Europe. In addition to bilateral cooperation with European countries, Japan has also been working with the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) and regional organizations such as the EU, NATO, and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) to further strengthen collaborative relations between Europe and democratic nations in Asia. At the same time, Japan has been working towards better collaboration with regional frameworks within Europe that include "V4 (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia) + Japan," "NB8 (8 Nordic and Baltic countries) + Japan," and "GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova) + Japan." Japan also proposed to launch the Japan-Baltic Cooperation Dialogue and the "Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative" as part of efforts to advance comprehensive and multi-tiered relationships with Europe.

Prime Minister Abe shaking hands with Secretary General of NATO Stoltenberg (October 31, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

In the field of security, for instance, concrete cooperation has been advanced with the UK, France, and Italy. With respect to collaboration with NATO, Secretary General of NATO Stoltenberg visited Japan in October where leaders agreed to further strengthen cooperation between Japan and NATO and among Japan, the U.S., and Europe.

In addition to the abovementioned efforts, Japan is actively involved in public diplomacy activities through means that include dispatching experts and promoting the MIRAI Program, a program for personal and intellectual exchange that allows students from Europe and other regions to visit and learn about Japan. Through such efforts, Japan has built myriad channels with European countries and institutions in a broad range of fields from politics to security, economy, education, culture, science, and technology. By providing information about Japan and Asia and promoting mutual understanding through these channels, Japan is working to maintain close, multi-tiered relations with these countries and organizations.

1 Regional Situations in Europe

(1) European Union (EU)

The EU is a political and economic entity

consisting of 28 member states with a total population of about 510 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, 2017 was a year of addressing problems through efforts that included engaging in Brexit negotiations and taking steps to deal with immigrant and refugee influx, as well as terrorist attacks. It was also a year that saw the EU try to further discuss the future of Europe in light of a better EU economy and continuing pro-EU administrations after the elections in the major EU member states.

Regarding Brexit, the UK submitted the notification of its intention to withdraw from the EU on March 29. Subsequently, a total of six negotiations focused primarily on the three main issues (citizens' rights, financial obligations, and the border issues with Ireland) were conducted as a part of the first phase of Brexit negotiations. Although these negotiations did not lead to agreements, top-level negotiations were accelerated shortly before the European Council meeting in December. Eventually, "sufficient progress" of the first phase negotiation was acknowledged by the Council, and thus they entered the second phase during which topics such as the transition period and the future UK-EU relations would be discussed.

Regarding the immigrant and refugee influx into Europe, as a result of efforts to address immigrant and refugee flows from Africa to Italy via Mediterranean Sea routes while maintaining the EU-Turkey statement made in March 2016, the number of arrivals in Italy decreased dramatically starting in the summer of 2017. This contributed to an overall drop in the number of arrivals into Europe. However, little headway was made in formulating a new immigration policy aimed at distributing the burden placed on EU member states such as asylum seeker relocation. 2017 was also a year of frequent terrorist attacks in multiple major cities in Europe, making counter-terrorism measures a continuing priority. At the same time, the rise of populism and similar movements continued in certain EU member states. For example, in Germany among major member states, the populist party achieved a considerable vote share increase in the national election held in 2017.

During his State of the Union address in September, and in light of pro-EU administrations holding power in major countries' elections and general upswings in European economies, European Commission President Juncker expressed his intention to further strengthen solidarity within Europe. In this way he showed an attitude toward seeking further European integration by addressing the crisis on European integration, thus advancing discussions concerning the future of Europe.

Economic and social cooperation takes the lead in promoting European integration, but a new plan for bolstering security-related cooperation deserves more attention. One such measure is the establishment in June of the European Defence Fund, which seeks to streamline defense equipment spending. December saw the launch of the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), a defense cooperation framework provided for in the Treaty on European Union. PESCO aims to improve joint defense capabilities and make investments in joint projects as well as enhancing the EU's operational readiness

and each member state's contribution to defense. Efforts also continue to be made to strengthen cooperation with NATO.

With respect to Asia, the EU expressed its intent to continue strengthening involvement in the region in line with the Global Strategy formulated in 2016. In response to the repeated nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches by North Korea, the EU decided to introduce autonomous measures against North Korea at the Foreign Affairs Council on October 16.

On the economic front, amid uncertainty over Brexit and other issues, a moderate economic recovery was seen in 2017 in the EU and Eurozone on the back of a moderate recovery in the global economy, a rise in consumer spending, better unemployment rates, and other factors.

(Japan-EU Relations)

Through the finalization of the negotiations of the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and other such achievements, significant progress was made in 2017 towards comprehensively strengthening Japan-EU relations. The first such achievement was a March Japan-EU Summit in Brussels, Belgium, where Prime Minister Abe made a visit to hold talks with European Council President Tusk and European Commission President Juncker. This was followed by a Summit in May that coincided with a G7 Summit held in Taormina, Italy. At the 24th Japan-EU Summit held in Brussels, Belgium in July, both leaders reached an agreement in principle on the Japan-EU EPA and Japan-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), and they also agreed to work together on the issues concerning North Korea. At each of these talks, Prime Minister Abe consistently requested that transparency and predictability in the Brexit process be ensured in consideration of the possible impact on Japanese business activities. Close talks were also held between the ministerial levels in 2017: Foreign Minister Kishida attended the Japan-EU Foreign Ministers' Meeting that coincided with the G7 Foreign Ministers Meeting held in Lucca, Italy in April, while Foreign Minister Kono held his first talk with High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Mogherini in September on the occasion of the UN General Assembly.

24th Japan-EU Summit (July 6, Brussels; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

On the economic front, closing discussions were held following an agreement in principle of the Japan-EU EPA in July. Foreign Minister Kono held a telephone talk with European Commissioner for Trade Malmstrom on December 8. On the same day, Prime Minister Abe and European Commission President Juncker held a summit telephone talk and confirmed the finalization of negotiations on the EPA.

(2) United Kingdom

Following the result of a referendum conducted in June 2016, Prime Minister May issued a notification of the UK's intention to withdraw from the EU on March 29, 2017. Following Prime Minister

May's dissolution of the parliament and the subsequent general election held in June, the Conservative Party, while holding onto its status as UK's largest party, lost seats and failed to win a majority of seats on its own. After the election, she made the decision to stay on as Prime Minister, and her Conservative Party made a confidence and supply agreement with the Democratic Unionist Party, a regional political party of Northern Ireland, to engage in extra-cabinet cooperation. Meanwhile, the election saw a gain in seats for the Labor Party, a result that led to Mr. Corbyn, the leader of the party and radical left-wing MP, gaining stronger support within his party at a party conference in September. Additionally, a spate of scandals prompted cabinet resignations of Secretary of State for Defense Fallon and Secretary of State for International Development Patel in November and of First Secretary of State Green in December, leading to a cabinet reshuffle in January 2018.

Both Japan and the UK have strengthened the bilateral relations through policy cooperation and mutual exchange at various levels, including Summit and Ministerial Meetings. Prime Minister Abe visited the UK in April for the Japan-UK Summit Meeting with Prime Minister May at Chequers, the official country residence of the British Prime Minister. The two leaders also had a bilateral summit meeting at the G20 Summit in Hamburg, Germany in July. In August, Prime Minister May paid an Official Visit to Japan for another round of a Japan-UK Summit Meeting. In the meeting, the two leaders issued the "Japan-UK Joint Vision Statement," "Japan-UK Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation," "Japan-UK Joint Declaration on Prosperity Cooperation" and "Joint Statement on North Korea," and shared understanding for further elevating the level of Japan-UK cooperation with focuses on security, economic partnership and global prosperity and growth.

Foreign Minister Kishida and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Johnson had a Foreign Ministers' Meeting during the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Bonn, Germany in February. This was followed by another meeting in April on the occasion of the UN Security Council Ministerial Briefing on Non-proliferation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea in New York. In July, Secretary Johnson visited Japan and the two ministers had the Sixth Japan-UK Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue. New Foreign Minister Kono, who assumed office in August, had a Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary Johnson on the occasion of the UN General Assembly in September. In December, they also had another meeting in the UK.

Recent years, security and defense cooperation between Japan and the UK have significantly developed. The Japan-UK Joint Vision Statement, which was issued during Prime Minister May's Official Visit to Japan in August, states that Japan and the UK are "each other's closest security partners in Asia and Europe respectively" and that the two leaders are "committed to elevating our global security partnership to the next level." Following this, at the Third Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2") held in London in December, the four Ministers confirmed the approach for taking Japan-UK security and defense cooperation to the next level and issued a joint statement. Discussions were also held on advancing comprehensive cooperation

in such security fields as realizing the free and open Indo-Pacific region sharing views and strengthening coordination on regional affairs, joint exercises, defense equipment and technology cooperation as well as counter-terrorism. Regarding defense equipment and technology cooperation, the Joint Preliminary Study on Potential Collaborative Opportunities for Future Combat Air System/Future Fighter was launched in March. In May, the first joint exercise by Japan, the UK, France, and the U.S. was conducted in the sea around Japan and Tinian Island, Guam. Furthermore, in August, the Japan-UK Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) entered into force.

(3) France

The presidential elections were held from April to May in France and presidential candidate Macron who advocated the rallying of right and left wings which would go beyond the traditional framework of two-party politics, defeated far-right party leader Le Pen, and was elected as the eighth president of the French Fifth Republic. In the subsequent parliamentary elections in June, La République en Marche (LREM), a centrist party led by President Macron, had won a majority of seats and Prime Minister Philippe's cabinet was formed. Additionally, in September, the senate elections (election of the half members) were held.

In respect of domestic affairs, President Macron undertook labor market reforms to address the long-standing unemployment issue. Additionally, an administrative order (*ordonnance*) concerning the revision of the labor law was agreed by the Council of Ministers in September. Regarding counter-terrorism, France lifted on 1st November the state of emergency that had been effective since the consecutive terrorist attacks in Paris in November 2015. In place, they have been dealing with the threat of terrorism by enacting a new bill that grants the government authority some part of the extensive powers approved exceptionally during the state of emergency. Regarding the financial aspect, France has been taking measures toward fiscal reforms to keep its budget deficit below 3% of GDP as required for EU member states. Concerning external affairs, they prioritize the stabilization of the Middle East and Africa as well as climate change issues. In that respect, France hosted the One Planet Summit in Paris in December, which Foreign Minister Kono attended. Furthermore, France has placed high priority on the framework of multilateral cooperation in this multi-polarizing world, and they have been taking leadership in European integration for example by announcing a vision of introducing the common budget for the euro zone.

With respect to the Japan-France relations, the Third Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2") was held in Paris in January, and the four ministers confirmed to commence negotiations of the Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA). They also confirmed that they would concretize the cooperation regarding unmanned underwater vehicle (UUV) for mine detection as the first collaboration project under the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology between Japan and France that entered into force in December 2016. Joint exercises by Japan, France, the UK and the U.S. were conducted in the sea space around Japan and Guam between

April and May on the occasion of the visit to Japan of a French training task group "Jeanne d'Arc." In March, Prime Minister Abe visited France and had a Summit Meeting with President Hollande. In May, Prime Minister Abe had the first Summit Meeting with the new President Macron at the G7 Summit in Taormina, Italy. In the meeting they confirmed cooperation toward "Japonism 2018," which will be held mostly in Paris in 2018. Subsequently, they had another Summit Meeting in September at the UN General Assembly. Regarding Foreign Minister Kono, he had a Foreign Ministers' Meeting with the new Foreign Minister Le Drian. In January 2018, moreover, Foreign Minister Kono attended the Fourth Japan-France Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") as well as Seventh Japan-France Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue. In the above occasions he welcomed the agreement in principle of the Japan-France ACSA and confirmed with the French side that a Japan-France joint exercise would be conducted when French naval frigate "Vendemiaire" visits Japan.

(4) Germany

As the international community faces various issues such as Brexit, the Ukrainian crisis, and the refugee crisis, Germany hosted the G20 Hamburg Summit in July 2017 as the chair country. Along with leading the release of the Hamburg G20 Leaders' Statement on Countering Terrorism in the capacity of the chair country, Germany ensured commitments from each country towards international cooperation to strengthen global economic growth and safeguard against downside risks.

Germany's economy maintained gradual recovery. The Federal Government of Germany predicted a real GDP growth rate of 2.0% in 2017 and announced that its unemployment rate in November was 5.3%, the lowest level since 1991.

In domestic affairs, former Foreign Minister Steinmeier was elected as the 12th Federal President of Germany, succeeding President Gauck, whose term ended in March 2017. A German Federal election, which takes place every four years, was held in September. While political leaders of other countries, including the major EU member states, had been replaced, there was high expectation that Chancellor Merkel, who had stably managed the government, would stay in the office. Although the ruling Christian Democratic Union (CDU/CSU) preserved its position as the largest party, its share of the vote fell to its second lowest level ever since the World War II, and the percentage of votes going to the Social Democratic Party of Germany, a partner in the grand coalition, sank to its lowest level in history. Meanwhile, "Alternative for Germany (AfD)," which has promoted an anti-refugee policy, made a leap forward to become the country's third largest party in the double-digit share of the vote and won seats in the Federal Parliament for the first time by attracting voters tired of and unsatisfied with current politics. The Free Democratic Party (FDP) resumed its seats in the Parliament for the first time in four years.

After the election, as SPD refused to continue to be a partner of the grand coalition with CDU/CSU, CDU/CSU began preliminary discussions aiming at establishing a coalition with the FDP and the Green Party, which came to an impasse when the FDP announced that it would

Other European Regions

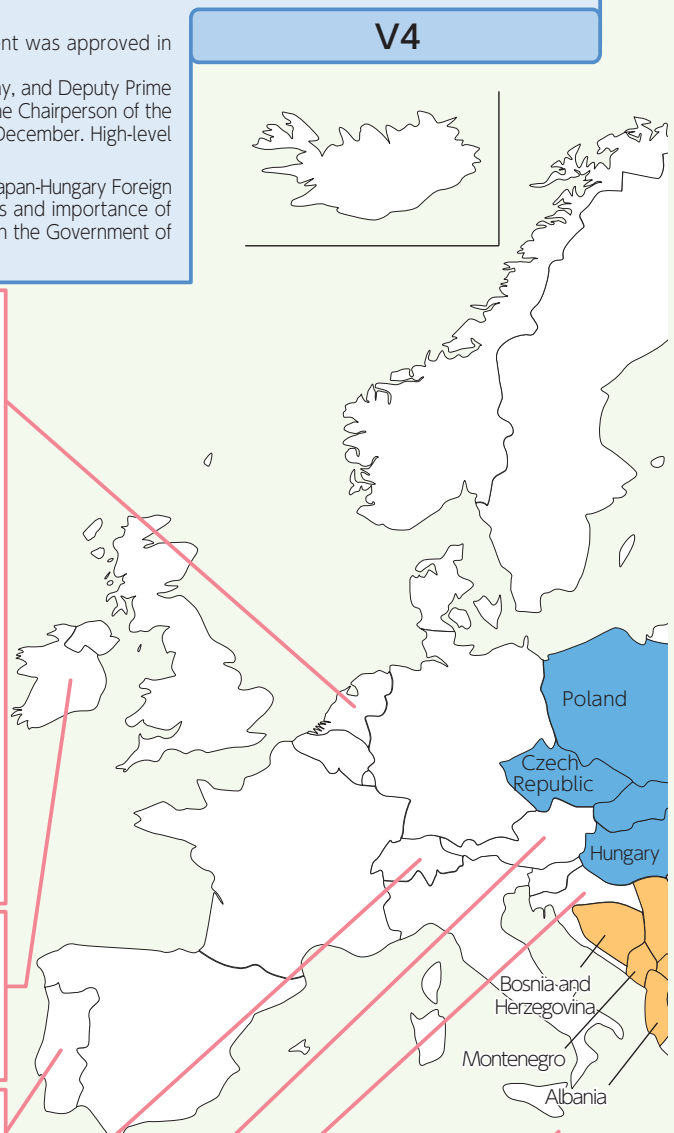
Japan places importance on the cooperative relationship with the Visegrad Group (V4), which is a regional cooperative framework established by four countries--the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia--that share the fundamental values such as democracy and the rule of law. Japan and the V4 worked to strengthen their ties by holding "the V4 + Japan" seminar on migration issues in Central Europe and Japan' s perspective in February and appointing an ambassador in charge of "V4 + Japan" in November.

Poland: State Secretary, the Chancellery of the President Szczerski visited Japan in February. Minister of Foreign Affairs Waszczykowski visited Japan in May for the occasion of the 60th anniversary of re-establishment of diplomatic relations. Both Ministers signed "the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategic Partnership between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Poland" during Foreign Ministers' Meeting.

Czech Republic: Upon entering the year of the 60th anniversary of restoration of diplomatic relations in 2017, the Protocol Amending the Agreement Between Japan and the Czech Republic on Social Security was signed in February. Prime Minister Sobotka visited Japan in June. At the Summit Meeting, Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister Sobotka affirmed stronger cooperation on bilateral relations and international affairs including North Korea situations. ANO led by Babiš won in the Lower House election in October, and the Babiš Cabinet was appointed in December. However, the cabinet lost a confidence vote in the Lower House in January and coalition negotiations are taking place again as of February 2018.

Slovakia: The Agreement on Social Security was signed in January. The Agreement was approved in Slovakia' s Parliament in March and in Japan' s National Diet in June.
State Secretary, Minister for Foreign and European Affairs Korcok visited Japan in May, and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Lajčák visited Japan in July as the Chairperson of the UN General Assembly. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane visited Slovakia in December. High-level exchange was active throughout the year.

Hungary: Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Szijjártó visited Japan in February for a Japan-Hungary Foreign Ministers' Meeting. The two Ministers confirmed reinforcement of bilateral relations and importance of fundamental values such as the rule of law. They also signed the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of Hungary regarding a Working Holiday Scheme.



【Benelux countries】

The Netherlands: Despite losing seats, the People's Party for Freedom and Democracy led by Prime Minister Rutte maintained its position as the leading party in the general election in March. Although they faced difficult negotiations to form a coalition government, in October the 3rd Rutte Cabinet led by Prime Minister Rutte was finally formed by four parties dominated by his party. In November, Her Royal Highness Princess Laurentien visited Japan to attend the opening ceremony of Omotemon bridge in Dejima, Nagasaki. This event further deepened over 400 years' cordial relations between the two countries.

Belgium: President of the House of Representatives and President of the Belgium-Japan Parliamentary Friendship Group Bracke visited Japan in February on an invitation from Speaker of the House of Representatives in the Diet Tadamori Oshima. Their meeting contributed to promote mutual exchanges between the two parliaments. Bracke also held a meeting with Prime Minister Abe. The cordial relations between the two countries further deepened through the visit of Prime Minister Abe to Belgium where Prime Minister Abe had a working dinner with Prime Minister Michel.

Luxembourg: His Royal Highness Grand Duke Henri paid a State Visit to Japan in November on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Luxembourg in 2017. During the stay, he visited Tsukuba City and attended a variety of events including a State Banquet as well as a dinner hosted by Prime Minister Abe and his spouse. These events further deepened the cordial relations between the two countries. Additionally, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Asselborn who accompanied H.R.H. Grand Duke Henri, had a Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Kono. This State Visit provided opportunities to further deepen the bilateral relations between the two countries.

Ireland: The year of 2017 marked the 60th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between Japan and Ireland. Foreign Minister Kishida visited Ireland in January to have a Foreign Ministers' meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Flanagan and to attend the 60th anniversary ceremony which was held on a large scale. Foreign Minister Flanagan paid a working visit to Japan in March and held a Foreign Ministers' meeting.

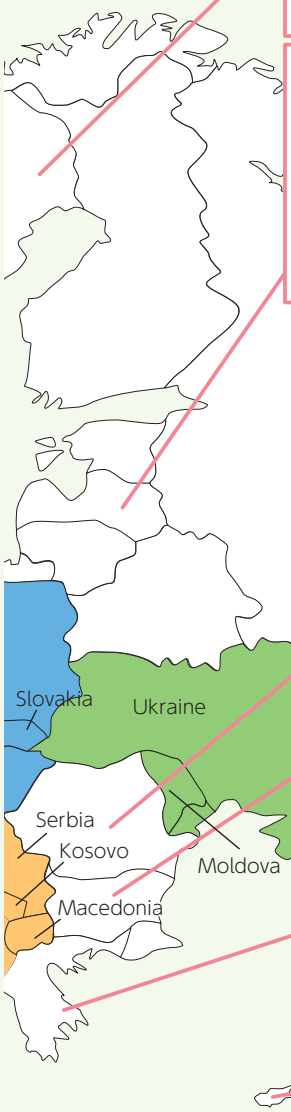
Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP): Executive Secretary of the CPLP Silveira visited Japan in March.

Switzerland: The Switzerland-Japan Parliamentary Friendship Group visited Japan in March on an invitation from the House of Councilors and held a meeting with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kishi. In November, the new Minister for Foreign Affairs Cassis assumed his role.

Austria: The Tax Convention between Japan and the Republic of Austria was signed in January. Foreign Minister Kishida visited Austria as a sitting Minister for the first time in 14 years in May. He held a Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Minister for Europe, Integration and Foreign Affairs Kurz. In July, the 21st meeting of "the Japan-Austria Committee for Issues of the Future" was held in Shizuoka City, Japan. In October, the national parliamentary election took place earlier than originally scheduled and the People' s Party led by Mr. Kurz won. In December, the Peoples Party and the Freedom Party formed a coalition Government led by Mr. Kurz as the Prime Minister.

Malta: Prime Minister Abe visited Malta in May as the first Japanese Prime Minister to visit the country. Prime Minister Abe had a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Muscat and paid respects at a cemetery of the war dead of the Imperial Japanese Navy.

Croatia: There were high-level exchanges such as the visit of State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kishi to Croatia in July 2017 and the Summit Meeting between Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister Plenković during the UN General Assembly in September.



【Nordic Countries】

Denmark: 2017 was the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Denmark, where active mutual visits of VIPs were realized. His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Naruhito visited Denmark in June, (See Special Feature: "His Imperial Highness Crown Prince Visits Denmark") and Prime Minister Abe visited the country in July. Their Royal Highnesses Crown Prince Frederik and Crown Princess Mary visited Japan in October as an Official Working Visit. During the visit, the Japan-Denmark Tax Convention was signed by the two countries.

Finland: In July, Prime Minister Abe visited Finland and had a Summit Meeting with President Niinistö. The two countries confirmed to further develop strategic relations toward the 100th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations in 2019.

Norway: In July, Prime Minister Abe had a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Solberg during the G20 Hamburg Summit. The two countries confirmed to further develop cooperative relations in a broad range of areas including through implementation of the rule of law in maritime affairs and the Arctic.

Sweden: In July, Prime Minister Abe visited Sweden and had a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Löfven. The two countries confirmed to further develop cooperative relations in a broad range of areas toward the 150th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations in 2018.

【Baltic Countries】

In January 2018, Prime Minister Abe visited the Baltic countries for the first time as the Japanese Prime Minister and announced the launch of the "Japan-Baltic Cooperation Dialogue."

Latvia: In July, the Japan-Latvia Tax Convention entered into force. In December, Prime Minister Kučinskis visited Japan and held a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Abe.

Lithuania: In May, Minister of Foreign Affairs Linkevičius visited Japan and had a Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Kishida. They confirmed to further develop in bilateral relations in a broad range of areas, including politics, economy, education, and science. In July, the Japan-Lithuania Tax Convention was signed by the two countries.

GUAM

In January, the "GUAM + Japan" workshop was held in Tokyo under the theme of tourism promotion. In September, Foreign Minister Kono attended the 5th "GUAM + Japan" Foreign Ministerial Meeting held in New York. Cooperation between Japan and GUAM has been strengthened through these events.

Romania: In January 2018, Prime Minister Abe visited Romania for the first time as Prime Minister and had a Japan-Romania Summit Meeting with President Ionannis. There were high-level contacts between the two countries including the visit by the State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kishi in July.

Bulgaria: Prime Minister Abe visited Bulgaria in January 2018, the first-ever visit to the country by a Japanese Prime Minister, and held a Japan-Bulgaria Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Borissov. He also paid a courtesy call on President Radev. In addition to Prime Minister Abe' s visit to Bulgaria, there were high-level exchanges such as visits by members of the Japan-Bulgaria Parliamentary Friendship League at the House of Councilors, headed by Chairman of the League Hiromi Yoshida in August.

Greece: Fiscal rebuilding and structural reforms have been moving forward with the assistance of the bailout program toward the completion of the third economic adjustment program in the summer of 2018. High-level exchanges between Japan and Greece have increased in recent years, including the visits by State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kishi in January 2017 and a group led by President of the House of Councillors Chuichi Date in December 2017 and a Japan-Greece Foreign Ministers' Meeting in January 2018.

Cyprus: Japan has traditionally maintained friendly bilateral ties with Cyprus. Cyprus is an EU member state and its geopolitical importance with close proximity to the Middle East has risen in recent years of instability in the Middle East. Japan opened its Embassy in Cyprus in January 2018 to further strengthen bilateral relations and in light of the potential role of Cyprus as an evacuation site for a crisis in the Middle East or North Africa.

the Western Balkans

Although there still remains ethnic divisiveness, overall progress has been made for stability and development in the Western Balkan region with each country's commitment to reforms toward European integration. With regard to the relations with Japan, there were high-level exchanges such as the visit of State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kishi to Albania in July 2017, the visit of State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane to Serbia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in September, and the visit of Minister of Foreign Affairs Crnadak to Japan in October. Furthermore, Prime Minister Abe visited Serbia in January 2018, the first-ever visit to the country by a Japanese Prime Minister, and held a Japan-Serbia Summit Meeting with President Vučić. During the visit, Japan launched the Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative to strengthen support for socioeconomic reforms of the Western Balkans (Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Macedonia, and Montenegro), which are willing to join the EU. Japan also opened its Embassies in Albania and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia in January 2017 to strengthen its presence and activities in the region.

be withdrawing from the discussions. Subsequently, in January 2018, after the mediation efforts by President Steinmeier, CDU/CSU and SPD began coalition negotiations that led to an agreement in February.

Subsequent to 2016, high-level visits were made between Japan and Germany in 2017. Foreign Minister Kishida visited Bonn, Germany in February to attend the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting. In March, Prime Minister Abe visited Hanover, Germany to attend the CeBIT trade show, for which Japan became the partner country. At the event, Prime Minister Abe and Chancellor Merkel visited the booths of Japanese and German telecommunications companies. They also held a Summit Meeting that led to agreement between the two leaders on the importance of making the G7 more united than ever and demonstrating unwavering cooperation and commitment on the security and economic fronts. In February 2018, President Steinmeier held a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Abe in Japan.

(5) Italy

Italy held the G7 presidency in 2017, taking over the role from the former year's president: Japan. Numerous Japanese high-level officials visited Italy to attend the G7 Summit in Taormina and 13 Ministerial Meetings. In March, Prime Minister Abe visited Rome and had a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Gentiloni. In the Meeting they confirmed close cooperation as the current and former chairs of the G7 Summit. In May, Prime Minister Abe visited Sicily to attend the G7 Summit. Foreign Minister Kishida visited Lucca (located in Toscana, Central Italy) to attend the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in April. On that occasion, he had a Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Italian Foreign Minister Alfano.

The two countries are steadily developing bilateral cooperation in the fields of security and defense. In the Japan-Italy Summit Meeting in March, the two leaders confirmed that both countries would start negotiations on an Agreement on the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology. The Agreement was later signed by Foreign Minister Kishida and Defence Minister Pinotti in Tokyo in May.

In respect of domestic affairs, Prime Minister Gentiloni has steadily managed the administration since his inauguration at the end of 2016. Regarding the electoral law which had been an long-standing issue for Italy, both the Chamber of Deputies and Senate passed a reform bill which was later put in force in November.

(6) Spain

In 2017, active high-level visits between Japan and Spain were realized. In April, Their Majesties King Felipe VI and Queen Letizia of Spain paid a State Visit to Japan. On this occasion, Foreign Minister Kishida had a Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Dastis, who was accompanying Their Majesties, and signed the Japan-Spain Working Holiday Scheme Agreement. In July, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takisawa visited Barcelona and Madrid and exchanged views with individuals affiliated with local Japanese businesses. Additionally, he had a meeting with State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Castro. In October, the 19th Japan-Spain Symposium was held under the title of "The Fourth Industrial Revolution and Globalization: Dialogue between Japan

and Spain" in Malaga, Spain.

In respect of domestic affairs, the Spanish Constitutional Court ruled illegal the Catalan independence "referendum" in October. The Spanish Government implemented measures, including the dissolution of the Regional Parliament of Catalonia, based on its Constitution.

(7) Ukraine

In eastern Ukraine, although the cease-fire agreements at the end of August and the end of December made temporary improvements in the situation, conditions remain unstable due to factors that include the death of an OSCE Special Monitoring Mission member in April. Since January, the distribution between regions controlled by the Ukrainian Government and temporarily occupied regions has stopped, and the economic blockade of the temporarily occupied territories continues until now. Meanwhile, no significant progress has been achieved in talks over implementation of the Minsk Agreements among the nations concerned.

In foreign affairs, the Association Agreement with the EU that includes the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) came into force in September. Ukraine has engaged in active diplomatic efforts through discussions and mutual visits between Ukraine and the U.S., Europe, and neighboring countries, including two Summit telephone talks under the Normandy Format[2], as well as through multilateral talks in the UN and other organizations.

In domestic affairs, some positive results were achieved with respect to judicial, healthcare, pension, election law, and other reforms under the leadership of Groysman's cabinet, which was formed in April 2016. However, due to differences of positions among the domestic political powers regarding the anti-corruption measures, there remain the issues that have yet to be addressed.

In terms of relations with Japan, in recognition of 2017 as being the Year of Japan in Ukraine, many events related to Japan were held throughout the country to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Ukraine, including planting more than 1,500 cherry blossom trees in locations around Ukraine. Active high-level exchanges continued in 2017 such as the visit of Chairman of the Ukrainian parliament Parubiy to Japan at the end of February, the visit of Chairperson of the Ukraine-Japan Parliamentary Friendship Group Yemets and his party to Japan in June, the visit of Deputy Head of the Presidential Administration Yelisieiev to Japan in October, and the visit of State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane to Ukraine in November for the event related to the Year of Japan in Ukraine.

The bilateral relations between Japan and Ukraine also made steady progress among working-level officials through efforts that included the fifth meeting of the Japan-Ukraine Joint Committee for the Cooperation to Advance Aftermath Response to Accidents at Nuclear Power Stations in Kiev in November and the implementation of relaxation of visa requirements for Ukrainian nationals in January 2018.

Regarding Japan's assistance to Ukraine, Japan pledged additional support of around 460 million yen (3.89 million US dollars).

2 Framework for dialogue among four nations (France, Germany, Russia, and Ukraine) aiming at resolving the situation around Ukraine.

2 Collaboration with European Regional Institutions, and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

(1) Cooperation with NATO

As a military alliance aimed at providing collective defense for its 29 member countries, NATO is currently conducting security-keeping operation in Kosovo, providing support in Afghanistan, helping counter-terrorism efforts, and engaging in crisis management, conflict prevention, and regional stabilization after conflicts both inside and outside of the region that could pose a direct threat to the security of the territories and peoples of NATO member countries. U.S. President Donald Trump had expressed the desire for NATO member countries to increase their defense burden sharing before his inauguration, and leaders at the meeting of NATO Heads of State and Government in May reaffirmed the target to spend 2% of its GDP on defense by 2024. Although great attention was paid to President Trump whether he would express the U.S.'s commitment to the Article 5 in the same meeting, such commitment was made public during his visit to Poland in July.

As a partner that shares fundamental values with NATO, Japan is taking specific steps towards collaboration based on the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP), which Prime Minister Abe signed while visiting NATO headquarters in May 2014. During Japan-NATO high level consultations held in Tokyo in May, officials exchanged views on security policies in Japan and Europe. High-level talks continued throughout the year, with a visit to NATO headquarters in July by Prime Minister Abe followed by a visit to Japan by Secretary General of NATO Stoltenberg, who held talks with Abe and Foreign Minister Kono. During the Secretary General's visit to Japan, Japan and NATO issued a joint press statement calling for further efforts to apply decisive pressure on North Korea to urge North Korea to abandon its nuclear and ballistic missile programs, and the resolution of the abductions issue, as well as expressing concern for the situation in the South China Sea and East China Sea. Japan participated as an observer in NATO crisis management exercises (CMX), as well as training exercises related to cybersecurity and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR). Japan also dispatches female self-defense force official to NATO headquarters in order to promote cooperation on matters concerning women, peace and security.

In addition to financial contributions for development, Japan is also working with NATO to improve stability in Afghanistan. Japan provides support through Afghanistan National Army (ANA) Trust Fund for healthcare and education activities. Through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) Trust Fund, Japan is also providing support for clearing unexploded ordinance in Azerbaijan, removing unexploded ordnance and landmines and conducting explosive ordnance disposal training in Georgia, as well as supporting training women in the military in Jordan.

(2) Cooperation with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)

OSCE is a regional security organization with 57 member countries across Europe, central Asia, and North America, that works to prevent conflicts and foster trust

in these regions through a comprehensive approach. Japan has taken part in OSCE activities since 1992 as an Asian Partner for Co-operation. Japan provides support for preventing terrorism through means such as strengthening border patrol and conducting election monitoring in Afghanistan and central Asia including through the Border Management Staff College, and also lends support to the projects that support women's social advancement. OSCE plays an important role in improving the situation in Ukraine. Japan views the Ukrainian crisis as a challenge to the matter of the principle to maintain rules-based international order. Based on such view, Japan provides financial support to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) to Ukraine and has been dispatching experts to the SMM since August 2015. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane attended Ministerial Council in Vienna, Austria, where he addressed "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," the issues concerning North Korea's missile and nuclear programs, the situation in Ukraine, and measures to counter violent extremism. He called for the importance of thoroughly ensuring the rule of law and a concerted response from the entire international community.

(3) Cooperation with the Council of Europe (CoE)

CoE is a regional organization comprising 47 member states in Europe. It plays a key role in establishing international standards in areas concerning democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. As the CoE's sole observer country in Asia, Japan has made active contributions to a range of CoE activities since gaining membership in 1996. In 2017, Japan has provided financial support for a summer school to assist internally displaced persons (IDP) in Ukraine (Western Ukraine, August), the international forum in support of IDPs (Kiev, October), and roundtable talks discussing the establishment of international standards concerning NGOs and other organizations that receive extra-national funding (Venice, October).

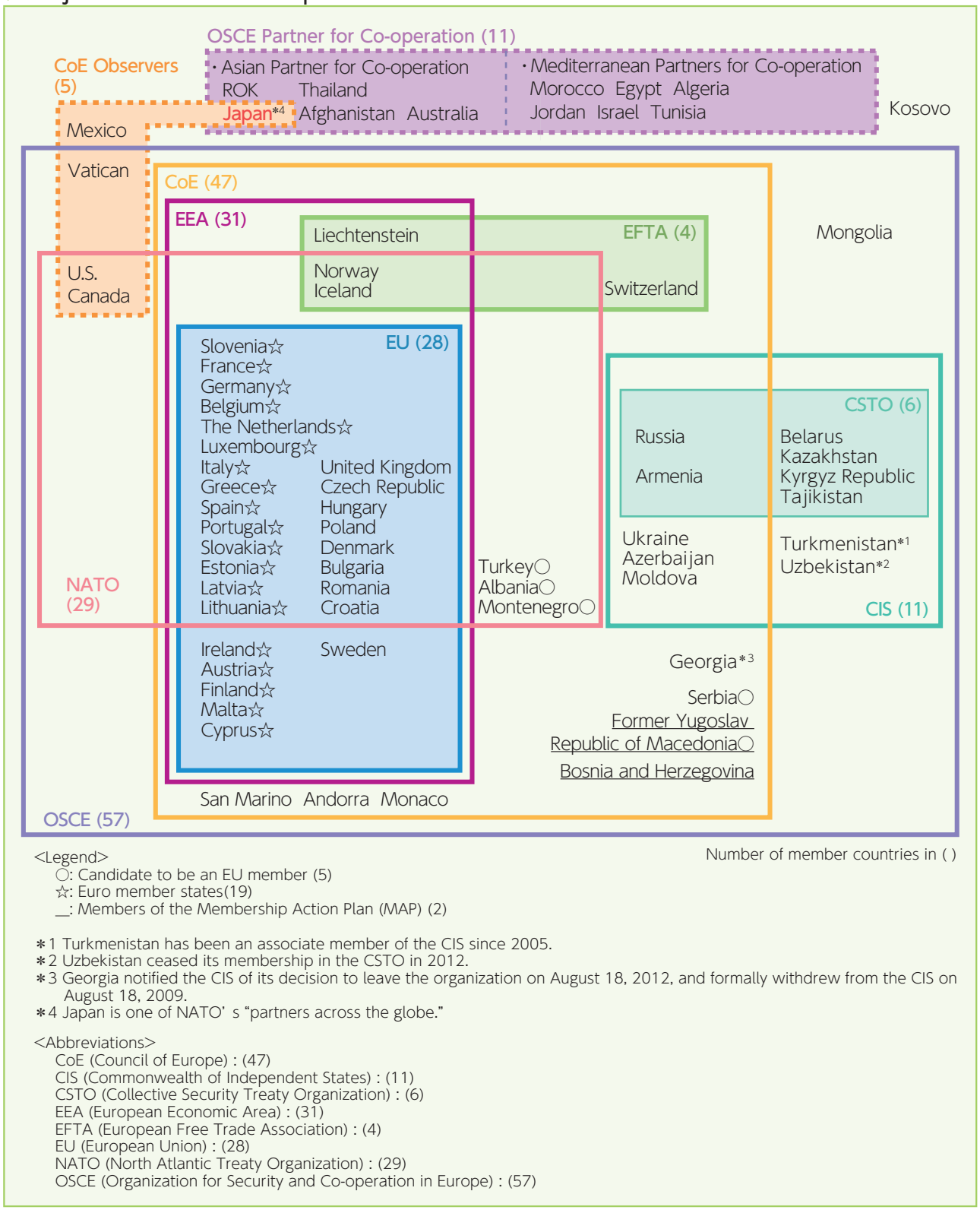
(4) Cooperation through the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

ASEM was established in 1996 as the sole forum for dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe. It currently comprises 51 member states and two institutions, and works through Summits, Ministers' Meetings, seminars, and other activities focused on three main areas, namely (1) politics, (2) economy and (3) culture and society.

On November 20 and 21, ASEM held its 13th Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Nay Pyi Daw (Myanmar) whose themes are "Synergizing Peace and Sustainable Development" and "3rd Decade of ASEM: Making ASEM Partnership more Dynamic and Connected."

In attendance from Japan was Parliamentary State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane, who provided an explanation of the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," a critical strategy in the interest of bringing Asia and Europe together, and emphasized the importance of making the Indo-Pacific region free and open. On issues concerning North Korea, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane stated that now is the time for the international community as a whole to maximize pressure on North Korea and also asked each country for their understanding and support for the

Major Frameworks of Europe



Number of member countries in ( )

<Legend>
○: Candidate to be an EU member (5)
☆: Euro member states(19)
_: Members of the Membership Action Plan (MAP) (2)

*1 Turkmenistan has been an associate member of the CIS since 2005.
*2 Uzbekistan ceased its membership in the CSTO in 2012.
*3 Georgia notified the CIS of its decision to leave the organization on August 18, 2012, and formally withdrew from the CIS on August 18, 2009.
*4 Japan is one of NATO' s "partners across the globe."

<Abbreviations>
CoE (Council of Europe) : (47)
CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) : (11)
CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization) : (6)
EEA (European Economic Area) : (31)
EFTA (European Free Trade Association) : (4)
EU (European Union) : (28)
NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) : (29)
OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe) : (57)

abductions issue. Concerning maritime security, he emphasized the importance of ensuring free and open maritime order in every region based on the rule of law. He also addressed the South China Sea problem by expressing his strong hopes for relieving tensions and progress towards demilitarization through settling effective Code of Conduct (COC) early in the South China Sea.

In the chairs' statement of the Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Foreign Ministers mentioned maritime security issues and condemned in the strongest terms the nuclear test and ballistic missile launches by North Korea. Ministers also explicitly referenced to the abductions issue, which was also referred to in the chairs' statements previously at the 10th G7 Summit in 2014, the 12th ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting in 2015, and the 11th G7 Summit in 2016.

In addition, Japan supports ASEM through contributions to the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and the tourism seminar (February) in Yangon co-hosted with the Government of Myanmar.

In addition, Deputy State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Kosaburo Nishime attended the 7th ASEM Ecomonic Ministers' Meeting conducted in Seoul, South Korea in September, the same month that State Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Takao Makino, attended the 4th ASEM Transport Ministers' Meeting held in Bali (Indonesia).

Special Feature

His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince's Visit to Denmark

Japan and Denmark have built stable friendly relations traditionally in a variety of areas including politics, economy and culture, supported by the close relationship between the Imperial Family of Japan and the Royal Family of Denmark. The Imperial Family and Royal Family have had intimate exchanges over the years. While Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress paid a State Visit to Denmark in 1998, Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II and His Royal Highness the Prince Consort (Prince Henrik) paid a State Visit to Japan in 1981 and 2004, respectively.

Following the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II donated to the disaster victims the proceeds from a charity auction where she auctioned off her craft works. She also raised relief donation from Danish businesses and donated it to the disaster-affected areas. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Frederick visited Higashimatsushima City, Miyagi Prefecture in June 2011, three months after the disaster. Such exchanges between Higashimatsushima City and the Royal Family of Denmark still continue today.

In 2017, both countries celebrated the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. To hold commemoration events, His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Frederick were appointed as the Honorary Presidents for this anniversary. His Imperial Highness paid an official visit to Denmark from June 15 to 21, 2017. This was his second visit to Denmark, following his first visit in 2004 to attend the wedding of His Royal Highness Crown Prince Frederick.

Upon arriving in Denmark on June 15, His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince received a warm welcome from His Royal Highness Crown Prince Frederick and Her Royal Highness

Crown Princess Mary at Copenhagen's Kastrup Airport. On the next day, June 16, His Imperial Highness attended the "Japan in the Danish Royal House" exhibition which explored the long-standing mutual exchanges between the Imperial Family of Japan and the Royal Family of Denmark, together with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Frederick. In the evening of the day, His Imperial Highness attended a Japanese traditional music performance featuring the *koto* held as a part of the 150th anniversary celebration together with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Frederick and Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary.

His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince receiving a welcome to the luncheon at Fredensborg Palace by Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II and His Royal Highness Crown Prince Frederick and Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary (June 18, Denmark, Photo: The Asahi Shimbun)

On June 18, Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II hosted a welcome luncheon at Fredensborg Palace located on the outskirts of Copenhagen. On June 19, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Frederick and Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary hosted a dinner at Amalienborg Palace in Copenhagen.

His Imperial Highness visited "State of Green", an institution that provides information about Danish policies and business initiatives on energy, water and environment, together with His Royal Highness Crown Prince Frederick to know measures on Danish environmental policies. His Imperial Highness also participated in a tour of the Port of Copenhagen with Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary.

His Imperial Highness also met with Prime Minister of Denmark Lars Løkke Rasmussen at the Prime Minister's Official Residence located outside of Copenhagen. Additionally, His Imperial Highness visited a variety of facilities which showcase Danish distinct features in the fields of the environment, design, marine shipping and welfare as well as these deeply connected to Japan. At each destination, His Imperial Highness had friendly exchanges not only with officials but with local residents, who extended a warm welcome. His Imperial Highness also met with Japanese nationals working for Japan-affiliated organizations and international institutions in Denmark as well as Danish people with a deep connection to Japan in such fields as culture, art, academia and business.

His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince's visit to Denmark reaffirmed the long-standing and wide-reaching cooperative relations between the two countries and served as a major event contributing to further development of friendly relations in the future.

Section 5 Russia, Central Asia and Caucasus

Overview

Bilateral relations between Japan and Russia have the greatest underlying potential.

Given the rapidly changing strategic environment of the Asia-Pacific region, developing relations with Russia as Japan's appropriate partner in the region contributes to Japan's national interest and regional peace and prosperity. With such understanding, Japan-Russia cooperation progressed in a wide range of areas in 2017, discussions on various levels were held, including four Summit Meetings, and five Foreign Ministers' Meetings. Progress was also made in cooperation between Japan and Russia on the topics of politics, security, economy, culture, and human exchanges among other matters.

Regarding the Northern Territories Issue, which is the greatest concern between Japan and Russia, five candidate projects[1], which will be undertaken at an early stage, have been designated in the context of the Joint economic activities on the Four Northern Islands. Furthermore, a special grave visit by airplane was conducted for the first time as a part of humanitarian measures for the former island residents. In this way, the matters agreed[2] on the occasion of President Putin's visit to Japan in December 2016 have been taking shape.

While Japan has political dialogues at various levels including the summit level and promotes overall Japan-Russia cooperation in a wide range of fields, the Government of Japan intends to energetically continue negotiations with Russia to conclude a peace treaty through the resolution of the issue of attribution of the Four Northern Islands.

Countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus are situated in a location of geopolitical importance that connects Asia, Europe, Russia, and the Middle East, and have abundant natural resources such as oil, natural gas and uranium. The importance of this region is also highlighted in the context of efforts to seek the stability of the whole region and its respective

1 (1) Project of propagation and aquaculture of marine products, (2) greenhouse vegetable cultivation project, (3) development of tours compatible with the islands' features, (4) introduction of wind-power generation, and (5) garbage volume reduction measures

2 As a result of the Japan-Russia Summit Meeting in December 2016, the two leaders declared their sincere resolve to address the issue of a Peace Treaty, as well as agreed to begin negotiations on implementation of the Joint economic activities on the Four Northern Islands. In addition, the two leaders agreed on improving procedures for grave visits of the former island residents.

countries, and to address key issues which the international community faces such as the fight against terrorism, and measures to counter illicit drugs.

In 2017, Japan and the countries in Central Asia and Caucasus celebrated the 25th anniversary since the establishment of diplomatic relations (See Column "Sharing the Appeal of Central Asia – Starting with Comics and Cuisine for a Milestone Year"). Japan continues to work for the strengthening of bilateral ties with these countries through VIP visits, etc., and will be continuing initiatives to promote regional cooperation utilizing the framework of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, etc.

1 Russia

(1) Situation of Russia

A Internal Situation in Russia

After receiving the overwhelming support of public opinion after the "annexation" of Crimea in March 2014, President Putin maintained a high approval rate throughout the entire year of 2017. On the other hand, Prime Minister Medvedev's corruption scandal caused large-scale protests in March, while anti-government protests led by the opposition parties were held in June and October.

B Russian Economy

The Russian economy saw sluggish growth since the second half of 2014 due to the fall in international oil prices and economic sanctions by the European countries and the U.S. But the downturn came to a stop with the stabilization of oil prices in 2016, and the country's GDP growth rate improved to minus 0.2%. In 2017, the GDP growth rate bounced back to +1.5% (preliminary estimate) amid further improvement in consumption and investment, as well as weaker inflation and increased wages, indicating a trend of recovery. However, some factors for instability remain, including real incomes still showing negative growth.

C Russian Diplomacy

Russia, and the European countries and the U.S. remained in confrontation because of the Ukrainian situation as well as suspicions that Russia interfered with the U.S. election. Relations between Russia and the U.S. have not showed signs of improvement, evident by the exchanges of retaliatory measures against each other.

Russia maintains close ties with China, working for connecting the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) with the "Belt and Road" Initiatives, as well as implementing two joint military exercises.

In the Middle East, Russia has engaged in diplomacy using its unique position in conducting dialogues with various countries within the region. In particular, in Syria, President Putin ordered Russian troops dispatched to the country to begin withdrawing in December, while promoting a political dialogue process as well as cooperating with Iraq and Turkey.

Also, Russia has maintained a traditional cooperative relationship with the CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States), while exercising diplomacy via multinational frameworks including the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

(2) Japan-Russia Relations

A Japan-Russia Relations in the Asia-Pacific Region

In recent years, Russia places importance

on the development of the Russian Far East and the East Siberia and has been proactively enhancing relations with the states in the Asia-Pacific region that is a center of the growth of the global economy. The development of the relations with Russia as a partner in the Asia-Pacific region contributes not only to Japan's national interests but also to peace and prosperity of the region. Japan and Russia have developed cooperative relations in various fields including politics, security, economy, culture and people-to-people exchange.

On the other hand, the greatest concern between Japan and Russia is the Northern Territories Issue. Holding frequent dialogues between the two leaders and Foreign Ministers, the Government of Japan has been energetically continuing negotiations with Russia to conclude a peace treaty through the resolution of the issue of the attribution of the Four Islands.

B The Northern Territories and Negotiations for Conclusion of a Peace Treaty

The Northern Territories Issue is the greatest concern between Japan and Russia. Japan's position is that the Four Northern Islands belong to Japan. The Government of Japan has been energetically continuing negotiations with Russia under its consistent basic policy of concluding a peace treaty with Russia through the resolution of the issue of the attribution of the Four Northern Islands on the basis of the agreements and documents created by the two sides so far, such as the Japan-Soviet Joint Declaration of 1956, the Tokyo Declaration of 1993, the Irkutsk Statement of 2001, and on the principles of law and justice[3].

In 2017, during active political dialogues, including four Summit Meetings and five Foreign Ministers' Meetings, the matters agreed[4] between the two leaders on the occasion of President Putin's visit to Japan at the end of 2016 have been taking shape. Regarding the Joint economic activities on the Four Northern Islands, following the Foreign Ministers Meetings in February and March as a result of the Japan-Russia Summit Meeting held in Moscow at the end of April, the two countries agreed to send a joint public and private research team to the Four Northern Islands, and the first field survey on the islands was conducted in June. Following the Japan-Russia Summit Meeting held during the G20 Hamburg Summit (Germany) in July, and the first Foreign Ministers' Meetings since Foreign Minister Kono took office in August (Manila, the Philippines), the Japan-Russia Summit Meeting was held in Vladivostok in September, and as a result, the five candidate projects[5] were designated, while both countries shared the view that they will explore legal frameworks that do not harm the positions of either side and will start from those which are viable. Subsequently, following the Foreign Ministers' Meeting on the occasion of the UN General Assembly in September, the second field survey on the Four Northern Islands was concluded in October. In the Japan-Russia Summit Meeting held during the Vietnam APEC

3 Way back when the Soviet Union continued denying the presence of a territorial issue itself, Foreign Minister Masayoshi Ohira proposed to refer the Northern Territories Issue to the International Court of Justice in October 1972, which Foreign Minister Gromyko of the Soviet Union turned down. At present, the Russian side admits the necessity to conclude a peace pact through bilateral negotiations with Japan, engaging in negotiations for the solution of the issue.
4 2-5 See footnote 2 of the Overview
5 2-5 See footnote 1 of the Overview

Summit Meeting, the two leaders agreed to accelerate consideration in order to give shape to the candidate projects towards the spring of 2018. Furthermore, specific way of further work was confirmed at the Foreign Ministers' Meeting upon Foreign Minister Kono's visit to Russia at the end of November.

In addition, as a part of humanitarian measures for the former island residents of the Northern Territories, a grave visit to Seseki area of Kunashiri Island to which access had been restricted was realized in August. Also in August, an additional entry/exit point was set up for the grave visits to Habomai Islands. Furthermore, in September, a special grave visit by airplane was conducted for the first time, opening up a new path to reducing the physical burden of the former island residents. Japan and Russia have agreed to take further measures in order for the island residents to be able to visit the islands more freely in 2018 and beyond.

To realize the conclusion of a peace treaty based on a future-oriented approach of identifying solutions acceptable for both parties through jointly developing a future vision of the Four Northern Islands, the Government of Japan will continue to work to give shape to the matters agreed between the leaders of Japan and Russia under their strong leadership.

The Government of Japan is actively working on projects contributing to the improvement of the atmosphere for the resolution of the Northern Territories Issue, such as the four-island exchange program, Free visits, Visits to graves, and cooperation such as disaster prevention in adjacent areas. The Government of Japan is approaching and coordinating with the Russian side in order to ensure safe operations for Japanese fishing vessels in the waters surrounding the Four Northern Islands and to continue the fishing of salmon and trout using an alternative fishing method to the prohibited driftnet fishing. However, Russia's moves to build up military forces in the Four Northern Islands are contradictory to the Government of Japan's position regarding the Northern Territories Issue, and Japan is taking appropriate action against Russia.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane accompanying the special grave visit to the Northern Territories of the former island residents by airplane (September 24, left: Nakashibetsu Airport, right: Furukamappu Cemetery)

Departure ceremony for the special grave visit by airplane (September 24, Nakashibetsu Airport)

C Japan-Russia Economic Relations

Japan-Russia trade volume in 2017 increased for the first time in four years since 2013, amid the stabilization of oil and natural gas prices, major commodities imported to Japan from Russia, and an increase in the amount of automotive components exported from Japan to Russia (trade volume amounted to about 2.2224

Japan-Russia Summit Meeting (September 9, Vladivostok; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

trillion yen, marking an increase of about 25% over the previous year) (Source: Trade Statistics of Japan, Ministry of Finance).

On the other hand, the volume of Japanese direct investment to Russia fell from 217.6 billion yen (2015) to 175.7 billion yen (2016) (Source: Balance of Payments Statistics of the Bank of Japan).

With regard to the Eight-point Cooperation Plan for Innovative Reform in the field of Industry and Economy of Russia as a leading country of a favorable living environment[6] proposed by Prime Minister Abe in May 2016, Prime Minister Abe presented the benefits of the Cooperation Plan to President Putin using audio and visual materials, and the two leaders agreed to further realize the plan during Prime Minister Abe's visit to Moscow in April 2017. Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, and Minister for Economic Cooperation with Russia Hiroshige Seko attended the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum in June and the International Industrial Trade Fair INNOPROM (Yekaterinburg) in July, where active discussions took place between Japanese and Russian companies. Through the above-mentioned efforts, at the 3rd Eastern Economic Forum (Vladivostok) in September a wide range of results were accomplished, including the signing of the amended Tax Convention between Japan and Russia, the establishment of a joint investment framework between the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) and the Russian Direct Investment Fund (RDIF), and the signing of a memorandum on cooperation toward realizing a digital economy. Ever since President Putin's visit to Japan in December 2016, 100 documents have been concluded between private-sector companies in both countries.

During the Japan-Russia Summit Meeting held at the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Vietnam in November, both leaders welcomed progress in the realization of the Cooperation Plan and reaffirmed that discussions will continue to be held. At the 13th Meeting of the Japan-Russia Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Issues (Moscow) held in the same month, Foreign Minister Kono and First Deputy Prime Minister Shuvalov agreed to promptly implement domestic procedures for the early entry into force of the Tax Convention between Japan and Russia. With regard to cooperation in the Far East region, Japan proposed cooperation focused on (1) development of agriculture, forestry and fisheries industries; (2) infrastructure development for the promotion of the role of the region as

6 Proposed by Prime Minister Abe at the Japan-Russia Summit Meeting held in Sochi, Russia, to which President Putin expressed positive feedback and approval. The eight items are: (1) extending healthy-life expectancy, (2) development of comfortable and clean cities easy to reside and live in , (3) fundamental expansion of exchange and cooperation among medium-sized and small companies, (4) energy, (5)promotion of industrial diversification and enhancement of productivity in Russia, (6) development of industries and promotion of the role as export bases in the Far East, (7)cooperation on cutting-edge technologies, and (8) fundamental expansion of people-to-people interaction.

export hubs; (3) energy development; and (4) establishing a foundation for investment promotion. Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry and Minister for Economic Cooperation with Russia Seko and representatives from Japanese companies took part in Japanese Investor Day (Vladivostok) held in December, where discussions were held on further energizing cooperation in the Far East region.

Furthermore, Japan Centers operating in six cities in Russia carry out business matching between companies from both countries and hold management courses. To date, a total of some 82,000 Russian people have taken the courses and about 5,100 of them have visited Japan for training.

D Cooperation between Japan and Russia in Various Fields

(A) Defense Exchanges, Security and Maritime Security

In 2017, discussions such as Japan-Russia Strategic Dialogue were held between diplomatic authorities from the two countries in a wide range of areas including disarmament, non-proliferation, consular services, etc. Practical training for drug enforcement agents from Afghanistan and Central Asia was also implemented by officers from Japan and Russia. The two countries also agreed to engage in new cooperation to tackle terrorism, drugs, money laundering, and corruption, and one foreign ministry official was dispatched to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

In the area of security, the Japan-Russia Foreign and Defense Ministerial Consultation ("2+2") took place in Tokyo in March for the first time in three years and four months and Japan-Russia security talks between Foreign Ministries took place in August. Also, Secretary General Shotaro Yachi of the National Security Secretariat met with Secretary of the Security Council Patrushev in September and December. Regarding defense exchanges, Colonel General Salyukov, Commander-in-Chief of the Land Forces of Russia visited Japan in November and General Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Russia visited in December. At the working level, the two countries endeavored to encourage mutual understanding and prevent chance accidents by continuously implementing a range of consultations and a Japan-Russia Search and Rescue Exercise. Moreover, a joint exercise was held involving patrol vessels of the Japan Coast Guard and Russian security forces vessels, and collaboration was confirmed in the area of security in marine transportation. In July, Admiral Satoshi Nakajima, Commandant of the Japan Coast Guard, visited Russia where talks involving the heads of both countries' maritime security agencies were held for the first time in about four years.

(B) Human and Cultural Exchanges

Following confirmation at the Japan-Russia Summit Meeting of December 2016 that youth exchanges will be doubled, in 2017 a total of 1,118 people (2.3 times the number of the previous year) participated in the Japan-Russia Youth Exchange Program, where exchanges took place in a broad range of areas.

Additionally, cultural exchanges became more active as various Japanese cultural events were held across Russia and Japan hosted its world-first "Russian Seasons." Furthermore, at the Japan-Russia Summit

Japan-Russia Youth Forum 2017 (November 20, Hokkaido; Photo: Japan-Russia Youth Exchange Center)

Meeting (Vladivostok) held in September 2017, an agreement was reached to hold the opening ceremony for Japan Year in Russia and Russia Year in Japan on May 26, 2018 in Moscow.

2 Central Asian and Caucasian Countries

(1) Central Asian Countries

Japan is supporting the "open, stable and self-sustained development" of Central Asia, which is geopolitically important and is promoting the development-support diplomacy with the objective of contributing to the peace and stability of the region. The three pillars of Japan's diplomacy in Central Asia are as follows; (1) fundamental strengthening of bilateral relationships; (2) encouragement of regional cooperation and contribution to the common issues of the region through the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue; and (3) cooperation in the global arena.

In 2017, Japan and five Central Asian countries celebrated the 25th anniversary of the start of diplomatic relations and following similar efforts in the previous year, active exchanges including VIP visits were carried out. From Central Asian countries, Foreign Minister of Kyrgyz Republic Abdyldayev visited Japan in March, Minister of the Economic Development and Trade of Tajikistan Khikmatullozoda visited in April,

Sixth Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue (May 1, Ashgabat, Turkmenistan)

Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Manabu Horii encouraging Japan's national team ahead of the 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games (September 16. Ashgabat, Turkmenistan)

and Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Meredov visited in June. In terms of political party exchanges, First Deputy Chairman Kul-Mukhammed of the Nur-Otan Party of the Republic of Kazakhstan visited Japan in May.

From Japan for the first time of a sitting Foreign Minister of Japan, Foreign Minister Kishida visited Turkmenistan in May. During his visit, the Sixth Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue was held in the capital of Turkmenistan, with attendance of Foreign Ministers from five Central Asian countries. From June to September, Astana World EXPO was held in the capital of

Kazakhstan, Astana, under the theme of "Future Energy," and was attended by a variety of key figures from Japan, such as Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Seko, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane, State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Kosaburo Nishime, State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Yoji Muto, Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Daisaku Hiraki, and Parliamentary Vice-Minister of Defense Takayuki Kobayashi. In September and November, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Manabu Horii repeatedly visited Turkmenistan to attend the 5th Asian Indoor and Martial Arts Games as well as the Energy Charter Conference respectively. Additionally, the Central Asia Cultural Exchange Mission[7] visited Turkmenistan in April, and Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Kazakhstan in November.

In the framework of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, business dialogue was held in February, where more than 100 representatives from Japanese companies and economic organizations who took part in discussions aiming at developing economic relationships between Japan and Central Asian countries. In August, the 10th Tokyo Dialogue (intellectual dialogue) was held under the theme "the present and the future of Japan-Central Asia relations." Cultural exchange events were also held to share the attractiveness of Central Asia. These included an exhibition of the original illustrations from the comic "A Bride's Story (*Otoyome Gatari*)," the release of cooking videos of Central Asian cuisine, and the Manga "Let's Make It With Everyone! Central Asian Cooking" newly drawn by comic artist Kaoru Mori (See Column "Sharing the Attractiveness of Central Asia - Starting with Comics and Cuisine for a Milestone Year").

In Turkmenistan, a presidential election was held in February after the expiration of the President's term of office and resulted in the re-election of the incumbent President, Berdimuhamedov. In the Kyrgyz Republic, a presidential election was held in October with the expiration of the president's term of office and previous Prime Minister Jeenbekov was elected as a President in November. For this election, biometric data registration machines and readers provided by Japan were used, and the election observation mission was dispatched from Japan.

(2) Caucasus countries

The relations between Japan and Caucasus countries were further strengthened through high-level mutual visits as well.

From Georgia, which shares with Japan fundamental values of liberty, democracy and the rule of law and seeks integration into Europe, First Vice Prime Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development Kumsishvili visited Japan in May to attend the annual meeting of the Asian

7 As a follow-up of the visit by Prime Minister Abe to all of the Central Asian countries in October 2015, the Japan Foundation (JF) has designated Central Asia as one of its "priority regions" and is intensively planning and implementing cultural exchange projects in a wide range of areas in this region. As a part of this, it dispatched the Japan Foundation Central Asia Cultural Mission, a cultural exchange delegation comprising experts in a variety of fields including culture and arts, to five Central Asian countries. The first delegation was dispatched in August 2016 (Uzbekistan), the second delegation was dispatched in April 2017 (Turkmenistan), and the third delegation was dispatched in November of the same year (Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Kazakhstan), studying each delegates made site-visit of cultural and community projects in five Central Asian countries and exchanged views and information with experts. The report of these delegations was submitted to Prime Minister Abe in December of the same year.

Japan-Georgia Foreign Ministers' Meeting (June 2, Tokyo)

Development Bank (ADB), and Vice Prime Minister of Foreign Affairs Janelidze visited Japan from May to June and met Foreign Minister Kishida. Additionally, State Minister for Reconciliation and Civic Equality Tsikhelashvili visited Japan in September. From the Japanese side, State Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Ryosei Tanaka visited Georgia in January and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takisawa also visited the country in June, where they met with high-level Government officials.

With abundant natural resources, Azerbaijan leads the economy of the Caucasus area. From Azerbaijan, Finance Minister Sharifov visited Japan in May to attend the annual meeting of the ADB, and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Khalafov visited in November. From the Japanese side, State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Yoshifumi Matsumura visited Azerbaijan in February, so did Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Manabu Horii in September, Vice-Minister Horii met high-level Government officials including President Aliyev and First Vice President Aliyeva. He also attended the signing ceremony for the extension of the production sharing agreement (PSA) for the development of Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli (ACG) oil field, in which Japanese companies participate.

From Armenia, which is rich in human resources, especially in the IT field, President of the National Assembly Sahakyan visited Japan in January on the invitation of the House of Representatives. President Sahakyan made a courtesy call to Prime Minister Abe and had a meeting with the Speakers of both Houses of the Diet. From the Japanese side, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takisawa visited Armenia in June, and met with high-level Government officials including President Sahakyan and Foreign Minister Nalbandian. Armenia held an election for its National Assembly in April and the ruling Republic Party of Armenia maintained the largest number of seats and its status as the ruling party.

Meanwhile, in Caucasus countries, there still exist disputes including South Ossetia and Abkhazia[8] in Georgia, and the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict[9] between Armenia and

8 In August 2008, an armed conflict took place between Georgia and South Ossetia; the latter was aiming for separation and independence from the former. Russia intervened in the dispute which led to a military conflict between Georgia and Russia. About one week after the conflict occurred, France, which was then EU president, and other states acted as mediators and realized a cease-fire. Based on the agreement reached at that time, international conferences have been held in Geneva to discuss security and humanitarian issues among parties concerned.

9 This is a dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan regarding Nagorno-Karabakh. Most of the residents living in the disputed Nagorno Karabakh area are Armenian and during the Soviet era they made increasingly strong demands to change their affiliation from Azerbaijan to Armenia and this led to a dispute between the two countries following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Armenia had occupied almost the entire region of Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding seven areas by 1993. In 1994, the two countries agreed to a cease-fire through the intermediation of Russia and the OSCE; however, conflict with casualties has been repeated until now. In April 2016, the largest military clashes since the cease-fire in 1994 occurred and a few days later both parties agreed to a cease-fire. Since 1999, an intermediation of the OSCE Minsk group has allowed direct talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan at various levels, including their leaders and foreign ministers, but there is still no prospect of a resolution (as of February 2018).

Azerbaijan, both which still cause tensions among the countries involved. Although efforts toward resolution have been made, no specific progress has been seen (as of February 2018).

Column

Sharing the attractiveness of Central Asia
- Starting with Comics and Cuisine for a Milestone Year -

1. 25th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Central Asian countries

2017 marked the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Central Asian countries. Japan has promoted friendly and cooperative relationship with Central Asian countries through providing economic assistance for nation building and support in a wide range of fields. While the Central Asian region is not quite familiar to Japanese people, it has been recently attracting attention as the area of geographical importance and a new destination for investments.

Keynote speech by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Manabu Horii at the 10th Tokyo Dialogue (August 31, MOFA, Tokyo)

2. The Central Asia plus Japan Dialogue / The 10th Tokyo Dialogue

The Tokyo Dialogue is a public symposium held as part of the framework of "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, which was launched by Japan in 2004. The 10th Symposium entitled "Thinking of the present and future of relations between the Central Asia and Japan," was held this year and active exchanges of ideas were made there.

3. The 10th Tokyo Dialogue Side Event: Exhibition of Original Illustrations, Cooking Videos, Comic Streaming

Along with the Tokyo Dialogue, MOFA conducted three cultural programs.

The first was the exhibition of original illustrations of the comic "A Bride's Story (*Otoyome Gatari*)" set in Central Asia in the 19th century, which was drawn by Ms. Kaoru Mori. The popularity of Kaoru Mori and novelty of the event as the first exhibition of original illustrations organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, made it big news, followed with very positive comments on social network sites, such as "Really thank you! MOFA!" and "Impressive! MOFA has gone this far, thank you!"

The second event was the release of cooking videos of Central Asian cuisine. These

videos were made and released with the aim of enhancing the public's knowledge of Central Asian cuisine that are not familiar to Japanese people but can be easily made at home (plov, dimlama, lagman) (available for viewing on the Ministry of Foreign Affair's official website: http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/erp/ca_c/page23_002183.html).

The third program was the publishing of the Manga "Central Asia Cooking (seven stories in total)" newly drawn by Kaoru Mori exclusively for this project. Characters representing respective Central Asian Countries, who had painted on the body of the Government Aircraft at the occasion of Prime Minister Abe's official visit to Central Asia in 2015, this time introduced Central Asian cuisines in this comic (available for viewing on the Ministry of Foreign Affair's official website: http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/erp/ca_c/page24_000897.html). This section of the Foreign Ministry's website is so popular that it recorded the highest number of visits in the entire website of MOFA. It was also featured on social networking sites as well as news websites, and made a gateway to Central Asian countries for many Japanese people. While it has not been officially charted in the Japanese Vogue Words Award yet, the fans of the comic are starting to use the phrase "otsukare-stan" (coined phrase meaning "See you later!").

Ms. Kaoru Mori attending the Exhibit of Original illustrations (August 29, MOFA, Tokyo)

"Let's Make It with Everyone! Central Asian Cooking" newly drawn by comic artist Ms. Kaoru Mori
From Story 1 "Introduction"

Section 6 The Middle East and North Africa

Overview

The Middle East and North Africa is situated in a geopolitically important location at the intersection of Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia, and South Asia. This region contains major international maritime routes for international commerce, and is also an important supplier of energy resources, including crude oil and natural gas, to the rest of the world. On the other hand, the region faces a number of destabilizing issues such as Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) and other violent extremist groups, the vast numbers of refugees that are flowing into nearby regions, the prolongation of the crisis in Syria, the situation in Iraq, the Middle East Peace Process, the tensions between Iran and Saudi Arabia, the situation surrounding Qatar, and domestic conditions in Afghanistan, Yemen, and Libya. Achieving peace and stability in this region is of great importance for the world as a whole, including Japan. Japan is working with the global community to resolve these issues. Japan is also working with the global community in areas such as humanitarian aid, stabilization assistance, and mid- and long-term development cooperation while encouraging related countries to engage in initiatives aimed at achieving regional stability.

The First Japan-Arab Political Dialogue (September 11, Cairo, Egypt)

Japan relies on the Middle East for more than 80% of its crude oil imports and has developed ties with countries in the Middle East and North Africa region (hereinafter, "countries in the Middle East") that have centered on resources and energy. Today, however, beyond these relationships Japan works to build more multi-layered ones in the areas such as wide-ranging economic cooperation, politics and security, and culture and people-to-people exchanges. Prime Minister Abe has visited this region six times since the inauguration of the

second Abe administration in December 2012. Foreign Minister Kono has also visited the region four times since taking on his current position in August 2017. There have also been a number of high-level visits, meetings, and talks, and the Government of Japan is working more proactively to strengthen ties with countries in the region.

In particular, Foreign Minister Kono has given strong commitment to this region as one of six pillars of his foreign policy. He outlined his "Kono Four Principles[1]," -basic Middle East policies based on Japan's achievements so far in the region at the first Japan-Arab Political Dialogue, held in Egypt in September 2017. The four principles are: (1) intellectual and human contribution, (2) investment in people, (3) enduring efforts, and (4) enhancing political efforts.

The Middle East Peace Process has stagnated since negotiations between Israel and Palestine faltered in April 2014. Japan is utilizing its friendly relations with countries in the Middle East to provide support from an impartial perspective aimed at resolving the issue of peace in the Middle East. At a series of summit meetings and foreign ministerial meetings held during high-level visits, Japan has expressed its support for finding a resolution through dialogue between both parties and is working to encourage peace negotiations. Japan has also made steady progress with its own efforts to provide support to the Palestinians, including the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" initiative and the Conference on Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD). With the announcement in December 2017 by U.S. president Trump that the U.S. Embassy in Israel would be relocated to Jerusalem, the circumstances surrounding the issue of peace in the Middle East have become more complicated. This led Foreign Minister Kono to visit Israel and Palestine to lobby both sides.

Although the area controlled by ISIL is decreasing in size, violent extremism continues to be a source of instability for the Middle East and is a serious issue for the international community as a whole. Since the beginning of the crisis in Syria, Japan has provided support worth more than 1.9 billion US dollars in total to Syria, Iraq, and other neighboring countries, including the provision of yen loans to Turkey and Jordan, which have been affected by an influx of Syrian refugees. Japan has used a number of opportunities, including the first Japan-Arab Political Dialogue (held in September 2017), to show a stance to support the creation of inclusive societies that do not produce violent extremism, through providing humanitarian aid to refugees and displaced persons, improving economic infrastructure, developing human resources, and so on.

With regard to Iran, the "Implementation Day" of the final agreement on the nuclear issue was reached in January 2016, and the U.S. and the EU partially suspended or terminated sanctions against Iran. Following the final agreement, Japan has continued to support the nuclear agreement which would strengthen the global non-proliferation system and contribute to stability in the Middle East. Japan is making efforts to further strengthen relations with Iran following the implementation of the agreement through cooperation to

1 The address given by Foreign Minister Kono, at the First Japan-Arab Political Dialogue in September 2017. URL: http://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000288921.pdf

encourage the steady implementation of the final agreement by Iran and the conclusion of the bilateral investment agreement.

In June 2017, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Egypt, and other countries announced termination of diplomatic relations with Qatar for a number of reasons including Qatar's support for terrorism. Japan supports mediation efforts by Kuwait and calls for a resolution through dialogue, emphasizing the importance of the unity of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) for peace and stability in the Middle East.

In recent years, the Middle Eastern countries have achieved steady economic development due to their rapidly growing youth population, and have been increasing their presence as a consumer market and an investment destination. Therefore, Japan has been working on establishing legal frameworks such as the EPA, FTA, investment agreements, tax agreements, and social security agreements, which are foundations for strengthening the economic and business relationships with the Middle East countries. Additionally, Japan has been promoting infrastructure projects in the region.

1 Situation in Middle East Region

(1) Iraq

In 2017, developments which are mutually contradictory on Iraq's unity were seen. While Iraqi ethnic groups and religious sects teamed together to successfully liberate all Iraqi territory from "Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL)" control, the tensions between Iraq's Federal Government and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) became heightened after a referendum on independence of the Kurdistan region.

▶ The complete map of Iraq

The operations against ISIL were carried out with cooperation among Iraq's Federal Government security forces, Popular Mobilization Units (PMU) which are primarily made up of Shia paramilitary fighters, and the KRG's Peshmerga security forces, and have successfully liberated major cities including Mosul in July. In December, Iraqi Prime Minister Abadi declared that all Iraqi territory had been liberated from ISIL control.

On the other hand, the KRG went through with a referendum on independence of the Kurdistan region (including disputed areas with the Federal Government) despite strong opposition from the Federal Government and the international community. The Federal Government responded to this by deploying security forces to Kirkuk and other disputed areas. As a result, the KRG lost almost all of the disputed areas and KRG President Barzani subsequently resigned.

The operations to liberate Iraq from ISIL have resulted in a large number of internally displaced persons, and their early return to their home becomes the primary issue to

address towards reconstruction. Against this backdrop, Japan provided, in January, approximately 100 million US dollars of humanitarian and stabilization assistance via international organizations which included provision of food, water and other daily commodities to displaced persons, as well as repairing houses and providing vocational training, in order to assist their early return and settlement. In September, Japan also provided 4.5 million US dollars in humanitarian and stabilization assistance via international organizations. In addition, Japan is contributing to the restoration of Iraq's infrastructure through yen-loan projects in areas such as electricity. Furthermore, based on the announcement at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit in 2016, Japan is supporting the restoration of Iraq's finances, which have suffered from factors such as falling oil prices and increased war-related costs.

With regard to Japan-Iraq relations, the Consular Office of Japan in Erbil was opened in January, with the aim of providing safety for Japanese nationals in Iraq and following the Kurdistan regional issues. Concerning high-level visits, State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sonoura visited Iraq in January. He again visited Iraq in August as Special Advisor to the Prime Minister. State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sato also visited Iraq in November. During these visits, discussions were held on how to strengthen bilateral ties toward 2019, which will be marking the 80th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations. On the other hand, seven Iraqi parliamentary members visited Japan in February to attend "the Seminar on Knowledge Sharing" toward utilizing Japanese knowhow for reconstruction and national reconciliation.

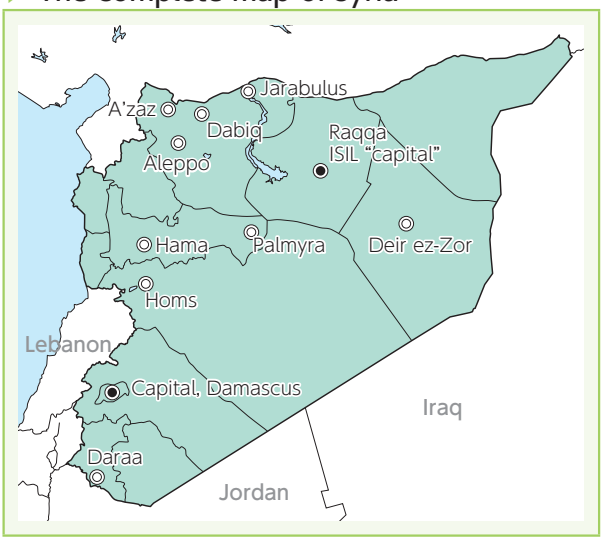
(2) Syria

A Current Situation in Syria, and the Decline of ISIL

The ongoing Syrian crisis, which began in 2011, is considered to be this century's worst humanitarian crisis. As of the end of 2017, between 320,000 and 470,000 people have died, more than 5 million people have become refugees, and approximately 6.3 million people have become internally-displaced persons.

Although the Syrian crisis is becoming protracted, the power of ISIL has diminished considerably. The Syrian Democratic Forces, which receive support from the U.S.-led coalition in Syria, has been fighting ISIL on the northeastern bank of the Euphrates River. On June 6, 2017, the SDF launched an attack on Raqqa, the city that ISIL referred to as their capital, and formally announced on October 20 that the city had been liberated. Syrian Government Forces have also pushed forward with their fight against ISIL on the southwest bank of the Euphrates River, and announced on November 3, the liberation of Deir ez-Zor, eastern Syria's major city, and on November 9, the liberation of Abu

▶ The complete map of Syria



Kamal, a city near the border with Iraq. Although ISIL still retains a certain amount of power, they have lost all of their urban bases, and it is thought that ISIL's power has diminished substantially.

On the other hand, although fighting between the Syrian Government and rebel forces has calmed somewhat due to endeavors in 2017 to bring about a ceasefire, there have been ceasefire violations, etc., and fighting is continuing, and the humanitarian situation continues to be harsh. The situation in areas that are under siege is particularly serious, with shortages of food and medicine. Providing humanitarian support and carrying out medical evacuations in such areas is a major issue that needs to be addressed. The Syrian Government, which is receiving support from Russia and Iran, has now gained the upper hand in the conflict but is yet to regain control over all Syrian territory.

On April 4, 2017, a chemical attack was made on the town of Khan Shaykhun. In response to this, the U.S. military launched cruise missiles at the Syrian Government's Shayrat air force base (the air base from which the aircraft involved in the chemical attack is believed to have taken off from and landed at). There have been several suspected cases of the use of chemical weapons in Syria and the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) and the United Nations' Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) has concluded that four cases have been carried out so far by the Syrian Government (including the Khan Shaykhun case) and two have been carried out by ISIL.

B Attempts at implementing a ceasefire (the Astana Process, etc.)

Amid these circumstance, on January 23 and 24, 2017, the Syrian Government and Syrian armed rebel groups held the first round of Astana Talks (marking the beginning of the Astana Process) primarily focused on discussing a ceasefire, with Russia, Iran, and Turkey acting as guarantor states. These talks were held eight times during 2017. The 6th round of talks held on September 14 and 15 produced a number of results including the declaration that four de-escalation zones would be established in Syria, namely, (1) Eastern Ghouta, (2) an area in north of the Homs Governorate, (3) the Idlib Governorate and adjoining districts, and (4) part of southern Syria.

On July 7, 2017, the U.S., Russia, and Jordan agreed to a ceasefire in southwestern Syria. The international community continues to make efforts to implement a ceasefire.

C Political Process

The United Nations' Geneva peace talks on Syria were held in 2017 from February 23 to March 3, marking the recommencement of the dialogue process (the Geneva Process), which had been suspended in March 2016. The Geneva peace talks are ongoing and involve discussions between the Syrian Government and Syrian rebel groups on issues such as governance, constitution, elections, and terrorism, with the aim of moving toward a political resolution of the Syrian crisis with mediation from the UN.

In addition, at the 7th round of Astana Talks held on October 30 and 31, Russia proposed that a wide range of Syrian nationals, armed groups, religious groups, etc., be invited to a Syria National Dialogue

Congress. At the 8th round of the Astana Talks held on December 21 and 22 the guarantor states (Russia, Iran, and Turkey) reached agreement on the holding of such a congress meeting.

D The Japanese Government's Efforts

Japan has consistently maintained a stance that the crisis in Syria cannot be resolved by any military means, and a political solution is indispensable. At the same time, Japan also attaches importance to continuing support to stave off further aggravation of the humanitarian situation through ongoing assistance. From this standpoint, following the aggravated situation in Syria, Japan has provided assistance worth more than 1.9 billion US dollars to Syria and neighboring countries by the end of 2017 for humanitarian assistance. Since becoming a UN Security Council non-permanent member from 2016 to 2017, Japan has actively contributed to discussions concerning the issue at the UN Security Council. Japan has also continued to put pressure on the relevant parties in areas such as ensuring humanitarian access and ceasefires. Japan intends to continue its efforts in close coordination with the international community to improve and stabilize the situation in Syria, with focus on humanitarian support, which is Japan's forte.

(3) Iran

Iran is a major Shiite regional power with land of approximately 4.4 times the size of Japan with a population of about 80 million and is blessed with abundant natural resources. Japan has maintained and strengthened a traditionally friendly relationship from the viewpoints of ensuring the stable supply of crude oil and the stability of the Middle East region.

The "Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)" agreed in July 2015 by Iran and the EU3 (UK, France, Germany and EU) +3 (U.S., China, and Russia) reached "Implementation Day" in January 2016, and, the U.S. and the EU partially suspended or terminated sanctions against Iran in conjunction with the end of sanction-related rules against Iran established under past UN Security Council resolutions. Since the agreement, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been continuously verifying and monitoring Iran's compliance with the agreement's terms, and the agency has reported that Iran is fulfilling its commitments under the agreement. Since taking office, U.S. President Trump has stressed the needs to firmly respond to destabilizing activities and others of Iran. In October 2017, President Trump announced that he would not certify the nuclear agreement (the need for certification is a domestic U.S. legal formality imposed on the agreement). In September, Japan worked with the IAEA to provide training on safeguards to employees of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran. In addition, in Japan-Iran Foreign Ministers' telephone conversations in October, Japan expressed its support for the nuclear agreement as it contributes to the strengthening of the global non-proliferation regime and stabilization of the Middle East. Japan also expressed its hopes for a resolution through dialogue, and that it would continue to back steady and continued implementation of the agreement. Prime Minister Abe sent a message to President Rouhani congratulating him for his reelection in presidential election held

in May 2017, and expressed the hope that further progress will be made in creating an even more constructive relationship between Iran and the international community. In September, special envoy of the Prime Minister, Masahiko Komura visited Iran and expressed to President Rouhani the hope that Iran would play a constructive role in regional stability based on an environment in which compliance with the nuclear agreement continues. The 6th Japan-Iran Summit Meeting since President Rouhani took office was held at the UN General Assembly in New York, and shared views on pursuing cooperation in a wide range of sectors including not only politics and economy but also medical, the environment, culture, and tourism. The 1st Iran-Japan Foreign Ministers' talk since Foreign Minister Kono took office was also held, exchanging frank opinions on the nuclear agreement and the situation in the Middle East.

Since the arrival of Implementation Day, Japan and Iran have engaged not only in high-level political exchanges, but have also expanded cooperation in a wide range of fields based on a framework of exchange and dialogue on a variety of different levels.

2017 saw a great deal of activity with high-level visits relating to a range of different fields including visits by the Vice President of Iran for Women and Family Affairs (February); the Vice President of the Cultural Heritage, Handicrafts and Tourism Organization of Iran (March); and a visit to Iran by State Minister of Environment, Yoshihiro Seki (May). In addition, a working group on the environment, culture, sport, economic cooperation, healthcare, trade, and investment was established under the Japan-Iran Cooperation Council based on an agreement between the foreign ministers of the two countries, and meetings of this working group have featured discussions aimed at achieving further progress with cooperation in various fields.

On the economic front, the lifting and easing of sanctions lead to a greater level of international business activities, and in 2016, Iran's real GDP growth was 6.5%—a switch to high growth from negative growth in the previous year. In 2016 trade between the two countries also increased, with Japan's exports to Iran increasing by 3.4% compared with 2015, and imports from Iran also increasing 3.4% compared with 2015. In April, the Japan-Iran Investment Agreement also came into effect. Japan has also engaged in other initiatives aimed at improving Iran's business environment.

(4) Gulf States (including Yemen)

The Gulf states (Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Oman, Qatar, Kuwait, and Bahrain) are important partners for Japan, helping to maintain Japan's energy security. There have been a large number of high-level visits to and from the Gulf states. In March, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman of Saudi Arabia became the first Saudi King to visit Japan in 46 years. UAE Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Abdullah visited Japan in April. In early September and early and late December, Foreign Minister Kono visited three times in total to the Middle East, resulting in visits to all six Gulf states to hold talks with Foreign Ministers. In particular, Foreign Minister Kono participated in the 13th session of the Manama Dialogue in Bahrain, becoming the first Japanese Foreign Minister to attend a Manama Dialogue, a series of

meetings held to discuss the issue of security in the gulf region. Foreign Minister Kono's first telephone conversations after assuming the role of Minister for Foreign Affairs, was conducted with Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammed in August. In September Foreign Minister Kono also made a courtesy call to the Crown Prince. Steady progress is being made on the strengthening of relations with important figures in Middle Eastern countries.

Economic conditions in these Gulf states have been affected by a decline in revenue due to low international oil prices. In response, they have prioritized industry diversification and human resources development towards ending reliance on oil and nurturing private sectors. This is particularly true of Saudi Arabia, which announced their "Saudi Vision 2030" which is focused on the issues of employment creation and ending dependence on oil. During the visit to Japan by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman of Saudi Arabia, Japan also announced "Japan-Saudi Vision 2030," as a new guide for future cooperation.

In terms of results contributing to people to people exchanges, in April, UAE citizens with ordinary passports were exempted from having to obtain visas to visit Japan provided that they register them in advance. In September an agreement was reached with Saudi Arabia to, among other things, greatly reduce the cost of visa fees for Japanese citizens visiting Saudi Arabia.

With regard to the political situation, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, Egypt and other countries announced termination of diplomatic relations with Qatar in June for a number of reasons including Qatar's support for terrorism. Emir of the State of Kuwait Sabah expressed his wish to mediate. Diplomatic mediation between the two sides is ongoing but the situation is currently deadlocked. Maintaining unity in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) is crucial for maintaining peace and stability in the Middle East. In June, Prime Minister Abe had telephone conversations with Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia Mohammed, and Emir of Qatar Tamim, to express his expectation for a rapid resolution to the issue through dialogue. Prime Minister Abe also sent a personal letter to Sheikh Sabah to communicate his support for Kuwait's mediation efforts. During his Middle East tour in September, Foreign Minister Kono held talks with Foreign Minister of Qatar Mohammed and Foreign Minister of Saudi

Prime Minister Abe shaking hands with the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques King Salman of Saudi Arabia (March 13, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Foreign Minister Kono, making an address at the 13th session of the Manama Dialogue (December 9, Manama, Bahrain)

Arabia Al-Jubeir to communicate Japan's hopes for a rapid resolution through dialogue and Japan's intention of providing support for anything that could lead to a resolution of the issue.

Fighting continues in Yemen's capital, Sanaa, between anti-government forces, the Yemeni military, and the military of the Arab League. The outlook for peace still looks uncertain. Yemeni citizens are suffering due to the adverse humanitarian conditions, which is called the world's largest food crisis, and support from the international community is required. Yemen is located along strategic sea lanes in the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, and stability in Yemen is directly tied to Japan's national interests. Japan is providing support aimed at improving the humanitarian situations including 62 million US dollars in aid which was announced in April. The Japan-Yemen Foreign Ministers' meeting was held in September for the first time in the past four years. Japan has announced its intention to commit to working in the long term toward achieving stability in Yemen and carrying out reconstruction.

(5) 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. Israel is continuing with its settlement policy, mutual mistrust is firmly entrenched, and a return to talks has not been achieved. Humanitarian situations in the Gaza Strip also continue to be severe.

With the inauguration of the Trump administration in the U.S. in 2017, and indications that the administration would take a proactive stance toward resolving the issue of peace in the Middle East, hope has grown in the international community that it will be possible to break the deadlock. High-level U.S. officials have made repeated visits to Israel and Palestine to listen to the opinions of both sides.

On the other hand, President Trump announced, on December 6 (U.S. Eastern Time), his intention to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Although it was made clear that President Trump's announcement did not forejudge the final status of Jerusalem, many Arabic/Islamic countries expressed their opposition to the announcement as they saw it as being a violation of the established principles of the international community regarding its status. Demonstrations against the announcement were held in some areas, and in Palestine a number of deaths occurred as a result of conflict with Israel's security authorities.

In response, an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council was held and a resolution calling on all countries to refrain from establishing diplomatic missions in Jerusalem and stating that measures contravening past Security Council resolutions concerning Jerusalem would not be accepted was vetoed by the U.S. The same resolution was subsequently put to a vote at the UN General Assembly and this was passed by a majority vote, including a vote from Japan.

B The Government of Japan's Efforts

Japan has been working on political and economic fronts in coordination with the international community toward the achievement of a "two-state solution" that

would enable Israelis and Palestinians to coexist peacefully. Political dialogue has been conducted at all levels involving the Prime Minister, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Special Envoy of the Government of Japan for the Middle East Peace. Japan is contributing toward the creation of an environment that will be essential for achieving peace, and working to build trust between Israelis and Palestinians by inviting officials and youths from both sides to Japan, among others.

In January 2015, Prime Minister Abe met with Prime Minister Netanyahu in Israel and President Abbas in Palestine. When President Abbas visited Japan in February 2016, Prime Minister Abe urged him to take a flexible approach toward the resumption of direct negotiations.

In December 2017, Foreign Minister Kono visited Israel and Palestine to hold talks with Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Abbas, and told them the importance of constructive responses from both parties.

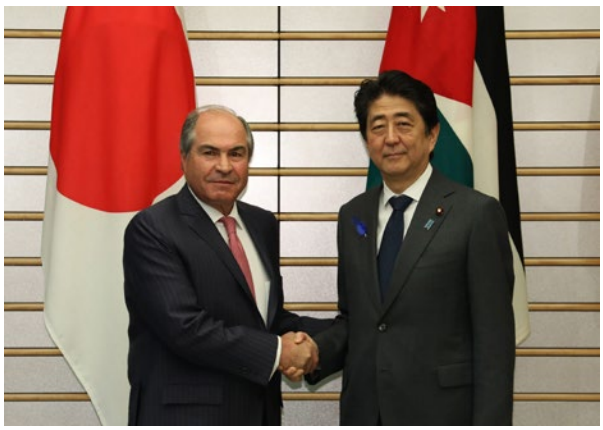
Japan's support for Palestine since 1993 amounts to 1.86 billion US dollars, covering humanitarian support, job creation, healthcare, agriculture, and a variety of other fields. The "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" initiative is Japan's unique effort to enable Palestine to achieve economic self-sustainability in cooperation with Israel, Palestine and Jordan. Several companies have commenced operations at the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP), a flagship project of this initiative, and it is expected that more companies will operate and create new employment opportunities. In December 2017, Foreign Minister Kono visited JAIP to attend an unveiling ceremony commemorating the start of Phase II. At the ceremony, he announced that greater focus will be placed on cooperation in the ICT field and improvements of distribution, in order to further enhance the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity initiative."

Japan engages in tripartite cooperation with Asian countries under the Cooperation among East Asian Countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD) framework, which was launched by Japan with the aim of encouraging Asian countries to provide support.

(6) Jordan and Lebanon

The situation in Jordan remains relatively stable compared to other parts of the constantly turbulent Middle East region. Jordan has, under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II, played an important role in the peace and stability of the region, such as with countermeasures against extremists, its acceptance of a large number of Syrian refugees, and active involvement in the Middle East Peace Process. The country's role is highly regarded by the international community.

With regard to Jordan's relations with Japan, Prime Minister Abe, in September, held a summit meeting with His Majesty King Abdullah II at the UN General



Japan-Jordan Summit Meeting (July 14, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Assembly in New York, and in July Prime Minister Al-Mulki visited Japan. In September and December, Foreign Minister Kono also visited Jordan to hold talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Safadi. The traditionally favorable relations between Japan and Jordan have been further enhanced with frequent summit meetings and ministerial level visits. The two countries have agreed to coordinate on bringing stability to the Middle East and to further develop the countries' bilateral relations in a wide range of areas such as diplomacy, security, and economics.

Japan also attaches importance to Jordan, which serves as a cornerstone for the stability of the region. Japan has been providing assistance for Jordan's industrial base and for maintenance of stability in the country through support for refugees and host communities. In 2017, Japan again contributed to Jordan's social stability through the provision of support such as 1.4 billion Japanese yen in grant aid to repair and extend water distribution pipe networks in Jordan's Balqa Governorate, which is currently hosting a large number of Syrian refugees.

Lebanon is a nation with a cultural mosaic consisting of 18 religions/sects, including Christianity and Islam. The former leader of the Free Patriotic Movement Aoun was elected President in October 2016 approximately two and a half years after President Suleiman stepped down in May 2014. With this, the Hariri Cabinet was inaugurated in December of the same year. A range of policies are being implemented by the Hariri Cabinet. In particular, regarding reform to electoral legislation, which had not proved possible to reach an agreement between religious sects, a new electoral law passed in June 2017, and a parliamentary election is now scheduled for May 2018, Lebanon's first parliamentary election since 2009.

In November 2017, there was an incident in which Prime Minister Hariri suddenly announced his resignation while visiting Saudi Arabia. However through mediation by France and the international community, he retracted his resignation in December after having returned to Lebanon.

Lebanon is facing a range of serious issues including the impact of the situation in Syria. Stability in Lebanon is key to the stability and prosperity of the Middle East. Japan has also provided Lebanon with humanitarian aid for assistance to Syrian refugees and the host communities.

(7) Turkey

Turkey is a geopolitically important large country in the region located at the crossroads of Europe, the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Caucasus. As a member state of NATO, the Government of Turkey essentially emphasizes Europe and the U.S. in its diplomacy, including making efforts to join the EU, while proactively pursuing multifaceted diplomacy with states in the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. Turkey has historically been a pro-Japan country, as typified by episodes such as the Ertugrul Frigate incident in 1890[2].

Following the attempted coup d'état by factions within the Turkish army on July 15, 2016, the Turkish Government declared a state of emergency claiming that Fethullah Gulen, the leader of an Islamic movement

2 For more details of the Ertugrul Frigate incident, refer to:http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/middle_e/turkey/data.html

in Turkey who is currently living in exile in the U.S., was behind the incident. Dismissals and crackdowns on government officials and persons in the army and security authorities who are thought to have connections to Gulen are continuing.

On the diplomatic front, while Turkey has accepted 3.3 million Syrian refugees and tensions with countries in Europe and North America keep rising, Turkey is cooperating with Russia and Iran on, among other things, the creation of de-escalation zones through the Astana Process. Tensions are also rising with the U.S. over the issues of the extradition of Fethullah Gulen and the provision by the U.S. of weaponry to the PYD and YPG (organizations that are active in Syria that are connected with the PKK, a Turkish terrorist organization involved in the Kurdish independence movement). When a Turkish employee at the U.S. Embassy in Istanbul was arrested by the Turkish authority in October on suspicion of having connections with Fethullah Gulen, U.S. diplomatic offices in Turkey halted the issuance of visas. Turkey also took similar measures in response to this (visa issuance resumed at the end of December).

Japan-Turkey Summit Meeting (September 20, New York, U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japan-Turkey Foreign Ministerial Meeting (December 28, Ankara, Turkey)

With regard to Turkey's relationship with Japan, Prime Minister Abe met with President Erdogan in New York in September for their 8th Summit Meeting. In June, Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Cavusoglu visited Japan, and in December Foreign Minister Kono visited Turkey.

(8) Afghanistan

Although the National Unity Government (NUG) of President Ghani, which was inaugurated in September 2014, has gained the support of the international community and has moved forward with corruption countermeasures, governance reform, and so on, there are still a large number of issues needing to be addressed. In particular, the security situation in Afghanistan continues to be adverse, due to attacks by anti-government forces such as the Taliban. On May 31, a largescale terrorist attack occurred in the capital, Kabul, near the Embassy of Germany (adjacent to the Embassy of Japan) causing over 300 casualties. On the other hand, the NUG is mounting an effort for peace while working closely with the international community,

including the gathering officials from key countries and neighboring countries to hold a "Kabul Process Conference," which is aimed at making progress with peace between the Government of Afghanistan and anti-government forces. In August, U.S. President Trump also announced new strategies in Afghanistan and South Asia, indicating the continued involvement of the U.S. in Afghanistan.

(9) Egypt

Located at the north-eastern edge of the African continent and facing Europe on the other side of the Mediterranean, Egypt is a major country which plays an important role in the stability of the Middle East and North Africa.

On the economic front, there has been a tendency toward macroeconomic indicators such as foreign currency reserves and foreign direct investment by introducing a floating exchange rate system in autumn 2016 and reforming the fuel subsidy system as well as the introduction of value-added tax. With regard to security measures, there were challenging issues such as a series of terrorist attacks on the Coptic Christians and an attack on a mosque in the north of the Sinai Peninsula.

Steady progress is seen in Japan-Egypt relationship. Since President El-Sisi's visit to Japan in February 2016, steady progress has been made on partnership programs as the construction program of Grand Egyptian Museum and the "Egypt-Japan Education Partnership (EJEP)," which includes the introduction of Japanese-style education, an increase in the numbers of Egyptian students and trainees to into Japan, and strengthening support for the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST).

2017 witnessed mutually active high-level visits. There were visits to Japan by the Speaker of Egypt's House of Representatives, the Chief of Staff of the Egyptian Armed Forces, and the Pope of the Coptic Church. Foreign Minister Kono visited Egypt in September for the first time in approximately five years for a Japanese Foreign Minister. While in Egypt, he gave a speech on Japan's Middle East diplomacy at the first-ever Japan-Arab Political Dialogue, paid a courtesy call to President El Sisi, and held Japan-Egypt Foreign Ministerial talks.

In October, direct flights between Japan and Egypt resumed. In December, Minister of Investment and International Cooperation Nasr visited Japan and expressed her hope for an increase in investment from Japan at "Egypt Investment Seminar." The expansion of bilateral relations in the fields of tourism and investment is to be expected.

2 The Situation in the North Africa Region (Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and Mauritania)

The Maghreb is at the crossroads to Europe, Africa, and the Middle East, and has shared history, culture, and language in common. Recently it has attracted attention because of the potential as a region. On the other hand, there is the issue of the return to the region from Iraq and Syria of foreign fighters, as well as the issues of refugees and illegal migrants entering Europe, etc. Stabilization of the political system and security situation is a crucial issue.

In Libya, confrontation rooted in tribal society and the worsening of security since the collapse of the Gadhafi administration continues to be serious. There are three

parallel political forces in the country—one in the west (Tripoli) and one in the east (Tobruk) as well as a national unity government that was formed based on mediation from the UN and other parties. In 2017, efforts by the international community (including the efforts listed below) achieved a certain degree of progress toward resolving the Libya issue. In July, talks mediated by France were held between Prime Minister Sarraj of the Government of National Accord, and Field Marshal Haftar of the Libyan National Army. In September, a roadmap was announced by a Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) Salamé. Meetings with neighboring countries (Egypt, Algeria, and Tunisia) were also held in September. On the other hand, there have been reports that some ISIL fighters from Iran and Syria are now shifting the focus of their activities to Libya, and the security situation remains unstable. It is hoped that, for the sake of stability within Libya and in neighboring countries, progress will be made with comprehensive political dialogue in Libya with backing from the international community, and that a legitimate national unity government can be established.

Tunisia, which has achieved a transition to democracy, is facing the issues of economic reform such as eliminating the economic disparity between regions. The security situation has been calm since the attack on security forces in the region near the Libyan border in March 2016, but the Libyan situation also has an influence and ensuring security remains an important issue.

The Governments of Algeria and Morocco have remained stable. Both countries are also contributing to peace and stability in the region and are working hard to mediate for peace in neighboring countries such as Libya and Mali. Morocco joined the African Union in January 2017 and has also expressed its intention to join the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). The future actions of both countries are the subject of much interest.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sato, during his visit to Algeria (December 23, Algiers)

Although Mauritania shares a long border with the politically unstable Mali, the country is relatively stable compared to other countries in the Sahel Region, and has experienced no terrorist attacks since 2012. In January 2017, Mauritania mediated in a peaceful change of government in Gambia and has contributed to regional stability.

Located in sub-Saharan Africa, Mauritania is the westernmost Arabic country. With regards to the country's relations with Japan, it participated, together with the other north African nations, in the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in August and also participated in the First Japan-Arab Political Dialogue in September.

Section 7 Africa

Overview

Africa, with a population over 1.2 billion in 54 countries with diversity, attracts the interest of the international community, owing to its high market potential and rich natural resources. This is one of the reasons why the influence of African countries on consensus-building is expanding in the international community.

On the other hand, long-standing challenges such as political unrest, severe disparities and poverty remain unsolved in Sub-Saharan Africa, while recently other challenges have emerged, such as the vulnerability of the health systems and the rise of violent extremism. Furthermore, their economic growth has slowed down compared to the previous years, due to the deceleration of emerging economies and the decline of global commodity prices.

As the impact of these issues transcends national borders, it is crucial for African countries to overcome these challenges and achieve stable growth for the peace and stability of not only Africa, but also the international community as a whole, including Japan.

TICAD is an international forum for African development, co-organized by the UN, the UNDP, the World Bank and the African Union Commission (AUC) under the leadership of Japan. TICAD was launched in 1993, under the basic philosophy of "ownership (self-help efforts)" of Africa and "partnership" with the international community including Japan. While TICAD Summit Meetings were held in Japan once every five years in the past, responding to the recent request from the African side, TICAD Summit Meetings are now set to be held once every three years since the sixth summit, alternately in Africa and Japan.

At the sixth TICAD (TICAD VI), which was held in August 2016, in Nairobi, Kenya, Prime Minister Abe announced that for a

Foreign Minister Kono making a speech at the TICAD Ministerial Meeting (August 25, Maputo, Mozambique)

Outline of TICAD (Tokyo International Conference on African Development)

[Basic Principle]
Ownership and Partnership

[Theme]
Supporting Africa through broad support from the international community and expansion of development partnership

[Approach]
South-South Cooperation, human security and respect for distinctiveness, diversity and identity

—History of TICAD Process—
1993: The First Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD Ⅰ, Tokyo)
1998: The Second Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD Ⅱ, Tokyo)
2001: TICAD Ministerial Meeting (Tokyo)
2003: The Third Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD Ⅲ, Tokyo)
2004: TICAD Asia-Africa Trade and Investment Conference (AATIC) (Tokyo)
2006: TICAD Conference on Consolidation of Peace (Ethiopia)
2007: TICAD Ministerial Conference on Energy and Environment for Sustainable Development (Kenya)
2008: The Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD Ⅳ, Yokohama)
2009-2012: TICAD Ministerial Follow-up Meeting was held every year (Botswana, Tanzania, Senegal and Morocco)
2013: TICAD V Ministerial Preparatory Meeting (Ethiopia)
2013: The Fifth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD Ⅴ, Yokohama)
2014: The first TICAD V Ministerial Conference (Cameroon)
2016: TICAD VI Preparatory Ministerial Meeting (The Gambia)
2016: The Sixth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD Ⅵ, Kenya)
2017: TICAD Ministerial Meeting (Mozambique)

period of three years from 2016 to 2018, Japan will invest in the Future of Africa, through implementing measures including human resource development to 10 million people by making use of quality, Japan's strength, which amounts to approximately 30 billion US dollars under public-private partnership. At the closing session, the Nairobi Declaration was adopted as the TICAD VI outcome document outlining the achievements of TICAD VI based on the discussions in each session, and the "Nairobi Implementation Action Plan" was announced.

In August 2017, a TICAD Ministerial Meeting was held in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique. Foreign Minister Kono and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Manabu Horii attended the meeting. In the meeting, participants reviewed the progress of the commitments announced at TICAD V and VI. Following the meeting, "TICAD Progress Report 2017" and "Japan's Initiatives 2017" were released and, Co-chairs' Summary was produced,

Summit meeting with leaders of African countries serving as members of the UN Security Council and others (September 18, New York, U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

compiling the main points of the discussions. The support that Japan provided was highly appreciated from many African countries.

Based on the policies and measures hammered out at TICAD, Japan is working to strengthen relations with African countries in various fields. In the field of peace and stability, while Self Defense Force Engineering Unit personnel in the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) have returned to Japan, the deployment of personnel to the UNMISS headquarters is still ongoing. Japan has

continued to contribute to the enhancement of the capabilities, etc., of those Africans participating in peacekeeping operations (PKO) through the provision of support for PKO training centers in African countries and training courses organized by the UN. In September, in the margin of the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Abe held a summit meeting with African leaders including those of UN Security Council member countries, and Foreign Minister Kono hosted a dinner meeting for African foreign ministers at which he introduced Japan's contributions to the resolution of issues relating to peace and stability in Africa and also discussed issues such as North Korea and reform of the UN Security Council.

On the economic front, in May, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei led the Joint Mission for Promoting Trade and Investment to Africa and visited Nigeria and Morocco, where trade and investment promotion seminars, social functions with local business figures, and other events, were held. This was one of the initiatives introduced at TICAD VI in response to the high expectations of Japanese companies to expand their activities into Africa. At the "Japan-Africa Private Sector Dialogue" event, which was held as a side-event at the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, the importance of the roles played by Japanese and African private sector companies' rate in African development and economic growth was underscored. At a meeting of the Ministerial Meeting on Economic Strategy for Africa, which was established under the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary, it was affirmed that the Government of Japan would gather its expertise to pursue initiatives developed based on the outcomes of TICAD VI. These initiatives include the promotion of concrete policies and measures such as comprehensive region wide development in the three priority areas of the West Africa Growth Ring, the East African Northern Corridor, and the Nacala Corridor. In addition to the bilateral investment treaties that are already in effect with Kenya and Mozambique, consultations are underway for bilateral investment agreements with Angola, Uganda, Ethiopia, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Zambia, Senegal, Tanzania, Nigeria, Madagascar, and other countries.

Japan continued to strengthen cooperation with the African Union (AU) or other entities. Japan is planning to further strengthen relations with the AU and African countries particularly through the establishment of Mission of Japan to the African Union in the beginning of 2018.

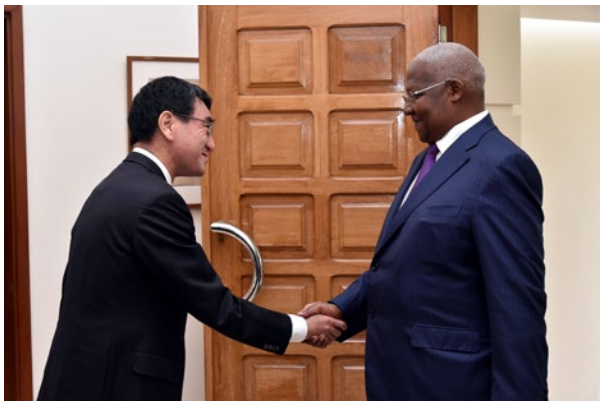
In addition, Japan is also working, through discussions on Africa-related policies, to share information and cooperate on policies with other countries such as the U.S., the UK, France, and India.

1 East Africa Region

(1) Uganda

Under President Museveni's long-serving administration since 1986, Uganda has enjoyed sustained economic growth thanks partly to stable domestic politics, and has contributed to regional stability as an important and influential actor in East Africa. There are more than one million South Sudanese refugees sheltering in the northern part of the country and the burden of this on the Government of Uganda is increasing. In June, the Refugee Solidarity Summit was held in Uganda, cohosted by UN Secretary General Guterres and President Museveni, and Japan's State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kishi participated in this meeting.

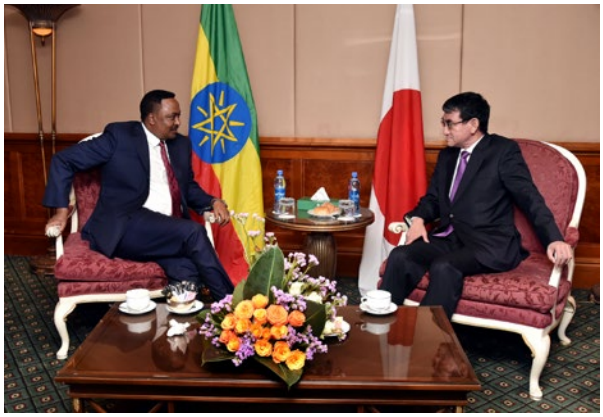
During the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in Mozambique in August, Foreign Minister Kono had a meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs Kutesa and affirmed the friendly relations between the two countries.


Japan-Uganda Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 25, Maputo, Mozambique)

(2) Ethiopia

With more than 100 million citizens, Ethiopia has the largest population in the East Africa region. Ethiopia plays an important political role in the region and is home to the headquarters of the African Union (AU), and also holds the presidency of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), an organization consisting of eight East African countries. Ethiopia is currently serving as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for a two-year period beginning in January 2017. On the economic front, Ethiopia has been enjoying sustained robust economic growth, and is aiming to become a middle-income country.

Foreign Minister Kono visited Ethiopia in August and held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs Workneh. The two ministers held a telephone conference after North Korea conducted a nuclear test

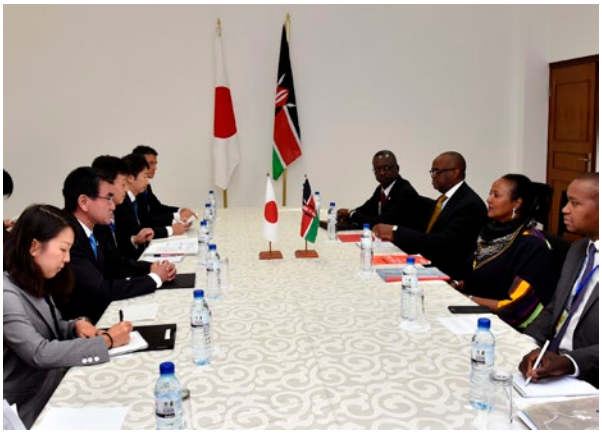

Japan-Ethiopia Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 27, Ethiopia)

in September. Also, in November, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sato visited Ethiopia. Ethiopia's Deputy Prime Minister Demeke visited Japan in June and made a courtesy call to Prime Minister Abe and affirmed the strengthening of friendly bilateral ties.

(3) Kenya

Kenya, which is the gateway to East Africa, is an economic leader in the region and is a key country in the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy." In 2017 President Kenyatta was reelected.

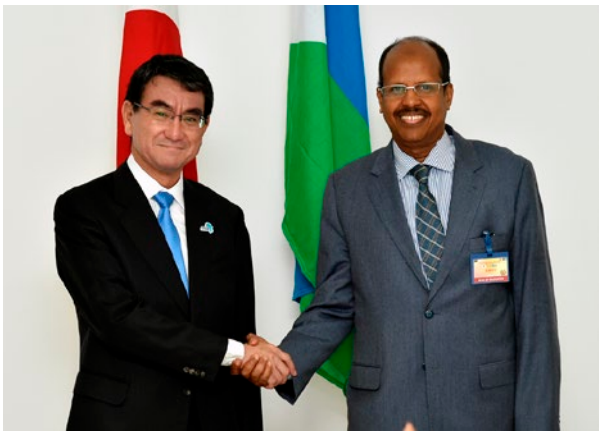
In May, Cabinet Secretary of Foreign Affairs Amina paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Abe and held talks with Foreign Minister Kishida during her visit to Japan. Dr. Amina also held talks with Foreign Minister Kono during the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August. The entry into force of the Japan-Kenya investment agreement is a leading example which shows the close relations between the two countries.



Japan-Kenya Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 25, Maputo, Mozambique)

(4) Djibouti

Djibouti, situated at one of the great trade arteries that passes through the Indian Ocean and connects Europe and Asia, is aiming to become a distribution hub of East Africa. It is a base for international security



Japan-Djibouti Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 25, Maputo, Mozambique)

and is a key country in the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy."

Since 2011, Djibouti has been hosting the installations of the Japan Self-Defense Forces to carry out antipiracy activities, and the two countries have been developing very good relations. During the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, Foreign Minister Kono held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Youssouf and affirmed the intention of further strengthening their bilateral ties.

(5) Somalia

International community including Japan is supporting Somalia's nation building efforts to recover from the civil war. A new president was elected in February, and the London Somalia Conference was held in May. Although Al Shahab (AS) remains active and humanitarian crises resulting from the impact of droughts still remain to be solved, the efforts are being made to stabilize the security and to achieve economic growth.

In February, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Kishi held talks with Deputy Prime Minister Arte. In May, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei held

talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Yusuf-Garaad. In September, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister Sonoura also held talks with Minister Yusuf-Garaad.

(6) Sudan

Sudan plays an important role in the stability of the East Africa region, including that of South Sudan. Given the improving security situation in Sudan's Darfur region, the UNAMID, the joint peacekeeping operation by the UN and the African Union, is currently in the process to scale down its forces. In October, the U.S. lifted its economic sanctions against Sudan, and relations with countries in Europe and Northern America are improving.

During the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Manabu Horii held talks with Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Atta El Manan, affirming the intention to strengthen bilateral relations.

(7) Tanzania

Tanzania enjoys stable politics and economic growth. It has the second largest population in the East Africa Region (over 57 million). Over the last ten years it has maintained a high growth rate, and private companies in the country have been garnering attention as vibrant trading partners and investment destinations. The country's domestic affairs has remained stable since its independence and has contributed to peace and stability in the African Great Lakes Region by, for example, hosting a large number of refugees from neighboring countries over a long period of time.

Negotiations toward a Japan-Tanzania investment treaty are currently underway, and the fourth meeting on the issue was held in September.

(8) Madagascar

Madagascar is an island in the Indian Ocean near southeastern Africa. It is rich resources and is one of the key countries in the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy."

With regard to relations with Japan, the Japan-Madagascar Public-Private Infrastructure Meeting was held in July. In December, President Rajaonarimampianina visited Japan and held a summit meeting in Japan. Minister of Foreign Affairs Rabary-Njaka, who accompanied the President, also held talks with Foreign Minister Kono, affirming the intention to strengthen bilateral ties.

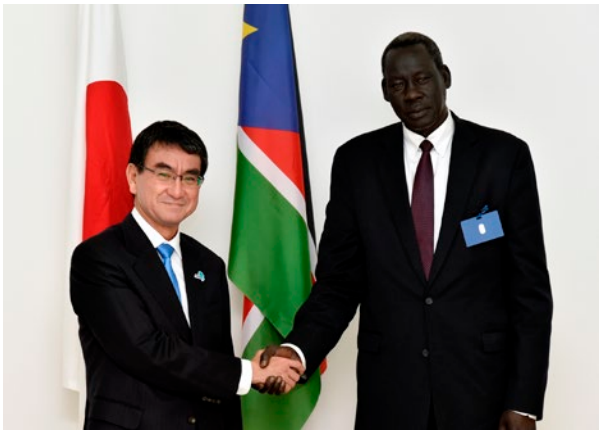
Madagascar is home to one of the world's largest integrated production for nickel and cobalt, and a Japanese company contributes to this project. The Government of Japan is providing yen loans to support the extension project of the Toamasina Port, which is set to become the country's largest resource shipping port.

President Rajaonarimampianina reviewing the salute and attending the guard of honor ceremony during his visit to Japan (December 5, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

(9) South Sudan

South Sudan gained independence from the Republic of the Sudan in July 2011. Although armed clashes and violent incidents are continuing in some areas away from the capital Juba, moves to resolve issues through political dialogue have become increasingly active since May. National Dialogue is making progress around the country, and in December, a meeting aimed at revitalizing 2015's Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (ARCSS) was hosted by the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), an organization consisting of eight East African countries.

Having withdrawn its Self Defense Force engineering unit from the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) at the end of May (the dispatch of personnel to the mission's headquarters is still ongoing), Japan is continuing to provide for and support IGAD activities and national dialogue, human resources development, humanitarian aid, etc. During the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, Foreign Minister Kono held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs Deng Alor. In December, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sato visited the capital, Juba and made a courtesy call to President Kiir and others.



Japan-South Sudan Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 25, Maputo, Mozambique)

(10) Mauritius

Mauritius is the host country of the Indian Ocean Commission (IOC) and the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA) secretariats, and is one of the key countries in the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy." Mauritius is promoting diversification of its industries, with focus on the fields of IT and finance. It has maintained the highest rating amongst African countries in the World Bank's "Ease of Doing Business" rankings.

Following the opening of the Embassy of Japan in Mauritius in January, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sonoura visited Mauritius in June, followed by State Minister of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism Suematsu in July. On these occasions, the intention to further strengthen bilateral ties including in the areas of economics and infrastructure was confirmed.

(11) Rwanda

Under the leadership of President Kagame, who took office in 2000, Rwanda has been working toward economic development and national reconciliation with the aim of recovering from the genocide which occurred in 1994. President Kagame, who was reelected in the presidential elections in August, is taking measures aimed at shifting from an agriculture-centered economy. The country is experiencing rapid growth especially in the ICT field.

During the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, Foreign Minister Kono held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation, and the East Africa Commission Mushikiwabo.

Japan-Rwanda Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 25, Maputo, Mozambique)

2 Southern Africa

(1) Angola

Angola has rich energy and mineral resources. Since the end of the civil war in 2002 the country has enjoyed a high economic growth rate. The drop in primary commodity prices in recent years has led to economic stagnation, and the Government of Angola is therefore placing emphasis on diversifying the country's industries.

The general election held in August resulted in the first peaceful presidential transition in 38 years. In September, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sato attended the inauguration ceremony for President Lourenço as a Special Envoy of the Prime Minister, and reaffirmed with the new president the intention to cooperate on further strengthening Japan-Angola relations.

(2) Zambia

Zambia has maintained political stability since its independence in 1964. It has also contributed proactively to regional peace and security, mediating for peace among neighboring countries, accepting refugees, and so on. In June, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei visited Zambia and held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs Kalaba, and affirmed their intention to commence negotiations for a bilateral investment treaty. The first Japan-Zambia investment treaty negotiation was held in December.

(3) Zimbabwe

Although Zimbabwe's economy has stagnated due to political and economic turn off since 2000, the country has a great deal of potential thanks to its high level of literacy, wealth of resources, bountiful agriculture, and tourist attractions such as the Victoria Falls. A military intervention in November led to the resignation of President Mugabe, who had held power ever since Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980. In accordance with the constitution, former Vice-President Mnangagwa was subsequently inaugurated as president. It is hoped that, under the new administration, democratic and economic reform will be progressed.

(4) Namibia

Namibia boasts rich maritime and mineral resources. As the distribution hub

for the Atlantic Ocean side of the Southern Africa Region, an expansion is expected in resource development as well as trade and investment in the energy field. In June, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei visited Namibia and held talks with Prime Minister Kuugongelwa-Amadhila and Deputy Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Mushelenga, and affirmed the intention to further strengthen bilateral ties including economic cooperation.

(5) Malawi

Malawi's domestic politics have remained stable since gaining independence in 1964. Approximately 80% of the population engages in agriculture, and agricultural production accounts for 80% of total exports. Nurturing value-added industry as a way to earn foreign currency is the priority. There has been a notable level of people-to-people exchange at the grassroots level between Japan and Malawi, with more than 1,780 Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs) being dispatched to Malawi over the years, which is the highest in the number of JOCVs dispatched to a single country. Malawi was also the first African country elected for the One Village One Product project.

(6) South Africa

South Africa is the sole African country in the G20. It continues to garner attention from overseas companies including Japanese companies as a major economic power in Africa and as a base from which to carry out business expansion. At the National Conference of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) in December, Deputy Party President Ramaphosa, who visited Japan in 2015, was elected as the new party leader, replacing President Zuma, who had served as party leader for ten years.

Foreign Minister Kono making a courtesy call to President Zuma of the Republic of South Africa (August 25, Maputo, Mozambique)

During the TICAD Ministerial Meeting in August, Foreign Minister Kono made a courtesy call to President Zuma and also held talks with Minister of International Relations and Cooperation Nkoana-Mashabane.

(7) Mozambique

Mozambique is situated at the Indian Ocean coast and has a natural harbor that serves as a port which connects Southern Africa with Asia, the Middle East, Europe and elsewhere. It is a key country in the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy."

The leaders of Japan and Mozambique attending a signing ceremony following their summit meeting (March 15, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japanese private companies have a high interest in Mozambique and are eager to invest by virtue of the country's rich natural resources.

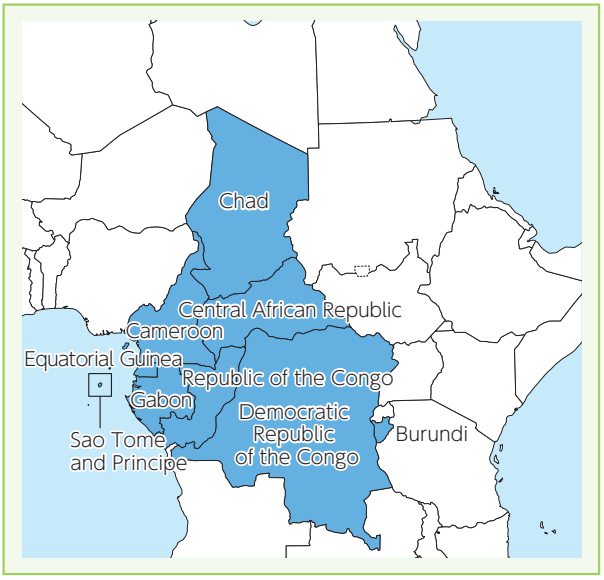
2017 was the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic relations between Japan and Mozambique, and a number of high-level visits were organized. In March, President Nyusi and his spouse visited Japan and held a Summit Meeting. On this occasion, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Baloi also held talks with Foreign Minister Kishida, affirming the intention to further develop bilateral ties. TICAD Ministerial Meeting was held in Mozambique in August, and Foreign Minister Kono took the opportunity to make a courtesy call to President Nyusi and held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Baloi.

(8) Botswana

Botswana has maintained a stable political situation since gaining independence. Botswana's core industry is diamond mining, with the world's second highest diamond output. It has developed into a medium to high-income country. The Government is aiming to break dependence on diamonds by diversifying the country's industries and eliminating poverty. In 2013, the country became the first country in Africa to adopt Japan's digital terrestrial broadcasting (ISDB-T) system.

In January, Vice President Masisi visited Japan and held talks with Japanese Government officials including Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Hagiuda and State Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Jiro Akama.

3 Central Africa



(1) Gabon

Gabon has experienced no civil war nor conflict since gaining independence in 1960. Following the death of Former President Omar Bongo, who served as president for 41 years, a peaceful presidential election was held in August 2009 and the son of the former president, Ali Bongo, was elected (he was also reelected in 2016). Reform of the country's economic structure, which is dependent on oil and other natural resources, is a pressing issue. Efforts are being made to diversify the country's industries and increase added value to products through local processing of primary commodities.

(2) Cameroon

Since 1982 Cameroon had a stable administration under President Biya. In 2016 dissatisfaction increased in the Anglophone Northwestern and Southwestern Regions bordered by Nigeria. With ordinary citizens' participation in demonstrations, disagreement sharpened gradually and grew into political movements calling for the restoration of the federal system and

independence for Anglophone territories. President Biya has criticized attacks on security forces as being the work of terrorist groups and has indicated that he will take all necessary measures.

(3) Republic of Congo

The Republic of Congo gained independence from France in 1960. The country is dependent on oil, which accounts for approximately 80% of its exports. The drop in oil prices has therefore caused the economy to stagnate, and economic diversification is now a pressing issue for the country. A presidential election was held in March 2016 under the new constitution promulgated in 2015, and President Sassou-Nguesso was re-elected for three consecutive terms. The country has remained stable since the election. Although armed rebels had been operating in the Department of Pool, the main rebel group headed by Ntumi signed a peace agreement in December. It was announced that the group had agreed to cooperate with the disarming of the "Ninja" militia and that it would not interfere with the reestablishment of state control in the Pool Department. The situation in the Department is being stabilized after the announcement.

(4) Democratic Republic of the Congo

The Democratic Republic of the Congo gained independence from Belgium in 1960. It is one of the world's leading producers of cobalt and other natural resources. A UN mission was deployed in 1999 to monitor a ceasefire established following the conflict that broke out in 1998. In 2010 this mission was renamed as the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), and it is now working to help the country recover from the conflict and respond to rebel groups in eastern regions.

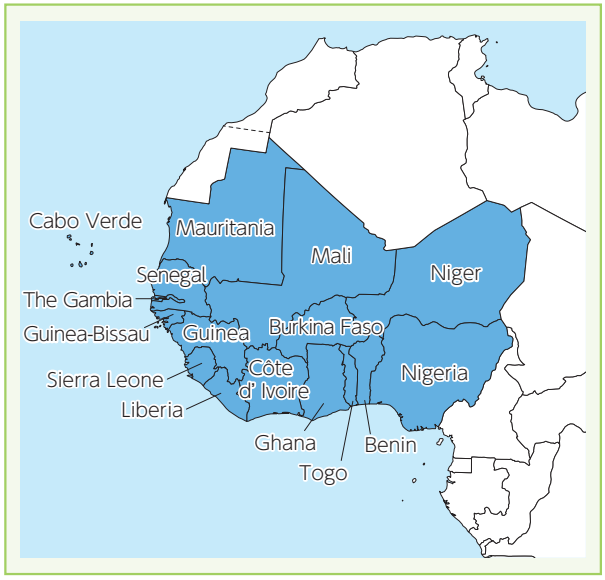
Although President Kabila's second term in office came to an end in December 2016, no elections were held and President Kabila has remained in office, causing tensions to escalate. The election was not held in 2017 and has been postponed until December 23, 2018.

(5) Equatorial Guinea

Equatorial Guinea is the only country in Africa with Spanish as its national language. Until the early 1990s, it was one of the world's poorest countries and was dependent on agriculture (cacao and timber). During the 39 years under the long-term administration of President Nguema, the country has developed into one of sub-Saharan Africa's top oil producers, with oil production commencing in 1992. With the rapid economic growth, progress has been made with the creation of economic infrastructure such as road networks, and public buildings. Enhancing social infrastructure in the fields of education, medicine, and healthcare, and addressing disparities between the rich and poor, however, are long-standing issues.

Equatorial Guinea is serving as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for a two-year period beginning in January 2018.

4 West Africa



(1) Ghana

Ghana hosts the largest number of Japanese companies in West Africa. President Akufo-Addo, who was inaugurated in January, after a peaceful election is pursuing reforms such as restoring fiscal soundness and industrialization.

2017 was the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Ghana, the 90th anniversary of the arrival of Dr. Hideyo Noguchi in Ghana, and the 40th anniversary of the first deployment of Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers. A variety of events, such as Japanese drumming performances, fashion shows, symposiums on diplomacy and Dr. Hideyo Noguchi, and judo and karate tournaments were held to mark these anniversaries and promote a bilateral relationship. Minister of Health Agyemang-Manu visited Japan in July and made a courtesy call to Prime Minister Abe and acknowledged the contributions of Japan to the healthcare field.

Event commemorating 60 years of the establishment of Japan-Ghana diplomatic relations (October, Accra, Ghana)

(2) Guinea

Guinea has recovered from the Ebola Virus Disease crisis that occurred in 2014 and 2015. The country is now pursuing economic development centered on its high degree of potential in its agriculture and maritime industries and its rich mineral resources.

In June, President Condé (the 2017 AU chair) became the first Guinean head of state to carry out a bilateral visit in Japan. His talks with Prime Minister Abe included discussion of development assistance and cooperation on the international arena. President Condé expressed gratitude for the establishment of an office of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) in the Guinean capital Conakry and other cooperation by Japan, and promised to contribute to the TICAD process. A Japan-Guinea Business Forum was held

President Condé reviewing a guard of honor during his visit to Japan (June 20, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

during President Condé's visit, to enable public and private sector figures from both countries to meet and talk.

(3) Côte d'Ivoire

Côte d'Ivoire is home to the Africa Development Bank, and the Port of Abidjan, which handles the largest volume of container cargo in West Africa, making it one of the region's distribution hubs. The country has enjoyed stable economic growth since the end of the civil war in 2012. It gives the impression of having regained its place as a core country in West Africa. It was selected to serve as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council from June 2018 until 2019, and the UN Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) has achieved a complete withdrawal. On the other hand, issues relating to internal politics still remain, including frequent disturbances by some members of the national armed forces and ex-combatants.

With regard to relations with Japan, the first post-resumption yen loan agreement (the Abidjan Port Cereal Berth Construction Project) was signed in March, and in November, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sato visited Côte d'Ivoire and made a courtesy call to President Ouattara and Minister of Foreign Affairs Amon-Tanoh, affirming the intention to strengthen bilateral ties.

(4) Senegal

As a stabilizing power for West Africa, Senegal achieves economic growth. In recent years, the discovery of offshore oil and natural gas reserves attracts a greater interest from Japanese companies. The country served, concurrently with Japan, as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for a two-year period beginning in January 2016.

Exchanging football uniforms at the Japan-Senegal summit meeting (December 13, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office) *Senegal is in the same pool as Japan in the 2018 FIFA World Cup.

In November, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sato visited Senegal to attend the 4th Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security in Africa. In his speech during the opening ceremony he gave an overview of Japan's contributions to peace and security in Africa.

In December, President Sall visited Japan to attend the Universal Health Coverage (UHC) Forum 2017, at which he introduced the initiatives of Senegal as a model country for the implementation of UHC. During his talks with Prime Minister Abe they discussed cooperation on infrastructure development and human resources development, and they exchanged letters concerning grant aid in the fields of electricity, food security, and healthcare.

(5) Nigeria

Nigeria, which has both the largest economy and population in Africa, has a great deal of potential as a resource-rich country. On the other hand, declining oil prices has worsened the country's financial situation, and the radical Islamist organization Boko Haram's terrorist acts in

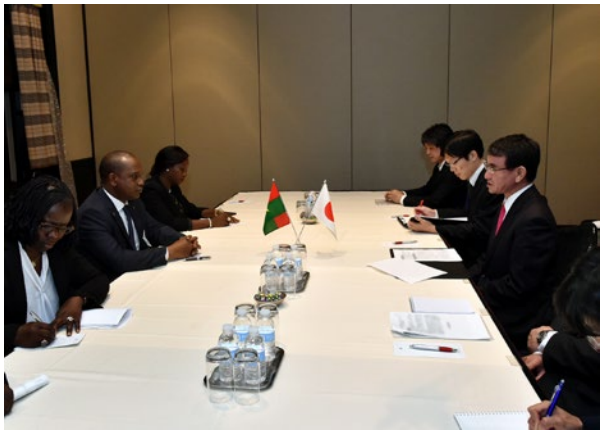
the northeast of the country and invasions of neighboring countries are issues that need to be addressed. President Buhari is placing emphasis on industrial diversification and enhancing security in order to address the abovementioned issues.

In May, Japan dispatched the Joint Africa Trade and Investment Promotion Mission led by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takei and discussions were held with several cabinet ministers and others.

(6) Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country with an economy centered on agriculture. Domestic politics had been in a state of flux since the uprising in 2014 but the political situation has been comparatively stable since the inauguration of President Kaboré in 2015. On the other hand, Islamist radicals entering from Mali has become an issue because of the worsening security situation in neighboring Mali. In August, a terrorist attack occurred at a restaurant in the capital Ouagadougou.

On the occasion of the 72nd UN General Assembly in September, Foreign Minister Kono held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs Barry and they affirmed the intention to cooperate on bilateral ties and in the international arena. Burkina Faso is one of two countries in Africa with diplomatic relations with Taiwan.



Japan-Burkina Faso Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September 20, New York, U.S.)

(7) Benin

Benin has enjoyed peaceful presidential transitions since the 1990s, and it is referred to as a model for West African democracy. President Talon, a former entrepreneur, has set countering corruption as his administration's top priority. His administration has been operating stably since its inauguration in 2016.

In July Minister of Economy and Finance Wadagni visited Japan and held talks with Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Aso and State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Matsumura. During the TICAD Ministerial Meeting held in August, Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Agbenonci held talks with Foreign Minister Kono and discussed economic cooperation and cooperation in the international arena.

Japan-Benin Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 25, Maputo, Mozambique)

(8) Mali

Ever since gaining independence, Mali has had to deal with conflict with the Tuareg group in the north of the country. Implementation of the agreement of peace

and reconciliation signed in 2015 between Mali's Government and the northern Mali's armed groups continues to be a challenge. The entering into the country of Islamist radicals from the north and the spread of terrorism into central and southern parts of Mali as well as into neighboring countries has become serious problems. In February, countries in the Sahel Region, including Mali, made the decision to establish joint forces to respond to the security problem.

To support peace and stability in Mali, Japan provides the Malian police forces and law enforcement authorities with equipment to help them maintain security. Japan has also coordinated with the UN organizations to provide support for Mali's School of Peacekeeping.

(9) Liberia

Liberia developed in the early 19th century as a place for freed slaves from the U.S. to settle, and it was the first country in Africa to gain independence as a republic. The country has overcome the effects of the civil war that lasted approximately 14 years until 2003 and is now referred to as a model case for the consolidation of peace in Africa. Former President Sirleaf received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2011 and was Africa's first democratically elected female president. In December, a peaceful presidential election was held to find a successor, and this was won by former professional football player Weah.

Japan provided support through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for strengthening the security enforcement system over the course of the elections and also dispatched election observers.

Column

Japanese Nationals Working for an International Organization in Sudan

Hideko Hadzialic, Deputy Country Director at
United Nations Development Program (UNDP), Sudan

Sudan is a strategically important country located between Africa and Arab regions, facing the Red sea, which is called the gateway to Asia, Europe, and the Gulf region. It is the third largest country in Africa and the 16th largest country in the world.

Humanitarian, Development, and Peace Nexus

Darfur in western Sudan faces one of the most serious humanitarian crises in the world. Southern Sudan has been challenged by the issue of the preventing the conflict between refugees and their host communities since South Sudan declared its independence in 2011. Eastern Sudan hosts many immigrants from Eritrea and Ethiopia. Northern Sudan is confronted with the issue of security of water and conflict prevention due to climate change and desertification. Sudan faces these challenges concerning "the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus," and thus receives some of the highest attention in the

headquarters of the UNDP where I worked until recently.

Khartoum International Airport

In June 2017, the United Nations Security Council adopted a resolution to reduce the number of the military and police personnel of the African Union-United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) by 30%, which translated to reducing military personnel down to about 11,000 and police officers down to less than 3,000. Considering the security situation and the human rights protection on the ground, further reduction is scheduled in 2018. However, there remains a lot of issues, such as the development of the legal system for peace building and the requirement for development based on the human rights situation. There are about 80 staff members in the UNDP Darfur office, including United Nations Volunteers (UNV) (there are about 200 staff members in the UNDP in Khartoum, the capital of Sudan). In order to foster a seamless partnership between the UN peacekeeping mission and the UNDP as a development agency, it is necessary to increase the fund and the support to enhance UNDP's field presence.

Activities of Japanese Nationals at UNDP Sudan

There are many Japanese working for the United Nations in Sudan. They include the Representative at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Sudan and the Deputy Representative of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT). Four Japanese including myself are working at the UNDP. Ms. Yumi Amano and Ms. Chihiro Bise are working for conflict prevention and recovery assistance under the Youth Volunteers Supporting Peace and Recovery project in Darfur, which is supported by the Japanese Government. They have so far worked with about 380 Sudanese youth volunteers to reduce poverty with environmental considerations, by supporting proposals for small and medium-sized businesses and bridging with microfinance institutions. They are working hard, side by side with local youth who wish to contribute to community development and peace building, and sharing joy and sorrow to create a cooperative structure between communities. Their effort for building a relationship of trust with local residents, which sometimes requires great patience, is a true testament of the Japanese spirit.

Mr. Tomokazu Serizawa is working on the frontline of supporting the humanitarian, development and peace nexus. He visits refugee camps near the southern border of South Sudan to grasp the long-term needs of the refugees and the host village residents and to understand their situations firsthand. The local residents appreciate the joint assistance of Japan and the UNDP and hope to expand such assistance to other communities. Currently, Mr. Serizawa is investigating the path way of extremism. The military defeat

of ISIS in Iraq and Syria has led Sudanese ISIS members to return to Sudan, which might risk social instability if not handled delicately. The UNDP intends to enhance its technical assistance including revision of anti-terrorism laws, increased employment opportunities mainly targeted for the youth, and advocacy (policy proposal).

I would like to let the world know about the successful cases of cooperation on the humanitarian, development, and peace nexus in Sudan together with Japanese assistance.

International Volunteer Day
Speech to give encouragement to volunteers (author)

(From left) Minister of International Cooperation, author, a representative of Spanish embassy, visiting the project related to the humanitarian and development nexus, which supports both the refugees and the host community in White Nile.

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

Overview

(National Security)

It is no exaggeration to say that the security environment surrounding Japan is most severe since the end of World War Ⅱ. Since 2016, North Korea has conducted three nuclear tests, and fired as many as 40 ballistic missiles, including ones that flew over Japan on two consecutive occasions, constituting an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat. Furthermore, the increase in China's military spending which is lacking transparency, and its unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion at sea and in the airspace at areas such as the East and South China Seas, have become a common concern of the international community. Moreover, risks such as the spread and diversification of international terrorism and cyberattacks are becoming more serious.

Facing such a security environment, it has become important for Japan itself to fulfill its responsibility and role, more than ever before, in order to ensure the security of Japan and the peace and stability of the region. From this perspective, Japan promotes vibrant diplomacy under the policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation. At the same time, under the "Legislation for Peace and Security," Japan strives to ensure its own security, while making concrete efforts to contribute even more proactively in securing peace, stability and prosperity of the international community.

It goes without saying that the presence and role of the U.S. are important for ensuring the peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region, including Japan. From this perspective, in order to ensure the forward deployment of the U.S. Forces under the Japan-U.S. security arrangements and, further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, both Japan and the U.S. have been expanding and strengthening cooperation in a wide range of areas such as ballistic missile defense, cyberspace, outer space, and maritime security, including efforts made under the new Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation (the New Guidelines) and the "Legislation for Peace and Security." With regard to the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan, both Governments are determined to mitigate

the impact on local communities, including Okinawa, while maintaining deterrence, by steadily implementing the existing agreements between the two Governments, including the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma to Henoko.

In addition to strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance, it is necessary for Japan to build trust and cooperative relations with its partners both inside and outside the Asia-Pacific region, and to create multilayered relationships for security cooperation. Japan promotes security cooperation with Australia, India, European countries including the UK and France, Member States of the Association of South Asian Nations (ASEAN), and other countries with which it shares strategic interests.

Furthermore, it is also important to promote the institutionalization of regional cooperation frameworks in the security aspect of the Asia-Pacific region. Japan also advances partnership and cooperation through multilayered regional cooperation frameworks, including the East Asia Summit (EAS) and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and through trilateral cooperation frameworks such as the Japan-U.S.-ROK, Japan-U.S.-Australia, Japan-U.S.-India and Japan-Australia-India frameworks, as well as the quadripartite framework of Japan- Australia-India-U.S.

(Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding)

The security and prosperity of Japan cannot be achieved merely by improving the security environment surrounding Japan, as it also depends on the peace and stability of the international community. Based on this understanding, Japan is actively engaging in addressing various issues and challenges that confront the international community. In particular, Japan addresses peacebuilding as one of its key diplomatic agendas, which is essential in order to prevent the outbreak and recurrence of conflicts and to achieve sustainable peace. In this regard, Japan works comprehensively on peacekeeping, emergency humanitarian assistance, promotion of peace processes, maintenance of security, and reconstruction and development. These include Japan's proactive cooperation with United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations (PKOs) and the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), and its engagement in the development of social infrastructure and human resources through Official Development Assistance (ODA).

(Threats to Security)

Although the territory controlled by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in Iraq and Syria has shrunk, the return or relocation of foreign terrorist fighters (FTF) who had been under the influence of ISIL to their home countries or to third countries has spread the threat of terrorism, and this threat is also growing in Asia. In May 2017, a group self-professed to be "ISIL East Asia" occupied a part of Marawi City in the Philippines. While the military operations have been completed, there is still a need to continue closely monitoring the situation in Mindanao including Marawi City.

In 2016, Japan formulated the "G7 Action Plan on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism" at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit, and at the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting held during the same year, declared its commitment to putting in place comprehensive counter-terrorism measures that are comprised of the following initiatives: (1) Improvement of

counter- terrorism capacity; (2) Measures to counter violent extremism conducive to terrorism; and, (3) Social and economic development assistance for creating a foundation for a moderate society. Japan is steadily promoting international cooperation in measures to counter-terrorism and violent extremism in line with these plans.

(Disarmament and Non-proliferation and the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy)

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings, Japan has been actively engaged in disarmament and non-proliferation efforts to realize "a world free of nuclear weapons." To achieve progress in nuclear disarmament, it is necessary to put repeated effort into realistic and practical measures with the cooperation of both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. Based on this understanding, Foreign Minister Kishida attended the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)[1] held in May, where he announced Japan's proposal about the pathway towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In September, Foreign Minister Kono attended the 10th Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)[2], where he declared Japan's determination to continue leading international efforts towards the early entry into force of the CTBT. He also co-hosted the 9th Ministerial Meeting of the Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI)[3] with Germany, and issued statements confirming cooperation as the NPDI towards the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT, and strongly condemning North Korea's nuclear tests and missile development.

While the divergent views as to the way to advance nuclear disarmament had come to the surface, Japan submitted a draft resolution regarding the elimination of nuclear weapons to the UN General Assembly with the aim of providing a common ground by rebuilding trust amongst all states and to bridge gaps among states with different positions. This resolution was adopted with wide support from countries with various positions. Furthermore, Japan held the first meeting of a Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament in Hiroshima in November, which contributed to rebuilding trust and cooperation among countries having differing approaches towards a world free of nuclear weapons, and which drew recommendations that contributed

1 Opened for signing in 1968, and entered into force in 1970. 191 countries are parties to the treaty (countries that have not ratified the treaty are India, Pakistan, Israel, and South Sudan). (1) Nuclear non-proliferation: Defines the five countries of U.S., Russia, UK, France, and China as "nuclear-weapon States," and prevents the proliferation of nuclear weapons to countries other than the "nuclear-weapon States;" (2) Nuclear disarmament: Stipulates the obligation of State Parties to faithfully engage in negotiations on nuclear disarmament (Article 6); (3) Use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes: Stipulates the use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes as an "inalienable right" of all State Parties (Article 4.1). In addition, it also sets out the obligation for non-nuclear-weapon States to accept the safeguards of the International Atomic and Energy Agency (IAEA), with the aim of preventing the transfer of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes to military technology (Article 3).

2 Prohibits experimental explosions of nuclear weapons and nuclear explosions in all places including outer space, within the atmosphere, in water, and underground. Although it was opened for signing in 1996, as of December 2017, of the 44 countries required to ratify the treaty in order for it to enter into force, China, Egypt, Iran, Israel, and the U.S. have not yet ratified the treaty, while India, North Korea, and Pakistan have not yet signed it. Hence, it has not entered into force. In the past two years, Myanmar and Swaziland ratified the treaty on September 2016, while Thailand is currently undergoing domestic procedures towards ratification.

3 A group of cross-regional non-nuclear-weapon States established under the leadership of Japan and Australia in 2010, it now has 12 members. The other members are Canada, Chile, Germany, Poland, Mexico, the Netherlands, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the Philippines and Nigeria.

to achieving substantive advancement of nuclear disarmament.

Japan is also putting much effort into strengthening the framework of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and other arms. A representative example is its initiatives aimed at strengthening and enhancing the efficiency of the safeguards[4] of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)[5], which plays a central role in international nuclear non-proliferation. In addition, Japan participates in the export control regimes, which are frameworks for the appropriate control of the export of weapons and related dual-use goods and technologies.

As for the regional nuclear proliferation issues, the nuclear agreement between Iran and EU3 (UK, France, Germany, and EU) +3 (the U.S., China, and Russia) has continued to be upheld, and the IAEA has reported that Iran has implemented its commitments based on this nuclear agreement.

On the other hand, North Korea's nuclear and missile problem is posing a new level of threat not only to East Asia but also to the international community. In light of this situation, Japan has continued to discuss nuclear issues and nuclear non-proliferation issues with the relevant countries, and engaged in capacity building efforts in the field of non-proliferation, including strengthening the IAEA safeguards and export controls, particularly in developing countries in Asia.

Japan is also actively engaged in efforts in the field of nuclear security, such as by organizing the relevant conferences in Tokyo, with the aim of preventing nuclear materials from falling into the hands of terrorists and other criminals.

Japan's basic approach is to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, which is one of the three pillars of the NPT, while securing nuclear non-proliferation. Japan takes wide-ranging initiatives, including promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy through means such as the conclusion of bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements, while also focusing on promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in developing countries and contributing to development agenda. Japan takes further steps to deal with the aftermath of the accident at Tokyo Electric Power Company's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station (the Fukushima Daiichi accident) and moves forward on reconstruction, while gaining the understanding and support of the international community. Japan also contributes to strengthening nuclear safety globally by sharing its experience of the accident with the international community.

(The Oceans and Seas/ Cyberspace/ Outer space)

"Free, Open and Stable Seas," which are upheld by a maritime order governed by law and rules and not by force, are essential for peace and prosperity not only of Japan, but

4 The IAEA was established in 1957 to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to prevent it from being diverted from peaceful to military uses. Its secretariat is located in Vienna. Its highest decision-making body is the General Conference, which consists of all member countries and meets once a year. The 35-member Board of Governors carries out the IAEA's functions, subject to its responsibilities to the General Conference. As of February 2017, the IAEA has 168 member countries.

5 Verification measures (inspections, checks of each country's material accountancy (management of its inventory of nuclear material) records, etc.) undertaken by the IAEA in accordance with the safeguards agreements concluded by each individual country and the IAEA, in order to assure that nuclear material is being used exclusively for peaceful purposes and is not being diverted for use in nuclear weapons or the like. Pursuant to Article 3 of the NPT, the non-nuclear-weapon States that are contracting parties to the NPT are required to conclude safeguards agreements with the IAEA and to accept safeguards on all nuclear material within their borders (comprehensive safeguards).

also of the international community as a whole. From the perspective of contributing to maintaining and strengthening a maritime order, Japan is dedicated to ensuring the freedom of navigation and overflight and safe maritime transport under the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," through various efforts and cooperation as well as support with other countries, including anti-piracy operations. Especially for Japan, a maritime nation surrounded by the sea, a maritime order, with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) at the core, is indispensable for securing its maritime rights and interests as well as for undertaking maritime activities smoothly.

Regarding cyber issues, in order to ensure a free, fair and secure cyberspace, Japan contributes proactively to international discussions on cyber security, including the promotion of rule of law in cyberspace. For this purpose, Japan cooperates with a wide range of stakeholders, such as private companies and experts. Furthermore, Japan promotes concrete forms of cooperation and confidence-building measures with other countries through dialogues and discussions on cyber issues. At the same time, Japan provides support for capacity building in developing countries and others.

In order to tackle increasing risks accompanying the diversified use of outer space and increasing number of countries using space, Japan has been engaged in efforts to realize the rule of law in outer space as well as conducting dialogues and consultations with other countries on space while promoting international cooperation in the fields of space science and exploration, and supporting overseas business development of the Japanese space industry.

(United Nations)

For two years from January 2016 to the end of 2017, Japan served as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) for the 11th time, which is more frequent than any other UN Member State (See Special Feature "Summary of Japan's contribution during its 11th term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council"). During its term on the Council, Japan contributed proactively to discussions on issues surrounding North Korea, Africa, and the Middle East, in order to exert leadership towards achieving international peace and security.

Japan is also putting efforts into the UN Security Council reform, including Japan's entry as a permanent member of the Council, with the pressing need to reform the Council in a way that reflects the realities of the international community in the 21st century, so that the Council can deal more effectively with contemporary challenges. Furthermore, in order to continue contributing to the maintenance of peace and security in the international community prior to its admission as a permanent member, Japan is running for the UNSC non-permanent membership election in 2022, in order to serve, as frequently as possible, as a member of the Council.

Today, the international community is confronted by a wide range of challenges across borders including conflicts, terrorism, refugees, poverty, climate change, and infectious diseases, and the UN has to fulfill an expanding role. Under the policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on

international cooperation, Japan will take an even more proactive approach towards tackling these issues through the UN. Japan will also continue to be proactively engaged in the UN reform, including the reform of the Security Council, so that the UN can cope more effectively with the various issues faced by the international community.

(Rule of Law)

The rule of law is the concept that recognizes the superiority of the law over all forms of power; it is the basis of the international order that consists of friendly and equitable relations between states, as well as an essential cornerstone of a fair and just domestic society. The rule of law is also an important factor in promoting "good governance" in each state and in ensuring the peaceful settlement of disputes between states. Based on this view, Japan promotes the bilateral and multilateral rule-making and implements these rules in various fields, such as security, economic and social affairs, and criminal justice. Furthermore, in order to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and maintain international legal order, Japan actively cooperates with international judicial organizations such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), and the International Criminal Court (ICC), to strengthen their functions via contributions both in terms of human resources and financial needs. In addition, Japan has been working to enhance the rule of law in Asia as well as the international community as a whole via provision of legal technical assistance, participation in international conferences, exchanges with various countries, and hosting of events related to international law.

(Human Rights)

Human rights, freedom and democracy are fundamental values. The protection and promotion of these values are the basic responsibility for all states and a legitimate concern of the entire international community. It is essential that these values are fully guaranteed in each country not only for the peace and prosperity of Japan, but also for laying the foundations of peace and stability in the international community. Towards this end, Japan is working actively in the field of human rights. Specifically, Japan has been making proactive contributions to improve the human rights situation around the world through dialogue and cooperation. Japan is also engaged in bilateral dialogues, actively participates in multilateral forums, including the UN, and continues constructive dialogues with human rights mechanisms.

(Women)

Japan has been leading the international community to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, and to achieve "a society where women shine" around the world. As a part of these efforts, Japan leads discussions to promote women's empowerment in the world through fora such as the World Assembly for Women (WAW!). In the field of international cooperation, to promote the empowerment of women in developing countries, Japan announced its commitment to provide support of more than 3 billion U.S. dollars by 2018 and is steadily implementing this initiative, based on the "Development Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's

Empowerment" that aims to further strengthen women's capabilities and their advancement in society.

1 National Security Initiatives

(1) "Proactive Contribution to Peace" Based on the Principle of International Cooperation

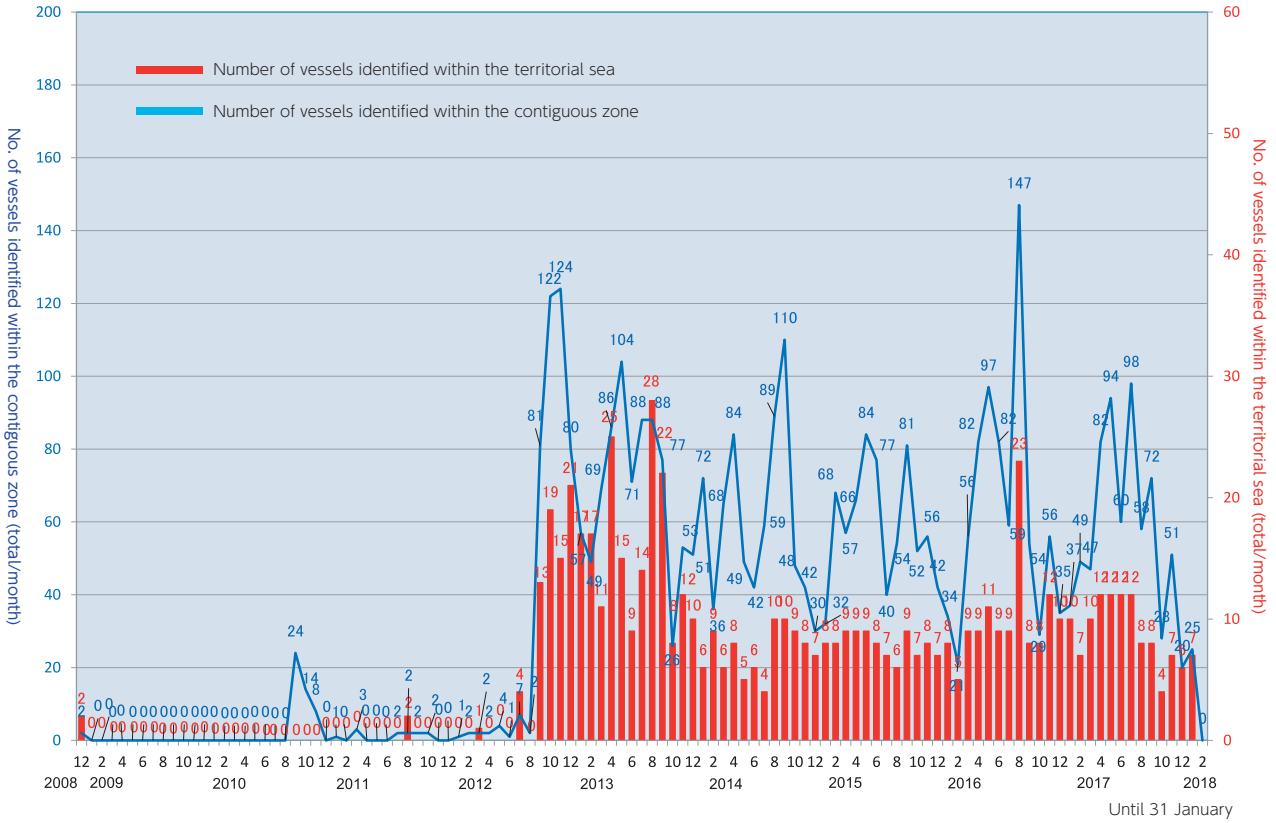
It is no exaggeration to state that the security environment surrounding Japan has become the most severe since the end of World War II. North Korea has continuously taken provocative actions, disregarding the strong will of the international community towards peaceful solution. Since 2016, North Korea has conducted three nuclear tests, and launched as many as 40 ballistic missiles, including ballistic missiles that flew over Japan on two consecutive occasions, constituting an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat. China has been strengthening its military power extensively and rapidly in a way that lacks transparency as it has not provided any detailed breakdown of its national defense budgets despite the increase of the expenditures by approximately 49 times over the past 29 years only according to its public announcement. China has also continued with its unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion at sea and in the airspace in the East and South China Seas, based on its own claims, which are inconsistent with the existing international order. Furthermore, there are diversifying global security challenges, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, the growing threat of terrorism, and emerging issues in new domains such as cyberspace and outer space. In such a security environment, any threats, wherever in the world they occur, could directly affect the security of Japan, and no nation can any longer maintain its own security alone.

Since the end of World War II, Japan has consistently followed the path of a peace-loving nation under the Constitution of Japan, and has proactively contributed to the peace and prosperity of the international community through cooperation with the international community as well as other international organizations, including the United Nations. Japan's such posture has garnered appreciation and respect from the international community. The international community expects Japan to play a more proactive role for the peace and security in the world in a way commensurate with its national capabilities.

Continuing to adhere to the course that it has taken to date as a peace-loving nation, Japan will advance vibrant diplomacy under the policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation, and will contribute even more proactively to the peace and security of the international community.

(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 situations, and to contribute even more proactively to the peace and stability of the international community under the

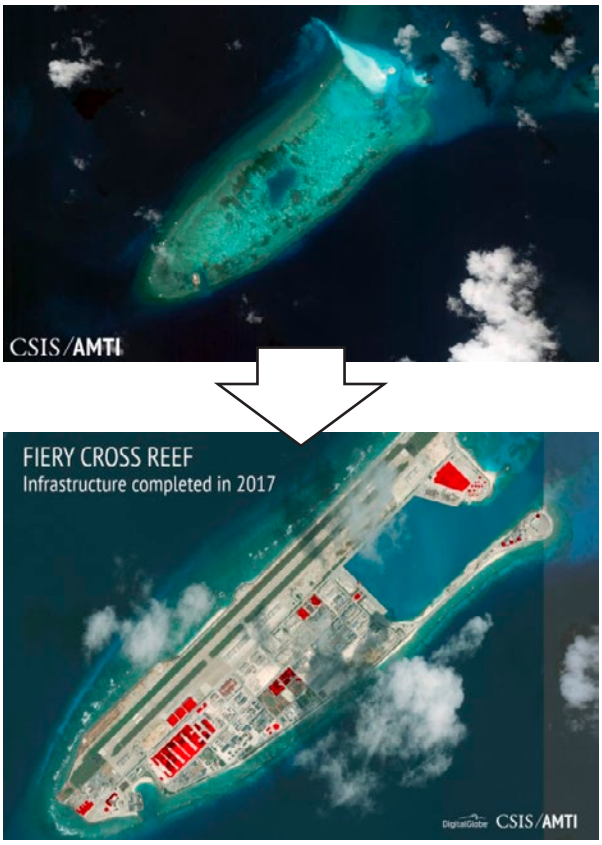


Number of Chinese Government-owned vessels that entered the contiguous zone or intruded into territorial sea surrounding the Senkaku Islands (Source: Japan Coast Guard website)

A ballistic missile with an intercontinental ballistic missile range, launched by North Korea on November 29, 2017

policy of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation. To achieve these objectives, the "Legislation for Peace and Security" took effect in March 2016.

This legislation aims to solidify Japan's orientation as a peace-loving nation, including adherence to its exclusively defense-oriented policy. Moreover, the legislation strengthens the Japan-U.S. Alliance and enhances the deterrence



Undergoing reclamation and militarization at the Fiery Cross Reef on the South China Sea
Top: August 14, 2014
Bottom: November 19, 2017 (Section in red: Outpost developed in 2017)

capability of Japan, thus enables Japan to prevent conflicts beforehand, and to further contribute to the international community. Given that the scope of supplies and services that the Self-Defence Forces (SDF) can provide for forces of other countries has been expanded under the "Legislation for Peace and Security," new Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements (ACSA) with the U.S. (April) and Australia (September) entered into force, and an ACSA with the UK (August) also entered into force. In addition, Japan also reached a substantial agreement with Canada on ACSA negotiations, and arrived at a broad agreement with France.

Japan has taken advantage of a variety of opportunities to thoroughly explain the "Legislation for Peace and Security" to foreign countries. Not only the U.S. but also a number of countries and organizations including Australia, ASEAN Member States, European countries, Central and South American countries, and the UN have expressed their understanding and support for this legislation. This clearly demonstrates that the "Legislation for Peace and Security" is legislation that contributes to the peace and security of the world.

(3) Territorial Integrity

Maintaining territorial integrity is a fundamental responsibility of the Government. Japan's policy to resolutely protect its land, sea and airspace remains unchanged. Japan will continue to maintain its stance of responding firmly but in a calm manner. 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 our 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, it is indispensable to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements and to enhance the deterrence of the Japan-U.S. Alliance not only for the peace and security of Japan but also for the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region. Based on the robust bilateral relationship confirmed through such meetings as the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting in February and November 2017, Japan and the U.S. are further enhancing their deterrence and response capabilities under 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 ballistic missiles defense, cyberspace, outer space, and maritime security. Japan and the U.S. have 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, while maintaining the deterrence of the U.S. Forces in Japan.

(2) Japan-U.S. Security and Defense Cooperation in Various Fields

A Efforts Under the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation (the "Guidelines")

The Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation announced at the April 2015 meeting of the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee ("2+2"), reviewed and updated the general framework and policy direction of the Japan-U.S. defense cooperation. Through the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) established under these Guidelines, Japan and the U.S. have shared information closely, established a common understanding of the situation, and provided "seamless" responses from peacetime to contingencies. In the "2+2" meeting held in August 2017, Minister for Foreign Affairs Kono, Minister of Defense Onodera, U.S. Secretary of State Tillerson and Secretary of Defense Mattis concurred on moving forward on identifying measures to further strengthen the Alliance, including through reviewing roles, missions, and capabilities of each country. At the same time, they reaffirmed the Alliance's commitment to the security of Japan through the full range of capabilities, including U.S. nuclear forces. There have been active interpersonal exchange between high level-officials, with visits to Japan by Secretary of Defense Mattis in February, Commander of U.S. Pacific Command Admiral Harris in May and November, Chairman of the Joint Chief of Staff, General Dunford, and Commander of U.S. Strategic Command, General Hyten, in August, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, General Milley in September, Commander of United Nations Command/Combined Forces Command/U.S. Forces Korea, General Brooks in November, and Chief of Naval Operations, Admiral Richardson, in December. In addition, the Japan-U.S. Extended Deterrence Dialogue was held in June, in which Japan and the U.S. had candid discussions about ways to secure the deterrence of the Japan- U.S. Alliance. Through these multilayered efforts, Japan will continue to promote security and defense cooperation with the U.S., further enhancing the deterrence and response capabilities of the Alliance.

B Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD)

Japan has been making steady efforts to develop and engage in the production of the BMD system, such as the decision to introduce ground-deployed Aegis system (Aegis Ashore), while continuing cooperation with the U.S., which includes the steady implementation of joint development and joint production of the Standard Missile 3 (SM-3) Block IIA since 2006. Japan has been fully prepared to protect the lives and property of its citizens from the threat of ballistic missiles from North Korea under any circumstances.

C Cyberspace

The two countries held the fifth Japan-U.S. Cyber Dialogue in July in Tokyo. Based on the necessity for government-wide efforts by both Japan and the U.S., participants from both sides had a follow-up discussion on the outcome of the fourth dialogue held in July 2016. They also engaged in broad discussions on Japan-U.S. cooperation in cyberspace, including awareness about the situations, initiatives in both countries, cooperation in the international arena, and support for capacity building, and issued a joint press release after the dialogue.

D Outer Space

Japan and the U.S. have been discussing a wide range of cooperation on space at the Space Security Dialogue and the Japan-U.S.-Australia Space Security Dialogue. Japan and the U.S. will continue to cooperate on space security, including through mutual exchange of information in the field of Space Situational Awareness (SSA), and efforts to ensure the resiliency of space assets (i.e. the ability to maintain the function of facilities or systems required for the operation of the space system even during unforeseen circumstances).

E Trilateral Cooperation

Japan and the U.S. place importance on security and defense cooperation with allies and partners in the Asia-Pacific region. In particular, the two countries are steadily promoting trilateral cooperation with Australia, the ROK, and India. At the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held in July and November as well as other meetings, the leaders affirmed that such trilateral cooperation promotes the shared security interests of Japan and the U.S., and contributes to improving the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region. Also, following the nuclear test and repeated ballistic missile launches by North Korea in September, the importance of the respective trilateral cooperation was reaffirmed at the Japan-U.S.-ROK and Japan-U.S.-Australia Summit Meetings and other meetings.

F Information Security

Information security plays a crucial role in advancing cooperation within the context of the alliance. In addition to the implementation of the government-wide security clearance system, the two countries have been continuously discussing ways to further improve information security systems, including introducing and further enhancing counterintelligence measures (designed to prevent information leaks through espionage activities).

G Maritime Security

In fora such as the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the East Asia Summit (EAS), Japan and the U.S. stress the importance of solving maritime issues in accordance with international law. The Guidelines announced in April 2015 also provide that Japan and the U.S. will cooperate closely with each other on measures to maintain maritime order in accordance with international law, including the freedom of navigation. Japan and the U.S. affirm their shared view and their cooperation on maritime security through various occasions including the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held in February 2017.

(3) Realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan

In the joint statement issued by Japan and the United States in February 2017, the two Governments affirmed, for the first time in a document at the summit level, that constructing the Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF) at the Camp Schwab-Henokosaki area and adjacent waters is the only solution to avoid the continued use of MCAS Futenma. Furthermore, in the "2+2" joint statement in August, Japan and the U.S. reaffirmed their commitment to implement the existing arrangements, which aim to maintain operational and deterrent capability, while also mitigating the impact on local communities, and enhancing support from local communities for the presence and operations of U.S.

forces in Japan. Japan and the U.S. will also continue to work closely on the steady implementation of the relocation of approximately 9,000 U.S. Marine Corps from Okinawa to outside the country such as Guam, which will begin in the first half of the 2020s, and on the return of land south of Kadena based on the April 2013 "Consolidation Plan for Facilities and Areas in Okinawa."

Following the return of a major portion of the Northern Training Area (NTA, approximately 3,987 hectares) in December 2016, the return of land along the eastern side of MCAS Futenma (approximately 4 hectares) was achieved on July 31, 2017, based on the "Implementation of Bilateral Plans for Consolidating Facilities and Areas in Okinawa" announced in December 2015. If the opening of the entire route of Ginowan City Municipal Road No. 11 were to be also realized, along with the said return, it could contribute to the alleviation of traffic congestion in the surrounding area, and to the improvement of the living environment in the local community of Ginowan City.

Additionally, relocation of carrier air wing squadrons from Naval Air Facility Atsugi to Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni has commenced in August of 2017, based on the U.S.-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation of May 2006. This relocation is expected to contribute to mitigating the problem of noise and other issues that residents living near Naval Air Facility Atsugi, which is located in a densely populated area, have long tolerated. The Government of Japan will continue to make all efforts to mitigate impact on local communities, including Okinawa, so as to ensure stable stationing of U.S. forces in Japan, including the relocation of MCAS Futenma to Henoko at the earliest possible time.

(4) Host Nation Support (HNS)

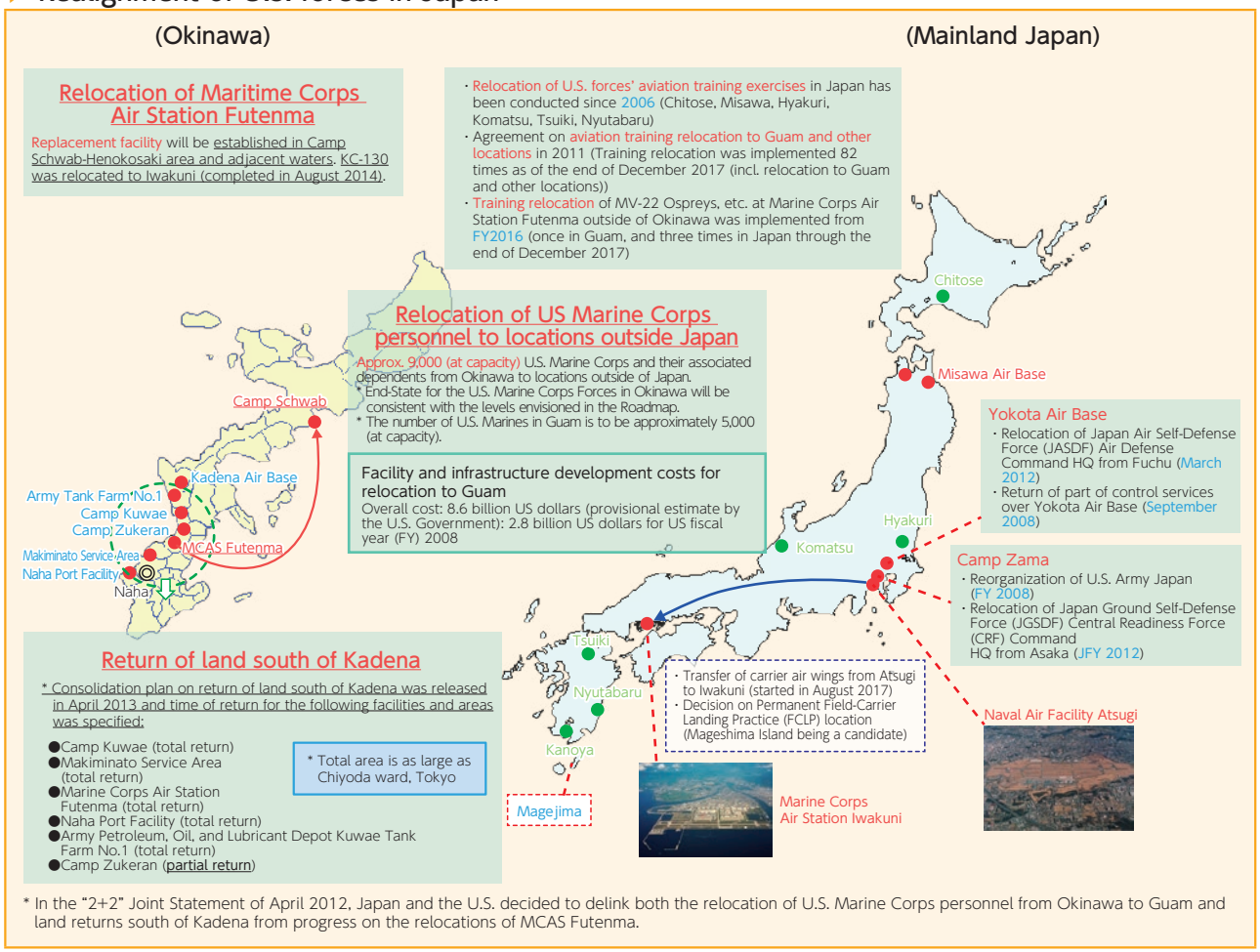
Under the security environment surrounding Japan, which is becoming increasingly severe, from the standpoint that it is important to ensure smooth and effective operation of the U.S. Forces, Japan (USFJ) Japan bears the rent for USFJ facilities and areas and the Facility Improvement Program (FIP) funding stipulated within the scope of the Status of U.S. Forces Agreement. In addition to this, under the special measures agreements, Japan also bears labor costs, utility costs, and training relocation costs for USFJ.

Based on the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) and special measures agreement that came into force on 1 April 2016, the Government of Japan bears Host Nation Support (HNS) from FY2016 to FY2020.

(5) Various Issues Related to the Presence of U.S. Forces in Japan

To ensure the smooth and effective operation of the Japan-U.S. security arrangements and the stable presence of USFJ 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. In particular, the importance of promoting mitigation of the impact on Okinawa, where U.S. Forces facilities and areas are concentrated, has been confirmed mutually between Japan and the U.S. on numerous occasions, including President Trump's visit to Japan in November 2017.

Realignment of U.S. forces in Japan



* In the "2+2" Joint Statement of April 2012, Japan and the U.S. decided to delink both the relocation of U.S. Marine Corps personnel from Okinawa to Guam and land returns south of Kadena from progress on the relocations of MCAS Futenma.

While continuing to work towards the realignment of U.S. forces in Japan, Japan has been making its utmost efforts to make improvements in specific issues in light of the requests of local communities such as preventing incidents and accidents involving U.S. forces, abating the noise by U.S. forces aircraft, and dealing with environmental issues within USFJ facilities and areas.

In response to the murder by a civilian component of the USFJ in Okinawa in April 2016, through the steady implementation of a supplementary agreement concerning the civilian component of the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), which was signed and entered into force in January 2017, it is expected that Japan-U.S. cooperation is further promoted, and recurrence of incidents and accidents by civilian components is prevented through strengthening the management over the civilian components of USFJ. This supplementary agreement supplements and clarifies the scope of the civilian component set forth in SOFA through the form of an international agreement, and this was the second time that a supplementary agreement to the SOFA had been drawn up, following from the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Stewardship concluded in 2015.

(6) United Nations Command (UNC) and U.S. Forces in Japan

As the Korean War broke out in June 1950, United Nations Command (UNC) was established in July of the same year

based on UN Security Council Resolution 83 and Resolution 84. Following the ceasefire agreement concluded in July 1953, UNC Headquarters was relocated to Seoul in July 1957, and UNC (Rear) was established in Japan. UNC (Rear) placed in Yokota Air Base currently has a stationed commander and three other staff and military attaches from eight countries who are stationed at embassies in Tokyo as liaison officers for UNC.

Based on Article 5 of the Agreement Regarding the Status of the United Nations Forces in Japan, UNC may use the U.S. Forces' facilities and areas in Japan to the minimum extent required to provide support for military logistics for UNC. At present, UNC is 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, Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, and White Beach Area.

3 Global Security

(1) Regional Security

The security environment surrounding the Asia-Pacific region is becoming increasingly severe due to various reasons such as the shift in the global power balance. Meanwhile, it would be difficult to say that the framework of regional security cooperation is sufficiently institutionalized because of the diversity of political, economic and social systems in the region. Therefore, Japan makes efforts to realize a regional security environment desirable for Japan, by strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and by combining bilateral and multilateral security cooperation at multiple levels mainly in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan has also unveiled a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" from the perspective of promoting the stability and prosperity of the extensive region stretching from the Asia-Pacific Ocean, passing through the Indian Ocean, to the Middle East and Africa, by treating this region as an integrated whole and securing the free and open international maritime order in the Indo-Pacific.

Japan is working to further strengthen deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, as well as to enhance security cooperation with various other countries other than the U.S. In relation to the Republic of Korea, based on the recognition that closer cooperation between Japan and the ROK is crucial considering the growing threat posed by North Korea, Japan, the U.S., and the ROK have carried out the ballistic missile information sharing exercise as well as anti-submarine warfare exercise. Furthermore, the two countries frequently hold summit meetings and foreign ministerial meetings, and affirm that they will work closely together between Japan and the ROK, as well as between Japan, the U.S., and the ROK. In relation to Australia, at the seventh Japan-Australia Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations ("2+2") held in April, the two countries have confirmed to further enhance Japan-Australia security and defense cooperation, as well as strengthening cooperation in addressing various issues which the region faces. At Summit Meetings held in January and November 2017 and January 2018, they also affirmed continuous cooperation to achieve the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region. In relation to India, at the Japan-India "2+2" Vice-Ministerial Dialogue held in March and the Japan-India Summit Meetings held in

July, September and November, the two countries shared the view that they will work together towards the realization of free, open, and stable oceans, as well as regional stability and prosperity, which are the common goals, by coordinating Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" and India's "Act East" policy. In relation to the UK, at the Japan-UK Summit Meeting held in August and the third Japan-UK Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting ("2+2") held in December, the two countries committed to elevating the Japan-UK security partnership to the next level, and shared the view to materialize cooperation towards the realization of a free and open Indo-Pacific region. In relation to France, a joint exercise by Japan, France, the UK, and the U.S. was conducted in May during the French naval fleet's visit to Japan as a part of "the Mission Jeanne d'Arc 2017." In addition, the fourth Japan-France Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") was held in January 2018, during which the two countries reached a broad agreement on the ACSA. In relation to ASEAN Member States, through such efforts as providing patrol vessels, Japan continuously supports the efforts towards enhancing the maritime capabilities of the Philippines, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Indonesia, and other countries.

In addition to strengthening bilateral cooperative relations mentioned above, Japan has also been promoting cooperation in the following frameworks to build a network for peace and prosperity in the region: the Japan-Australia-India Trilateral Dialogue Senior Officials Meeting (April and December), the Japan-U.S.-ROK Trilateral Summit Meeting (July and September), the Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting (February, April, and August 2017, and January 2018), the Japan-U.S.-Australia Trilateral Ministerial Strategic Dialogue (August), the Japan-U.S.-India Foreign Ministers' Meeting (September), the Japan-U.S.-Australia Summit Meeting (November), and the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Consultations at the level of senior officials of diplomatic authorities (November).

Furthermore, it is also important to enhance the relationships of trust with China and Russia for the stability of the security environment surrounding Japan. The Japan-China relationship is one of the most important bilateral relationships, and Japan is striving to develop stable relations of friendship and cooperation from a broad perspective, under the "Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests." As China's military trend is a major concern for Japan, Japan is making efforts to build multilayered channels for dialogue and exchanges in the field of security with China, including the Japan-China Security Dialogue held in October. Alongside with such efforts to communicate effectively in the policy aspect, Japan is also encouraging China to improve transparency. At the same time, Japan is striving to improve mutual relations of trust through high-level dialogues, including between leaders and foreign ministers. Regarding the Japan-Russia relations, while holding political dialogues at various levels, including four Summit Meetings and five Foreign Ministers' Meetings held in 2017, Japan has been energetically continuing negotiations with Russia with the aim of resolving the issue of the attribution of the Four Northern Islands and concluding a peace treaty. In the area of security, the Japan-Russia "2+2" Ministerial Meeting took place in

March. Discussions were also held between their security authorities in September and December. The two countries held candid discussions on defense and security on the occasion of the visits to Japan by Colonel General Salyukov, Commander-in-Chief of the Land Forces of Russia, in November, and by General Gerasimov, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation, in December.

Furthermore, Japan held the 4th Politico-Military (PM) Dialogue with Cambodia (July), the 3rd PM Dialogue with Indonesia (July), the 16th PM Dialogue with the UK (November), the 10th PM Dialogue with Canada (December), and the 20th PM Dialogue with France (December) respectively. Japan also held the 2nd Security Dialogue with Laos (July) and the 15th Security Dialogue with China (October) as well as the 4th Politico-Military-Security Dialogue with Mongolia (August), and the 15th High-Level Consultations with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) (May).

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. Among these, the ARF aims at improving the security environment of the Asia-Pacific region through dialogues and cooperation on political and security issues. The ARF is an important security dialogue framework in which various entities including North Korea and the EU participate. It is also an important forum in promoting security cooperation in which it focuses on confidence building through various initiatives. In August, the 24th ARF Ministerial Meeting was held, where participating Ministers candidly exchanged views mainly on regional and international affairs, including the South China Sea and North Korea. As the number of cyberattacks is growing rapidly worldwide and cybersecurity has become increasingly important, it is essential to make greater collective efforts on cybersecurity including through the framework of the ARF as well. From this viewpoint, Japan, together with Malaysia and Singapore, proposed the establishment of ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM) on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies. This establishment was approved unanimously. Japan is making a proactive contribution through, for example, taking a leading role as a co-chair in the Inter-Sessional Meeting (ISM) on Maritime Security (from summer 2014 to summer 2017). In this regard, Japan hosted the 9th ISM on Maritime Security in Tokyo in February 2017.

Furthermore, in addition to government-to-government dialogues (track 1), Japan actively utilizes frameworks where participants from both public and private sectors (track 1.5) exchange opinions and explain their security policies. Japan participates in various conferences, including the IISS Asia Security Summit (Shangri-La Dialogue) (Singapore). Also Foreign Minister Kono attended the Regional Security Summit (Manama Dialogue) (Bahrain) in December as well as the Munich Security Conference (Germany) in February 2018, as a part of Japan's efforts to promote other coutries' understanding of Japan's security policies, and to facilitate cooperation and confidence-building in the

region.

(2) Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

A On-the-Ground Initiatives

(A) UN Peacekeeping Operations (UN PKOs)

Traditionally, UN PKOs are positioned between parties to a dispute, and by monitoring ceasefires and the withdrawal of troops, they help calm the situation or prevent the recurrence of hostilities with the aim to support the settlement of the dispute through dialogue between the parties involved. However, following the changes in the international environment since the end of the Cold War, including an increase in civil wars, UN PKOs have multifaceted mandates in addition to its traditional mandates such as monitoring of ceasefires. These new mandates include support in Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants, security sector reform, elections, human rights, and the rule of law as well as the promotion of the political process and the protection of civilians. As of the end of 2017, 15 UN PKO missions were deployed, primarily in the Middle East and Africa, with a total of over 100,000 military, police and civilian personnel 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 PKOs are underway in various fora, primarily within the UN.

Based on the Act on Cooperation with UN Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (PKO Act), Japan has dispatched more than 12,500 personnel to a total of 27 missions including UN PKO since 1992. More recently, Japanese staff officers have been dispatched to the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) since 2011, while the engineering units have been dispatched there since 2012. The engineering units in the South Sudanese capital of Juba and the surrounding areas have undertaken such activities as developing infrastructure such as roads, supporting displaced persons through the provision of water supplies, as well as site preparation, and concluded their activities in May 2017. On the other hand, four SDF officers are currently still on active duty at the UNMISS Headquarters. Japan will continue to contribute in various ways to peace and stability in South Sudan. Under the banner of "proactive contribution to peace," building on the past experiences of peacekeeping operations and making use of its own strengths, Japan will also continue to contribute proactively in the field of international peace cooperation in the future such as through dispatching units and individuals, as well as enhancing capacity building.

(B) ODA and other Cooperation to Facilitate Peacebuilding

Japan attaches importance to peacebuilding as part of its international cooperation and it is positioned as one of the priority issues in Japan's Development Cooperation Charter.

In the area of coping with humanitarian crises, it is also effective to combine coordination between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, with peacebuilding. It is important to drastically enhance measures to address the root causes of conflict, not only by taking post-conflict responses but by focusing more on the prevention of conflicts and their

recurrence through nation-building and social stabilization measures during times of peace. Japan places great importance on such "humanitarian, development and peace nexus," and has been providing support for peacebuilding particularly in the following countries and regions.

(1) Middle East

Based on the Kono Four Principles and the five new initiatives unveiled in September 2017, at the 13th Manama Dialogue held in December 2017, Minister for Foreign Affairs Kono announced that Japan will be providing fresh aid of about 21 million US dollars for humanitarian assistance efforts in Syria and the surrounding countries, as Japan's continued support to countries that have been affected by the fight against ISIL and other conflicts.

(2) Africa

Japan has consistently implemented measures towards the realization of peaceful and stable Africa that does not generate violent extremism and took up the theme of "promoting social stability for shared prosperity" as one of the priority areas of the TICAD VI Nairobi Declaration. During the UN General Assembly held in September 2017, Prime Minister Abe announced that Japan had provided approximately 23.3 billion Japanese yen towards efforts to promote social stability, including vocational training for more than 16,000 people since 2016 on various issues related to peace and stability in Africa. The leaders of the African countries present at the same UN General Assembly expressed their appreciation for Japan's support.

For instance, since 2014, Japan has provided training for human resources in the field of criminal justice in eight French-speaking countries of Africa, contributing to human resource development and capacity building in these countries. In September 2017, Japan also provided support for strengthening of security maintenance systems of the state police force of Liberia, with the aim of realizing fair and equitable presidential and lower house elections in the country.

Furthermore, Japan has been providing support to PKO training centers operated by African countries since 2007, and the amount of its assistance totals more than 45 million US dollars for facilities in 13 countries by 2017.

Criminal justice training for French-speaking African countries (February 13, 2018, Cote d'Ivoire; Photo: JICA)

Special Feature

Cooperation in Peacekeeping Operations (PKO)

International Peace Cooperation

2017 marks the 25th anniversary of the enactment of the Act on Cooperation with United Nations Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (PKO Act). Under the Act, Japan has made a considerable number of personnel and in-kind contributions to UN peacekeeping operations, international humanitarian relief operations, and international election observation operations. Japan's efforts have been highly regarded by the international community.

SDF units carrying out road repairs between Juba and Mangalla (South Sudan) Photo: Ministry of Defense

Specifically, over the past 25 years, Japan has dispatched more than 12,500 personnel on 27 missions including those in Cambodia, Timor-Leste, the Golan Heights and Haiti under severe environments. Japanese personnel have maintained discipline and worked actively to realize peace and stability in the world by utilizing advanced technological capabilities.

More recently, Japan has contributed to nation-building efforts in South Sudan, by dispatching Self Defense Force (SDF) engineering units to the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS). At the end of May 2017, the SDF engineering units dispatched to UNMISS completed their five year long activities which included repair of roads and building of facilities for internally displaced persons. This has been the largest achievement by the Japanese PKO engineering missions. Furthermore, a Cabinet decision was made to enable the 11th engineering unit to come to the aid of individuals engaging in activities related to UN peacekeeping operations, upon urgent request, and authorized the unit to use weapons for joint protection of camps. This carries great significance in the history of Japan's PKO. Currently, four SDF officials are continuing to contribute to UNMISS activities as staff officers in the headquarters.

Support for Capacity Building, and Human Resource Development

Japan has also been supporting peacekeepers from various countries participating in PKOs to enhance their capacities. The support includes financial contributions and the dispatch of instructors to the UN Project for African Rapid Deployment of Engineering Capabilities and PKO Training Centers in Asian and African countries.

Japan also cooperates on projects to nurture civilian experts with the capability to work in the fields of peacebuilding. Over the past 10 years, 643 experts have completed their training, and now play an active role in the field worldwide.

In addition to the dispatch and development of human resources, Japan also provides support for peace building initiatives by the United Nations, such as funding for the development and roll-out of e-learning program to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) by UN PKO personnel, and contributing to a trust fund that should assist SEA victims. Going forward, Japan will put further effort into international peace initiatives.

Ceremony for the end of the course, ARDEC (conferment of certificates of completion)

Contributing to Peace in the Future

In our world today, no country can secure peace solely through its own efforts. Various conflicts are occurring around the world, and challenges that transcend national borders, such as terrorism, refugees, and poverty, are becoming increasingly serious. Japan, as a responsible member of the international community, continues to contribute to peace and stability in the world with its capabilities and responsibility.

B Initiatives within the UN

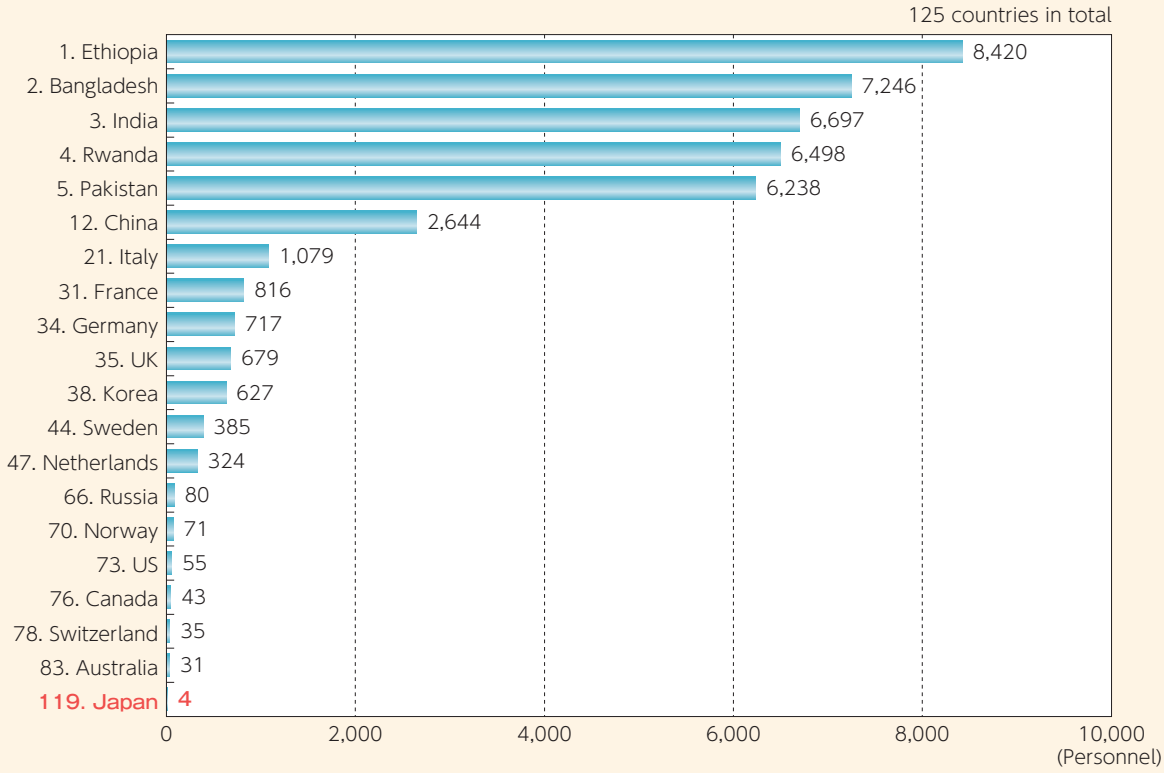
Many regional conflicts and civil wars are rekindled even after the conflict has ended. Hence, it is extremely important to provide appropriate support in the post-conflict period. Based on this understanding, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was established in 2005 with the aim of offering advice on integrated support, from conflict resolution to recovery, reintegration, and reconstruction. Japan has served as a member since its establishment, and contributed to its activities as the chair from 2006 to 2008 and also as the chair of PBC Working Group on Lessons Learned from 2011 to 2015.

Two resolutions were adopted in April 2016: the UN General Assembly Resolution (A/RES/70/262) on the "Review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture" including the PBC, and the UN Security Council Resolution 2282. These resolutions recommended the improvement of the efficiency and flexibility of the PBC, along with the strengthening of cooperation between the PBC and the UN Security Council as well as other organizations. In response, the PBC launched a new initiative in 2017 to implement these resolutions, and there have been continued discussions to identify priority issues and formulate peacebuilding strategies in the five original agenda countries[6].

As one of its new initiatives, the PBC designated focal points (countries in charge) to take the lead in five thematic discussions (institution-building, youths, gender, financing for peacebuilding, and national ownership). Japan has been appointed as the focal point for institution-building. In addition to the thematic discussions, Japan also hosts meetings on countries and

6 Five countries of Burundi, Sierra Leone, Guinea-Bissau, Central African Republic, and Liberia. Meetings on Guinea have not been convened in the recent years, and in July, the PBC made the decision to terminate the meetings on Guinea.

▶ Peacekeepers for military, police and headquarters personnel under the UN mission



Source : UN websites, etc. (military, police and headquarters personnel: as of December 2016, civilian personnel: as of July 2016)

regions apart from the countries on the PBC agenda, and contributes to improving the flexibility and efficiency of the PBC. Japan is also involved in efforts within the PBC to strengthen cooperative relationships with the World Bank and the African Union (AU).

In September 2016, Japan announced its aim to allocate 10 million US dollars as its initiative to contribute proactively to the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). As of December 2017, Japan has contributed a total of 48.5 million US dollars (2.5 million US dollars in 2017) and ranks sixth among the major donor countries.

C Human Resource Development

(1) The Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development

While civilian experts with a high level of skill and expertise have a substantial role to play in the field of post-conflict peacebuilding, the number of those who are capable of fulfilling the role are insufficient, and consequently, the development of personnel has become a major challenge. Japan has been implementing programs for human resource development in order to cultivate civilian experts who can play a leading role in the field of peacebuilding and development. As of the end of the FY2017, a total of about 730 people have been trained. The trainees who completed the programs have gone on to play an active role in the field of peacebuilding and development worldwide in such countries as South Sudan and Afghanistan, and have received high acclaim from both the UN and other countries.

In the FY2017 program, training courses for younger personnel, as well as training courses for mid-career practitioners and one-to-one career development support,

were implemented.

(2) Training for United Nations Peacekeepers

Japan has been supporting peacekeepers from various countries participating in UN PKOs to enhance their capabilities. Since 2015, Japan has dispatched 83 JSDF instructors for training approximately 130 future engineering personnel from five countries in East Africa that have expressed their intention to dispatch engineering units to UN PKOs (the UN Project for African Rapid Deployment of Engineering Capabilities). These instructors have conducted training on the operation of heavy engineering equipment, including training for full-scale operation of those equipments. Japan has also provided support for the UN Signals Academy, with the aim of facilitating the implementation of effective training for the signals units of UN PKOs in Africa. Japan also engages in dispatching instructors and other personnel to PKO Training Centers in Asia and African nations.

(3) Initiatives to Combat Security Threats

A Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism Measures

In 2017, terrorist incidents occurred around the world, including the shooting at a nightclub in Istanbul (January), bombing in Manchester (May), attack by a vehicle driven deliberately into crowds in Barcelona (August), and the terrorist incident on the Sinai Peninsula of Egypt (November).

While operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) carried out in Iraq and Syria had effectively reduced the areas dominated by ISIL, the threat of terrorism is spreading as a result of the return or relocation of foreign terrorist fighters to their home countries or to third countries. In particular, the threat of terrorism is growing in Asia.

At the G7 Ise-Shima Summit held in 2016, Japan took the lead in formulating the "G7 Action Plan on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism." The Plan stressed the importance of the following points: (1) Concrete counter-terrorism measures including the utilization of Interpol databases and passenger name records (PNR); (2) Promoting tolerance through dialogues aimed at preventing violent extremism; and (3) Support for capacity-building in developing countries. At the G7 Taormina Summit held in 2017, the full implementation of this Action Plan was affirmed, and Japan has been steadily moving forward on its implementation. Specifically, it has supplied equipment and conducted training for law-enforcement authorities, etc. in the areas of capacity building for border control including airport security, improving the investigation and prosecution capabilities of security personnel, and measures to counter terrorist financing including money-laundering and organized crime. In the aspect of countering violent extremism measures, Japan has been focused on the implementation of measures to counter violent extremism, which is the root cause of terrorism. This includes, in particular, community support at the grassroots level such as promotion of interfaith dialogue and empowering women and youths. Regionally, Japan places its emphasis on Asia. In particular, as one of the initiatives to strengthen comprehensive countering terrorism measures in the Asia region, Japan announced at the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting in 2016 that it

will provide support of 45 billion Japanese yen and develop 2,000 personnel in the next three years. Japan is now steadily implementing this support initiative.

In 2017, Japan held counter-terrorism consultations with ASEAN, the U.S., Australia, India, and Pakistan, and affirmed its commitment towards strengthening cooperation and exchanging information on terrorism situation.

Japan has also held a workshop inviting officials from Asian countries as well as international organizations who are in charge of public security and correctional policy. At this workshop, participants had active discussions on the approaches for effective assistance and cooperation to counter-terrorism and violent extremism in Japan and other countries. Besides the lecture-style workshop, Japan arranged on-site visits to Japanese private enterprises to show the relevant technologies which can be applied to counter-terrorism measures in other countries. As another initiative, Japan has continued the invitation program for Islamic school teachers over ten years and arranged inter-faith dialogue, cultural visits and school visits for the participants. Japan will continue to implement such initiatives moving forward, in order to contribute to promote moderation.

With regard to initiatives implemented through international organizations, Japan has contributed about 46 million U.S. dollars (supplementary budget for FY2016) to international organizations and funds, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), thereby providing support for individual projects to counter-terrorism and violent extremism through these organizations.

B Criminal Justice Initiatives

The UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice are the core bodies in shaping policy on crime prevention and criminal justice in the international community. At the 26th Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) held in May, an agreement was reached to establish the overall theme for the 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice that will be held in Japan in April 2020, as "Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda." The cabinet also approved the convention of this UN Congress in Kyoto. Furthermore, Japan is also engaged in initiatives to improve prosecution capabilities in Southeast Asia, by funding the UN Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund of the UNODC. With regard to measures against cybercrime, Japan provides support through initiatives such as organizing a capacity building workshop for law-enforcement authorities from ASEAN countries, in cooperation with the UNODC and with financial contributions from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

Furthermore, in July, Japan concluded the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), in order to prevent transnational organized crime including terrorism more effectively, and to promote cooperation to fight against such crime, by establishing a global legal framework to tackle this problem (See "Special Feature: Conclusion of the UN Convention against Transnational

Organized Crime (UNTOC)").

C Anti-corruption Measures

In July, Japan concluded the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), which sets out provisions for international cooperation and measures to tackle acts of corruption, such as bribery and embezzlement of property by public officials. Japan has been conducting training to strengthen the investigation and prosecution capabilities of the authorities in developing countries that are responsible for corruption cases, through contributing to UNODC, with the aim of promoting the implementation of UNCAC. Japan has contributed approximately 90,000 U.S. dollars through the UNODC towards the operation of UNCAC Implementation Review Mechanism, which monitors the status of implementation of UNCAC in countries that are party to the convention.

Within the context of the G20, Japan was involved in the formulation of deliverables, including the High Level Principles on the Liability of Legal Persons for Corruption through the activities of the G20 Anti-Corruption Working Group.

The OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) Working Group on Bribery monitors the "Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions" to prevent and combat the bribery of foreign public officials. Japan is an active participant in this program. Japan has also supported the ADB/OECD Anti-Corruption Initiative promoted jointly by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the OECD as part of its contributions toward enhancing anti-corruption measures in the region.

D Measures to Combat Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism

In terms of measures to combat money laundering and the financing of terrorism, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an international framework that has been leading global discussions concerning the international standards that countries should implement, as well as examining measures from new perspectives. As a founding member, Japan has actively participated in these discussions. In recent years, the FATF has fulfilled a certain role in preventing the financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. In November, in response to repeated nuclear tests and missile launches by North Korea, member jurisdictions unanimously adopted the FATF statement that calls for the eradication of illegal financial activities by North Korea.

Japan provides assistance to Iran and other countries in ASEAN and the Sahel region in areas such as the development of legal systems, in cooperation with the UNODC to promote international efforts to disrupt money laundering and stem the flow of funds to terrorists.

E Measures to Combat Trafficking in Persons

Japan has strengthened its domestic mechanisms to combat trafficking in persons, and also proactively provides assistance to developing countries, based on "Japan's 2014 Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons." This Action Plan was developed in order to effectively tackle trafficking in persons, which involves increasingly sophisticated and latent methods. In July, Japan became a party to

Special Feature

Conclusion of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC)

On July 11, Japan concluded the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC).

What is the UNTOC?

The UNTOC is a convention adopted at the UN General Assembly in November 2000 in order to effectively address the rapidly growing complexity and severity of transnational organized crime. It was formulated in response to heightened awareness among the respective countries of the vital need not only to strengthen the criminal justice systems in their own countries, but also for the international community to work together to tackle this crime effectively.

This Convention aims to prevent transnational organized crime, including terrorism, more effectively, and to establish an international legal framework to promote cooperation to combat this crime.

Japan's Efforts toward the Conclusion of UNTOC

Japan signed the UNTOC at the conference held in Palermo, Italy, in December 2000 for the signing and ratification of the Convention, and received the approval of the Diet on the conclusion of the Convention in May 2003. However, as an implementing legislation for this Convention had not been established, it took a long time for Japan to finally conclude the Convention.

During this period, most countries and regions in the world became parties to the Convention and engaged in international cooperation based on it. Countries that had not yet concluded the Convention were repeatedly requested to do so at the relevant UN Resolutions and G7/G8 Summits.

In addition to this international situation, Japan has been also preparing for the Rugby World Cup in 2019 and the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games in 2020. Hence, in order to prevent Japan from becoming a "loophole" for transnational organized crime including terrorism, the implementing legislation for this Convention, which is the Amended Act on Punishment of Organized Crimes and Control of Crime Proceeds (also referred as "the Act on Punishment of the Preparation of Acts of Terrorism and Other Organized Crimes"), passed the Diet in June 2017. With the enforcement of this Act, Japan concluded UNTOC in July, becoming the 188th party to the Convention (as of December, the number of countries and regions that are parties to the Convention is 189).

Effects of the Conclusion of UNTOC

The conclusion of UNTOC accelerates and enhances mutual legal assistance in investigations and the transfer of criminals between the countries that are parties to the Convention, enables more effective cooperation with the international community, including in the collection of information, and makes it possible for countries that are party to the Convention to deal with transnational organized crime including terrorism. Taking the opportunity of the conclusion of UNTOC, Japan is working more closely with the international community in efforts to further strengthen measures against crime.

Ambassador Minami depositing the instruments of acceptance of the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) with the UN Secretary-General (July 11, New York, U.S.)

the Trafficking in Persons Protocol, which was drawn up with the aim of strengthening international cooperation to protect victims and prevent as well as fight against human trafficking. This further deepened Japan's cooperation with the respective foreign governments towards the eradication of human trafficking. Furthermore, in view that human trafficking is being carried out in recent years as a means of acquiring fighters or financing for terrorist organizations, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2388 (Trafficking of Persons in Conflict Situation) unanimously in November, and Japan declared its strong solidarity with the international community to combat this new threat.

In the respect of cooperation with international organizations, in 2017, Japan has continued to provide assistance for the repatriation and social rehabilitation program for foreign victims of trafficking in persons protected in Japan, through funding to the International Organization for Migration (IOM). Japan also funded training programs to law-enforcement authorities in Southeast Asian countries through projects organized by the UNODC.

F Measures to Combat Illicit Drug Trafficking

At the 60th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) held in March, Japan supported holding the Convention of a High-Level Ministerial Meeting in 2019, which is the target year for the achievement of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, formulated in 2009. Japan also explained its efforts to reduce demand and supply of drugs as a follow-up to the UN General Assembly Special Sessions (UNGASS) on the World Drug Problem held in April 2016. In the field of international cooperation, Japan works in cooperation with the UNODC to investigate and analyze synthetic drugs such as amphetamine-type stimulants and new psychoactive substances in the Asia-Pacific region, provide support for improving container control capacity of

regulatory authorities at air and sea ports, and put in place measures against illicit drugs trafficking that are spreading across borders. In relation to Afghanistan, which is the world's largest region for the illegal cultivation of opium poppy, Japan has contributed 5 million U.S. dollars to the UNODC and provides active support for initiatives by the respective countries in the region, in order to strengthen border controls, promote alternative development to drug crop cultivation, and enhance capacity building of narcotics agents in cooperation with the neighboring countries.

(4) The Oceans and Seas

Japan 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." For Japan, maritime rights and interests, which are the basis for economic survival, including the freedom of navigation and overflight, and development of marine resources, are of great importance toward securing peace and security. To ensure these maritime rights and interests in the long-term and in a stable manner, it is indispensable to maintain a maritime order and ensure safe maritime transport.

Furthermore, "Free, Open and Stable Seas," which are upheld by a maritime order governed by law and rules and not by force, are essential for 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 advocates the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," and contributes actively to maintaining and strengthening maritime order and ensuring safe maritime transport.

However, in recent years, there has been an increasing number of cases where the interests of countries clash with each other from the perspective of securing resources 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 closely monitoring these cases with much interest. Against this background, based on the recognition that it is necessary to fully uphold the "Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea" (See 3-1-6 (2)) advocated by Prime Minister Abe at the Shangri-La Dialogue in May 2014, a Leaders' Communique was released at the G7 Taormina Summit (Italy) in May 2017. This Communique contains a strong message to the international community on aspects of maritime security, such as the maintenance of a rules-based order in the maritime domain based on the principles of international law. At the Third G7 High-Level Meeting on Maritime Security held in Rome in November, Japan disseminated information about its initiatives on maritime security, including maintaining and strengthening a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law in the Indo-Pacific region. Furthermore, outside the framework of the G7, Japan has also utilized fora that are related to the East Asia Summit (EAS), including the ARF Inter Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security and the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF), to actively show the importance of "Free, Open and Stable Seas" and disseminate Japan's stance and initiatives in the area of maritime security.

Combining various assistances including Official Development Assistance (ODA) by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, capacity

building assistance by the Ministry of Defense, Self-Defense Forces and the Japan Coast Guard, defense equipment and technology cooperation, and Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA), Japan seamlessly supports coastal states mainly in Asia and Africa to enhance maritime law enforcement capabilities through providing patrol vessels, technical cooperation and human resource development, among other forms of assistance. In this way, Japan has been contributing to establishing and promoting the rule of law at sea.

A Order at Sea

(A) United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) and Related Japanese Initiatives

Also known as the "Constitution for the Seas," UNCLOS is the very basis of a maritime order governed by law and rules. The Convention comprehensively provides principles governing uses of the sea, including the freedom of navigation and overflight over the high seas. It also stipulates the rights and obligations under international law on the development of marine resources and so on. Furthermore, this Convention led to the establishment of international organizations such as the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS), the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS), and the International Seabed Authority (ISA). This Convention has been ratified by 167 countries including Japan (including some not recognized by Japan) and by the EU. As a leading maritime nation, Japan regards a maritime order, with the Convention at the core, as the cornerstone to ensure Japan's maritime rights and interests and to facilitate maritime activities. As such, Japan actively contributes to discussions at conferences including the Meetings of States Parties to the Convention and to the activities by international organizations in order to ensure that the Convention will be even more widely applied and implemented appropriately. Furthermore, Japan has done its utmost to build, maintain, and strengthen a maritime order under the Convention, by various means such as holding international symposiums on the law of the sea where eminent Japanese and foreign experts are invited (see 3-1-6).

(B) A Challenge to the Maritime Order and Response by Japan and International Community (see 1-1(2), 2-1-2(1) and 2-1-6)

a Situation surrounding the East China Sea

In the East China Sea, Chinese Government-owned vessels have continued to intrude into Japan's territorial waters around the Senkaku Islands in 2017, and active operations by Chinese military vessels and aircraft have been observed. In addition, China has been continuing unilateral resource development in the Exclusive Economic Zone and on continental shelves in areas pending delimitation. In recent years, Japan has found the Chinese side conducted a number of research in the waters surrounding Japan such as the East China Sea. Many of the research were conducted without Japan's consent or in a manner which Japan did not agree to. Given China's continued attempts to change the status quo unilaterally in the East China Sea, Japan will carefully monitor the trends and movements around its air and sea spaces, continue to respond in a firm but calm manner while making claims that should be made, and at the same time, promote cooperation with the

relevant countries including the U.S. in order to achieve peace and stability in the East China Sea.

b Issues surrounding the South China Sea

In the South China Sea, China has been further conducting unilateral actions to change the status quo that increase tensions such as large-scale and rapid building of outposts as well as their use for military purposes, and attempts to create a fait accompli. Many countries including Japan have expressed concern over such China's actions. Until now, Japan has consistently supported the full enforcement of the rule of law in the South China Sea, and emphasized the importance for all the concerned parties related to the South China Sea to work towards peaceful settlement of disputes based on international law. With regard to dialogues between China and ASEAN concerning issues surrounding the South China Sea, Japan's stance is that the easing of tensions through such forward-looking initiatives should lead to non-militarization.

With regard to the arbitration proceedings based on UNCLOS concerning the conflict between the Philippines and China over the South China Sea, lodged by the Government of the Philippines, the Arbitral Tribunal made its final arbitral award on July 12, 2016. On the same day, Japan released a statement by the Foreign Minister. The statement explains that 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 expects that the parties' compliance with this award will eventually lead to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea.

Japan has a high interest regarding the issues over the South China Sea as it relies on marine transportation for most of resources and energy, and attaches importance to the freedom of navigation and overflight in the South China Sea, as well as security of sea lanes. Cooperation within the international community is of great importance to maintain and develop "Free, Open and Stable Seas." From this perspective, Japan supports the U.S. Freedom of Navigation Operations.

B Ensuring Safe Maritime Transport

Japan actively contributes to ensuring the freedom of navigation and overflight and safe maritime transport, through anti-piracy measures in Asia and Africa, as well as close partnership and cooperation with other countries.

(A) Anti-piracy Measures Off the Coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden

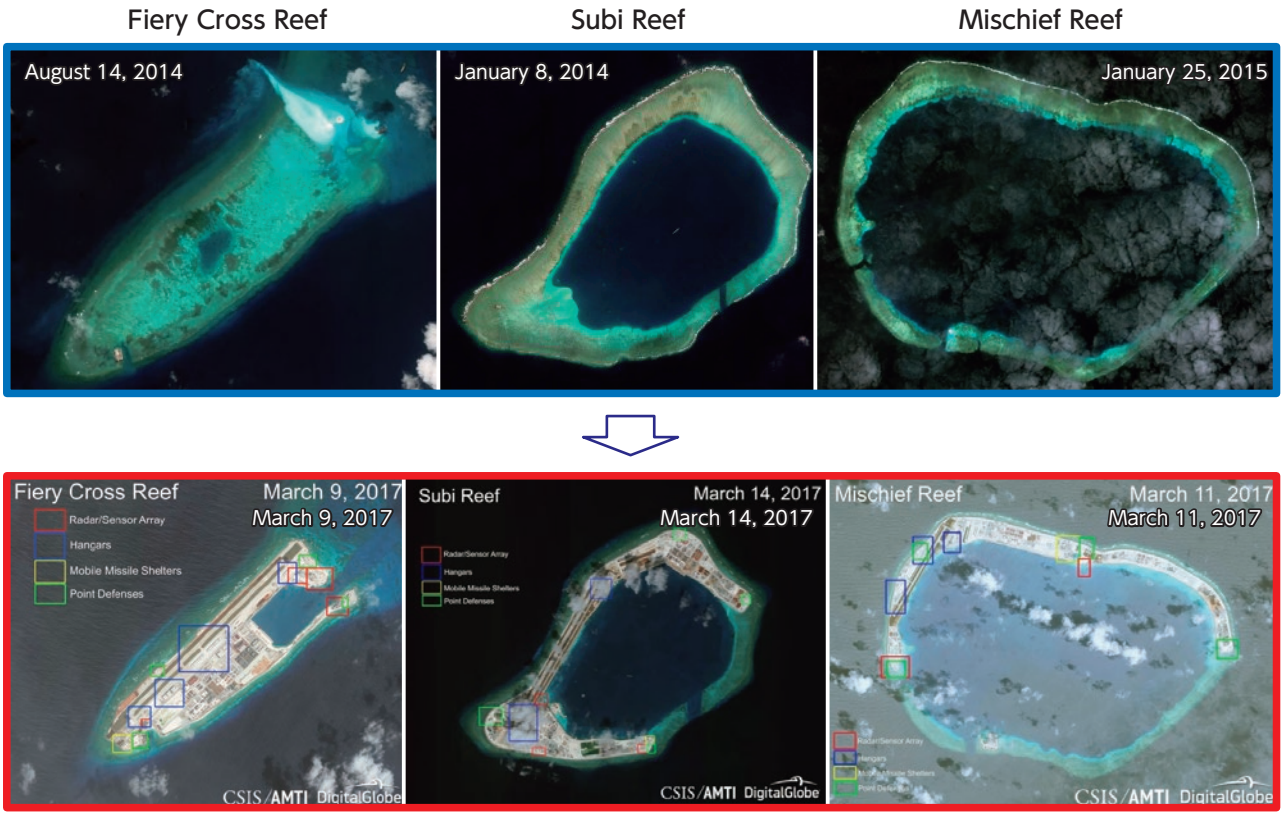
a Current status of piracy and armed robbery cases

According to the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the number of piracy and armed robbery cases (hereinafter referred to as "piracy cases") off the coast of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden was 237 at its peak in 2011, but has since been on a decline, dropping to the low levels of zero in 2015, two in 2016, and nine in 2017. Despite sustained efforts in maritime law enforcement activities by the navies of the respective countries, and the implementation of self-defense measures by the merchant ships of each country, the root causes giving rise to piracy off the coast of Somalia remain unresolved. Thus, pirates off the coast of Somalia still have

Uotsurijima of the Senkaku Isands (Photo: Office of Policy Planning and Coordination on Territory and Sovereignty, Cabinet Secretariat)

Fishing vessels gathering together (Taken on August 6, 2016; Photo: Japan Coast Guard)

Chinese Government-owned vessels and fishing vessels (Taken on August 6, 2016; Photo: Japan Coast Guard)



Source: http://amti.csis.org/ etc.

the intention and capability to carry out acts of piracy, and the situation requires caution.

b Extension of anti-piracy operations and record of escort activities

Since 2009, Japan has been conducting anti-piracy operations, without any interruption to the operations even once, by deploying Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyers (with coast guard officers on board) and P-3C maritime patrol aircraft to the Gulf of Aden. On November 2, 2017, the Government of Japan decided to continue anti-piracy operations based on the Act on Punishment and Countermeasures against Piracy for another year. The deployed destroyers protected 72 merchant ships on 43 escort operations between January and December 2017, while the P-3C maritime patrol aircraft carried out 243 mission flights, in which they conducted surveillance, information gathering and provided information to naval vessels of other countries.

c Promotion of international cooperation in anti-piracy measures

Japan has been making multi-layered efforts, including support for enhancement of maritime law enforcement capacity of Somalia and neighboring countries as well as for stability of Somalia, in order to solve root causes of piracy off the coast of Somalia. Japan has assisted the establishment of Information Sharing Centres in Yemen, Kenya, and Tanzania, as well as the construction of a training center (DRTC) in Djibouti for capacity building of the region, through contributing 14.6 million US dollars to a fund established by the IMO. Moreover, Japan has contributed 4.5 million US dollars to an international trust fund managed by the UN Development Programme (UNDP), through which it assists Somalia and neighboring countries in improving courts and training judicial officers, as well as repatriation to Somalia of those found guilty of piracy in the neighboring countries including Seychelles. In December 2015, Japan provided two patrol vessels to the Djibouti Coast Guard, to which the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) has extended technical assistance for capacity building. In October 2017, a seminar on maritime security, co-hosted by Japan and France, was held at DRTC. With a view to promoting stability in Somalia, Japan has provided a total of 456.3 million US dollars since 2007 aimed at supporting improvement in basic services, improvement in public security through support for the police, and revitalization of domestic economy through vocational training and job creation, among other measures.

(B) Anti-piracy Measures in Asia

To encourage regional cooperation in the fight against piracy cases in Asia, Japan was at the forefront of efforts to formulate 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 piracy cases in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, and other regions, via the Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP-ISC) established in Singapore under the Agreement. Japan supports the activities of ReCAAP-ISC through personnel (dispatching the Executive Director and an Assistant Director) and

financial contributions. From September 30 to October 7, Japan, in cooperation with ReCAAP-ISC, organized the "Capacity Building Executive Programme on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia" in Tokyo, Kanagawa, and Hiroshima for participants from the ten ASEAN Member States. In addition, efforts by Japan to counter piracy in Asia, including support for improving maritime law enforcement capabilities of coastal countries and for improving surveillance capabilities, have been highly appraised internationally.

According to figures released by the IMB, the number of piracy cases in the seas of Southeast Asia was 76 in 2017. In recent years, there have been cases of crew abduction in the Sulu Sea and Celebes Sea in Southeast Asia, posing a threat to vessels navigating in these waters. In view of this situation, Japan announced at the East Asia Summit (EAS) held in November that it will provide steady support of 15 billion Japanese yen over two years towards the realization of "Asia resilient to terrorism," through a comprehensive approach that takes the current situation into account and which aims to improve security in the southern part of the Philippines, the Sulu Sea, and the Celebes Sea. Based on this declaration of its support, Japan will continue to actively support capacity building for maritime safety.

(5) Cyber

Year by year, as cyberspace is becoming an essential platform for people's socioeconomic activities, the scale and the influence of cyber attacks are expanding. In recent years in particular, the scale of DDoS (distributed denial of service) attacks has reached an unprecedented level, and critical infrastructure has become the target of attacks. Thus, the threat of cyber attacks is becoming more serious.

Japan is no exception, and has been increasingly exposed to the cyber threats. For instance, the Japan Pension Service suffered a cyberattack in 2015, in which as many as 1.25 million cases of personal information were stolen. Furthermore, in May 2017, a large-scale cyberattack was carried out on about 150 countries and regions including Japan, through the illegal ransomware known as "WannaCry." As the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 approaches, the cybersecurity issue is a matter of urgent priority for Japan.

Cyberattacks are characterized as being highly anonymous, advantageous to the attacker, less affected by geographical constraints and able to cross national borders easily. For these reasons, cyber security is an issue that is difficult for a single country to address alone. As such, coordination and cooperation of the international community are essential.

Against this backdrop, Japan has advanced its efforts that include contributing to the development of international rules, promoting cooperation and confidence-building measures with other countries, enhancing countermeasures against cybercrimes, and supporting capacity building, based on the "Cybersecurity Strategy" that was adopted by the Cabinet in September 2015.

In respect of developing international rules, from its standpoint that existing international law is applicable to cyber activities, Japan has taken active roles in discussions in the international community through the United Nations Group of

Governmental Experts (GGE) on cyberspace and other fora.

Regarding the promotion of cooperation and confidence-building measures with other countries, Japan has held consultations and dialogues with the countries and organizations such as the U.S., the UK, France, Australia, Israel, Estonia, India, Russia, Japan-China-ROK, EU, and ASEAN. In addition, at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meeting held in August (Manila, the Philippines), Japan, together with Malaysia and Singapore, proposed the establishment of ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Security of and in the Use of Information and Communication Technologies. This proposal was approved at the Ministerial Meeting. Through these talks, Japan strives to exchange information about cyber-related policies and initiatives, deepens mutual understanding, enhances cooperation and fosters confidence-building measures with other countries. Furthermore, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Manabu Horii attended the Global Conference on Cyber Space (GCCS) held in India in November, and delivered a speech about Japan's cyber diplomacy.

Regarding countermeasures against cybercrime, as the first member country in Asia of the "Convention on Cybercrime" (Budapest Convention), which is the only multilateral treaty on the use of cyberspace, Japan actively participates in its related conferences, and promotes efforts to expand the parties to the Convention, especially among Asia.

Due to the nature of cyberspace, the lack of incident handling capacity of some countries and regions may pose a risk to the entire world. Therefore, capacity building support for developing countries is important for ensuring Japan's security as well. Japan has been providing support, including the capacity building of CSIRT (Computer Security Incident Response Team)[7] and the relevant administrative agencies mainly in ASEAN countries. Based on the "Basic Strategy of Cybersecurity Capacity Building for Developing Countries" formulated by the Government as a whole in October, Japan will continue to provide strategic and efficient assistance on an All-Japan basis.

(6) Outer Space

In recent years, outer space has become congested due to the diversified use of outer space and increasing number of countries using space. In addition, increase of space debris caused by Anti-Satellite (ASAT) tests, collisions of satellites etc., has posed a growing risk to the sustainable and stable use of outer space.

In order to cope with this situation, Japan has been proactively participating in discussions on the rule-making for outer space with the aim of further establishing the rule of law. It also promotes dialogues and consultations on outer space with other countries to contribute to the efforts to ensure security in outer space.

Amid new technologies and services with regard to space utilization and applications, Japan proactively engages in space science and exploration such as the International Space Station (ISS), the

7 A general term which refers to a group to deal with computer security incidents. In order to minimize the damage caused by computer security incidents, they collect and analyze incident-related information, vulnerability information and predictive information of cyberattacks, consider solutions and measures, and cope with the incidents.

overseas development of Japanese space industry, resolution of global challenges by utilizing space technologies, and support for capacity building in the field of outer space in developing countries.

A Establishing the Rule of Law in Outer Space

Based on the environmental changes related to outer space, the international community has been discussing the necessity of formulating new rules for outer space. Japan has also been actively involved, and has contributed to these discussions with the aim of establishing the rule of law in outer space. It is important to restrict actions that create space debris such as ASAT tests and to formulate rules with regard to transparency and confidence-building measures (TCBM) which will promote information exchange on outer space activities between countries. From these points of view, Japan has actively participated in discussions on the peaceful use of outer space, including the International Code of Conduct for Outer Space Activities (ICOC) led by EU, and the development of the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNCOPUOS) Guidelines for the Long Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities. Chiaki Mukai, Japan's first female astronaut, served as the chair at the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at the UNCOPUOS from January 2017.

B International Dialogues and Consultations on Outer Space

An increasing number of various bilateral and multilateral dialogues and consultations on outer space have been held with the aim of facilitating international cooperation and information sharing from a broad perspective and promotion of international cooperation; reflecting the growing interest of the international community concerning outer space. Japan also promotes dialogues in the fields of security, science, and industry with major space-faring nations and other countries in the Asia-Pacific Region.

The Second Japan-France Comprehensive Dialogue on Space (Tokyo) was held in March. In addition to discussions on information exchanges and the potential for cooperation in the aspects of security and civil life, the two countries also signed the "Comprehensive Space Partnership between the Competent Authorities of Japan and the French National Defence, Letter of Intent" and the "Technical Arrangement between the Competent Authorities of Japan and the Minister of Defence of the French Republic related to Space Situational Awareness Data Sharing" as the summary. In addition, the Fourth Japan-U.S. Comprehensive Dialogue on Space, the 11th Japan-U.S. Global Positioning System (GPS) Plenary Meeting and the 7th Japan-U.S. Civil Space Dialogue (Civil and Commercial Uses) (Washington, D.C.) were held in May, while the Third Japan-EU Space Policy Dialogue (Tokyo) was held in October. Japan also hosted a multilateral meeting in Kyoto, which was the 12th Meeting of the International Committee on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (ICG) held in December.

C Space Science and Exploration, Overseas Development of Japanese Space Industry, and Contributions to Global Challenges

The progress of space exploration and application for peaceful purposes is a common benefit for all humankind, and is

also significant in terms of diplomacy. In particular, the ISS is an epic project in which 15 countries participate, and has become a symbol of international cooperation in the field of outer space. From December, astronaut Norishige Kanai began his nearly six month stay on the ISS as a member of the 54th/55th Expedition Mission crew. The Japanese Experiment Module "Kibo" is capable of releasing nanosatellites, and is also used to release satellites on behalf of many emerging and developing countries with the aim of providing support for capacity building in the space field.

To acquire internationally increasing demand for satellites and launching services is an important challenge for the Japanese space industry. The Government of Japan has been promoting overseas development of its space industry through top-level sales and diplomatic missions overseas. Furthermore, through development cooperation that utilizes space technologies, Japan has been contributing to addressing global issues such as climate change, disaster risk reduction, forest conservation, and resources/energy, and to supporting capacity building in the field of space in developing countries. For example, Japan signed the Letter of Intent on space cooperation and maritime cooperation that utilizes satellite data with Indonesia in March, and has commenced studies towards the development of concrete projects in November. In relation to Thailand, Japan has signed an Exchange of Note on cooperation to develop the Continuously Operating Reference System Network based on Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) technology, and has also conducted demonstration experiments for satellite positioning services in Thailand, such as automatically-operated construction and farming equipments.

4 Disarmament and Non-proliferation and the Peceful uses of Nuclear Energy[8]

(1) Nuclear Disarmament

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings, Japan has the responsibility to take the lead in efforts by the international community to realize a world free of nuclear weapons.

In recent years, amidst the deterioration in the global security environment, including North Korea's nuclear and missile development, differences in positions concerning the approach to nuclear disarmament have been emerging 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. Concerning these severe circumstances, it is necessary to gain the cooperation of both non-nuclear-weapon and nuclear-weapon States, and to persevere in putting in place realistic and practical measures in order to advance nuclear disarmament in a real manner.

In the area of nuclear disarmament, the United Nation's conference to negotiate the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was conducted in 2017, and the treaty was adopted with a majority vote on July 7 (122 votes for, one vote against, and one abstained vote). Nuclear-weapon States and allies of NATO member countries, among others, did

8 For more details about Japan's policy in the fields of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, please refer to "Japan's Disarmament and Non- Proliferation Policy" (7th Edition) published in March 2016.

not participate the conference. Japan did not participate in the negotiations either. However, Japan attended the beginning of the conference and stated its position (See "Special Feature: Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons").

Japan continues to pursue nuclear disarmament persistently with the aim to realize a world free of nuclear weapons, by taking a bridging role between nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States through measures such as holding a meeting of the Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament, submitting a draft resolution for the total elimination of nuclear weapons to the UN General Assembly, and utilizing the framework of the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), and by accumulating realistic and practical measures that also involve nuclear-weapon States, such as the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT).

A Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

Japan attaches great importance on maintaining and strengthening the NPT, which is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. At the NPT Review Conference, which is held once every five years with the aim of achieving the goals of the Treaty and ensuring compliance with its provisions, various discussions that reflected the international situation of the time have been held since the Treaty entered into force in 1970. At the NPT Review Conference held in 2015, discussions surrounding the issue of a weapons-of-mass-destruction-free zone in the Middle East and other topics could not reach a consensus, and the conference ended without an adoption of a final document. Against this backdrop, there is growing importance of efforts towards the NPT Review Conference in 2020, which marks the 50th anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force.

Foreign Minister Kishida attended the First Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference, which was held in Vienna in May, and he appealed for the necessity to rebuild relationships of trust between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States. He also proposed three policies, namely enhancing transparency, improving the security environment, and raising awareness of the realities of the atomic bombings, and stated Japan's proposals on the pathway towards the elimination of nuclear weapons.

B Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament

In May, Japan announced the establishment of a Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament (EPG) at the first Preparatory Committee of the 2020 NPT Review Conference. The EPG consists of a total of 16 experts; six Japanese experts including the chairperson, and ten foreign experts from nuclear-weapon States and non-nuclear-weapon States including the States promoting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. In November, the EPG's first meeting was held in Hiroshima. The EPG will make concrete recommendations that contribute

to substantive advancement in nuclear disarmament after the second meeting to be held in the spring of 2018. Japan will input the recommendation to the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee of the 2020 NPT Review Conference (in Geneva) in April, 2018.

C The Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI)

The NPDI, which is a group of non-nuclear-weapon States from various regions established under the leadership of Japan and Australia in 2010, has taken a bridging role between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States and is taking the lead in efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation through its concrete and practical proposals, based on the involvement of the Foreign Ministers of its Member States.

At the First session of Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference held in May 2017, the NPDI submitted a total of six working papers, including a working paper on transparency, as a part of its concrete contributions to the discussions. In September, Foreign Minister Kono co-hosted the 9th Ministerial Meeting of the NPDI in New York, with Germany.

9th Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) Ministerial Meeting (September 21, New York, U.S. (Permanent Mission of Germany to the United Nations))

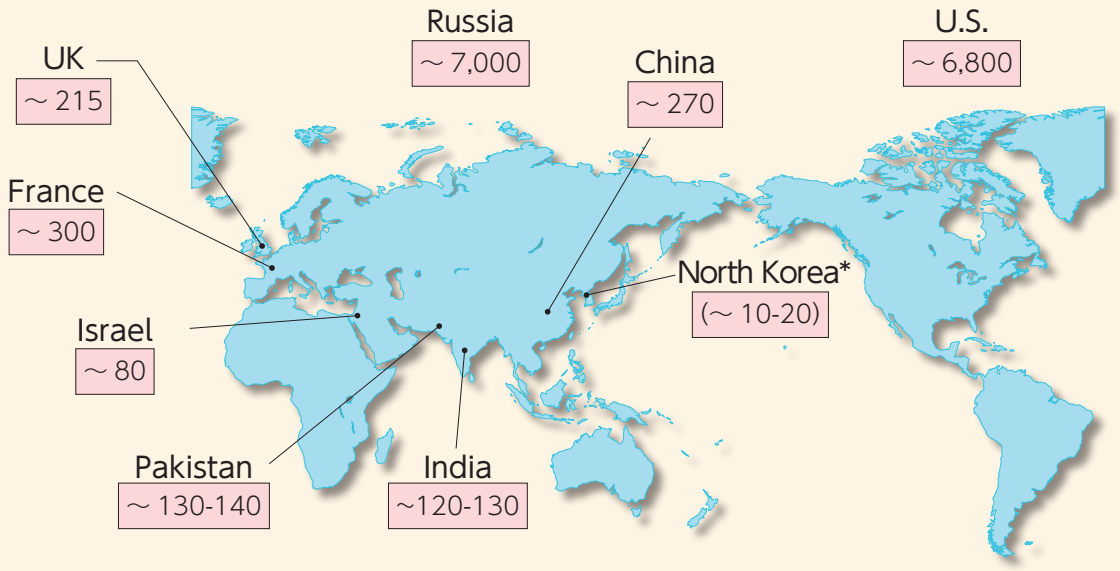
In addition to affirming collaboration and cooperation towards the 2020 NPT Review Meeting, a statement that strongly condemns North Korea's nuclear tests and missile launches was also issued.

D Initiatives Through the United Nations

(A) Resolution on Nuclear Disarmament

Since 1994, Japan has annually submitted a draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons to the UN General Assembly. This draft resolution incorporates current issues that are related to nuclear disarmament, as well as concrete and practical measures towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. In 2017, the resolution aimed to rebuild relationships of trust among all states, bridge gaps among states with different positions, and provide a common ground for the international community to work together to address this issue, so as to achieve substantive progress in nuclear disarmament. As a result, this resolution was adopted with the wide support of 156 states at the UN General Assembly in December. Nuclear-weapon States such as the U.S. and the UK, both of which abstained from voting on the same resolution in the previous year, became co-sponsoring states for the resolution. France also voted for its adoption. The resolution was supported by many states, including 95 out of the 122 states that had voted in support of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. In addition to Japan's draft resolution on the elimination of nuclear weapons, a couple of resolutions that deal comprehensively with nuclear disarmament were also submitted to the UN General Assembly. Japan's draft resolution enjoyed the support of a larger number of states in comparison with these

▶ World Nuclear Forces: Total Inventory (2017)



Source : SIPRI (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute), 2017 (All figures are approximate)

*There exists no evidence based on public information that North Korea developed and deployed nuclear warheads.

other draft resolutions, and has continued to have the wide support of states of difference in position in the international community for more than 20 years.

(B) United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues

The UN Conference on Disarmament Issues, organized by the UN, has been held in Japan almost every year since 1989 in cooperation with local government bodies and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In November 2017, the 27th UN Conference on Disarmament Issues was held in Hiroshima. 60 representatives from two international organizations and 12 countries, such as UN representatives including Under-Secretary-General and High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, Izumi Nakamitsu, and senior government officials, experts, NGO representatives, and media representatives from various countries attended the Conference. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Okamoto attended

10th Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) (September 20, New York, U.S. (UN Headquarters))

the Conference on behalf of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and gave a speech at the opening session. In the speech, Parliamentary Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs Okamoto mentioned Japan's effort and approaches towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation based on the current severe security environment, in which the launch of a ballistic missile by North Korea took place during the early dawn of the opening day of the conference. At the Conference, representatives from

the atomic-bombed sites of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as well as civil society expressed their hopes for the realization of a world free of nuclear weapons. The participants also discussed education on disarmament and non-proliferation aimed at firmly passing on to next generations the correct understanding of the realities of atomic bombings across borders and generations, and the current state and future outlook of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation after the adoption of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW).

E Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)

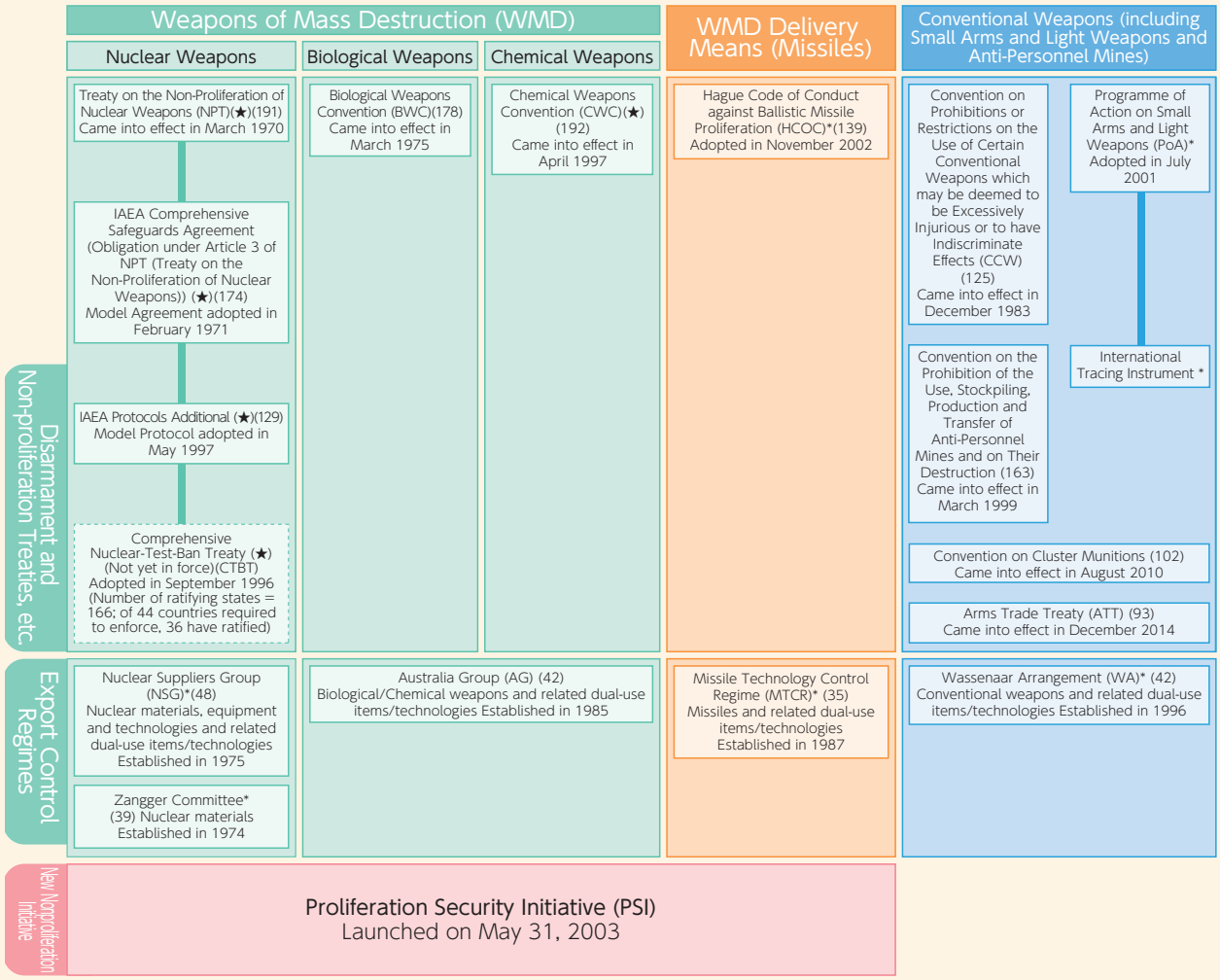
Japan attaches great importance on the early entry into force of the CTBT as a realistic and practical measure of nuclear disarmament where both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States can participate. During the two years from September 2015 to September 2017, Japan served as a co-coordinator for facilitating entry into force of the Treaty, along with Kazakhstan, and has taken the lead in initiatives toward the early entry into force of the CTBT. In March 2017, Japan made a voluntary contribution of approximately 290 million Japanese yen to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), with the aim of strengthening the detection capabilities of the International Monitoring System (IMS) for nuclear tests. In July, a regional conference to promote the entry into force of the CTBT in the Asia-Pacific region was convened in Tokyo. In August, Foreign Minister Kono had a meeting with Executive Secretary of CTBTO Zerbo and affirmed that Japan will continue to offer close cooperation towards the early entry into force of the CTBT. Furthermore, in September, Foreign Minister Kono attended the 10th Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty held in New York. He condemned North Korea's nuclear tests as a grave challenge against the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and stated Japan's resolve, as a former co-coordinating country, to continue leading efforts by the international community towards facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT.

F Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT: Cut-off Treaty)[9]

The FMCT has great significance from the perspectives of both disarmament and non-proliferation, as it prevents the emergence of new states which possess nuclear-weapon by banning the production of fissile materials (such as highly-enriched uranium and plutonium) that are used in nuclear weapons, and at the same time, limits the production of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon States. However, for many years, an agreement has not been reached on the commencement of negotiations of the treaty in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). In view of this situation, it was decided at the 71st UN General Assembly in December 2016 to establish an FMCT High-Level Experts Preparatory Group, and to hold the sessions of the Group in 2017 and 2018 to consider and make recommendations on the substantive

9 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, etc.) that are used as the materials for the production of nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

Disarmament and Non-proliferation Frameworks for Weapons of Mass Destruction, Missiles, Conventional Weapons, and Related Materials



(Note 1) "★" indicates treaties with verification mechanisms.
(Note 2) Figures in parentheses indicate the number of countries, regions, and organizations that have concluded, ratified, or joined respective frameworks as of December 2017.
(Note 3) As for conventional weapons, United Nations Register of Conventional Arms was established in 1992 to enhance transparency of transfer.
(Note 4) "*" indicates political commitments, which are not legally-binding international agreements.

elements of the treaty. In August 2017, the Group held its first session in Geneva, and Japan sent an expert to the meeting. Based on the discussions at the session, a report will be drawn up at the second meeting to be held in 2018, and submitted to the 73rd UN General Assembly that will be held in the same year.

G Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings, Japan places great importance of education on disarmament and non-proliferation. Specifically, Japan has been actively engaged in efforts to convey the realities of the devastation caused by the use of nuclear weapons to people both within Japan and overseas, through activities such as translating the testimonies of atomic bomb survivors into other languages, conducting training courses for young diplomats from other countries in the sites of atomic bombings through the United Nations Programme of

Special Feature

Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons and the Views of the Government of Japan

1. Overview/Background

Negotiations on the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (July 7, New York, U.S. ; Photo: Mainichi Shimbun)

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons was adopted with a majority vote on July 7, 2017 after two rounds of negotiations (March and June-July 2017) in the United Nations, on the basis of initiatives by the civil society and countries, such as Mexico and Austria, which led the discussions on the humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons. This Treaty became open for signature on September 20, 2017. It will enter into force 90 days after being ratified by 50 countries. As of February 28, 2018, 56 countries have signed the Treaty, of which five countries have ratified it.

On December 10, 2017, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), an international NGO advocating the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Foreign Minister Kono issued a statement, in which he welcomed both an increase in global awareness and heightened momentum towards nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in the international community. In the statement, Foreign Minister Kono also expressed his respect for the efforts taken by the "Hibakusha" (atomic bomb survivors) of Hiroshima and Nagasaki who have engaged in activities over many years to speak about the realities of the atomic bombings. At the same time, Minister Kono also expressed his intention to advance practical and concrete measures towards nuclear disarmament, involving nuclear-weapon States.

2. Prohibitions Stipulated in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons

Article 1 of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons stipulates that "Each State Party undertakes never under any circumstances to: (a) Develop, test, produce, manufacture, otherwise acquire, possess or stockpile nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; (b) Transfer to any recipient whatsoever nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices or control over such weapons or explosive devices directly or indirectly; (c) Receive the transfer of or control over nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices directly or indirectly; (d) Use or threaten to use nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices; (e) Assist, encourage or induce, in any way, anyone to engage in any activity prohibited to a State Party under this Treaty; (f) Seek or receive any assistance, in any way, from anyone to engage in any activity prohibited to a State Party under this Treaty; (g) Allow any stationing, installation or deployment of any nuclear

weapons or other nuclear explosive devices in its territory or at any place under its jurisdiction or control."

3. Views of the Government of Japan

As Japan is the only country that has experienced nuclear devastation during war, the Government of Japan shares the goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons with the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. On the other hand, North Korea's nuclear and missile development is an unprecedented, grave and imminent threat against peace and stability of Japan and the international community. As conventional weapons alone cannot effectively deter ones, such as North Korea, that threaten to use nuclear weapons, it is necessary to maintain the deterrence including nuclear deterrence under the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

As the Government of Japan works on nuclear disarmament, it is important to consider both humanitarian and security perspectives. The security perspective, however, is not taken into account in the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. If Japan participates in a treaty that categorically makes nuclear weapons illegal, nuclear deterrence will lose its justification, which could then expose the lives and properties of Japanese citizens to danger. This will cause a problem for the security of Japan. Furthermore, the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons has neither gained support of nuclear-weapon States that possess nuclear weapons in reality, nor that of non-nuclear-weapon States that are exposed to the threat of nuclear weapons just like Japan. Hence, there are also concerns that the Treaty is generating a division in efforts in the international community to advance nuclear disarmament.

It is essential for the Government of Japan to steadily seek ways to advance nuclear disarmament in a realistic manner, while responding appropriately to real security threat to fulfill its responsibility to protect the lives and properties of Japanese citizens. Therefore, Japan will tenaciously advance concrete and practical measures, while fulfilling a bridge-building role in the international community including nuclear-weapon States and countries that support the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

Fellowships on Disarmament[10], providing assistance for holding atomic bomb exhibition overseas through its diplomatic missions overseas[11], and commissioning atomic bomb survivors who have given testimonies of their atomic bomb experiences as "Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons."

With the atomic bomb survivors aging, it is becoming increasingly important to

10 Implemented since 1983 by the UN to nurture nuclear disarmament experts. Participants of the program are invited to Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and efforts are made to promote understanding of the realities of atomic bombing through tours of the various museums, talks by victims about the experience of atomic bombing, etc.

11 Opened as a permanent exhibition about atomic bombing in New York (U.S.), Geneva (Switzerland) and Vienna (Austria), in cooperation with Hiroshima City and Nagasaki City. In 2017, the Hiroshima-Nagasaki Atomic Bomb Exhibition was held in Budapest (Hungary) and Hanoi (Vietnam), etc.

pass on the current understanding of the realities of the use of atomic bombings in Hiroshima and Nagasaki across the generations and borders. In this regard, since 2013, Japan has been commissioning youths within Japan and overseas as "Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons." In November 2017, the 3rd Forum of Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons was held in Hiroshima, with the aim of revitalizing the activities of the Youth Communicators, and strengthening their networking within Japan and overseas. Youth Communicator alumni from Japan and overseas attended the Forum.

Japan has also been engaged in the invitation of them to Hiroshima and Nagasaki through various invitation programmes. In FY2016, more than 2,400 people visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

(2) Non-proliferation

A Efforts to Prevent the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction

Japan has been making efforts to strengthen non-proliferation regimes. As a member state of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Board of Governors designated by the Board[12], Japan contributes to the activities of the IAEA in both the personnel and financial aspects. Yukiya Amano, who has been serving as Director General of the IAEA since 2009, was re-elected (for the third consecutive term) unanimously at the IAEA Board of Governors meeting held in March 2017, and his appointment was approved at the 9th General Conference (for the term from December 2017 to the end of November 2021). Director General Amano has established the vision of "atoms for peace and development," discussed issues such as application of safeguards, seen to the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)[13], which is the final agreement concerning Iran's nuclear issues, and tackled the nuclear issues of North Korea. Director General Amano has also made efforts in addressing development challenges by using nuclear technology. These initiatives under the leadership of Director General Amano have been highly appraised by countries around the world. With respect to the IAEA safeguards, which are a central measure to the international nuclear non-proliferation regimes, Japan encourages other countries to conclude Additional Protocols (AP) of the IAEA safeguards[14] by providing personnel and financial support for the IAEA's regional seminars,

12 13 countries designated by the IAEA Board of Governors. Japan and other countries such as G7 members that are advanced in the field of nuclear energy are nominated.

13 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)
Sets forth detailed procedures for imposing constraints on Iran's nuclear activities while ensuring that they serve peaceful purposes, and for lifting the sanctions that have been imposed until now.
<Main measures undertaken by Iran>
- Constraints on enriched uranium-related activities
  - Limits the number of centrifuges in operation to 5,060 units
  - Upper limit of enriched uranium at 3.67%, and limit on the amount of stored enriched uranium at 300 kg, etc.
- Constraints on Arak heavy-water nuclear reactor, and reprocessing
  - Redesign/remodeling of the Arak heavy-water nuclear reactor such that it is not able to produce weapon-grade plutonium, and transfer of spent fuel out of the country
  - No reprocessing including for research purposes, no construction of reprocessing facilities, etc.

14 A protocol concluded between a respective country and the IAEA in addition to a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, etc. 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 rights to check for undeclared nuclear materials and nuclear activities. As of September 2017, 129 countries have concluded the Additional Protocol.

as well as through other fora. In addition to organizing national workshops aimed at promoting the conclusion of AP in Sudan and Ethiopia in April, a training course on the implementation of safeguards, hosted by the Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security (ISCN) of the Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA) was held for Iran in September. These initiatives were implemented through financial support disbursed through the Nuclear Nonproliferation Fund[15], and contribute to promoting the conclusion of AP in Southeast Asia, Middle East, and Africa.

With respect to nuclear weapons, biological and chemical weapons, missiles[16], and conventional weapons, Japan participates in relevant export control regimes, which are coordinating frameworks for countries supporting appropriate export controls and capable of supplying respective weapons and related dual-use goods and technologies. In particular, the Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Vienna serves as the Point of Contact of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG).

In addition to actively taking part in the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)[17], Japan is working to promote understanding of the non-proliferation regime and strengthen regional efforts particularly in Asia by hosting the Asia Senior-Level Talks on Non-Proliferation (ASTOP)[18] and the Asian Export Control Seminar[19]. Furthermore, through the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), Japan is also contributing to international scientific cooperation and efforts to prevent the proliferation of knowledge and skills in the field of weapons of mass destruction. More specifically, scientists from Central Asia and other countries, who were previously involved in research and development focused on weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems, are now undertake research for peaceful purposes funded by the ISTC.

To strengthen the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540[20], which was adopted in 2004 with the aim of preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery

15 A special contribution that Japan makes independently to the IAEA, with the aim of strengthening the international non-proliferation regime. Established in 2001 based on arrangements with IAEA.

16 Apart from export control regimes, the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCOC) addresses the proliferation of ballistic missiles based on the principle of exercising restraint in their development and deployment. 139 countries have subscribed to the HCOC.

17 A framework established in May 2003 to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, and related materials, in which endorsing states discuss and implement possible measures within the scope of international and domestic law. 105 countries have endorsed the PSI as of December 2016. Japan hosted two PSI maritime interdiction exercises in 2004 and 2007, an Operational Experts Group (OEG) meeting in November 2010 in Tokyo, and an air interdiction exercise in July 2012. Japan has also participated in events hosted by other countries, including the May 2013 tenth anniversary High-Level Political Meeting in Poland, the January 2016 Mid-Level Political Meeting in the U.S., the August 2017 OEG meeting in Singapore, and the September 2017 Maritime Interdiction Exercise Pacific Protector 17 in Australia.

18 A multilateral meeting hosted by Japan to discuss various issues related to the strengthening of the non-proliferation regime in Asia with the participation of the ten ASEAN Member States, China, the ROK, India, the U.S., Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and France. The ASTOP was most recently held in January 2018.

19 A seminar hosted by Japan to exchange views and information towards the objective of strengthening export controls in Asia, with the participation of export control officials from Asian countries and regions. It is organized annually in Tokyo since 1993. The seminar was most recently held in February and March 2018 and attended by approximately 30 countries and regions.

20 Adopted in April 2004, Resolution 1540 requires all countries to: (1) exercise restraint in providing support to terrorists and other non-state actors attempting to develop weapons of mass destruction; (2) enact 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 composed of Security Council members, with a mandate to review and report to the Security Council the implementation status of Resolution 1540.

means (missiles) to non-state actors, Japan has contributed approximately 1 million US dollars. This contribution is primarily being used to support initiatives aimed at strengthening the non-proliferation regime in Asia.

B Regional Non-proliferation Issues

North Korea's development of nuclear and missile programs is a grave and urgent threat to international peace and security, and poses a serious challenge to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime centered on the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

In the two years since 2016, North Korea has conducted three nuclear tests and launched as many as 40 ballistic missiles. The UN Security Council adopted Resolution 2270 in March 2016, Resolution 2321 in November 2016, and Resolutions 2356, 2371, 2375 and 2397 in 2017. However, North Korea has failed to comply with the series of resolutions, and has neither shown any intention nor taken any concrete action towards denuclearization.

The report issued by the Director General of the IAEA in August 2017 stated that throughout the period of observation by the IAEA on the situation of nuclear development in North Korea, indications of operation were observed at the 5MWe graphite-moderated reactor in Nyongbyon, including the discharge of water vapor and outflow of cooling water. This report further stated that while signs of operation were not observed at a facility deemed to be a reprocessing plant, there were indications that what was deemed to be within the fuel fabrication facility had been used. The report also announced the establishment of a new team within the IAEA to tackle North Korea's nuclear issues, and stated that the IAEA is ready to return to North Korea immediately if the relevant countries reach a political agreement, if approved by the IAEA Board of Governors, and if there is such a request from North Korea.

On its part, Japan will continue to work closely with the relevant countries, including the U.S. and the ROK, and strongly demand that North Korea steadily implement measures aimed at the abandonment of its nuclear and missile programs. In addition, to ensure that countries fully and strictly implement sanctions imposed through the UN Security Council Resolutions, Japan will work on capacity building for export controls particularly in Asia (See 2-1-1 (1)).

On the other hand, with regard to Iran's nuclear issue, in July 2015, the EU3 (the UK, France, Germany, and EU) + 3 (the U.S., China, and Russia) and Iran agreed on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The JCPOA imposes restrictions on Iran's nuclear activities while ensuring that they serve peaceful purposes, and clearly sets forth the procedures for lifting the sanctions that have been imposed until now, alongside the implementation of measures by Iran. The UN Security Council Resolution 2231 was also adopted; this resolution endorses JCPOA, as well as requests to the IAEA to carry out the necessary verification and monitoring activities.

Iran and the IAEA conducted verification based on the "Road-map for the Clarification of Past and Present Outstanding Issues regarding Iran's Nuclear Program," which

covers the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear issue[21]. In December 2015, the IAEA Director General issued a Final Assessment Report[22].

Furthermore, in January 2016, the IAEA verified that Iran had implemented some of the measures that it had committed to in the JCPOA. Consequently, based on UN Security Council Resolution 2231, some of the sanctions imposed through past relevant UN Security Council resolutions were terminated. Sanctions continue to be imposed on the transfer activities that are related to Iran's nuclear and missile activities.

Japan supports the JCPOA, and takes the position that its continuous implementation is important. Based on this position, when Foreign Minister Kishida visited Iran in October 2015, he expressed Japan's intention to cooperate in the field of nuclear safety and implementation of the IAEA safeguards and transparency measures. In addition, corresponding with the Japan-Iran Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on December 7, 2016, Japan decided to offer assistance, through IAEA, worth 550,000 Euros for cooperation in nuclear safety, and 1.5 million Euros for cooperation in safeguard measures, in order to support continuous implementation of the nuclear agreement. From September 25 to 29, 2017, a training course on the implementation of safeguards on Iran was held in Japan (organized by the IAEA, and hosted by the Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security (ISCN) of the Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA)).

With regard to Syria's implementation of the IAEA security measures, little progress has been achieved, partly due to the Syria crisis. In order to clarify the facts, it is important for Syria to cooperate fully with the IAEA, and to sign and ratify the Additional Protocol, as well as to implement it.

C Nuclear Security

In recent years, international cooperation on "Nuclear Security" to prevent terrorist organizations from using nuclear materials or other radioactive materials has also been enhanced through various efforts by the IAEA, the UN and like-minded countries. To maintain the heightened momentum from the Nuclear Security Summit that was held in Washington, D.C. (U.S.) in 2016 and the International Conference on Nuclear Security organized by the IAEA, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) was held in Tokyo, Japan, in June 2017. Approximately 220 representatives from 74 countries and four international

21 Possible Military Dimensions (PMD)
In November 2011, the IAEA pointed out, through the Director General's Report, the "possible military dimensions (PMD)" of the signs of nuclear bomb development with regard to Iran's nuclear activities. The PMD comprises 12 items including the development of detonators. Thereafter, this has been treated as an important point of contention in consultations between Iran and the IAEA.

22 The IAEA Director General's Final Evaluation Report on the Possible Military Dimensions (PMD) of Iran's Nuclear Issue (Summary), The report mentioned the following three points.
(1) All of the activities included in the "Road-map for the Clarification of Past and Present Outstanding Issues Regarding Iran's Nuclear Program" were implemented as scheduled.
(2) The IAEA assessed that Iran had conducted the activities relevant to the development of nuclear explosive device in its organizational structure before the end of 2003, and some activities took place after 2003. At the same time, the IAEA assessed that these activities did not advance beyond feasibility and scientific studies, and acquisition of certain relevant technical competences and capabilities. Also, the IAEA has no credible indications of activities in Iran relevant to the development of a nuclear explosive device after 2009.
(3) The IAEA has found no credible indications of the diversion of nuclear material in connection with the possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear program.

organizations participated in this event. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sonoura delivered a keynote lecture, in which he explained that the Government of Japan will cooperate with the IAEA on measures to counter nuclear terrorism as the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 approach, and expressed Japan's intention to strengthen measures to counter nuclear terrorism for major public events, and to contribute to enhancing nuclear security in the international community, particularly in the area of human resource development.

In February 2018, the signing of the Practical Arrangements between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the IAEA on Cooperation in the Area of Support to the Implementation of Nuclear Security Measures on the Occasion of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 took place in the presence of Foreign Minister Kono and Director General Amano of the IAEA.

(3) Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

A Multilateral Efforts

Along with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy are considered to be 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 nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation to develop nuclear research, production and use for peaceful purposes.

Due to such factors as growing global energy demand and the need to address global warming, many countries are planning to further develop or newly introduce a nuclear energy program[23]. Even after the Fukushima Daiichi accident, nuclear energy remains as an important energy source for the international community.

On the other hand, the 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 its neighboring countries. For these reasons, with regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, it is vital to ensure the "3S"[24]: (1) Safeguards; (2) Nuclear Safety (measures to ensure safety to prevent a nuclear accident, etc.); and (3) Nuclear Security. As the country that experienced the Fukushima Daiichi accident, it is Japan's responsibility to share with the rest of the world its experiences and lessons learned from the accident and to contribute in strengthening global nuclear safety. In this regard, Japan and the IAEA are working in cooperation. the IAEA Reponse and Assistance Network (RANET) Capacity Building Centre (CBC) was designated in Fukushima in 2013, where workshops are organized in May (twice), July, August, and October in 2017 for Japanese and foreign officials to strengthen their capabilities in the field of emergency preparedness and response.

Decommissioning, contaminated water management, as well as decontamination and environmental remediation, have been progressing steadily at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. However, this work continues to be difficult in ways that are unprecedented in the world, and

23 According to the IAEA, as of December 2017, 448 nuclear reactors are in operation worldwide and 59 reactors are under construction (see the IAEA website).
24 IAEA's Safeguards, typical measures for non-proliferation, and Nuclear Safety and Nuclear Security are referred to as the "3S" for short.

efforts are being made to tackle the tasks through the technology and collective knowledge of the world. Japan has been working closely with the IAEA since the occurrence of the accident. In 2017, Japan hosted marine monitoring experts missions (October), and held an Experts' Conference on environmental remediation (April and November) with the IAEA. In addition, after its publication of a report on the levels and impact of radiation from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident in 2014, the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) has held briefing sessions about the report in Fukushima Prefecture (one held in October for 2017).

Furthermore, it is necessary to disseminate appropriate information at an appropriate time in order to deal with the aftermath of the accident and move forward on reconstruction, while gaining support and correct understanding of the international community. From this perspective, Japan periodically releases a comprehensive report through the IAEA, covering matters including the progress of decommissioning, contaminated water management at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, results of the monitoring of air dose rate and radioactivity concentration in the sea water, and food safety. Briefing sessions are held for diplomatic corps, and information is also provided through diplomatic missions overseas.

Nuclear energy is applied not only to the field of power generation, but also to areas including human health, food and agriculture, environment, and industrial applications. 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 member states. As Director General Amano upholds "Atoms for Peace and Development," the IAEA also places great importance on technical cooperation for developing countries.

Japan has been providing active support for this cooperation through the Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI) and other means. At the NPT Review Conference held in April 2015, Japan announced that it would be contributing a total of 25 million US dollars over the five years to the PUI. In 2017, Japan provided support through the PUI for projects, including measures against infectious diseases and natural disasters in developing countries.

B Bilateral Nuclear Cooperation Agreement

Bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements are concluded to secure a legal assurance from the recipient country, when transferring nuclear-related materials and equipment such as nuclear reactors to that country, that the transferred items will be used only for peaceful purposes. The agreements especially aim to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and ensure non-proliferation.

Moreover, as Japan attaches importance to ensuring the "3S," recent nuclear agreements between Japan and other countries set out provisions regarding nuclear safety, and affirm mutual compliance with international treaties on nuclear safety, while facilitating the promotion of cooperation in the field of nuclear safety under the agreements.

Numerous countries continue to express that they have high expectations for Japan's nuclear technology even after

Column

Participating in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) General Conference Additional Protocol Side Event

Masato Hori, Deputy Director
Integrated Support Center for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Nuclear Security (ISCN), Japan Atomic Energy Agency

Do you know about the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) safeguards and Additional Protocol?

As the peaceful uses of nuclear power spreads across the globe and the number of countries that possess nuclear material rises from year to year, the safeguards serve as an important framework for verifying that nuclear materials are used only for peaceful purposes and not for the production of nuclear weapons.

The author delivering the opening remarks at a training session

After the Gulf War, it was revealed that Iraq, which had been subjected to the IAEA's safeguards, was engaged in secret nuclear development. In response, the Additional Protocol was entered into force to give the IAEA greater authority and enhance the reliability of the safeguards.

In September 2017, I attended "The IAEA Additional Protocol: 20 Years and Beyond" held in Vienna in conjunction with the 61st IAEA General Conference, and organized under the leadership of the Government of Japan to mark the 20th anniversary since the formulation of the Additional Protocol. At this event, the IAEA and the respective countries delivered reports about the background of the formulation of the Additional Protocol as well as the current status of its enforcement, and reaffirmed the importance of the Additional Protocol. Of the 174 countries where the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement is effective, the Additional Protocol has entered into force in 129 countries as of May 2017. In view of this situation, discussions were also held at the event on initiatives and challenges towards further increasing the number of countries where the Additional Protocol is effective.

Safeguards training (November 29)

Once the Additional Protocol enters into force in a country, the country will be obligated to provide even more information to the IAEA, and in principle, allow the IAEA safeguards inspectors to access to any place at any time. Therefore, it is necessary to establish the corresponding domestic laws

and systems. Since 2011, our organization, the ISCN, has been providing training and conducting seminars on the safeguards and the Additional Protocol for personnel from government agencies and nuclear power facilities of various countries, particularly in Asia. To date, 614 people have attended a total of 28 courses. In moving towards the entering into force of the Additional Protocol, many countries share common challenges including resource shortages, inadequate knowledge and lack of support from the Parliament, to name a few. At this event in Vienna, I shared the knowledge about these challenges, which I gained through the training, and contributed to discussions pertaining to future initiatives aimed at promoting the entering into force of the Additional Protocol.

To promote the entering into force of the Additional Protocol, there is a need to approach and appeal to relevant countries on a variety of occasions, and to provide necessary support. Seventeen countries and organizations participated in the Annual Meeting of the Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network (APSN) held from October 30 in Busan (Republic of Korea), and engaged in discussions about issues related to the safeguards and other topics, as well as shared best practices. To strengthen nuclear nonproliferation, it is necessary to continue such efforts. The ISCN, for its part, will also continue to cooperate with MOFA, MEXT, the IAEA, and other agencies and organizations, and work tirelessly to tackle challenges in promoting the entering into force of the Additional Protocol.

the Fukushima Daiichi accident. While taking into account the situation and intentions of the partner countries desiring to cooperate with Japan in this field, Japan can continue to provide nuclear-related materials, equipment, and technology with the highest safety standards. Furthermore, as bilateral nuclear cooperation, Japan is called upon to share with other countries its experience and lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident, and to continue cooperating with other countries on improving nuclear safety. When considering whether or not to establish a nuclear cooperation agreement framework with a foreign country, Japan considers the overall situation in each individual case, taking into account such factors as non-proliferation, nuclear energy policy in that country, the country's trust in and expectations for Japan, and the bilateral relationship between the two countries. As of the end of 2017, Japan has concluded nuclear cooperation agreements with Canada, Australia, China, the U.S., France, 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)[25] is the only multilateral legal framework imposing a comprehensive ban on the development, production, and retention of biological weapons. However, the question of how to enhance the

25 Enacted in March 1975. The contracting states number 179 (as of December 2017)

convention is a challenge, as it contains no provision regarding the means of verifying compliance with the BWC.

After the 6th Review Conference held in 2006, decisions were made to establish the Implementation Support Unit (fulfilling the functions of a secretariat), and to hold inter-sessional conferences twice a year; progress has been made in initiatives toward strengthening the implementation of the BWC.

At the 8th Review Conference held in November 2016, negotiations on inter-sessional activities broke down, resulting in holding only a Meeting of States Parties (MSP). However, at the MSP held in 2017, it was agreed that a meeting should be held on international cooperation, review on the progress of science and technology, domestic implementation, defense support, and systematic strengthening of the Convention.

B Chemical Weapons

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)[26] imposes a comprehensive ban on the development, production, storage, and use of chemical weapons and stipulates that all existing chemical weapons must be destroyed. Compliance is ensured through the verification system (declaration and inspection) and that is why this Convention is a groundbreaking international agreement on the disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The implementing agency of the CWC is the Organization 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 towards the realization of a world free of chemical weapons were highly appraised, and the organization was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013. Japan has provided financial support for OPCW activities concerning the elimination of chemical weapons in Syria. In addition, Japan, which has a highly developed chemicals industry and numerous chemicals factories, also accepts many OPCW inspections. Apart from these, Japan cooperates actively with the OPCW in concrete ways, such as measures to increase the number of member States, and strengthening domestic 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 territory of China by working in cooperation with China.

(5) Conventional Weapons

A Cluster Munitions[27]

Japan takes the humanitarian consequences brought about by cluster munitions very seriously. Therefore, in addition to taking steps to address this issue by victim assistance and unexploded ordnance (UXO) clearance, Japan is continuing efforts to increase the number of States Parties on Cluster Munitions

26 Enacted in April 1997. The contracting states number 192 (as of December 2017)
27 Generally speaking, it refers to a bomb or shell which enables numerous submunitions to be spread over a wide area by opening in the air a large container, which holds those submunitions. It is said that there is high possibility that many of them do not explode on impact, which creates problem of accidental killing or injury of civilian population.

(CCM)[28] for its universalization. Besides, Japan is assisting with UXO clearance bomb disposal and victim assistance projects in Laos, Lebanon and other countries that suffer from cluster munitions[29].

B Anti-personnel Mines

2017 marks the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Treaty)[30]. To date, 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. As well as calling on countries in the Asia-Pacific region to ratify or accede to the Convention, Japan has, since 1998, provided support worth over 71 billion Japanese yen to 51 countries and regions to assist them in dealing with the consequences of land mines (for example, landmine clearance and victim assistance).

In December 2017, the 16th Meeting of the States Parties to the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention (the Ottawa Treaty) was held in Austria. At this Meeting, Japan looked back on its efforts to universalize the Ottawa Treaty in Japan to date, as well as its initiatives and achievements in supporting mine action. It also expressed Japan's continuous resolve to play a positive role with the aim of realizing a mine-free world.

C The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)[31]

The ATT, which seeks to establish common international standards to regulate international trade in conventional arms and prevent illicit trade in them, came into force on December 24, 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 actively to discussions in Conference of States Parties after the Treaty entered into force. In August 2018, Japan will be hosting the 4th Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty in Japan as the chair country.

D Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW)[32]

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, and comprises a framework Convention that sets forth the procedural matters, etc., as well as five annexed Protocols that regulate the individual conventional arms, etc. The framework Convention came into force in 1983. Japan has ratified the framework

28 Enacted in August 2010, it prohibits the use, possession, or production of cluster munitions, while obliging the destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions, and the clearance of cluster munitions in contaminated areas. As of December 2017, the number of contracting states and regions is 102, including Japan.
29 See the White Paper on Development Cooperation for specific efforts in international cooperation regarding cluster munition and anti-personnel mine.
30 While banning the use and production of anti-personnel mines, the Convention, which came into force in March 1999, obliges the destruction of stockpiled mines and clearance of buried mines. As of December 2017, the number of contracting states and regions is 164, including Japan.
31 As of December 2017, the number of contracting states and regions to Army Trade Treaty (ATT) is 94. Japan signed the Treaty on the day that it was released for signing, and in May 2014, became the first country in the Asia Pacific region to become a contracting state.
32 As of December 2017, 125 countries and regions have ratified the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW).

Convention and the annexed Protocols I to IV, including the revised Protocol II. In December 2017, the first meeting of the Group of Governmental Meeting of Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS) was held, in response to concerns among the international community against a background of the growing military use of robots in recent years.

E Small Arms and Light Weapons

Described as "weapons of mass destruction" in terms of the carnage they cause, small arms and light weapons continue to proliferate due to their ease of operation, and are one of the causes behind the drawing out and escalation of conflict, as well as hindrance to the restoration of public security and post-conflict reconstruction and development. Since 1995, Japan has been making an annual submission to the UN General Assembly of a resolution on small arms and light weapons, which has consistently been adopted by consensus. Japan supports various projects to tackle small arms and light weapons across the globe, including weapons recovery and disposal programs and training courses.

5 Japan's Efforts at the United Nations (UN)

(1) The United Nations (UN)

A Japan-UN Relationship

The UN is an international organization with a universal character, in which almost all the countries in the world hold membership (193 countries as of December 2017). With a high level of expertise, it addresses various challenges that the international community faces in diverse areas, including conflict resolution and peacebuilding, counter-terrorism, disarmament and non-proliferation, development, human rights, environment and climate change, and disaster risk reduction.

Japan is engaged more proactively in efforts to further strengthen cooperation through the UN, such as by tackling global issues, towards the realization of diplomatic goals that cannot be realized by one country alone. Japan has also served as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for 11 times, the most frequent among the Member States, fulfilling a key role in the maintenance of peace and security in the international community.

In September, Prime Minister Abe and Foreign Minister Kono attended the 72nd UN General Assembly.

Prime Minister Abe delivered a speech at the General Debate for the five consecutive years. In addition to touching on global issues such as health and women issues, he focused on the North Korea issues in his speech. He pointed out that North Korea's nuclear and missile issues are posing an unprecedentedly grave and imminent threat. Furthermore he expressed that it is vital to urge North Korea to abandon all of its nuclear and ballistic missile programs in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible way, and emphasized the importance of pressure rather than dialogue to achieve that end. In view of that, he called for the international community to work together to tackle the issues of North Korea. With regard to the abductions issue as well, he declared that Japan will put all effort into bringing the abductees back to Japan as soon as possible.

Prime Minister Abe also attended the high-level events on the global issues of health and women, and drew attention to

UN Headquarters (Photo: UN Photo/Andrea Brizzi)

Prime Minister Abe attending the UN General Assembly (September 20, New York, U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japan's initiatives in these aspects.

In the field of health, he attended the side event led by Japan, entitled "World Leaders for Universal Health Coverage (UHC): A High-Level Discussion at the United Nations on Achieving the SDGs through Health for All." On this occasion, he explained that promoting UHC is an indispensable and vital means towards realizing the SDGs principle of creating a society where no one is left behind. Furthermore, he asserted that to achieve UHC, a framework that mobilizes and utilizes the resources of not only international organizations and donor countries, but also civil society and private-sector businesses, is necessary in addition to domestic financing for developing countries. In this vein, he declared Japan's determination towards promoting UHC.

Furthermore, Prime Minister Abe attended the ceremony for the unveiling of the IMPACT 10x10x10 Parity Report of the HeForShe campaign organized by UN Women, which calls for the involvement of boys and men in promoting gender equality. In addition to disseminating Japan's initiatives and achievements towards the realization of a "society where all women shine," he also introduced the World Assembly for Women (WAW! 2017) initiative.

Prime Minister Abe took full advantage of his attendance at the UN General Assembly to engage actively in dialogues with high-level UN representatives and leaders of the respective countries, as well as exchanges of opinions on topics including the issues of North Korea.

In his meeting with the UN Secretary-General Guterres, Prime Minister Abe affirmed the importance of the full implementation of UN Security Council resolutions on North Korea by all Member States. At the same time, Prime Minister Abe conveyed that North Korea's serious intention and action towards denuclearization are needed, and that it is important to create a situation that makes North Korea request for a dialogue, by imposing further pressure on North Korea. Prime Minister Abe also called for understanding and cooperation on the abductions issue. With regard to the UN reform, he expressed that the reform of the UN cannot be fully realized without the reform of the Security Council, and affirmed

that both parties will continue cooperating closely on the UN reform.

In his dialogue with President of the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly Lajčák, Prime Minister Abe expressed that the launch of ballistic missiles and the nuclear tests conducted by North Korea are clear violations of the UN Security Council resolutions, and a serious blow to the non-proliferation regime. Hence, Prime Minister Abe expressed his desire to cooperate with President Lajčák on encouraging Member States to fully implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions. He also called for understanding and support towards the resolution of the abductions issue. Furthermore, with regard to the reform of the UN Security Council, he expressed a strong desire to launch text-based negotiations in the intergovernmental negotiations during the current session, and conveyed his expectations for President Lajčák's leadership in this regard.

Prime Minister Abe hosted the Japan-Africa Security Council Members' Summit Meeting. During the Meeting, leaders from Africa declared their support for Japan's position on North Korea, and emphasized the importance of the UN Security Council reforms. Prime Minister Abe also hosted the Fourth Japan-Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting, where the respective countries expressed their support for Japan's position on the North Korea issues, and confirmed their cooperation towards the Eighth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM8) scheduled for May 2018. Prime Minister Abe also held Summit Meetings with Israel, Iran, Jordan, France, Turkey, Croatia, and the U.S., as well as a Japan-U.S.-ROK Trilateral Summit Meeting. In addition, he received a courtesy call from President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Bach. In these ways, he worked actively to strengthen bilateral relations and cultivate other relationships.

During his stay in New York, Prime Minister Abe attended a ≪Washoku≫ (Japanese Cuisine) and Tourism Reception as well as an informal discussion with U.S. CEOs. Further he delivered a speech at the New York Stock Exchange. Through these occasions he offered direct explanations to experts and business people about Japan's economic and financial policies, actively disseminated information about Japan's appeal, and called for investment in Japan. Prime Minister Abe also had a social gathering with Japanese staff at UN organizations, encouraging them to play an even more active role in the UN.

Foreign Minister Kono chaired the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 countries on UN Security Council Reform and co-chaired the Japan-Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) Extended Troika Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and attended a total of 14 multilateral conferences including the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI) Ministerial Meeting and the "GUAM-Japan" Foreign Ministers' Meeting. He also held 15 Foreign Minister's Meetings, including Japan-U.S.-India and Japan-China, taking the opportunity of the UN General Assembly to strengthen mutual trust with his counterparts from other countries.

In 2017, there were also many opportunities apart from the UN General Assembly for high-level exchanges.

In July, President of the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of

Dialogue between Prime Minister Abe and UN Secretary-General Guterres (September 19, New York, U.S. (pool photo); Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Slovakia Lajčák visited Japan. In addition to paying a courtesy call on Prime Minister Abe, he engaged in a wide exchange of views on the North Korea issues, Security Council reforms, and SDGs with Foreign Minister Kishida.

In December, UN Secretary-General Guterres visited Japan for the first time after assuming office as the Secretary-General in January 2017. In his talk with Prime Minister Abe, the two exchanged detailed opinions about various issues concerning the international community, including the issue of North Korea and UN reforms. With regard to the issue of North Korea, they were in full concurrence that denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is vital to peace and stability of the region. They also shared the recognition that dialogue with North Korea for the sake of dialogue is meaningless when it comes to North Korea; rather, it is important to engage in meaningful dialogue aimed at denuclearization. Hence, they affirmed that they will work even more closely to address the issue. Furthermore, Prime Minister Abe and UN Secretary-General Guterres attended the UHC Forum 2017 organized jointly by Japan, the World Bank (WB), the World Health Organization (WHO), and others, where they disseminated a message for the international community to work hand-in-hand to promote UHC. UN Secretary-General Guterres took advantage of various opportunities during his stay in Japan to express his high appraisal of Japan's role in multilateralism and its contributions to the UN. Furthermore, in December, Foreign Minister Kono, who was on a visit to New York to attend the UN Security Council Ministerial Meeting, held talks with UN Secretary-General Guterres and President of the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly Lajčák.

B 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. Its activities, including Peacekeeping Operations based on UN Security Council resolutions, are diversifying and the Council's role is expanding year by year, encompassing the efforts to address new threats such as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism.

Japan served as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 11th time from January 2016 to the end of December 2017, having served more frequently than any other UN Member State, and contributed proactively to discussions on topics such as country-specific situations and peacebuilding. During its term on the Council, Japan made every effort to resolve North Korea's nuclear and missile issues; those efforts included contributions to drafting and the adoption of six UN Security Council resolutions in response to North Korea's repeated

ballistic missile launches and three nuclear tests conducted in January and September 2016, and September 2017. In December 2017, when Japan held the Presidency of the UN Security Council, Foreign Minister Kono chaired the United Nations Security Council Briefing on Non-proliferation / Democratic People's Republic of Korea. Japan, as the chair of the Council, also convened an open debate on "Addressing Complex Contemporary Challenges to International Peace and Security." In this regard, Japan made significant contributions to discussions concerning the maintenance of international peace and security (See Special Feature "Summary of Japan's contribution during its 11th term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council").

(B) Reform of the United Nations Security Council

For more than 70 years since the establishment of the UN, although the structure of the international community has changed significantly and the UN's functions have diversified, the composition of the UN Security Council has basically remained unchanged even today. There is a common recognition in the international community on the necessity of an early reform of the UN Security Council, in order to improve its legitimacy, effectiveness, representativeness, and transparency.

Japan has contributed proactively to the international community in areas such as disarmament and non-proliferation, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and "human security," among others. To play an even more proactive role towards the realization of world peace and security through the UN, Japan has been making efforts to convince other countries in pursuit of the early realization of the 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 the UN Security Council reform

Since 2009, in the UN General Assembly, Member States have been engaging in the Inter-governmental Negotiations on the UN Security Council reform. At the Inter-governmental Negotiations during the 71st session of the General Assembly (held once a month from February 2016 to June), the Co-chairs of the Inter-governmental Negotiations (UN Permanent Representatives of Romania and Tunisia) drafted a document summarizing the key points of convergence and divergence between countries, with respect to five key issues concerning the UN Security Council reform ((1) categories of membership, (2) the question of veto, (3) regional representation, (4) size of an enlarged Council and the working methods of the Security Council, and (5) relationship between the Council and the General Assembly). At the Inter-governmental Negotiations held in July 2017, the decision to pass on this document to the 72nd session (from September 2017 to September 2018) was adopted with a consensus at the UN General Assembly.

Furthermore, on October 30, President of the 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly Lajčák appointed the Permanent Representatives of Georgia and the United Arab Emirates as new Co-chairs of the Inter-governmental Negotiations. President Lajčák himself also declared in a letter that he will be proactively involved in the process of the UN Security Council

Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 countries (Brazil, Germany, India, and Japan) on the United Nations Security Council Reform (September 20, New York, U.S.)

UN Security Council Chamber (Photo: UN Photo/Loey Felipe)

reform.

In addition, Japan also places great importance on strengthening its initiatives as a member of the G4 (Japan, India, Germany, and Brazil), a group that cooperates on promoting the UN Security Council reform. Japan hosted the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 countries along with the UN General Assembly High-level Week in September. At this meeting, taking into account that all aspects of reform had been thoroughly discussed by the end of the 71st session, the Ministers agreed to work with strong resolve in order to launch text-based negotiations at the Inter-governmental Negotiations during the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly.

Japan will continue to engage proactively in the process for realizing the UN Security Council reform, in close cooperation with reform-oriented countries.

C Administrative and Budgetary Issues of the United Nations

(A) Budget of the United Nations

The UN budget is mainly composed of the regular budget which is the biennial budget for the period from January to December of the next year, and the peacekeeping budget which is the one-year budget for the period from July to the following June.

With regard to the regular budget, final budget for the FY2016-2017 biennium amounting to approximately 5.7 billion US dollars was approved, while regular budget for FY2018-2019 biennium, amounting to approximately 5.4 billion US dollars, was approved in December 2017 at the UN General Assembly (Approximately 5.3% less than the final budget for FY2016-2017 biennium). In June, the budgets for peacekeeping operations for FY2017-2018 biennium, amounting to approximately 6.8 billion US dollars in total, were approved (Approximately 14% less than the final budget for the previous fiscal year).

(B) Japan's Contribution[33]

The budget, which supports the activities of the UN, is composed of assessed contributions by Member States and voluntary contributions by Member States in accordance with their policy needs. With regard to the assessed contributions, Japan contributed approximately 240 million

33 Concerning Japan's financial contributions to international organizations including the UN, refer to the section on reports concerning contributions and funding to international organizations on the MOFA website. http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryo/sonota.html (in Japanese only)

Special Feature

Summary of Japan's Contribution during its 11th Term as a Non-Permanent Member of the UN Security Council

Japan completed its 11th term as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council at the end of 2017, which made it the most frequently serving non-permanent member of the Council among all Member States. During its term on the council (from January 2016 to December 2017), Japan contributed to international peace and security by proactively addressing a broad range of issues.

Response to North Korea

During the two years of Japan's tenure at the UN Security Council, North Korea went ahead with three nuclear tests and launched as many as 40 ballistic missiles, including ballistic missiles with the intercontinental range that can reach the East Coast of the United States. Japan played a leading role in discussions at the Security Council, by working closely with the countries concerned, including the United States. During Japan's term at the Security Council, six UNSCRs were adopted including Resolution 2397, which further enhances the sanctions measures against North Korea to an unprecedented level.

In December 2017, Foreign Minister Kono presided over the UN Security Council Ministerial-Level Meeting on the North Korean issue representing Japan as the President of the UN Security Council. This meeting sent out a unified message that a nuclear-armed North Korea will never be accepted by the international community and that the full implementation of the UNSCRs by all Member States is indispensable.

Response to regional situations, including Africa and the Middle East

Japan also contributed actively to the UN Security Council's activities related to the situations in Africa and the Middle East. Africa accounts for approximately 60% of the agenda of the Security Council, and Japan has put effort into objectively and accurately assessing the volatile regional situation, and into utilizing the Security Council in an efficient and timely manner to prevent conflicts in Africa and to contribute to mid- to long-term development and stability of the affected regions. In particular, Japan organized the Security Council Open Debate on Peacebuilding in Africa in July 2016, as the UN Security Council President. At this meeting, Japan's initiatives were highly appreciated by many participating countries, and a Statement by the President of the Security Council was adopted. This statement stressed the importance of institution-building, capacity-building, confidence-building, rule of law and use of science and technology in peacebuilding in Africa.

With regard to the situation in the Middle East, Japan also contributed proactively to activities aimed at making progress in difficult issues such as Syria, Yemen, the Middle East

peace process, and Afghanistan. This includes initiatives such as taking the lead in drawing up draft resolutions on Syria's humanitarian situation and Afghanistan.

Expanding the functions of the UN Security Council

In recent years, in addition to addressing traditional international conflicts and civil war, the UN Security Council has also organized meetings on various issues including climate change, famine, and infectious diseases. In light of this trend, in December 2017, Japan hosted an open debate of the UN Security Council on "Addressing complex contemporary challenges to international peace and security." Furthermore, Japan also aims to contribute to discussions based on the ideas of human security and sustaining peace, to make sure that the UN Security Council can respond effectively with complex contemporary threats from the perspective of international peace and security.

Efforts to improve the working methods of the UN Security Council

As a non-permanent member of the Security Council and particularly as the Chair of the Working Group on Documentation and Other Procedural Questions, Japan has led debates on improving the working methods of the UN Security Council, including measures to enhance its efficiency, transparency and interactivity. These include getting incoming non-permanent members to be well-acquainted with the Council's procedures prior to joining the Security Council so that they can effectively play their role from the outset of their tenure. In July 2016, Japan organized an open debate as the President of the UN Security Council, and based on these debates, a comprehensive and systematic Note by the President of the Security Council concerning the Security Council's working methods was revised in August 2017.

Foreign Minister Kono presiding over the United Nations Security Council Briefing (December 15, New York, United States)

Japan will contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security by attempting to be a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council as frequently as possible, until the achievement of the Security Council reform, including the admission of Japan as a permanent member of the Council. From this perspective, in December 2017 when it concluded its term as a non-permanent member of the Council, Japan announced that it will be running for the UNSC non-permanent membership election in 2022(serving for the term of 2023-2024).

Column

Japan-China-ROK Youth Exchange

Genshitsu Sen
Japan-United Nations Goodwill Ambassador
and President of the United Nations Association of Japan (UNA)

I was designated as the Japan-United Nations (UN) Goodwill Ambassador by the Minister for Foreign Affairs in 2005, and prior to that, in 2002, I became the first private citizen to be appointed as the President of the U.N. Association of Japan. Since I am a master of tea ceremony, these appointments had probably been made in consideration of the importance of civilian exchanges through culture.

Trilateral Presidents Meeting of UNA-Japan, UNA-China and UNA-ROK (August 28, Beijing, China)

Participating students of the 8th JCK Youth Forum, and participants of the Trilateral Presidents Meeting of UNA-Japan, UNA-China and UNA-ROK (August 30, Beijing Foreign Studies University, China)

In the teachings of Wang Yangming, there is a saying "Heaven, Earth, and the myriad things were originally as one substance." As we were originally a single body with all things in the universe, we feel the pain and suffering of others as the pain and suffering of ourselves. Although there are many difficult issues between Japan, China and the Republic of Korea (ROK) today, with that feeling, promoting civil exchanges especially among young population means all the more to us. Every people has its own unique culture. This culture should be respected, and cannot be infringed upon by anyone. To foster personalities that are able to treat everyone in the same way, it is necessary to nurture young people with a solid background that is underpinned by education. In view of that, the U.N. Association of Japan has been hosting the Japan, China and the Republic of Korea (JCK) Youth Forum (shown in the appended table) since 2010, held in each of the three countries in turn each time. The Trilateral Presidents Meeting of the U.N. Associations of the three countries is held on the day prior to the Youth Forum every year, during which the delegates discuss approaches to cooperation and coordination.

At the Trilateral Presidents Meeting held in 2017, the delegates exchanged candid opinions on the following four topics: (i) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); (ii) priority matters for the Secretary-General of the United Nations; (iii) culture dialogues on peace and development; and (iv)peacekeeping and peace building. They also affirmed their commitments towards mutual cooperation and contribution to the UN peace activities. The Youth Forum, which was held the next day, welcomed 20 university students from

Japan, 20 from ROK, and 40 from the host country, China. All sessions were held in English, and the participants ate and slept together from August 29 to September 3 while they participated and had discussions in model U.N. sessions followed by breakout sessions. Although political topics would emerge from time to time, they did not get carried away by their emotions, but spoke carefully and earnestly. I believe this opportunity was a valuable experience for all the participants. It has already been decided that the next Youth Forum will be held in ROK in 2018.

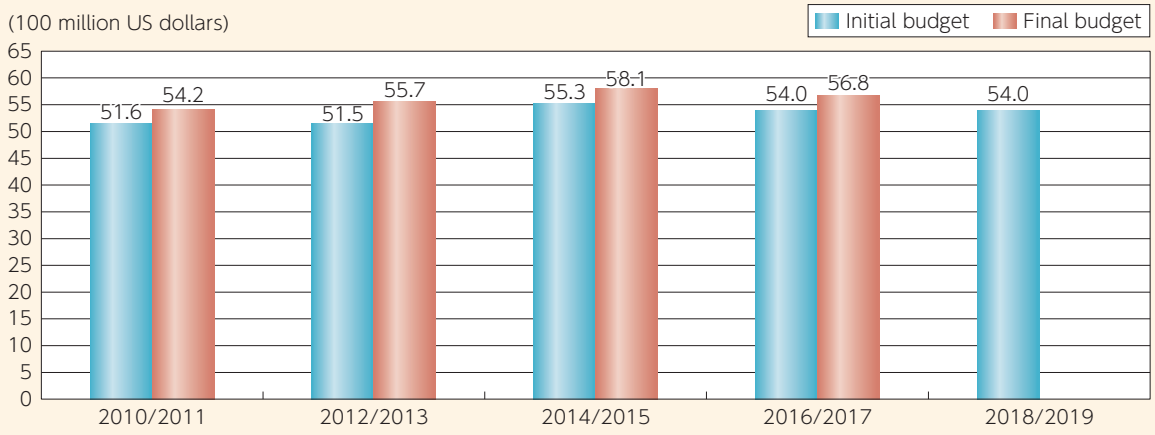
I think that this Japan-China-ROK Youth Exchange has successfully taken place every year because three countries took turns to host the event; also, the participants were full of youth entrepreneurship and trying to understand each other. Year by year, the participating Japanese students are becoming more active in their discussion.

I have heard that the youths of today are becoming introverted. However, when I meet the participating youths in this forum, I take heart and feel encouraged that Japan is still doing strong.

Past Forums of JCK

	Year	Country	City	Venue
1st	2010	Japan	Tokyo	Shonan Village
2nd	2011	China	Chengdu	Sichuan University
3rd	2012	Korea	Seoul	Kyung Hee University
4th	2013	Japan	Sapporo	Sapporo University
5th	2014	China	Xi'an	Northwestern Polytechnical University
6th	2015	Korea	Gyeongju	Imhaejon Hall
7th	2016	Japan	Fukuoka	Seinan Gakuin University
8th	2017	China	Beijing	Beijing Foreign Studies University

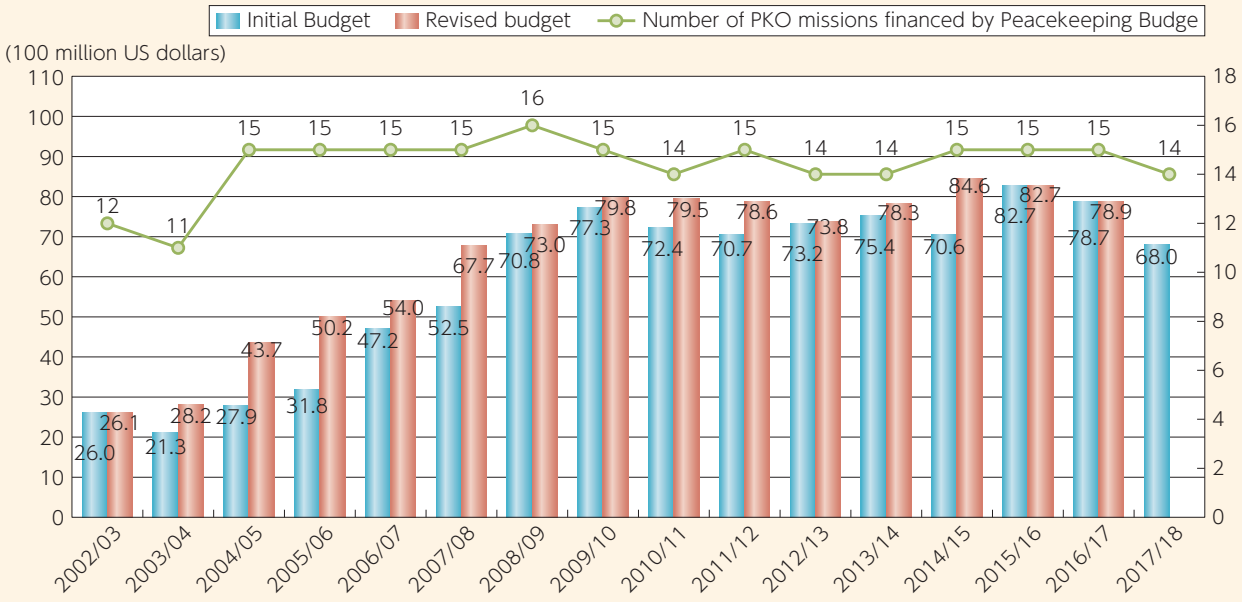
Changes in UN biennial regular budgets (100 million US dollars)



(Note) A "final budget" includes an additional demand generated in the course of a biennial budget or an additional budget adjusted for inflation, etc.

Source : UN documents

Changes in the Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) Budget and the number of PKO missions (2003–2018)



*Includes United Nations Support Office in Somalia (UNSOS)

Source: UN documents

The ratio of contribution to the UN Regular Budget by major Member States

Ranking*	Country	2013-2015	2016-2018	Increase/decrease by points
1	U.S.	22.000%	22.000%	±0
2	Japan	10.833%	9.680%	−1.153
3	China	5.148%	7.921%	+2.773
4	Germany	7.141%	6.389%	−0.752
5	France	5.593%	4.859%	−0.734
6	UK	5.179%	4.463%	−0.716
7	Brazil	2.934%	3.823%	+0.889
8	Italy	4.448%	3.748%	−0.700
9	Russia	2.438%	3.088%	+0.650
10	Canada	2.984%	2.921%	−0.063

* The numbers refer to rank for 2016-2018.

Source: UN documents

The ratio of contribution to the UN Peacekeeping Budget by major Member States

Ranking*	Country	2015	2016	2017	2018
1	U.S.	28.3626%	28.5738%	28.4691%	28.4344%
2	China	6.6368%	10.2879%	10.2502%	10.2377%
3	Japan	10.8330%	9.6800%		
4	Germany	7.1410%	6.3890%		
5	France	7.2105%	6.3109%	6.2878%	6.2801%
6	UK	6.6768%	5.7966%	5.7753%	5.7683%
7	Russia	3.1431%	4.0107%	3.9960%	3.9912%
8	Italy	4.4480%	3.7480%		
9	Canada	2.9840%	2.9210%		
10	Spain	2.9730%	2.4430%		

* The numbers refer to rank for 2016-2018.

Source: UN documents

US dollars to the UN regular budget for 2017, ranking second only to the U.S. Its contribution to peacekeeping operations for 2017 was approximately 660 million US dollars, coming third after the U.S. and China. As a major financial contributor, Japan has been encouraging the UN to make more efficient and effective use of its resources.

UN Secretary-General Guterres, who assumed office in January, positions peace initiatives and development, as well as reforms of the management of the UN, as priority issues, and is engaged in efforts to further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the secretariat functions. Japan, while supporting the objectives of these reforms, is urging the UN to move forward on the reforms in a way that does not impose additional financial burden on Member States. It is expected that such reforms will enhance efficiency of the financial, budgetary, and human resource management. Based on the resolution on the policies for management reform, etc., adopted at the end of December 2017, drafts on the structure and budget for the implementation of reforms are to be submitted in May 2018, but it is expected to take time to decide the concrete contents of the reform and implement them. While continuing to bridge differences in the respective views of Member States, Japan is actively contributing to the discussion with other Member States and the UN Secretariat to ensure concrete progress in management reforms.

6 The Rule of Law in the International Community

(1) Japan's Diplomacy Strengthening the Rule of Law

Strengthening the rule of law is a pillar of Japan's foreign policy. Japan opposes unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion, and strives to maintain its territorial integrity, secure its maritime and economic interests, and protect its citizens. Examples of Japan's efforts in this regard include the consistent affirmation of the maintenance and strengthening of a free and open international order based on the rule of law at various fora, including international conferences such as the UN General Assembly and meetings with relevant states, to promote the rule of law in the international community. At the G7 Taormina Summit (Italy) in May 2017, the leaders of the G7 reaffirmed their commitment to maintaining the rule-based order in the maritime domain based on the principles of international law, including as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), and to the peaceful settlement of disputes including arbitration. From the perspective of promoting the rule of law in the international community, Japan has been contributing to the peaceful settlement of inter-state disputes based on international law, formation and development of a new international legal order, and the development of legal systems and human resources in various countries.

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 jurisdiction of the International Court of Justice (ICJ), which is the principal judicial organ of the United Nations[34], and constructively contributes towards the establishment of the rule of law in the international community, via the provision of human and financial resources. Japan has delivered judges to international judicial bodies such as Judge Hisashi Owada at the International Court of Justice (ICJ), President of the ICJ from March 2009 to February 2012, Judge Shunji Yanai at the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS; see 3-1-6 (2)), President of the ITLOS from October 2011 to September 2014, and Judge Kuniko Ozaki at the International Criminal Court (ICC; see 3-1-6 (5)), Second Vice-President of the Court from March 2015 to March 2018. With regards to the ICC, at the election held in December 2017, Japanese candidate Tomoko Akane, Ambassador for International Judicial Cooperation and Public Prosecutor of Supreme Public Prosecutors Office of Japan, was elected as a new Judge. Japan is also the largest financial contributor to the ITLOS and the ICC. Through these contributions, Japan strives to enhance the effectiveness and universality of international courts and tribunals. To further strengthen the structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in dealing with international litigations, efforts are ongoing to enhance expertise on international judicial proceedings as well as to build up strengthened networks with lawyers in and outside Japan, especially by the International Judicial Proceedings Division established in the International Legal Affairs Bureau in April 2015.

B International Rule-making

International rule-making to respond to the issues the global community faces is one of the important efforts to strengthen the rule of law. In developing international rules, Japan has participated actively in negotiations in specific fields and has taken initiatives in rule-making processes from the planning phase, in order to reflect Japan's own ideas and views in cross-sectoral initiatives in the UN, etc., and to realize the appropriate development of international laws. Specifically, Japan has been actively involved in the rule-making process within various international frameworks including the codification work at the International Law Commission (ILC) and the 6th Committee of the United Nations General Assembly, as well as the preparation of conventions and model laws in the field of private international law at forums such as the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH), the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT). In the ILC, Dr. Shinya Murase, Professor Emeritus of Sophia University, serves as a Special Rapporteur on the topic of "Protection of the Atmosphere," contributing greatly to the development of international law through the deliberation of draft texts and other documentation. Japan also dispatches government representatives to various meetings of the HCCH, UNCITRAL, and UNIDROIT, taking an active lead in

34 A declaration that states parties to the Statute of the ICJ recognizes as compulsory ipso facto and without special agreement, in relation to any other state accepting the same obligation, the jurisdiction of the ICJ, in accordance with Article 36, paragraph 2 of its Statute. Only 73 countries, including Japan, have deposited such declaration to date.

discussions. In addition, Professor Hideki Kanda from Gakushuin University serves as a board member of UNIDROIT. Japan also cooperates with the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), a regional forum on international law, by providing personnel and financial support.

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 domestic legislation of Asian countries, and undertakes international cooperation related to the rule of law in order to further develop 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," an international law moot court competition for students from Asia with the aim of raising awareness about the importance of the peaceful settlement of disputes, nurturing future generations in the field of international law, and strengthening exchange and communication among them. On the occasion of its 19th session in 2017, university students from 11 countries in Asia (Japan, India, Indonesia, Singapore, Thailand, China, Nepal, the Philippines, Viet Nam, Malaysia, and Pakistan) competed in written and oral pleadings on the theme of a fictional international dispute on the Law of the Sea.

International law moot court competition, "2017 Asia Cup" (August, Tokyo, Ministry of Foreign Affairs; Photo: Executive Committee of the 2017 Asia Cup)

With respect to Japan's international judicial cooperation in the area of the rule of law, including support for the establishment of legal systems in Asia and human resource development in the field of criminal justice for the entire region, Japan actively promoted such cooperation in an event held on the sidelines of the AALCO Annual Session following the previous year.

(2) Initiatives in the Maritime Sector

In recent years, there has been an increasing number of cases of friction and tension between states taking place in the seas of Asia, attracting significant concern from the international community. Against this backdrop, Prime Minister Abe advocated the "Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea" at the Shangri-La Dialogue in May 2014, which are: (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. Based on these Three Principles, Japan is actively engaged in the maintenance and development of open and stable seas. Specifically, at the G7 Taormina Summit (Italy) held in May 2017, Prime Minister Abe led discussions on maritime security. The leaders of the G7 shared the view on the importance of rules-based order in the maritime domain, and they reaffirmed their commitment to the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes, including arbitration.

Furthermore, at the East Asia Summit (EAS) held in November, Prime Minister Abe announced Japan's intention to move forward efforts to maintain and strengthen a free and open maritime order in the Indo-Pacific based on the rule of law, and shared the importance of promoting such efforts, with the participating countries.

The UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) plays an important role in the rule of law at sea. UNCLOS established the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) for the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes and maintenance and development of the legal order at sea. Japan, while promoting the rule of law at sea, attaches importance to the role played by ITLOS and has provided personnel to the Tribunal by producing two Japanese judges successively and has also been the largest financial contributor since the establishment of ITLOS.

Likewise, the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) and the International Seabed Authority (ISA) also play important roles in the operation of the system for defining the outer limits of the continental shelf and management of deep sea-bed mineral resources respectively. Japan continues to cooperate with these organizations in terms of both human and financial resources (see 3-1-3 (4)).

Aiming to foster common understanding about the rule of law at sea, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs held the International Symposium on the Law of the Sea in February and December. Renowned scholars of international law, lawyers, ITLOS judges, and CLCS members from Japan and overseas were invited, where they engaged in vigorous exchanges of opinions on issues related to the Law of the Sea.

International Symposium on the Law of the Sea (February 2 – 3, Mita Kaigisho, Tokyo)

(3) Initiatives in the Fields of Politics and Security

In order to contribute more actively towards international peace and security based on the Legislation for Peace and Security, enacted in 2015 against the background of the severe security environment surrounding Japan, the scope of the provision of supplies and services by the JSDF to foreign armed forces was expanded. Following the enactment of the legislation, the Acquisition and Cross-Serving Agreements, which set out the settlement procedures and other matters on the mutual provision of supplies and services between the JSDF and foreign armed forces, were developed, and new agreements entered into force with the U.S. in April 2017, with the UK in August 2017, and with Australia in September 2017. Furthermore, in order to develop a foundation for promoting international cooperation in the field of security, Japan is keeping up with efforts to negotiate agreements concerning the transfer of the defence equipment and technologies, which set out provisions on the handling of defense equipment and technologies to be transferred, as well as measures for

the protection of information that will form the basis for the sharing of classified information on security with the relevant countries. Japan also continues negotiations towards the conclusion of a peace treaty with Russia, which is a key issue.

In the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the agreement with India entered into force in July.

(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 is becoming increasingly important in order to promote the liberalization of trade and investment, as well as people-to-people exchanges, and to strengthen the foundations for the overseas activities of Japanese citizens and companies. The agreements that Japan signed or concluded with various countries and regions in 2017 include tax conventions, investment treaties, and social security agreements. Japan also worked on negotiations with the Asia-Pacific region and Europe for Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs), actively advancing negotiations on broader regional economic partnership such as the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) among Japan, China, and the ROK, and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). Regarding the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement, an agreement at the ministerial level on the TPP was confirmed by 11 countries in November. In December, negotiations on the Japan-EU EPA were concluded with an agreement.

Furthermore, with a view of protecting and enhancing the livelihoods and activities of Japanese citizens and companies, Japan is working on the appropriate implementation of existing international agreements as well as utilizing the dispute settlement system of the WTO.

In social fields such as human rights, fisheries, maritime affairs, aviation, labor and social security, which are closely linked with the livelihoods of the people, Japan actively participates in negotiations to ensure that Japan's position is reflected in international agreements. In addition, in the field of environment, Japan concluded the Nagoya Protocol and the Nagoya-Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol in May and December, respectively.

(5) Initiatives in the Field of Criminal Justice

The ICC is the first-ever permanent international criminal court for prosecuting and sentencing, 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 and cooperated with the ICC's activities in various ways. Fiscally, Japan is the largest contributor to the ICC, accounting for approximately 16.5% of the entire contributions to the Court as of 2017. With regards to human resources, Japan has consistently produced judges since its accession to the ICC. Japan's candidate in the election of ICC judges held in December 2017, Tomoko Akane, Ambassador for International Judicial Cooperation and Public Prosecutor of Supreme Public Prosecutors Office of Japan, was elected. In addition, Hitoshi

Kozaki of the Committee on Budget and Finance was re-elected, Motoo Noguchi continued to serve as the Chair of the Board of Directors of the Trust Fund for Victims, and Hiroshi Fukuda continued to serve on the Advisory Committee on Nominations of Judges. These developments demonstrate Japan's active cooperation for the activities of the ICC. As the ICC evolves as 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 of its judicial procedures. Japan engages in addressing these challenges through its participation in Assembly of States Parties, including continuing to serve as Co-chair for the Study Group on Governance and Focal Point on for non-cooperation issues.

Besides the aforementioned efforts related to the ICC, in the face of an increase in cross-border crime in recent years, Japan is further working on ensuring the submission of necessary proof from other countries. Japan is also actively engaged in improving legal frameworks for promoting international cooperation in the field of criminal justice. Japan has been working on negotiations toward concluding international agreements as the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLAT)[35], the Treaty on Extradition[36] and the Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons[37].

7 Human Rights

(1) Initiatives within the UN

A UN Human Rights Council

The UN Human Rights Council was established in 2006 as a restructured version of the UN Commission on Human Rights, in order to strengthen the UN's ability to address human rights issues, as part of a movement towards mainstreaming human rights in the UN. The Human Rights Council holds sessions throughout the year in Geneva (three regular sessions per year, lasting more than ten weeks in total) to discuss issues and make recommendations concerning the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. To date, Japan has served as a member of the Council from June 2006 to June 2011 (the first and the second terms) and January 2013 to December 2015 (the third term). Most recently, Japan was elected in the elections held in October 2016, and currently serves as a member of the Council from January 2017 to December 2019 (the fourth term).

At the high-level segment of the 34th Session in February and March 2017, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takisawa delivered a statement. In his statement, he expressed that with Japan's re-election as a member of the Human Rights Council, it will continue to put effort into promoting diplomacy that places importance on fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, basic human rights, and the rule of law, while improving the human rights and humanitarian situation in the world.

35 A legal framework that allows for an efficient and prompt cooperation with legal authorities of other countries in criminal investigation and procedures.
36 A legal framework having comprehensive and detailed provisions regarding the extradition of criminals to enable more effective co-operation for repressing crime.
37 A legal framework aiming to facilitate the social rehabilitation of foreign prisoners by giving them the opportunity of serving their sentences in their own countries.

Special Feature

Adoption of the Resolution on "Advisory Services and Technical Assistance for Cambodia" at the 36th Session of the UN Human Rights Council

On September 29, 2017 (local time), the Resolution on "Advisory Services and Technical Assistance for Cambodia," submitted by Japan as the main proposing country, was adopted by consensus (without a vote) at the 36th Session of the UN Human Rights Council held in Geneva, Switzerland.

36th session of the UN Human Rights Council (September 29, Geneva, Switzerland)

Japan has been submitting this resolution to the UN Human Rights Council since 1999. The resolution, which aims to provide support for further efforts by the Government of Cambodia to improve the human rights situation, has been adopted by consensus every time.

This latest resolution reflects the concerns of the international community for the recent human rights situation in Cambodia, and calls for the UN Secretary-General to report on the human rights situation in the country, in writing, at the Human Rights Council to be held in March 2018. The resolution also incorporates the decision to extend the term of office of Special Rapporteurs for human rights in Cambodia, and to continue providing support for positive efforts by the Government of Cambodia to improve the human rights situation in the country.

Towards the submission of this resolution, Japan held human rights dialogues with the Government of Cambodia in the capital Phnom Penh in August 2017, and worked tirelessly to exchange views with ASEAN, Europe and the U.S., and civil society. Through these efforts, it aimed to formulate a balanced resolution that takes various opinions into consideration.

Japan is closely monitoring the human rights situation in Cambodia, and expects the adoption of this resolution to contribute to improving the human rights situation in the country.

Column

The Japanese Who are Active in the Field of Human Rights in the International Community

Serving as a Member of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances

Koji Teraya, Professor, The University of Tokyo

I have been serving as one of the ten members of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED) for a four-year term starting since July 1, 2017. This is the committee that carries out missions under the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (adopted in 2006, entered into force in 2010), and is currently the newest committee among similar UN human rights treaty bodies.

So far I have attended only one session of the Committee, which holds two sessions every year, and I found that the work at the session proved to be a very intensive experience. As a member of the Committee with an academic background, I sometimes felt lost and confused due to the differences in behavior and approaches between academics and practitioners, and felt anew my fundamental identity as an academic. At the same time, however, I also felt a certain sense of excitement as I was able to apply my accumulation of academic knowledge to practical situations.

In contrast with the normative strength of human rights and our expectations of that, human rights issues call for delicate treatment and complex deliberations of interests in both academic and practical aspects, and it is often the case that conclusions cannot be reached in a careless and thoughtless manner. However, it is obvious that enforced disappearances is one of the most serious criminal offenses; in light of that, I approach the related issues while constantly bearing in mind the simple and clear purpose of "reducing the number of enforced disappearances as far as possible, even if it is just one person." While there are various issues to deal with, I am particularly interested in a pressing issue faced by the CED, that is, increasing the number of States Parties to the Convention, for example.

Japan is one of the countries taking the lead in addressing the issue of enforced disappearances. This is a reflection of one of the most important challenges in Japan's diplomacy, which is to resolve the issue of abductions by North Korea. It is unfortunate that North Korea is not a State Party to the Convention; hence, this Committee has no capacity to tackle the issue directly. However, usually problems are not solved simply by making loud proclamations about the interests of one's own country, and it is not

desirable to do so. I believe that the interests of an individual country exist within universal interests, while universal interests exist within the interests of an individual country; hence, we should always keep in mind the importance of ensuring harmony and balance between the individual and the whole. I, myself, take great joy in being a part of this large overarching entity.

On Being Elected as a Member of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Keiko Ko, Professor, Nanzan University

One of the purposes of the United Nations is, "To achieve international cooperation [···] in promoting and encouraging respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion" (Article 1-3, Charter of the United Nations). To that end, it has provided support for the conclusion of many treaties aimed at protecting human rights. Of these, the earliest was the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination adopted in 1965. The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) reviews reports submitted by the States Parties and petitions from individuals in accordance with the Convention. I stood for the election (June 2017) for this Committee as the first candidate from Japan. I was successfully elected, winning support from 132 countries. The number of countries that are States Parties to the Convention stands at 179, and during the election campaign that spanned a four-month period, I had the opportunity to meet the representatives from approximately 160 countries. I had aspired to join the United Nations when I was young, so the election campaign that allowed me to meet many people from around the world was an invaluable experience for me, and I reaffirmed my strong conviction that protecting human rights was a universal value.

The main work of CERD is to review the reports submitted by States Parties to the Convention. In accordance with the Convention, we assess if these States Parties are not engaged in acts of racial discrimination, and provide recommendations. As a member of the Committee, I am dedicated to understanding and dialogue. Discrimination is deeply rooted in the hearts of people, and no individual is completely divorced from discrimination. Even if it appears to have been eradicated, discrimination may rear its ugly head once again, and we can see this problem emerging in recent international affairs as well. That is why it is necessary to persevere and put continued effort into eliminating discrimination. As a permanent organization, CERD carries the responsibility of ensuring this continued effort. We sometimes issue strict recommendations to the States Parties, but the nature of criticism is such that simply raising our voices is meaningless if these voices do not reach

the States Parties; in short, changes can only arise in the actions of a State Party if our voices reach them. As a member of the Committee with such a long history behind it, it is my goal to present views that the States Parties will pay attention to.

United Nations Human Rights Council Chamber (Photo: UN Photo/Jean-Marc Ferré)

During the same Session, the Resolution on the Situation of Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), co-tabled by Japan and the EU, was adopted without a vote (adopted for ten consecutive years). This resolution condemns in the strongest terms North Korea's ongoing systematic, widespread and gross human rights violations, and urges North Korea to take immediate steps to end all human rights violations, including the abductions issue. In addition, it welcomes the decision of the UN Security Council to hold a Council meeting, during which the situation of human rights in North Korea was discussed, and looks forward to the continued and more active engagement of the UN Security Council on this matter. Furthermore, it decides to strengthen the capability of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), including the field-based office in Seoul, in order to implement the relevant recommendations in the report of the Group of Independent Experts on Accountability for human rights violations in the DPRK.

At the 35th Session in June, Japan, together with Brazil, Ethiopia, Fiji, and Morocco jointly submitted a resolution on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Persons Affected by Leprosy and Their Family Members, which was adopted without a vote. The number of co-sponsors of the resolution reached as many as 50 countries. This resolution determines the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on the elimination of discrimination against persons affected by leprosy and their family members in the Human Rights Council for a term of three years, with the aim of protecting the human rights of people around the world who are affected by discrimination issues due to leprosy. Furthermore, it encourages that the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and this Special Rapporteur conduct a seminar on leprosy-related discrimination.

At the 36th Session in September, Japan submitted a resolution on the Human Rights Situation in Cambodia, as the main sponsor of the resolution, and this resolution was adopted without a vote. Aimed at continuing to support positive efforts by the Cambodian Government towards improving the human rights situation in Cambodia, this resolution reflects the concerns of the international community on the recent human rights situation in Cambodia, and requests for a written report on the human rights situation in Cambodia to be submitted to the UN Secretary-General at the UN General Assembly in

March 2018. Through this resolution, the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for the human rights situation in Cambodia was extended for two years (See Column "Adoption of the Resolution on 'Advisory Services and Technical Assistance for Cambodia'").

Japan will continue to be actively engaged in discussions in the UN Human Rights Council to resolve human rights issues in the international community.

The UN Human Rights Council conducts the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) that periodically reviews the human rights situations of all UN Member States. Japan was reviewed for the third time in 2017. In August, ahead of its review, Japan submitted a report concerning its human rights situation to the UN. In November, the third review was carried out in the UPR Working Group. Japan explained its domestic human rights situation as well as initiatives in Japan and abroad, including the Japan-ROK agreement of December 2015 on the issue of comfort women as progress since the previous review (2012). In addition, Japan explained its stance and policy concerning remarks made by each country[38].

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 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.

Every year since 2005, Japan and the EU have co-tabled the Resolution on the Situation of Human Rights in DPRK at the UN General Assembly. In 2017, Japan and the EU again co-tabled the resolution at the Third Committee in November and Plenary Session in December of the 72nd session of the General Assembly, which was adopted without a vote. The resolution, based on the UN General Assembly Resolution of 2016 reflecting the final report of the Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the DPRK (COI), condemns the North Korea's systematic, widespread, and gross human rights violations, and urges North Korea to take measures to end all human rights violations. In addition, the resolution underscores very serious concerns regarding reports of torture, summary executions, arbitrary detention, abductions and other forms of human rights violations and abuses that North Korea commits against citizens from other countries within and outside of its territory. It also condemns North Korea for diverting its resources into pursuing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles over the welfare of its people, and emphasizes the necessity of North Korea to respect and ensure the welfare and inherent dignity of the people in North Korea. As in 2016, it also encourages the UN Security Council to take appropriate actions, including through consideration of referral of the situation in

38 For more details, refer to: http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/fp/hr_ha/page22_002899.html

North Korea to the International Criminal Court (ICC), and consideration of the further development of sanctions.

In addition, Japan also actively participated in discussions on the human rights situations in individual countries, such as Syria, Iran, and Myanmar, as well as discussions on various human rights issues (social development, the rights of the child, and etc.). Japan participated actively in discussions in the international community toward protecting and promoting human rights, in cooperation with civil society, such as by dispatching a female representative of a Japanese NGO to serve as the Alternate Representative of Japan at the Third Committee of the 72nd session of the UN General Assembly, as it has done previously.

(2) Initiatives Concerning International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law

A International Human Rights Law

In June 2017, an election for the members of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances was held at the Fourth Meeting of States Parties of the Committee on Enforced Disappearances at the UN Headquarters. Japanese candidate Koji Teraya, Professor of the Graduate School of the University of Tokyo, was elected for the first time. Furthermore, in June, an election for the members of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was held at the 27th Meeting of States Parties for the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination at the UN Headquarters. Japanese candidate Keiko Ko, Professor of Nanzan University, was elected for the first time.

The Government's periodic reports on the status of the implementation of the various human rights treaties that Japan has concluded are carefully and thoroughly examined, with reference to the provisions of the relevant treaties. In June, the Government submitted its Fourth and Fifth State Party's reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. In July, Japan also submitted its Tenth and Eleventh State Party's reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

B International Humanitarian Law

In the intergovernmental process on the International Humanitarian Law (IHL) in Geneva, Japan participated actively in discussions on strengthening the respect for IHL and on protecting those who have been deprived of their liberty. Moreover, as part of its efforts to promote awareness and understanding of International Humanitarian Law, MOFA dispatched a lecturer to the International Humanitarian Law Moot Court Competition hosted by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), as it did in 2016.

(3) Initiatives Undertaken via Bilateral Dialogue

In addition to initiatives within the UN and other multilateral frameworks, Japan recognizes the importance of bilateral dialogues, in order to protect and promote human rights. The 4th Japan-Myanmar Human Rights Dialogue (Nay Pyi Taw) and the 12th Japan-Iran Human Rights Dialogue (Tokyo) were held in February 2017, while the 8th Japan-Cambodia Human Rights Dialogue (Phnom Penh) was held in August. In addition to exchanging information on their respective initiatives in the field of human rights, the participants

in these dialogues exchanged opinions concerning cooperation in multilateral fora such as the UN.

(4) Contribution to Refugee Issues

From the perspective of international contribution and humanitarian aid, Japan started 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).

In addition to accepting refugees from Myanmar who were residing temporarily in Malaysia since FY2015, Japan also welcomes the eligible family members of those who are already resettled in Japan, based on the premise of mutual aid with those who remain in Thailand. From FY2010 to FY2017, 152 people from 39 families have come to Japan under this program.

Until now, the main destinations for refugees to be accepted for resettlement have been Western countries. Japan, as the first Asian country to accept resettled refugees, has attracted both high praise and high hopes from the international community in regard to its proactive efforts to address refugee issues. Amidst a recent increase in the number of individuals applying for refugee status in Japan, Japan is continuing its efforts to provide finely tuned support to those most in need. In addition, while local governments in the Tokyo Metropolitan region have played a central role until now in operations concerning the resettlement destinations for refugees upon their arrival in Japan, proactive efforts will be made moving forward to resettle refugees in municipalities outside of the Tokyo Metropolitan region, from the perspective of promoting nationwide understanding of the refugee issue.

Resettled refugees in Japan attending the resettlement support program (Photo: Refugee Assistance Headquarters)

8 Women

(1) G7 Taormina Summit

At the G7 Taormina Summit (Italy), the Leaders' Communique stated the countries' continued commitment towards mainstreaming gender equality in all policies. Furthermore, the G7 Roadmap for a Gender-Responsive Economic Environment was adopted with the aim of promoting the economic empowerment of women and girls.

(2) G20 Hamburg Summit

At the G20 Hamburg Summit (Germany), discussions were held on topics related to the empowerment of women, including digitalization and in the field of the sciences, women's access to training and employment, and scale up support for women entrepreneurs. Based on the discussions, the World Bank and 13 participating countries announced the launch of the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi). We-Fi aims to promote the rapid economic independence and

participation in the economy and society of women in developing countries, as well as to realize regional stability, prosperity, and peacebuilding, by providing support to women entrepreneurs as well as SMEs owned and led by women in developing countries to help them overcome the various barriers they are confronted with. We-Fi complements and enhances the support for women entrepreneurs that Japan has been providing mainly through bilateral efforts. In addition, Japan announced its intention of contributing 50 million U.S. dollars to the fund, based on the perspective that it is aligned with Japan's policy that aims to realize a "society where women shine" both in Japan and abroad.

Foreign Minister Kono delivering a speech at the World Assembly for Women WAW! (WAW! 2017) (November 2, Tokyo)

Debates at the World Assembly for Women WAW! (WAW! 2017) (November 2, Tokyo)

(3) World Assembly for Women, "WAW! 2017"

The Fourth World Assembly for Women (WAW! 2017) was held over three days from November 1, 2017. It gathered a total of about 2,400 participants, including 66 top leaders from 21 countries including Japan and eight international organizations, who are active in the field of women. The theme for 2017 was "WAW! in Changing World." Based on this theme, and with a focus on concrete initiatives to support women and the results of these initiatives, discussions were carried out on measures to promote the continued activity and success of women in a changing world, among other themes. Participants engaged in discussions on a wide range of topics, including gender-related initiatives by corporations and international organizations, women's participation in the sciences, role-sharing in unpaid work, women's participation in peace and security, women in the media, and gender equality in natural disasters. Discussions, centered around youths, were also carried out about the future of women's empowerment. On the final day, recommendations for the direction of actions put forward by the participants were summarized and presented in the "WAW!2017 Tokyo Declaration" as the outcome of the three-day discussion.

(4) International Cooperation for the Empowerment of Women in Developing Countries

During the General Debate Session at the UN General Assembly in 2013, Prime Minister Abe announced that the Government would be providing Official Development Assistance (ODA) of more than 3 billion dollars over three years until 2015 for three areas with a focus on the empowerment of women: (1) facilitating women's active participation in society and women's empowerment; (2) enhancing Japan's efforts in the area of women's health care as a part of the Strategy on Global

Health Diplomacy; and (3) supporting women's participation and protecting their rights in the area of peace and security. These have been fully implemented. In May 2016, the Government announced the "Development Strategy for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment," formulated as one of the new thematic policies under the Development Cooperation Charter, and declared that measures would be implemented to train about 5,000 female government administrative officials and to improve the learning environment for about 50,000 girls over the three years from 2016 to 2018. At the Third World Assembly for Women (WAW! 2016) held in December the same year, Prime Minister Abe promised to provide support amounting to more than 3 billion US dollars for women in developing countries until 2018 focusing on: (1) promoting women's and girls' rights; (2) creating an enabling environment for women and girls to reach their full potential; and (3) advancing women's leadership in politics, economics, and other public fields. These measures are being steadily implemented.

(5) Initiatives in the UN

A United Nations Commission on the Status of Women

The 61st session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women was held in March, and Japan sent a delegation consisting of Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takisawa as the Chief Delegate, Hiroko Hashimoto, representatives from various government ministries, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), and NGOs. At the conference, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takisawa chaired the Ministerial Roundtable and led discussion on the possible measures that can be put in place in order to promote the economic empowerment of women. In addition, he introduced Japan's initiatives on women's economic participation and its relationship with technological progress and innovation, and exchanged views with representatives from the respective countries.

B UN Women

Japan contributed approximately 30 million U.S. dollars in 2016 to the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the contributions are used in ways such as empowering Syrian refugee women and measures to counter violent extremism in Africa. In September 2017, Prime Minister Abe, who was on a visit to New York (U.S.) to attend the 72nd UN General Assembly, participated in the ceremony for the unveiling of the IMPACT 10x10x10 Parity Report of the HeForShe campaign organized by UN Women. In addition to introducing Japan's initiatives on promoting women's empowerment and the results of these efforts, he also spoke about the World Assembly for Women WAW! (WAW! 2017), and called for participants to connect through WAW! and work together with Japan to realize a "society where women shine" throughout the world. At UN Women, the HeForShe Campaign has been implemented to call for the involvement of men and boys in gender equality. Prime Minister Abe was selected as one of ten state leaders to champion the acceleration of the campaign. Japan plans to continue to deepen its cooperation with the UN Women.

Column

WAW! in Changing World

- Special Event on Women's Empowerment with focus on Women Entrepreneurs -

On November 1, 2, and 3, the Government of Japan hosted the World Assembly for Women (WAW! 2017) which marked the fourth WAW! event since its launch. The event welcomed 66 speakers from 21 countries and eight international organizations, as well as a total of about 2,400 participants.

Based on the theme "WAW! in Changing World," WAW! 2017 placed the focus on concrete initiatives to support women and the outcomes of these efforts, and discussions were held about the measures to ensure that women continued to play an active role in the changing world. The "WAW!2017 Tokyo Declaration" including recommendations for action-oriented measures from participants was drawn up and presented as the outcome of the discussions over the three days.

This section provides an overview of the special event, "Women's Empowerment," held on the third day of WAW! 2017.

Prime Minister Abe and Advisor to the President of the U.S., Ivanka Trump (November 3, Tokyo, Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Prime Minister Abe delivered the opening speech and emphasized the Government's commitment towards promoting women's empowerment as well as its achievements. He also expressed Japan's strong support for the "Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative" (abbreviated as "We-Fi"), whose launch was announced by the World Bank and participating countries at the G20 Hamburg Summit this year, and reaffirmed Japan's intention to provide support of 50 million U.S. dollars towards the initiative, with mentioning the positive impact that women entrepreneurs have on the development of the global economy. Following that, a special speech was given by Ms. Ivanka Trump, Advisor to the President of the U.S. She pointed out that while the economic participation of women is beneficial and meaningful to society, at the same time, the job of full-time homemakers is just as important; hence, all women are "working women." She also expressed her hopes for the realization of a society that women can embrace both the dignity of work and the gift of flourishing families. Furthermore, she touched on the importance of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) education for women in an era of technological innovation and noted that assistance should be given to societies where women are prevented from reaching their full potential, and spoke about the importance of supporting women entrepreneurs

in developing countries from this perspective.

Foreign Minister Kono

Foreign Minister Kono presented some examples of successful Japanese women entrepreneurs and touched on the difficulties that entrepreneurs face in procuring financing and acquiring specialized knowledge. He emphasized the importance of We-Fi, which aims to provide support to entrepreneurs in overcoming these barriers.

Next, CEO of the World Bank, Georgieva, talked about the current status and challenges concerning access to funds for women in developing countries. For example, she explained that there are 35 countries in the world where married women are unable to inherit real estate, and 17 countries in the world where women are unable to leave the home unaccompanied and without the permission of their husbands. Furthermore, there are about 2 billion people in the world who are unable to acquire loans or other forms of financing when starting a business, and there are also people who do not even have a bank account. More than 60% of these people are women. CEO Georgieva described these current conditions, and emphasized that support to women through We-Fi can contribute to economic development. She also stated that the World Bank will continue to promote initiatives to support women entrepreneurs.

Kristalina Georgieva

After the speeches, a panel discussion entitled "Supporting Women Entrepreneurs" was held. Vice Chair of Goldman Sachs Japan Co., Ltd, Kathy Matsui, served as the moderator for this discussion, with the participation of seven panelists: Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia, Susi Pudjiastuti; Founder & CEO of UNICAL International, Inc., Kaori Sasaki, Founder &CEO of ewomen, Inc.; CEO of Fair Trade (Korea), Miyoung Lee; Founder and CEO of The Job Factory (Democratic Republic of the Congo), Patricia Veringa-Gieskes,; Vice President of Blended Finance and Partnerships of the International Finance Corporation, Nena Stoiljkovic; and, CEO and Creative Director of aeru, Rika Yajima. To kick off the discussion, Ms. Matsui commented that investing in women contributes to economic growth. Then, the panelists shared their experiences of the challenges and difficulties that they had faced and overcome when they started their businesses, and engaged in discussion about the approaches taken by governments and international organizations in providing support to women entrepreneurs.

Minister Susi addressed the importance of active financial assistance provided by governments when entrepreneurs start up their businesses, explaining her actual

experiences in utilizing SME funds to expand her own business. At the same time, she also spoke about the need for women to demonstrate their own capabilities without any restraint, while making use of education and mentoring. With regard to the procurement of funds when starting a business, Ms. Lee also talked about the need for a platform that facilitates the exchange of views and sharing of resources among women entrepreneurs of various generations, based on her own experience of a lack in funding, business plans, human resources, and networks when she started her business. Ms. Veringa-Gieskes explained that poorly developed legal systems were another stumbling block in addition to financing when starting a business in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. She appreciated the We-Fi initiative highly, and made concrete suggestions to assist entrepreneurs more effectively by including women entrepreneurs as executive officers in financing institutions, disseminating information about assistance offered by the government and support organizations, and establishing incubation centers which enable to resolve the problems women entrepreneurs face.

Scene at the panel discussion entitled "Supporting Women Entrepreneurs," at the special event of WAW! 2017 (November 3, Tokyo)

Ms. Stoiljkovic spoke about access to funds as a common barrier for women entrepreneurs in the world, and pointed out the importance of considering deregulation in order to solve the problem of collateral, and of eliminating discrimination against women that prevents them from working without permission from their husbands. In this regard, Ms. Yajima also recommended reducing corporate tax on entrepreneurs immediately after the launch of their businesses, with a view to business advancement and growth, and legalizing the retention of the respective family names of husband and wife so as to reduce the burden on women to change their family names. Ms. Sasaki, who had been subjected to discrimination as a female company president, shared her experience of overcoming discrimination by changing the ways in which she talks and delivers presentations. She also spoke about the importance of establishing women entrepreneurs-friendly work policies, and having all members of the community support women entrepreneurs by purchasing the products or using the services provided by their businesses.

C Dealing with sexual violence

Sexual violence as a tactic of war must not be overlooked, and it is important to put an end to impunity for perpetrators and to support victims of violence. To make the 21st century a world with no human rights violations against women, Japan is actively engaging in efforts in this field, and places importance on cooperating with international organizations including UN Action and Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, as well as participating in international discussions.

In 2017, Japan provided financial support of 1 million U.S. dollars to the Office of the

Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, contributing to strengthening the police and judicial capabilities of states concerned. Furthermore, Japan continues to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for Victims of the International Criminal Court, earmarking approximately 550,000 Euros out of a cumulative contribution of about 750,000 Euros for victims of sexual and gender-based violence. Through such contributions, Japan engages in efforts to support victims of sexual violence in conflicts.

D Initiatives in Japan

In order to realize a peaceful society more effectively, it is important to secure women's participation in all stages in conflict prevention, conflict resolution, and peace keeping and peacebuilding with integration of gender perspective. Japan formulated national action plan to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and other relevant resolutions on women, peace, and security. The action plan has been effective since 2016, and monitoring and evaluating of the implementation is conducted. The second annual report will be published by the end of FY 2017.

E Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Since 1987, Japan has continued to provide members for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Currently, Yoko Hayashi (lawyer) serves as a member of the Committee.

Section 2 Japan's International Cooperation (Development Cooperation and Response to Global Issues)

Overview

(Development Cooperation Charter and Strategic Use of ODA)

More than sixty years have passed since Japan started its Official Development Assistance (ODA)[1] in 1954. Japan's development cooperation policy including ODA has greatly contributed to securing the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community and consequently the national interests of Japan for many years.

On the other hand, the international situation with regard to development cooperation is at a major crossroad. The world is facing more diverse and complex challenges transcending national borders as the world becomes increasingly globalized. Furthermore, considering the growing roles of recent non-ODA public/private funds and support from emerging countries, it is important to collect wisdom and actions of developing countries as well as developed countries and various resources apart from the central government (corporations, local governments, NGOs, etc.). In this new era, it is essential for ensuring Japan's national interests that Japan should consider development cooperation as a part of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation, and strategically use ODA to address development and human rights issues while continuing to adhere to the course that Japan has taken to date as a peace-loving nation. Under the Development Cooperation Charter established based on this recognition (decided by the Cabinet in February 2015), there is a need to steadily implement the "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)," the development goals for the whole international community, including developed countries. It is also vital to establish anew a fully adequate system in order to secure the safety of Japanese people engaged in international cooperation abroad.

For Japan, development cooperation is one of the most important diplomatic tools and is essential for its proactive contribution to peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community, from humanitarian assistance such as initiatives to resolve

1 For details on Japan's international cooperation, refer to "Japan's International Cooperation" of White Paper on Development Cooperation.

issues concerning refugees in the Middle East and Africa, emergency assistance in response to disasters, to economic and social development in developing countries such as infrastructure development and human resource development. In particular, the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" set out by Prime Minister Abe in August 2016 places emphasis on support that contributes to strengthening the rule of law at sea, as well as enhancing connectivity through means such as the development of quality infrastructure, in order to achieve economic prosperity for the region. In developing quality infrastructure, it is vital to secure various elements including economic efficiency in view of life-cycle costs and responsible financing for recipient countries which are included in the G7 Ise-Shima Principles for Promoting Quality Infrastructure Investment adopted at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit held in May 2016, as well as openness and transparency of infrastructure, and promote their international standardization. Japan will continue to contribute to peace and prosperity of the international community while actively making use of ODA and developing quality infrastructure.

The revitalization of Japan's economy through the growth of developing countries and its growth alongside these countries is also an important issue for Japan's national interest. As described in the "Growth Strategy 2017" (revised in June 2017) and "Infrastructure Systems Export Strategy" (revised in May 2016), it is necessary to utilize ODA strategically in order to further promote the overseas expansion of Japanese companies.

Such efforts by Japan have won both high praise and trust from the international

Foreign Minister Kono attending the side event on promoting investment in quality infrastructure, at the 72nd UN General Assembly (September 19, New York, U.S.)

community. It is important that Japan continues and strengthens the efforts in the future so that Japan can lead the international community as a major responsible country in the world and ensure the international environment and order in line with Japan's national interests.

(Response to Global Issues)

While globalization has resulted in dramatic economic and social development worldwide, it has also brought about diverse threats to human security. The threats include conflict, terrorism, disasters, global environmental issues such as climate change, global health issues including infectious diseases, human trafficking, refugee issues, labor issues, and economic crises. These global issues cannot be addressed by one country alone. The international community must work together based on the concept of human security. Against this background, new frameworks aimed at countering the various global issues were formulated, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, and the Paris Agreement. In 2017, Japan accelerated the implementation of these frameworks, and

at the same time, disseminated information about Japan's initiatives through the UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF) and the Universal Health Coverage (UHC)[2] Forum 2017 (See Special Feature "UHC Forum 2017").

With the aim of implementing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were adopted in September 2015 as international goals with the year 2030 as the target deadline, the SDGs Promotion Headquarters was established within the Cabinet in May 2016, headed by the Prime Minister and comprising of all Ministers as members. Japan's guidelines toward the achievement of the SDGs (SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles) were established in December the same year. At the fourth meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters held in December 2017, the SDGs Action Plan 2018 was decided. This Action Plan incorporated the key initiatives that the Government of Japan aims to advance in an integrated manner. Overseas as well, Foreign Minister Kishida attended the UN High-level Political Forum (HLPF) on Sustainable Development in July 2017, where he put out messages about Japan's SDGs initiatives through public-private partnership as well as international cooperation relating to the SDGs (See Special Feature "Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) -Cooperation with Diverse Stakeholders-").

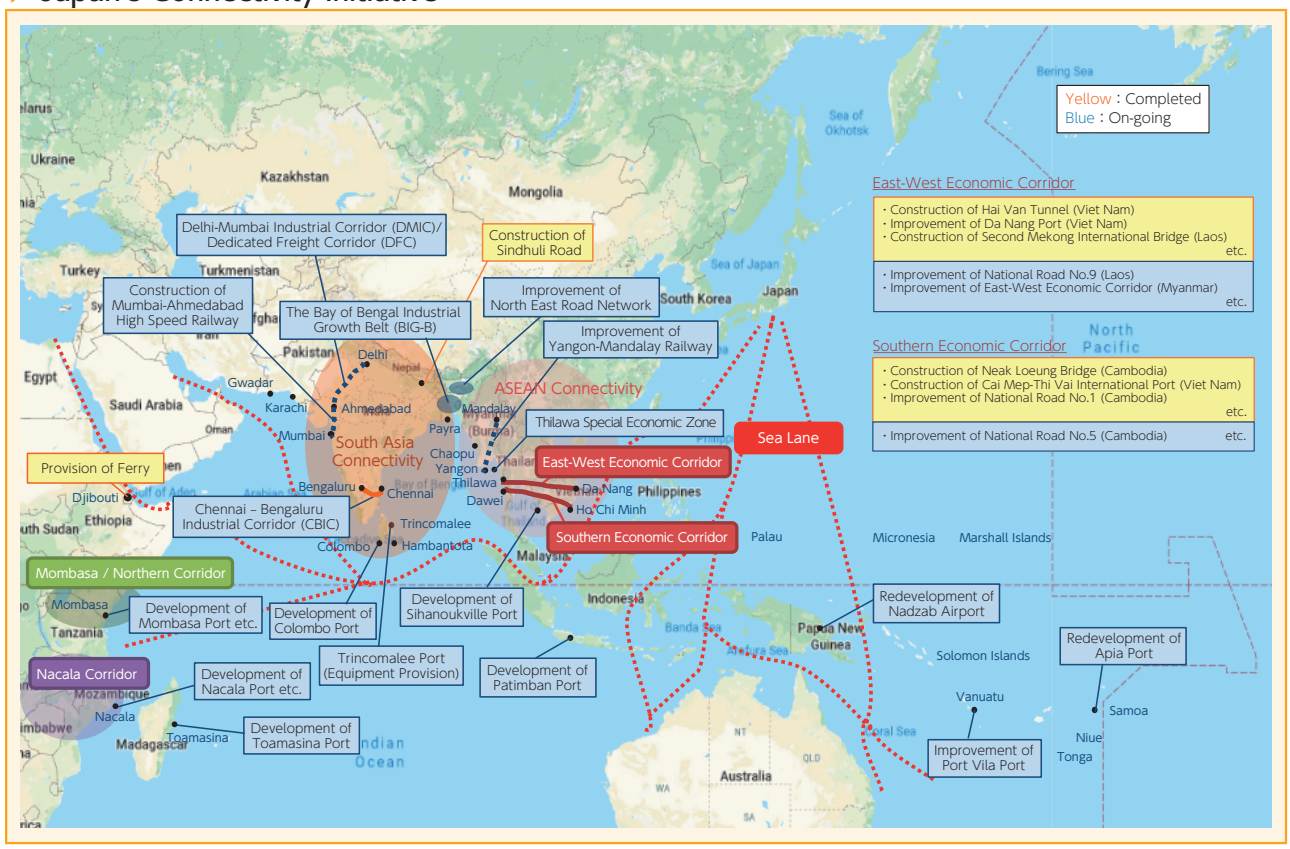
In the area of disaster risk reduction, which is essential to realize sustainable development, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 was adopted at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai in March 2015, and steady efforts are underway to bring disaster risk reduction into the mainstream. The enactment of "World Tsunami Awareness Day" (November 5), adopted at the UN General Assembly in December 2015, was followed by the implementation of related activities in 2017 including events to raise awareness about the "World Tsunami Awareness Day" in Japan and around the world, as well as tsunami evacuation drills.

In the area of health, Japan contributed to the international efforts in addressing global health issues based on the "Basic Design for Peace and Health" formulated in September 2015 as its Global Health policy under the Development Cooperation Charter. The UHC Forum 2017 was convened in Tokyo in December 2017 to promote UHC, and the importance of promoting UHC, which also contributes to responding to public health emergencies such as infectious diseases, left a deep impression about Japan's leadership in this field on the international community.

In the area of climate change, the Paris Agreement was adopted at the 21st Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21) held in France in December 2015. This Agreement is a fair and effective framework that provides for the submission of greenhouse gas emission reduction targets (nationally determined contribution) by each country independently, with no distinction between developing and developed countries, and for the implementation of measures toward the achievement of these targets. It entered into force in November 2016, and Japan

2 To endure affordable access to basic health services for all whenever they need them throughout their lives

Japan's Connectivity Initiative



ratified the Agreement in the same year. Negotiations are currently underway with the aim of adopting the relevant guidelines in 2018, and Japan participated actively in discussions to that end at the COP23 held in Germany in November 2017 as well as on other occasions.

Japan will continue to cooperate with the respective countries, international organizations, civil society, etc., under the Global Partnership, to promote human security and work actively toward the resolution of global issues.

Rapid changes in the Arctic environment as a result of global warming have brought about possibilities of new economic activities such as the use of the Northern Sea Route and the development of mineral and biological resources. On the other hand, there is growing concern over the Arctic environment in the international community, such as the impact on the lives of people in the Arctic including indigenous peoples, the importance of conserving the Arctic environment and sustainable development, and potential changes of the security environment.

Based on "Japan's Arctic Policy" adapted in 2015, Japan will ensure its strong presence on the issues over the Arctic by its contribution to the whole world, making full use of its strength in science and technology.

(Science and Technology Diplomacy)

Science and technology constitute the foundational elements for peace and prosperity that support socioeconomic development, and play a vital role in security. In this regard, Japan's advanced science and technology attracts a high level of international interest and expectations. Japan, by promoting science and technology diplomacy, harnesses its

unique strengths in science and technology to contribute to the development of science and technology at home and abroad, the promotion of relations with other countries, the peace and stability of the international community, and the resolution of global challenges. Japan is also putting effort into initiatives implemented through the activities of the Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

1 Development Cooperation (ODA, etc.)

(1) The Current Status of ODA

A FY2017 Priority Policy for Development Cooperation

From the perspective of "Proactive Contribution to Peace" based on the principle of international cooperation, development cooperation is one of the most important tools toward further contributing to securing the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community, and promoting Japan's diplomatic policies. With the aim of promoting strategic and effective development cooperation based on the Development Cooperation Charter, while also taking reference from diplomatic policies such as the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" and guidelines such as the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SDGs)," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has positioned the following (items (A) to (C)) as priority issues for FY2017, and will tackle these challenges while strengthening cooperation with various entities.

(A) Improving the environment and sharing universal values to achieve peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community

Based on the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," Japan is committed to improving connectivity between Asia and Africa as well as promoting stability and prosperity of the region as a whole. At the same time, Japan also works to ensure the safety of Japanese nationals working abroad, such as by offering cooperation to efforts by developing countries to improve counter-terrorism measures and the security environment. Based on the concept of sustaining peace, Japan contributes proactively to the realization of peace and stability in the international community through peacebuilding, support for refugees, measures to counter violent extremism, and other efforts, while at the same time strengthening the collaboration between humanitarian assistance and development cooperation. Japan also provides support for efforts by countries that share universal values such as the rule of law, and cooperates in fields including the strengthening of maritime security capabilities and the development of legal systems.

(B) Addressing global challenges and promoting human security towards achieving the SDGs

Japan strategically implements cooperation initiatives towards the achievement of the SDGs, which the international community as a whole is geared towards. In particular, Japan provides support for drawing up national strategies and plans, and also supports human resource development in relation to the formulation and implementation of development policies. It promotes cooperation in fields such as health, women (gender), education, disaster risk reduction and tsunami countermeasures, and climate change and global environmental issues.

(C) Contributing to economic diplomacy and regional revitalization with the aim of achieving "quality growth" alongside developing countries

Japan is involved in cooperative efforts toward the realization of "quality growth" in developing countries, and through that cooperation, contributes also to the growth of Japan alongside with the developing countries, and to regional revitalization in Japan. In particular, Japan works to improve the environment for foreign direct investment, and to support the overseas expansion of local governments and small and medium-sized enterprises, while at the same time further promoting the expansion of "quality infrastructure," including the promotion of "Japanese style." Furthermore, Japan provides support for the development of human resources for industries in developing countries, and through new policies, promotes innovation among domestic industries in Japan.

In tackling priority issues (A) to (C) above, efforts are made to organically tie up the initiatives with bilateral cooperation and cooperation through international organizations. At the same time, Japan also promotes companies that enhance Japan's visibility, with the involvement of Japanese private corporations, local government bodies, universities and research institutes, and NGOs and civil society organizations (CSOs). In addition to putting effort into domestic publicity aimed at deepening understanding among the citizens towards supporting developing countries, through development cooperation, Japan also actively communicates information about Japan's initiatives and promotes them to other countries. Japan is also engaged in efforts to strengthen measures to secure the safety of those involved in international cooperation projects.

B Safety Measures for Personnel Engaged in International Cooperation Projects

In the terrorist attacks that struck Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, in July 2016, seven Japanese engaged in ODA efforts lost their lives while one Japanese was injured. The Government of Japan is determined to continue supporting developing countries, and to never give in to terrorism; however, the international terrorism situation is becoming increasingly severe. To ensure the safety of Japanese personnel engaged in international cooperation abroad, it is vital to establish a new system for ensuring utmost preparedness.

From the standpoint of such awareness, the Council on Safety Measures for International Cooperation Projects was established under the Minister for Foreign Affairs. After five meetings with participation from many members from the relevant ministries and agencies, the Council published its final report at the end of August 2016, which sets forth new safety measures for personnel engaged in international cooperation projects. The final report covered the safety measures that should be taken in cooperation between MOFA and JICA, with the relevant parties, in accordance with the following five pillars: (1) Strengthening the collection, analysis, and sharing of threat information; (2) Code of conduct of partners and NGOs; (3) Physical/non-physical protective measures, and strengthening training and drills; (4) Post-crisis response; and (5) Heightening crisis management awareness and improving the organizational structure

of MOFA and JICA.

Japan will keep up the steady implementation of new safety measures, and ensure the safety of personnel engaged in international cooperation projects, in order to contribute proactively to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community as a responsible major power.

(2) Japan's Development Cooperation Performance and Approaches to Major Regions

A Japan's ODA Performance

In 2016, Japan provided approximately 16.81 billion US dollars in ODA[3], 11.8% more than the previous year on the basis of gross disbursements. Japan ranks fourth among the member states of the Development Assistance Committee of the Organisation for the Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD/DAC), following the U.S., Germany, and the UK. In terms of net disbursements generally used for international comparison, the amount was about 10.42 billion US dollars, up 13.2% from the previous year, and like for gross disbursements, ranking fourth after the U.S., Germany, and the UK. The ODA/GNI ratio based on net disbursements was 0.20%, ranking 20th among member states of the DAC.

B Approaches to Major Regions

(A) Southeast and Southwest Asia

The peace, stability, and prosperity in the Southeast Asian region are important to Japan, which has a close relationship with the region. Japan has created momentum toward solutions for various development issues including poverty reduction, by promoting economic growth and human security in the region through development cooperation, and also contributed to the development of the region.

Opening ceremony of the Thilawa Special Economic Zone (SEZ) in Myanmar. Japan provides support for the SEZ in many ways, including investing in the SEZ management company, developing the surrounding infrastructure, establishing the relevant legal systems, government administration, and consideration for environment and society. (August 14, Myanmar Photo: MJTD)

Approximately 52.3% of the total bilateral ODA of Japan went to the Asia region in 2016. A large portion of it comprised of support for Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). Japan not only provides support towards 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 industrial foundation development. For example, Japan has already undertaken human resource development for more than 30,000 people in ASEAN by March 2017, including experienced technical experts, engineers, and human resources for research and development under "the Industrial Human Resource Development

3 The main forms of ODA from Japan are: grant aid, namely, bilateral fund donations; loan aid for development in developing regions; technical cooperation; donations or contributions to international organizations. Of these, loan aid for development accounts for the largest percentage. Loan aid for development is typically repaid with interest.

Cooperation Initiative," which aims to develop 40,000 industrial human resources in three years, as announced at the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting (Malaysia) held in November 2015. Furthermore, in order to establish a free and open international order, Japan places great importance on providing support for maritime security through ODA, including the provision of patrol boats and the related equipment, and human resource development, to the Asia region, which is located along Japan's sea lanes, and is important for regional security. Furthermore, in light of the current situation and towards the realization of an Asia that is resilient against terrorism, Japan announced at the East Asia Summit (EAS) held in the Philippines in November 2017 that it will be providing steady support of 15 billion Japanese yen over two years through a comprehensive approach to improve security in the southern part of the Philippines and the Sulu-Celebes Seas. In addition to these efforts, Japan is also providing support to eradicate domestic and regional disparity, and support in areas including disaster risk reduction, environment and climate change, and energy for creation of a sustainable society.

In the Mekong region, under the "Japan-Mekong Connectivity Initiative," newly established at the Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting (Laos) in July 2016, Japan is moving forward on initiatives aimed at the realization of "vibrant and effective connectivity," including the enhancement of institutional and human connectivity as well as physical connectivity, through further infrastructure development, institutional improvement, and development of the surrounding areas in the region. Japan also announced in 2015 that it will be providing support of 750 billion Japanese yen over three years through ODA. In this regard, it announced at the 9th Japan-Mekong Summit Meeting held in the Philippines in November 2017 that it has already disbursed more than two-thirds of this assistance.

By providing such assistance, Japan aims to provide strong support to the ASEAN Community established in December 2015.

Southwest Asia holds strategic importance as a marine transportation hub that connects East Asia with the Middle East, and is also a region with countries that have immense economic potential, such as India. It is also increasingly drawing interest from Japanese companies as an export and investment destination. On the other hand, the region is still confronted by many unresolved issues such as undeveloped infrastructure and poverty. While also keeping in mind improving the investment environment for Japanese companies and human security, Japan provides a range of assistance through ODA to assist the region in overcoming these challenges.

With regard to India, on the occasion of Prime Minister Abe's visit to the country in September, the groundbreaking ceremony for the constraction of Mumbai-Ahmedabad

Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister Modi attending the groundbreaking ceremony for the high-speed rail project in India (September 14, Ahmedabad, India. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

High Speed Rail was held, and the provision of an ODA loan was signed and exchanged. In addition, the two leaders also agreed to move forward on cooperation between Japan and India for the enhancement of regional connectivity and in the development of India's North Eastern Region based on coordination between Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" and India's "Act East policy".

With regard to Sri Lanka, at the Summit Meeting held during Prime Minister Wickremesinghe's visit to Japan in April, Prime Minister Abe announced that, to fully support Sri Lanka's development as a hub in the Indian Ocean, Japan would promote the development of infrastructure in sectors such as ports, transportation and energy through Japan's Quality Infrastructure, and support strengthening connectivity and national development. At the same time, Japan also decided to provide assistance including yen loans for the expansion of water supply and basic infrastructure development in the former conflict-affected areas.

(B) Central Asia

The Central Asia and the Caucasus are geopolitically important areas surrounded by Russia, China, South Asia, the Middle East, and Europe. Its stability and development are important for all in the whole Eurasia, including Japan. Japan supports the "open, stable, and independent" development of Central Asia, and upholds the ideal of Japanese diplomacy that contributes to peace and stability in the region and around the world. Japan supports nation building that allows fundamental values such as human rights, democracy, market economy, and the rule of law to take root for long-term stability and sustainable development in this region with broad-based views covering neighboring regions including Afghanistan and Pakistan in mind.

On the occasion of the issuance of the joint declaration for the Sixth Foreign Ministers' Meeting of the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue held in Turkmenistan, Japan announced the Initiative for Cooperation in Transport and Logistics, which sets out the current and future direction of cooperation in the field of transportation and logistics. Based on this initiative, future improvements in transportation capabilities and safety through road improvements and disaster risk reduction measures are expected. Furthermore, as a result of the effective application of election-related equipment provided by Japan to the Kyrgyz Republic, which is making progress in democratization, during the parliamentary elections of 2015 and presidential elections of 2017, the elections were carried out peacefully without any major disorder. In this way, Japan also contributes to the establishment of democracy.

(C) Central and South America

Central and South America has enjoyed friendly relations with Japan for a long time and have deep historical ties with Japan, as demonstrated by the fact that about 2.1 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 new market with gross regional production amounting to approximately 5 trillion US dollars. On the other hand, as many countries in the region are confronted by problems such as

International disaster relief and rescue team engaged in search and rescue activities after the Mexico earthquake (Photo: JICA)

domestic income disparity and poverty in the agricultural and mountainous regions, Japan is engaged in various cooperative efforts while also taking into account the characteristics of each country in the Central and South America region.

Central and South America is also highly vulnerable to natural disasters, and tackling these problems is a challenge. This year, Japan dispatched members of the Japan Disaster Relief Team to Mexico in the aftermath of a major earthquake, and also supplied emergency relief supplies to countries of the Caribbean that had suffered serious damage in the hurricane.

Disaster risk reduction continues to be an important area in Japan's cooperation with Central and South America, and Japan continues to provide technical cooperation aimed at strengthening the abilities of these countries to cope with disasters. This includes providing equipment that is useful during times of disaster, and the Project on Capacity Development for Disaster Risk Management in Central America "BOSAI." In addition, from the perspective of measures aimed at mitigating the damage caused by disasters, Japan is engaged in the development of disaster-resilient infrastructure through grant aid in Bolivia, Honduras, Haiti, Saint Lucia, and other parts of this region. In the fields of environment and climate change, Japan has decided to cooperate with Jamaica in promoting energy conservation, with a dollar-denominated loan as the first project.

In Central and South America, it is important to provide cooperation based on the development issues each country faces. During the visit by Prime Minister Abe in 2016, he announced that Japan will commence large-scale grant aid to Cuba. Based on the above announcement, Japan is engaged in new cooperation projects in the agricultural sector, which is a priority area in Cuba. Furthermore, Japan has also decided to provide grant aid for the disposal of landmines to Colombia, which reached a peace agreement in 2016

(D) The Middle East

Securing peace and stability in the Middle East and North Africa regions, which are geopolitically important and important for energy security, is crucial not only for the stability of Japan but also of the world. From these standpoints, Japan has proactively provided support for these regions to achieve peace and stability.

Taking the opportunity at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit held in May 2016, Japan announced that it will provide support amounting to approximately 6 billion US dollars over the three years, including support for human resource development for about 20,000 people. The objective is to build a "tolerant and stable society" in the Middle East while stemming the growth of violent extremism based on the stance that "the best way is to go in the middle." From the perspective of extending opportunities for education to Syrian youths and fostering

human resources expected to contribute to the recovery of Syria in the future, Japan announced that it will accept up to 150 Syrian students for the coming five years, and it accepted the students in 2017.

At the First Japan-Arab Political Dialogue held in Cairo, Egypt, during Foreign Minister Kono's visit to the Middle East in September, five new initiatives were announced under the "Kono Four Principles" of (1) intellectual and human contribution; (2) investment in "people;" (3) enduring efforts; and (4) enhancing political efforts. The five Initiatives were: (A) upgrading the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" initiative, (B) further contribution to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) deployed in the Sinai Peninsula, (C) expanding cooperation on education and human resources development, (D) enhancing political efforts, and (E) new humanitarian assistance for refugees and stability. As a part of these efforts, he announced that Japan would be providing fresh support of approximately 25 million US dollars towards humanitarian crises in Syria, Iraq, and the neighboring countries, with the aim of preventing further instability in the region. Furthermore, concerning investment in "People", for the purpose of developing cooperation in the education field under the Egypt-Japan Education Partnership (EJEP), Foreign Minister Taro Kono explained Japan's policy to offer an ODA loan for Japanese-style education being introduced by the Government of Egypt, as well as a grant aid for educational and research equipment at the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST).

In December, Foreign Minister Kono attended the 13th Manama Dialogue, where

Japanese experts guiding students at the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST) (Photo: JICA)

he announced the fresh provision of around 21 million US dollars for humanitarian assistance to Syria and the neighboring countries, as Japan's continued support to countries that have been affected by the fight against ISIL and others. With this, in 2017 alone, Japan's assistance in total will reach over 100 million US dollars for all Syrian people in need inside Syria and around 320 million US dollars in Iraq, Syria and its neighboring countries.

During the same month, Foreign Minister Kono made a tour of the Middle East countries, and delivered a speech at the commemorative ceremony for the kick-off of phase 2 of the Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP) project in Palestine. During his speech, he declared that Japan will be upgrading the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" initiative. In addition to providing support for ICT and facilitating smooth logistics, he revealed Japan's plans to provide fresh support for Palestine amounting to approximately 40 million US dollars.

(E) Africa

Africa has achieved a significant economic growth thanks to its abundant natural resources and a rapidly growing population. As a potential market, it is

attracting the attention and anticipation of the international community. Since 1993, Japan has worked with African countries as well as supporting countries and organizations to tackle Africa's development issues through the processes of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), and continued to provide support towards the realization of economic growth in Africa. The TICAD processes further strengthen relations between Japan and Africa, and serve as a forum for discussing the further development of Africa while respecting the ownership of the African countries. For these reasons, the TICAD framework has been highly appraised by the countries of Africa. In August 2016, TICAD VI was held in Nairobi, Kenya, the first TICAD meeting to be held in Africa. The Nairobi Declaration was adopted with three priority areas as its pillars: (1) Diversification and industrialization of the economy; (2) Promotion of resilient health systems; and (3) Stabilizing society. Prime Minister Abe, who co-chaired the conference, announced during his keynote speech that Japan will be investing a total of 30 billion US dollars jointly from the public and private sectors, over three years from 2016 to 2018, towards Africa's future. This investment will go towards the development of about 10 million human resources by harnessing Japan's strength of high quality, and follow the three priority areas set out in the Nairobi Declaration. In 2017, these efforts were implemented steadily. The TICAD Ministerial Meeting was held in August in Maputo, the capital of Mozambique. Foreign Minister Kono, who attended the meeting as its co-chair, spoke about the status of progress of Japan's initiatives in line with its commitments made at TICAD V and TICAD VI.

Japan also takes full advantage of the opportunities presented by exchanges of key persons to promote initiatives under the TICAD process. On the occasion of the visit from President Rajaonarimampianina of Madagascar to Japan in December, the two countries agreed to strengthen cooperation on food security and safe water, which are priority areas set out in TICAD VI. In addition, on the occasion of the visit from President Sall of Senegal to Japan during the same month, the two countries also agreed to strengthen cooperation on health, infrastructure, and food security.

The next TICAD, which will be TICAD 7, is scheduled to be held in Yokohama in 2019. Japan will harness its strengths to provide steady support in areas such as economic growth that incorporates private-sector investment, development, and the promotion of social stability. At the same time, Japan will build mutually beneficial relationships with the countries of Africa and will continue to contribute to the realization of Africa's "quality growth" through cooperation between the public and private sectors.

(3) 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 by exchanging views with external experts at each phase and formulating projects based on these discussions. In the phase of preliminary studies in the implementation of ODA, the Development Project Accountability Committee holds

open sessions and decides whether studies should be implemented based on reviews and discussions conducted with external experts. Furthermore, after the implementation of the project, JICA publishes on its website the ex-post evaluation results for all projects valued at 200 million Japanese yen or more, while ex-post evaluations are also conducted by third parties for projects valued at 1 billion Japanese yen or more. With regard to grant aid projects implemented by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, an ex-post evaluation system has also been introduced since FY2017. Internal ex-post evaluations are carried out for projects over 200 million Japanese yen or more, and the results of the evaluation are published, while external ex-post evaluations are conducted for projects over 1 billion Japanese yen or more. The matters pointed out in such ex-post evaluations are applied to the formulation of future ODA projects.

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, MOFA and JICA take into account the needs of the partner country, establish priority areas of cooperation for each country, and formulate projects that contribute to these areas while going beyond the boundaries of each framework. For example, as the agricultural sector makes up about 30% of Myanmar's GDP, development of agriculture is extremely important in order to improve the lives of the people. From this perspective, Japan has been dispatching experts since October 2017 to expand systems for the widespread propagation of good seeds, as a part of technical cooperation. In November, it also decided to finance, through an ODA loan, the refurbishment of irrigation facilities, improvements of farm roads and bridges, development of approximately 2,000 hectares of farming fields, and establishment of a seed center, with the aim of improving the income of farmers in Myanmar. In this way, Japan combines various support schemes to improve efficiency of the overall value-chain of agricultural produce.

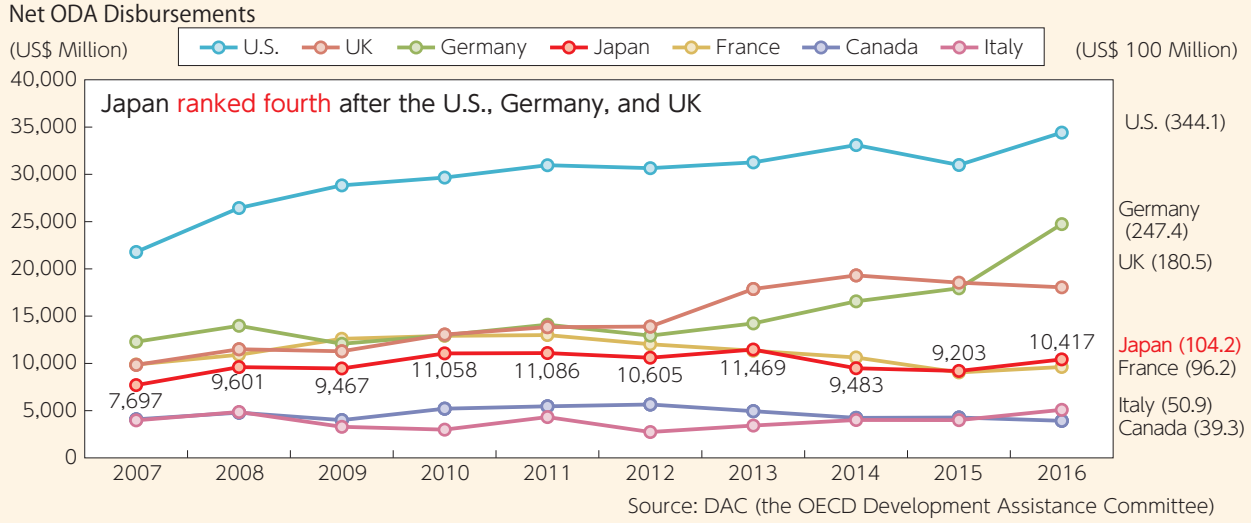
Japan also contributes to the creation of international frameworks for effective ODA implementation. The Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (GPEDC) exists as a framework that various development entities participate in with the aim of enabling the international community to work as one towards improving the effectiveness of development cooperation for developing countries. These entities are not limited to developed and developing countries, but also include civil society, the private sector and so on. Japan has been serving on the Steering Committee of the GPEDC since September 2015. At the 2nd High-level Meeting of the GPEDC held in November 2016 as well as other related fora, Japan introduced its initiatives in effective development cooperation, such as triangular cooperation and investment in quality infrastructure, and these initiatives were highly appraised by other participants.

C Efforts toward Promotion of Information Disclosure and Improvement Development of Cooperation Quality

The understanding and support

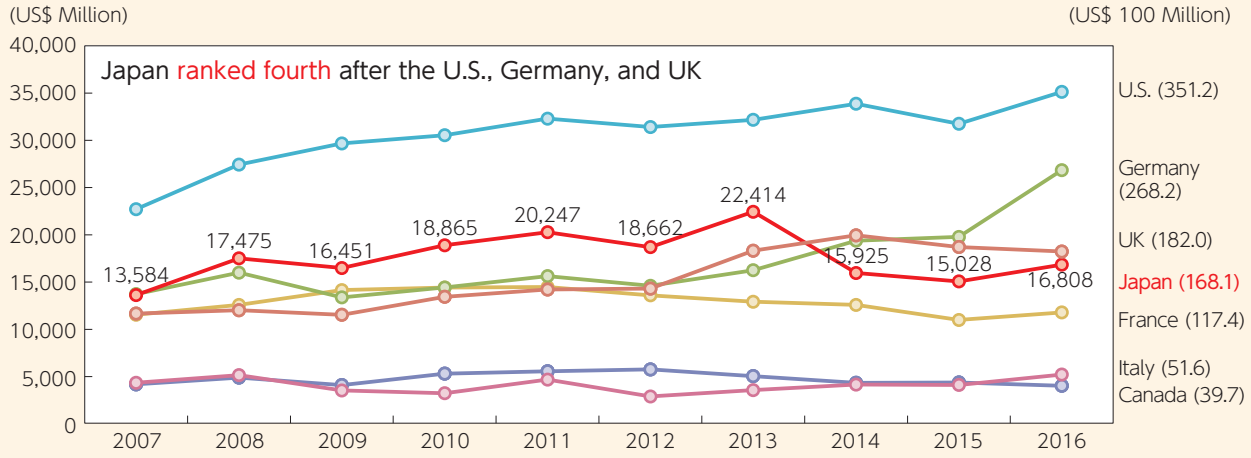
Recent Trend of ODA by Major Donors

Net ODA Disbursements



Source: DAC (the OECD Development Assistance Committee)

Gross ODA Disbursements



Note: Since China is not a DAC member, it is not placed under an obligation to report its disbursements to DAC.
According to China's official announcement, the foreign disbursements of the country accounts for 2.366 billion US dollars.

Source: DAC (the OECD Development Assistance Committee)

from Japanese citizens is essential for the implementation of development cooperation. Therefore, efforts are made for effective communication and higher quality of development cooperation to enhance their understanding of ODA. Various PR events took place aiming to reach out to a wide range of people. Specifically, participatory type events such as "Global Festa Japan 2017" (September 30 and October 1), Japan's largest event for international cooperation, in Odaiba, Tokyo, and "One World Festival" in Osaka City in February were held. In addition to these, TV publicity programs (Special program "Team Earth Smile of the Interstellar Spacecraft Oriental" and mini program "MA-SA's Discovery – Smile Earth") were broadcasted to present some examples of international cooperation activities by Japan all over the world, and to explain the meaning of development cooperation for Japan in an easy-to-understand manner, based on the reports from ODA sites in developing countries. Also, efforts are continuously made to deliver information on development cooperation through the ODA website. Furthermore, based on the Development Cooperation Charter, which declares enhanced efforts

for overseas publicity, Japan plans tours to its development cooperation project sites for the local media so that they will cover Japan's cooperation, and prepares PR pamphlets in English and local languages.

In order to raise the quality of ODA, it is necessary to apply knowledge and know-how gained from ODA evaluations to subsequent policy planning and project implementation. MOFA mainly carries out evaluations by external experts at policy and program levels, and the results are shared and used by relevant parties. Also, from the viewpoint of improving transparency of the JICA's projects, the JICA publicizes their current status and achievements on the "Visible ODA" section of its website. As of the end of December 2017, a total of 3,957 projects are listed on this site.

2 Response to Global Issues

(1) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda)" is a set of international development goals to be achieved by 2030, which was adopted by the UN Summit in September 2015 as a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

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.

Japan has consistently and proactively contributed to discussions and negotiations for the 2030 Agenda even before full-fledged discussions got underway in the international community. First, Japan established the SDGs Promotion Headquarters headed by the Prime Minister and composed of all Cabinet Ministers as members, formulated the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles to serve as Japan's guidelines in the implementation of the SDGs, and established eight priority areas that Japan will place particular focus on. Furthermore, Japan puts great importance on public-private partnership for the implementation of the SDGs, and has to date held four Round Table Meetings on the promotion of the SDGs, bringing together stakeholders from a wide range of fields including NGOs, academia, the private sector, and international organizations. It also engages in the exchange of views on initiatives by local governments and businesses towards the promotion of the SDGs. With regard to international cooperation, Japan has, for example, announced at the UN High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) held in July that it will be providing support of 1 billion US dollars by 2018 mainly for the sectors of education, health, disaster risk reduction, and gender, with a focus on the next generation.

At the fourth meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters held in December, the SDGs Action Plan 2018 was unveiled, covering the main initiatives to be undertaken by MOFA as well as other relevant Government Ministries towards the achievement of the SDGs. With the aim of spreading Japan's "SDGs Model," this Action Plan established, as the basic direction of the model, the promotion of Society 5.0 that is tied in with the SDGs and achieved through efforts by the public and private sectors, regional revitalization driven by the SDGs, and empowerment of the next generation and women as

Logos of all 17 goals under the SDGs (Source: UN Information Center)

The fourth meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters (December 26, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

the future leaders who will shoulder the burden of realizing the SDGs. At the same time, the first Japan SDGs Award was held to commend companies and organizations that have put in place excellent initiatives towards the realization of the SDGs. In 2018, the Government of Japan will stand as one to further realize and expand the SDGs initiatives, and at the same time, to further promote the implementation of the SDGs in Japan by sharing successful cases by both the public and private sectors.

A Human Security

Human security is a concept aiming at creating a community in which people can fully develop their potential through protecting all individuals, and at the same time empowering them to solve their own problems. Japan identifies human security as one of its diplomatic pillars and has been working on dissemination and implementation of this notion through discussions at the United Nations, the use of the UN Human Security Trust Fund established by Japan's initiatives, and also Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects. The 2030 Agenda also reflects the notion of human security as its core value such as "people-centered" and "leave no one behind" and its core reflects the concept of human security.

B Approaches in the Area of Disaster Risk Reduction

In the area of disaster risk reduction, 200 million people 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 250 to 300 billion US dollars. Disaster risk reduction is essential for realizing poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Japan makes use of the knowledge of disaster risk reduction and mitigation, built up through its numerous experiences with disasters, to promote international cooperation in various areas of disaster risk reduction. It hosted the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction in Sendai in March 2015, and took the lead in the adoption of the "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030," a guideline for efforts by the international community in disaster risk reduction that covers 15 years from 2015. Japan is also actively involved in cooperation in the area of disaster risk reduction, announcing the "Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk

Special Feature

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Cooperation with Diverse Stakeholders -

Conferment Ceremony for the Chair of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters (Prime Minister) Award (December 26, Prime Minister's Office, Tokyo, Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), adopted by consensus at the UN Summit held in 2015, are development goals for the entire international community, including developed countries. Japan is actively promoting initiatives both domestically and internationally while rallying the collective wisdom and knowledge of a wide range of stakeholders, in order to realize a diverse and inclusive society where "no one will be left behind" through the implementation of the SDGs. This Special Feature showcases some of the specific SDG-related efforts in 2017.

In promoting the SDGs, it is highly important to put effort into raising awareness among the people. The Government of Japan decided, at the meeting of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Promotion Headquarters held in June 2017, to establish the Japan SDGs Award to commend Japanese companies and organizations that are making outstanding efforts to the achievement of the SDGs, with the aim of appealing to a wide audience on the SDGs. The recipients of the award were selected while taking into account the views of a selection committee, which comprises members of the SDGs Promotion Round Table Meeting from a wide range of stakeholders including NGOs/NPOs, academia, the private sector, and international organizations. At the Conferment Ceremony for the first Japan SDGs Award, held in December 2017, Shimokawa town in Hokkaido won the Chair of the SDGs promotion Headquarters (Prime Minister) Award from among a large number of candidates.

PIKO TARO performing at the HLPF reception hosted by the Government of Japan (July 17, New York, United States)

Efforts are also being made to raise awareness about the SDGs through collaboration with the famous entertainer, PIKO TARO. At the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) held in New York in July 2017, which serves as the international forum for following up on the SDGs, Foreign Minister Kishida proposed the Public Private Action for Partnership (PPAP) as Japan's approach towards the realization of the SDGs. PIKO TARO, who gained fame worldwide for his performances of advocating the same keywords "PPAP," gave a performance at the HLPF reception hosted by the Government of Japan. This performance received wide media coverage by press from Japan and overseas, and

was met with a great response.

To raise even greater interest in the SDGs based on these initiatives, PIKO TARO was appointed as the Goodwill Ambassador for Promoting the SDGs at the Global Festa Japan 2017 event held in September the same year. Through such initiatives that involve a wide range of stakeholders, public awareness of the SDGs is growing steadily. Also in September, the Japan Securities Dealers Association established a Council for Promoting SDGs. Furthermore, at the beginning of November, Keidanren (Japan Business Federation) revised the Charter of Corporate Behavior that sets out the action guidelines that companies should comply with, for the first time in seven years. At the same time, it positioned the realization of Society 5.0 as a pillar for the achievement of the SDGs. As private companies accelerate their efforts to incorporate SDGs as part of their primary businesses, beyond the scope of corporate social responsibility (CSR), the government is also providing a strong boost for such moves through concrete measures to support them.

SDGs cannot be achieved through the government's efforts alone. All actors need to take ownership over the SDGs. The government, on its part, will also continue to take the lead in efforts moving forward, in order to strengthen and reinvigorate the world.

Reduction" as an independent contribution from Japan, and declaring the provision of 4 billion US dollars in total to the area related to disaster risk reduction and training of 40,000 government officials and local leaders in the four years from 2015 to 2018.

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 took the lead in organizing various conferences and tsunami evacuation drills in 2016 to raise awareness and strengthen preparedness about tsunami in countries around the world; in November the same year, the High School Students Summit on "World Tsunami Awareness Day" in Kuroshio was held in Kuroshio town, Kochi Prefecture. The objective of this Summit is to pass on the experiences and lessons drawn in the field of disaster risk reduction to the youths who will bear the responsibility for the future. High school students from the countries which are vulnerable to the impact of tsunamis were invited to Japan for the Summit, where they learnt alongside with Japanese high school students about the history of tsunamis in Japan and the disaster risk reduction and mitigation initiatives put in place by the various countries. The second High School Students Summit on "World Tsunami Awareness Day" was held in Ginowan City, Okinawa, on November 7 and 8, 2017. Japan will continue to share the 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 Approaches in the Area of Education

In the area of education, Japan announced "Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth," a new strategy for Japan's international cooperation on education, in line with the timing for the adoption of the "2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" in September 2015. The new

strategy specifies "educational cooperation to achieve inclusive, equitable and quality learning," "educational cooperation for industrial, science and technology human resource development and sustainable socio economic development," and "establishment and expansion of global and regional networks for educational cooperation" as guiding principles. Based on these guiding principles, Japan is providing various forms of educational support in countries around the world. It is also an active participant in education support-related fora including the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).

D Approaches in Agricultural Areas

In coordination with the relevant countries, such as G7 or G20 member states and international organizations, Japan has delivered assistance for agriculture and rural development in developing countries. In April 2016, Japan hosted the G7 Niigata Agriculture Ministers' Meeting. At this Meeting, the "Niigata Declaration," which seeks to strengthen global food security, was adopted and issued.

E Approaches in the Area of Water

Japan has continuously been the largest donor in the area of water since the 1990s and has implemented high quality assistance utilizing Japan's experiences, expertise, and technologies. Japan proactively participates in discussions in the international community, and tackles global issues in the area of water based on its contributions to date.

(2) Global Health

Overcoming health issues that threaten lives and hinder all kinds of social, cultural and economic activities is a common global challenge directly linked with human security. Japan has advocated human security, which underlines the "Proactive Contribution to Peace" and has acted in support of that principle. Japan regards health as its indispensable element. Japan has achieved the world's highest healthy life expectancy and is further expected to play a proactive role in the area of health. Japan aims to realize the international community that enhances the people's health as well as ensures the right to health through assisting the area of global health.

Under this principle, Japan has achieved remarkable results in overcoming health issues such as infectious diseases outbreak, maternal and child health and nutrition improvements through cooperation with a number of countries and various international organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Bank, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (the Global Fund), Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance (Gavi), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Based on the Basic Design for Peace and Health, a theme-based policy for the Development Cooperation Charter formulated in 2015, and bearing in mind the achievement of Universal Health Coverage (UHC) that ensures the provision of basic health services throughout the lives of all people, Japan demonstrated its leadership ability and took the lead in discussions.

Japan has hosted an event to promote UHC at the UN General Assembly in September. At this event, Prime Minister Abe explained that the realization of UHC, which is positioned as an international

Special Feature

UHC Forum 2017

The vision of "Health for all" looks hard to realize. The latest data shows that at least half of the world's population does not have full coverage of essential health services. The international community should work more actively to improve this situation.

Japan has been playing a leading role in the area of global health drawing on its experience and knowledge including the national health insurance system. Prime Minister Abe has continued to promote Universal Health Coverage (UHC) as a "Japan brand." Therefore, he actively refers to this policy at such occasions as the G7, TICAD and the United Nations General Assembly meeting.

* Universal Health Coverage (UHC)
To ensure that all people can receive the health services they need at an affordable cost throughout life.

* The UN General Assembly held in 2017 designated December 12th as the International Universal Health Coverage Day.

As one of these efforts, "UHC Forum 2017" was held in Tokyo on December 13 and 14, 2017, with the aim of further promoting UHC. Co-organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UHC2030, and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), this Forum welcomed about 600 participants from 61 countries.

This Forum, attended by Prime Minister Abe, brought together high level officials including Presidents and Health Ministers of various countries, representatives of international organizations including UN Secretary-General Guterres, World Bank Group President Kim, WHO Director-General Tedros, and UNICEF Executive Director Lake, and international health experts. They actively discussed how to promote UHC internationally. "UHC Tokyo Declaration" was adopted as the commitment to accelerate the efforts towards achieving UHC by 2030 by the co-organizers of the forum.

High-level Opening Session
(December 14, Tokyo, Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Prime Minister Abe proposed building and strengthening of a platform for the promotion of UHC to realize a society where "no one will be left behind," the core principle of the SDGs. He also emphasized the importance of cross-sectoral efforts, covering such fields as water and

sanitation, nutrition, etc., and announced that Japan will provide assistance amounting to approximately 2.9 billion dollars in coming years to push forward the efforts towards UHC by countries and organizations.

The global situation and progress of UHC and the measures against public health emergencies, as well as various international initiatives related to UHC, were introduced at the Expert's Meeting. Thematic breakout sessions were also held on strengthening of health system and health workers, financing for UHC, access to medicine, and health needs in the aging society, all of which are the important challenges to achieving UHC.

The UN High-level Meeting on UHC will be held in 2019. Japan will continue to cooperate with various governments and organizations to promote UHC.

goal in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), contributes not only to resolving issues in the health sector, but also to the development of foundation for people's everyday lives as well as the correction of disparities, thereby playing an extremely important role in achieving many of the SDGs goals. He also reaffirmed the importance of UHC with leaders who are driving the global health sector. The UHC Forum 2017 held in Tokyo in December was attended by the UN Secretary-General Guterres, as well as a large number of people such as the heads of states, health ministers, and heads of international organizations. At this Forum, Prime Minister Abe emphasized that, in order to accelerate the promotion of UHC, it is crucial to enhance the momentum towards UHC, promote the coordination among the national governments and donors, advance the continuous monitoring and evaluation, mobilize resources inside and outside of the country, and promote innovation. He further announced that Japan will provide assistance amounting to approximately 2.9 billion US dollars in the coming years to push forward the efforts towards UHC by countries and organizations. Furthermore, in order to promote initiatives in the area of nutrition, which forms the basis for good health, he announced that Japan would be hosting the Nutrition for Growth Summit in 2020 (See Special Feature "UHC Forum 2017").

(3) Labor

It is important to raise income levels through employment, in order to raise the living standards of those living 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. The realization of "decent work" has been positioned as a primary objective of the activities of the International Labor Organization (ILO), which marks its 100th anniversary in 2019.

In view of this, Japan is also engaged in development cooperation in the field of labor. In 2017, Japan offered technical cooperation to developing countries in the Asia Pacific region, including the development of labor laws related to social security, capacity building, and occupational health and safety, as well as the improvement of enforcement systems,

by making voluntary contributions to the ILO and providing support to networks of international labor organizations.

In May, the ILO Director-General Ryder visited Japan for the first time in four years. He paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Abe and Foreign Minister Kishida, and signed a memorandum of cooperation with Minister of Health, Labor and Welfare Yasuhisa Shiozaki to affirm the strengthening of cooperation between Japan and the ILO.

(4) Environmental Issues and Climate Change

A Global Environmental Issues

There is growing awareness internationally of the importance of efforts to address the global environmental issues. For example, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets out goals for the environmental sector. Japan is fully engaged in conserving the natural environment and realizing sustainable development, through its active participation in negotiations and encouragement of other parties in international organizations concerning multilateral environmental treaties and environmental matters. At the third session of the UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-3) held in Nairobi, Kenya in December, discussions were held to further advance international cooperation in the field of the environment.

(A) Conservation of Biodiversity

Japan ratified the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization to the Convention on Biological Diversity, and the Nagoya–Kuala Lumpur Supplementary Protocol on Liability and Redress to the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, under the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), in May and December respectively. Japan will further promote international cooperation towards the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use, including the faithful implementation of these protocols.

In recent years, illegal trade of wildlife, such as elephants and rhinoceros, is becoming an increasingly severe issue. It is also drawing the attention of the international community as one of the sources of funding for international terrorist organizations. In light of this situation, the UN Resolution on Tackling Illicit Trafficking in Wildlife was adopted for the third consecutive year at the UN General Assembly held in September. Japan participated as a co-sponsor of the resolution, just as it did in the previous times.

In November, at the 53rd Council of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO) held in Lima, Peru, discussions were held on the promotion of sustainable forest management.

(B) International Management of Hazardous Chemicals/Hazardous Waste

In August, the Minamata Convention on Mercury entered into force. This Convention sets out comprehensive regulations for mitigating the risks that mercury poses to human health and the environment. In September, the first meeting of the Conference of the Parties was held in Geneva, Switzerland, and was attended by 68 countries that are party to the Convention including Japan. Japan took a proactive stance in communicating its technology and knowhow on preventing

damage from mercury to the world, and declared that it will continue to exert its leadership with the aim of promoting global mercury countermeasures.

In November, the 11th Conference of Parties to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer, as well as the 29th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, were jointly held in Montreal, Canada. At these conferences, discussions were held on the enforcement of production and consumption regulations for substances that are destructive to the ozone layer, based on the adoption of the amendment made previous year to add hydrofluorocarbons (HFC) to the list of controlled substances under the Protocol.

(C) Conservation of the Marine Environment

In June, the UN Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 was held at the UN Headquarters in New York. During the conference, discussions were held on promoting efforts that are focused on the conservation and sustainable use of the seas and marine resources. Japan provided information about measures to counter marine waste and acidification of the seas, as well as its cooperation towards the international conferences of Pacific Alliance Leaders Meeting (PALM) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). It also declared its intention to continue contributing to the realization of SDG 14.

At the G20 Hamburg Summit (Germany) held in July, a declaration was made on the establishment of two initiatives: the G20 Resource Efficiency Dialogue, and the G20 Action Plan on Marine Litter.

At the 12th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the London Convention (Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter) held in September, the implementation of the strategic plans and the draft operational plan were adopted.

With regard to the conservation of the marine environment of the Sea of Japan and the Yellow Sea, the 22nd Intergovernmental Meeting for the Northwest Pacific Action Plan (NOWPAP), which involves cooperation among Japan, China, South Korea, and Russia, was held in Toyama in December. At this meeting, an agreement was reached on the Mid-Term Strategy for NOWPAP covering 2018 to 2023, as well as the Regional Action Plan on Marine Litter.

B Climate Change

(A) Entry into Force of the Paris Agreement, and the 23rd Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP23)

A concerted effort by the international community is 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. As a result of active negotiations spanning several years, including the "Durban Agreement" of 2011[4], the Paris Agreement was adopted at COP21 held

4 Contents included (1) Agreement on a new legal framework for all countries to participate by the year 2015; (2) The entry into force of the same framework from 2020. Decided on at COP17.

in Paris in December 2015. The Paris agreement is a fair and effective framework that provides for the submission of greenhouse gas emission reduction targets (nationally determined contribution) by each country, with no distinction between developing and developed countries, and for the implementation of measures toward the achievement of these targets. This Agreement entered into force in November 2016, and has been ratified by more than 170 countries including Japan (as of December 2017). The U.S. announced its intention to withdraw from the Paris Agreement in June 2017, but it has continued to participate in climate change negotiations at COP and other fora.

In November 2017, COP23 was held in Bonn, Germany under the chairmanship of Fiji. At COP23, the focus of discussions was placed on developing discussions on the implementation guidelines of the Paris Agreement to be adopted by 2018 in accordance with the decision at COP22 in 2016. Japan participated in COP23 with three main objectives: (1) furthering discussions on the implementation guidelines of the Paris Agreement, (2) completion of the design of Talanoa Dialogue, which is a facilitative dialogue to stocktake collective efforts to reduce emissions which will be started in 2018 and (3) accelerating Global Climate Action. The three objectives were largely achieved in various aspects of the outcomes of the conference. Some developing countries pushed for reopening the Paris Agreement. They maintained their pre-Paris positions that only developed countries were required to take actions, and also argued for treating all agendas equally on the time allocation and the format of outcome of the session. Developed countries were opposed to these arguments, and Japan emphasized that the guidelines should promote all countries' efforts on climate change and should not be bifurcated. Since there are clear differences between views of developed and developing countries, the challenge will remain in finding a way to develop the guidelines constructively while maintaining the mandate of the Paris Agreement. Japan contributed to the success of CPO23 by supporting Fiji, the COP23 Presidency, on both negotiation and promotion of global climate actions, including offering various forms of support such as organizing the Reginal Workshop to prepare for COP23 in the Asia-Pacific. Japan actively participates in the development of the Agreement through close collaboration with related countries.

(B) Approach on Support for Developing Countries

As many developing countries are unable to adequately implement climate change policies with solely their own funds and implementation capabilities, developed countries including Japan are engaged in initiatives to provide active support for developing countries. From this perspective, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) also plays an important role as a multilateral fund that provides support to developing countries for adapting to the impact of greenhouse gas emission reductions and climate change. Japan contributes funds to the GCF based on the Act on Contribution to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) and the Accompanying Measures enacted in 2015, and participates actively in the management of the Fund as a board member of GCF, including the selection of projects to provide support to.

As of December 2017, the GCF Board has approved 54 projects to support.

(C) Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)

The JCM is a mechanism for evaluating contributions from Japan to GHG emission reductions or removals in a quantitative manner, and using them to achieve Japan's emission reduction target through the diffusion of leading low carbon technologies, as well as implementation of mitigation actions in developing countries. The mechanism also contributes to addressing climate change on a global scale. As of December 2017, Japan has established the JCM with 17 partner countries, and implemented more than 120 projects related to the reduction or removal of greenhouse gases. In 2017, the initiative has steadily produced results, with the issuance of credits from JCM projects in Mongolia and Viet Nam.

(D) Japan's Initiatives on Climate Change and Fragility Risk

The view that climate change can have an impact on the stability of economies and societies in every country has been growing increasingly prevalent in recent years, alongside with growing interest in its impact on security such as conflicts and peacebuilding. Against this backdrop, a roundtable seminar was held in January 2017, attended by guests such as representatives from the G7 countries and experts from Japan and abroad. This seminar was held as a part of initiatives on the fragility risk of climate change, on which discussions have been ongoing at the G7 Ministerial Meetings and Working Groups. Thereafter, a report titled "Analysis and Proposal of Foreign Policies Regarding the Impact of Climate Change on Fragility in the Asia-Pacific Region –With focus on natural disasters in the Region –" was drawn up on this theme, based on hints and ideas gained from the various experts from Japan and abroad. This report was published in September. The contents of this report as well as discoveries were presented as Japan's contributions at the G7 Climate Change and Fragility Working Group held in Italy in October, and also introduced to the Pacific countries participating in the COP preparatory workshop in Fiji in September. Furthermore, it was also presented at a side event at the Japanese pavilion at COP23, and was received favorably by the attendees on all the occasions.

(5) Arctic and Antarctic

A Arctic

(A) The Rapidly Changing Arctic Environment, and Japan's Response

There is a risk that rapid changes in the Arctic environment caused by global warming (melting of sea ice, permafrost, ice sheet and glaciers, etc.) will have a drastic and irreversible impact on the ecology and the lives of those living in the Arctic, including indigenous peoples. At the same time, as the decreasing amount of sea ice has expanded the navigable area, there has been growing interest in new possibilities and economic activities such as the use of the Northern Sea Route and the development of mineral and biological resources.

Discussions are ongoing about appropriate economic activities that could enable sustainable development while conserving such an Arctic environment. Furthermore, international fora including the Arctic Council (AC) and International

Maritime Organization (IMO) have been working on international rule-making in order to ensure the actions are based on the rule of law on issues of territorial rights and maritime delimitation in the Arctic.

On the basis of increased interest by the international community over the Arctic, and in order to define the policy for more specific measures, the government adopted "Japan's Arctic Policy" in October 2015 as its first comprehensive Arctic policy, which clarified Japan's approach to the Arctic.

(B) Japan's International Activities on the Arctic

Based on this policy, Japan contributes to the international community in addressing Arctic issues by making use of its particular strength in science and technology.

a. Research and Development

To promote Arctic research that contributes to global policy decision making and problem solving, the Arctic Challenge for Sustainability (ArCS) project was launched in FY2015. Efforts such as international collaborative research in the Arctic and cooperative systems with stakeholders are continuously strengthened. Japan also promotes international cooperation in research and human resource development at research and observation stations in the Arctic regions of the U.S., Canada, Russia, Norway, and Greenland (Denmark).

b. International Cooperation

Ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs Keiji Ide attended the Senior Arctic Official (SAO) meetings of the AC, in which Japan was formally admitted as an observer in 2013. He also participated in the international conferences on the Arctic organized by Russia, Iceland, Finland, and Denmark, and actively presented Japan's engagements and thoughts over the Arctic. Furthermore, he held consultations on the Arctic with the relevant countries, including the Arctic States. Japanese researchers presented outcomes of their research on the Arctic at the AC working groups which deal with specific themes. They also collaborate with researchers from other countries towards the resolution of the Arctic issues.

Japan hosted the Second Trilateral High-Level Dialogue on the Arctic among Japan, China and the ROK in Tokyo in June. The Dialogue was launched at the 6th Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit held in 2015. It was attended by the Ambassadors in charge of Arctic Affairs and the Special Representative for the Arctic from the three countries, and adopted the joint declaration which includes the importance of maintaining cooperation based on a rule-based maritime order, and cooperative projects on scientific research by the three countries.

The Second Trilateral High-Level Dialogue on the Arctic (June 8, Tokyo)

c. Sustainable Use

Amidst growing interest by the international community in the future potential of the Northern Sea Route, Japan participates in international discussions, including the AC, and emphasizes the importance of international cooperation over the issues such as the stable use of the sea route and the development of an environment for that purpose, impacts of shipping on the maritime environment and securing the safety of navigation.

B Antarctic

(A) The Antarctic Treaty

The Antarctic Treaty adopted in 1959 sets forth the following three basic principles: (1) the use of the Antarctica for peaceful purposes, (2) freedom of scientific investigations and international cooperation, and (3) a freeze on territorial rights and claims.

(B) The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and the Protection of Antarctic Environment

At the 40th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM 40) held in Beijing, China, from May 22 to June 1, active discussions were held about tourism and activities by non-governmental organizations in the Antarctic. At the same time, guidelines on dealing with emergency situations and other matters were revised, while procedures and guidelines were drawn up for new applications for the qualification to be parties to the ATCM. In addition, Mr. Lluberas (from Uruguay) was elected as the incoming Executive Secretary (to assume office in September), succeeding Dr. Reinke (from Germany), whose term ends this year.

(C) Japan's Antarctic Observation

Based on the 9th six-year plan of the Japanese Antarctic Research Expedition (2016 to 2021), Japan is undertaking efforts to elucidate the global system and changes in the global environment, as well as to predict its future. To that end, in addition to long-term continuous observation, it is also implementing various research and observation activities, including observation using large aperture atmospheric radar.

3 Science and Technology Diplomacy

Prof. Teruo Kishi (Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs) supports the activities of the Foreign Minister from the perspective of science and technology, and provides advice on the utilization of science and technology in the planning and coordination of various foreign policies to the Minister and relevant divisions. He also takes part in public relations activities concerning Japan's science and technology diplomacy, while strengthening partnerships with Japanese and foreign stakeholders in the fields of science and technology.

In 2017, the Advisory Board for the Promotion of Science and Technology Diplomacy, chaired by the Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, as well as Study Group Meetings were held, and participants engaged in discussions about the utilization of science and technology in ways that contribute to the implementation of the SDGs and Arctic diplomacy.

As a result of these discussions, the Advisory Board for the Promotion of Science and Technology Diplomacy drew up its Recommendation for the Future in May,

aimed at the implementation of the SDGs, and this document was submitted by Science and Technology Advisor Kishi to Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida. The recommendation is based on the following four pillars: For Japan's diplomacy to (1) present a future vision of "change through innovation," (2) "grasp and solve" the challenges by use of scientific data on a global scale, (3) "link" and "unite" across different sectors, regions and states, and (4) "foster" human resources who can support these initiatives. Based on these, it establishes that Japan's diplomacy should play an active leading role in the implementation of the SDGs.

In August, a working group chaired by Dr. Takashi Shiraishi, a member of the Advisory Board for the Promotion of Science and Technology Diplomacy, drew up and published a report entitled "Achievements and Future Directions of Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan." This report establishes that the building of a scientific advisory system for diplomacy through the Advisor creates a new unique character for Japan's diplomacy, and concludes that this Advisor system should continue into the future to promote Japan's initiatives in science and technology diplomacy.

Furthermore, the Advisor also implemented a project to publicize science and technology innovation through cooperation with the Cabinet Office and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs[5] in various countries[6], with the aim of enhancing Japan's capability of disseminating information about its prominent scientific and technological strength, and discussed the potential for future cooperation with the relevant organizations and researchers from the partner countries.

The Advisor has also attended various international conferences alongside with the science and technology advisors of other countries including the U.S., UK, and New Zealand, engaged in exchanges of opinions, and strived to build and strengthen networks. Together with the advisors of the other countries, he has also co-authored academic papers. In addition to these efforts, the Advisor widely publicizes Japan's efforts in science and technology diplomacy at various fora in Japan and abroad. To raise the level of knowledge within MOFA, science and technology diplomacy seminars are also held periodically.

Japan has concluded 32 science and technology cooperation agreements, and these are now in force with 46 countries and the EU[7]. Based on these agreements, it organizes regular joint committee meetings with these countries to engage in intergovernmental dialogue. In 2017, joint committee meetings were held with India, France, Italy, Slovenia, the EU, South Africa, and Bulgaria respectively. Attended

5 Project (known as "SIP Caravan") to introduce the SIP (Strategic Innovation Promotion Program), which is a new type of Japanese national project for science, technology and innovation, spearheaded by the Council for Science, Technology and Innovation (CSTI) as it exercises its headquarters function to accomplish its role in leading science, technology and innovation beyond the framework of government ministries and traditional disciplines by facilitating coordination among government, industry and academic entities under 11 themes, in order to lay the groundwork for future international cooperation, as well as for the international dissemination of Japan's research and development output, through cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (diplomatic missions overseas).

6 Implemented in Indonesia in March 2017, in the Philippines and Thailand in June 2017, and in the Netherlands in September 2017.

7 The Japan-USSR Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement was succeeded by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Uzbekistan, Armenia, Georgia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Turkmenistan, and Tajikistan on different dates. The Japan-Czechoslovakia Science and Technology Cooperation Arrangement was succeeded by individual agreements with the Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1993. The Japan-Yugoslavia Science and Technology Cooperation Agreement was succeeded by individual agreements with Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Montenegro on different dates.

State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sonoura attending the fourth meeting of the Advisory Board for the Promotion of Science and Technology Diplomacy (April 27, Tokyo)

Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs Kishi visiting the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN) (September 14, Geneva, Switzerland)

by delegates from the relevant ministries and institutions, consultations were held on the current status of cooperation in diverse sectors, and on the future direction of cooperation, contributing to promoting science and technology exchange. The meeting with Bulgaria was the first to be held in 19 years.

With regard to multilateral cooperation, as a member of the Board of the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC) that supports research for peaceful purposes conducted by researchers on weapons of mass destruction from the former Soviet Union, Japan works together with the U.S. and the EU to provide support mainly to countries of Central Asia. Japan also participates in ITER projects.

Column

STI for SDGs: Science, Technology, and Innovation as a "Bridging Force"

Michiharu Nakamura
Counsellor to the President, Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST)

I have been working in Japan's industrial sector for many years, and have been involved in science, technology, and innovation (STI) from the perspective of research and development. We could say that the role of *monozukuri* (production with a focus on craftsmanship) is to give form to scientific discoveries in a way that matches the needs of the real world, thereby contributing to making the world a better place.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), established by the United Nations for 2030, place its expectations in the utilization of STI for the realization of the SDGs, and put in place mechanisms to promote international cooperation. What should Japan, which has consistently asserted its goal of becoming a science- and technology-oriented nation, do to achieve this end? In this respect, I have accepted the role of coordinator with the responsibility of consolidating views to make the necessary recommendations from the Advisory Board for the Promotion of Science and Technology Diplomacy.

In order to draw up the recommendations, I engaged in discussions with actors who are engaged in a wide range of fields including the maritime sector, space, basic science, academia, and industry, on the approach for "STI for SDGs," in view that the SDGs aim to resolve the diverse issues confronting humankind in a comprehensive and inclusive manner. In particular, we affirmed that Japan's initiatives towards realizing Society 5.0, as well as expanding and deepening international cooperation through Science and Technology Research Partnership for Sustainable Development (SATREPS) and other programs, can contribute to the sustainable development of the global community. Furthermore, we also reaffirmed that science and technology play an important role in Japan's diplomacy. The "Recommendation for the Future" completed in May 2017 as the outcome of these discussions, sets out four concrete actions in relation to the direction of "STI for SDGs." These are: presenting the vision for a future society (Society 5.0), problem-solving through the application of data, partnership that transcends countries and sectors, and the development of human resources who will play a key role in "STI for SDGs."

After that, I attended the second STI Forum held at the UN Headquarters in New York, together with the members who were involved in drawing up the recommendations. Bringing together 700 participants in the governmental, university, corporate, NGO, and other sectors of 100 countries, this two-day discussion focused on human resource development, collaboration with stakeholders, and the importance of the involvement of businesses, among other topics. These themes overlapped with the contents of our recommendation. The respective countries placed their expectations on Japan as a leader setting the precedence in efforts towards the realization of the SDGs, and anticipated the presentation of model cases by Japan.

The Recommendation for the Future described STI as a "bridging force." Amidst our complex feelings of expectation and anxiety towards new technologies that are evolving rapidly in the present day, such as artificial intelligence and robots, instead of leaving technology to grow and develop on its own, I felt keenly the growing importance of taking the lead in the development of STI and making it a bridging force towards a human-centered society of the future, from the perspective of our vision on how human society should become 50 years or 100 years into the future.

We could say that the SDGs hold the key to identifying the issues that should be resolved by harnessing STI. Furthermore, promoting "social application" on a global scale into the future, with the aim of enabling research outcomes to take root and spread across the real world, can also bring us closer towards the realization of the SDGs.

Second Multi-stakeholder Forum on Science, Technology and Innovation for the SDGs (STI Forum) (May 15 - 16, New York, U.S.)

Section 3 Economic Diplomacy

Overview

(Recognition of the Economic Situation and Japan's Economic Diplomacy)

Although the world economy has been on a recovery trend in 2017, the recovery has not been a complete one; the downside risk is still present in the medium-term, and it is necessary to establish a robust foundation for the economy precisely at this time when the economy is improving. Based on this recognition of the economic conditions, Japan has set out a strategic target that aims, in its economic diplomacy, to maintain and strengthen an international economic system that is free and open, and founded upon the rule of law. Alongside this, it has moved forward on the four dimensions of negotiations, namely the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement, the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP), and the Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue. The four dimensions of Japan's economic diplomacy are not dealt with separately as individual issues; rather, they have been tackled based on the basic strategy of expanding a network of free trade across the world with Japan as a central hub, and at the same time, creating a virtuous cycle where the dimensions are deeply linked to one another, and where the conclusion of one negotiation gives impetus to other negotiations. Based on this strategy, in 2017, Japan-U.S. economic relations advanced smoothly through the establishment of the Japan-U.S. Economic Dialogue, an agreement in principle was reached for the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP11), and negotiations of the Japan-EU EPA were finalized. Furthermore, in March 2018, Japan signed the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP11 Agreement).

Japan has developed its economic diplomacy with the aim of further accelerating the promotion of economic diplomacy as one of the priority areas of Japan's diplomacy, centered around the following three aspects: (1) rule-making to bolster free and open global economic systems by promoting the mega-EPA as described above; (2) supporting the overseas business expansion of Japanese companies through promotion of public-private partnerships; and (3) promoting

resources diplomacy along with inward investment towards Japan.

(1) Promotion of Economic Partnerships

The promotion of high-level economic partnerships constitutes one of the pillars of the Growth Strategy, which aims to raise the FTA ratio to 70% (18.9% in 2012) by 2018. The Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement signed in February 2016 establishes new trade and investment rules in the Asia-Pacific, and creates a huge economic zone. The inauguration of the President Trump's new administration in the U.S. in January 2017 saw the U.S. declare its withdrawal from the TPP Agreement. However, under Japan's leadership, 11 countries signed the TPP11 Agreement in Santiago, Chile, in March 2018. Furthermore, negotiations of the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) were finalized in December 2017. While aiming for the signing and entering into force of these agreements, Japan aims to continue contributing to global rule-making on trade and investment by carrying out various negotiations in parallel, including the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) and the Japan-China-ROK FTA.

(2) Multilateral Trade Liberalization (WTO)

The multilateral trading system centered on the World Trade Organization (WTO) plays a vital role in negotiations aimed at trade liberalization as well as putting existing rules into practice, including disputes settlement. With regard to WTO negotiations that have been stalled for many years, efforts are ongoing to explore approaches towards revitalization, including addressing issues that are current and relevant to the times. At the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC11) held in December, a ministerial declaration based on consensus among the WTO Members was not issued. However, with respect to issues such as e-commerce and fisheries subsidies, post-MC11 work programmes were decided upon, and ministerial statements by like-minded Members were issued. In the fields of e-commerce, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and investment facilitation. Such efforts by like-minded Members point to a new approach in the WTO. In particular, with regard to e-commerce, Japan demonstrated its leadership in the discussion process, and 71 Members, including the U.S., EU, and developing countries, participated in the joint statement.

(3) International Discussions Led by Japan

Concerning the G7 Summit, where the leaders of developed countries meet to discuss policy cooperation, the G7 Taormina Summit was held in May under the Presidency of Italy. Half of the G7 leaders, including the U.S. President Trump, were participating in the G7 for the first time, marking an "era of change" in the G7. At the same time, candid discussions were held on the matters of securing peace and stability in the world, as well as realizing inclusive growth in the global economy, against the growing severity of problems such as the issues of North Korea, terrorism and violent extremism, and refugees. In addition to deepening the personal relationships of trust between the respective leaders, the leaders concurred that the G7, as a driving force of an

international community established based on rules and the sharing of fundamental values, will stand more united than ever before to address these issues.

At the G20 Hamburg Summit (Germany) held in July, the leaders engaged in a frank exchange of opinions on topics under the theme of "Shaping an interconnected world," including the question of how the G20 can work together to address various downside risks while strengthening growth amidst global economy that remains at a moderate level alongside the presence of such risks of a downward turn. Concerning the response to problems such as the global economy, trade, and excess capacity, which were also regarded as issues of importance at the G7 Taormina Summit, Prime Minister Abe and other Japanese representatives lobbied strongly for the causes, contributing to agreement among the G20 on the relevant commitments to these issues. With the support of the G20 leaders, it was decided that Japan will assume G20 Presidency in 2019.

Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) is an economic cooperation framework in which 21 countries and regions from the Asia-Pacific Region participate. At the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Da Nang, Viet Nam, in November 2017, extensive discussions took place on a wide range of topics, including deepening regional economic integration, strengthening MSME's competitiveness and innovation in the digital age, and promoting sustainable, innovative and inclusive growth. Prime Minister Abe commented about Japan's proactive stance for establishing "free and fair" trade rules, as well as Japan's initiatives such as the "productivity revolution," the "human resources development revolution," and "digital trade," to the world.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is the "world's largest think tank," covering a wide range of economic and social issues. At the Ministerial Council Meeting held in June, discussions were held on the theme of "Globalization." Japan emphasized the importance of maintaining and strengthening the multilateral trading system, ensuring level playing field, and developing "quality infrastructure with open and fair access," all of which were reflected in the outcome documents of the meeting. In this way, Japan contributed to discussions in the OECD. Coinciding with the Ministerial Council Meeting, a signing ceremony was held for the Multilateral Convention to Implement Tax Treaty Related Measures to Prevent Base Erosion and Profit Shifting ("Multilateral Instrument" or "MLI").

(Supporting the Overseas Business Expansion of Japanese Companies through Promotion of Public-Private Partnerships)

(1) Support for Japanese Companies' Overseas Business Expansion

The Government of Japan places great importance on promoting the overseas businesses of Japanese companies to incorporate the vigorous economic growth in foreign countries, including emerging countries, and to promote the steady growth of the Japanese economy. Concerning the support it offers for overseas business expansion of Japanese companies, Japan has been engaged in nationwide efforts towards the achievement of concrete Government goals, such as, for example, "achieving the Government's target of approximately

30 trillion yen in infrastructure exports by 2020" and "one trillion yen in exports of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products and food by 2019."

Against this backdrop, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been working closely with diplomatic missions overseas, which serve as the liaison for Japanese companies in each country. It is also developing systems to support businesses in the respective countries, such as by establishing offices to support Japanese businesses and assigning officers in charge of infrastructure projects as well as business support officers (in charge of the food industry) at the relevant diplomatic missions overseas. The diplomatic missions overseas provide various consultation services, and support overseas expansion by Japanese companies in ways such as providing support for activities to promote Japanese products through the utilization of the diplomatic missions' facilities, and organizing seminars to help Japanese companies ensure that they are compliant with the local legal systems. In FY2016, the number of consultation cases received by Japanese embassies and consulates-general around the world reached 53,675, exceeding the 46,762 cases from the previous year. This number is expected to continue rising.

(2) Import Regulations on Agricultural, Forestry, and Fishery Produce as well as Food Products Produced in Japan

The Governments of the ROK, Singapore, Taiwan, China, Hong Kong, Macao, and Russia are maintaining the import restrictions, including import suspension, they have placed on agricultural, forestry, and fishery produce as well as food products produced in Japan, due to the Great East Japan Earthquake and the accident at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. MOFA has been disseminating accurate information promptly to the Governments and general public of these countries and regions, and has been tirelessly urging them to abolish the restrictions as soon as possible based on scientific evidence. After 2017, six countries, namely Qatar, Ukraine, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, and Turkey, have abolished such regulations, while the U.S., EU, and others have further relaxed restrictions.

(Promoting of Resources Diplomacy along with Foreign Direct Investment in Japan)

(1) Energy, Mineral Resources and Food Security

For Japan, which is dependent on other countries for many resources, efforts to secure a stable and cheap supply of resources remain important. MOFA is making use of various means of diplomacy in an effort to strengthen comprehensive and mutually-beneficial relationships with resource-producing countries, and to engage in strategic resource diplomacy such as by diversifying the supplier countries. In light of the structural changes arising in the energy industry worldwide in recent years, a new vision was launched in July 2017 after numerous reviews on the approach for new energy and resource diplomacy policies in the future (See Column "Japan's New Energy and Resource Diplomacy - Unveiling the "Global Vision" -").

As for food security, faced with the possibility of global food shortages in the future, Japan has been implementing initiatives to secure a stable food supply through balancing the world's food supply

and demand by increasing the world food production. Taking the opportunity of Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Director General Graziano's first visit to Japan in four years in 2017, Japan put effort into further strengthening its relationship with the FAO. (See Column "Strengthening Relations with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)").

(2) Sustainable Use of Living Marine Resources

As one of the responsible major fishing and consuming countries in the world, Japan has a basic policy of proper conservation and management and sustainable use of living marine resources. As such, Japan plays an active role as a member of many Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), which are the most important international organizations to decide and enforce conservation and management of fisheries resources. On the whaling issue, although the international situation remains difficult, Japan is making persistent efforts to deepen understanding among the international community, based on scientific evidence and international law, under the basic policy that diversity in culture and customs should be respected in the sustainable use of whale resources.

(3) Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan

The Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan, formed in 2014, has been spearheading government-wide initiatives to find or attract investments, or realize the necessary systematic reforms in aiming to achieve the goal of doubling foreign companies' direct investment in Japan to 35 trillion yen by 2020, as addressed in the Government's Growth Strategy.

As an initiative to make use of diplomatic resources, MOFA has been engaging proactively in calling for investments in Japan and holding events to promote it through "contact points for Direct Investment towards Japan," established at 126 diplomatic missions overseas. Additionally, a variety of strategic initiatives have been implemented both domestically and internationally through top-level sales carried out by government officials, and cooperation with related organizations such as the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO).

1 Rule-Making to Bolster Free and Open Global Economic Systems

(1) Promotion of Economic Partnerships

Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) 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 trade barriers on services, and through trade and investment rule making. The Government of Japan has signed and brought into force 16 EPAs with 20 countries. In order to achieve the goal set out in the "Growth Strategy" to increase the FTA ratio in Japan's trade (the ratio of trade value with countries which have FTAs already signed or entered into force with Japan to the total trade value) to 70% by 2018 from 18.9% in 2012, Japan is strategically promoting economic partnerships including those with the Asia-Pacific region and Europe. One of the

outcomes of these efforts was the signing of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP11 Agreement) by 11 countries in March 2018. In addition, active and tireless negotiations spanning many long years have also borne fruit, as exemplified by the finalization of negotiations of the Japan-EU EPA in December 2017.

Japan, as a champion of free trade, will work towards the early entry into force of the Japan-EU EPA and TPP11, and will continue to promote other negotiations on economic cooperation in the future.

A Multilateral Agreements (Mega FTAs)

(A) Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement

The TPP Agreement is an effort to establish new trade and investment rules in the rapidly-growing Asia-Pacific Region. The 12 countries, namely Japan, Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the U.S., and Viet Nam, participated in negotiations, and the TPP Agreement was signed in February 2016. If the TPP Agreement enters into force, it will form a free and fair "single economic zone" while creating a huge value chain.

This Agreement will establish 21st century rules in a wide range of areas, including tariffs, services, investments, intellectual property, and state-owned enterprises. It will provide Japanese companies an opportunity to be more active in markets overseas, and will be a major driving force for the economic growth of Japan. Furthermore, strengthening the rule of law from an economic perspective through the TPP Agreement with countries that share fundamental values will have a strategic significance of contributing to Japan's security, and stability of the Asia-Pacific region.

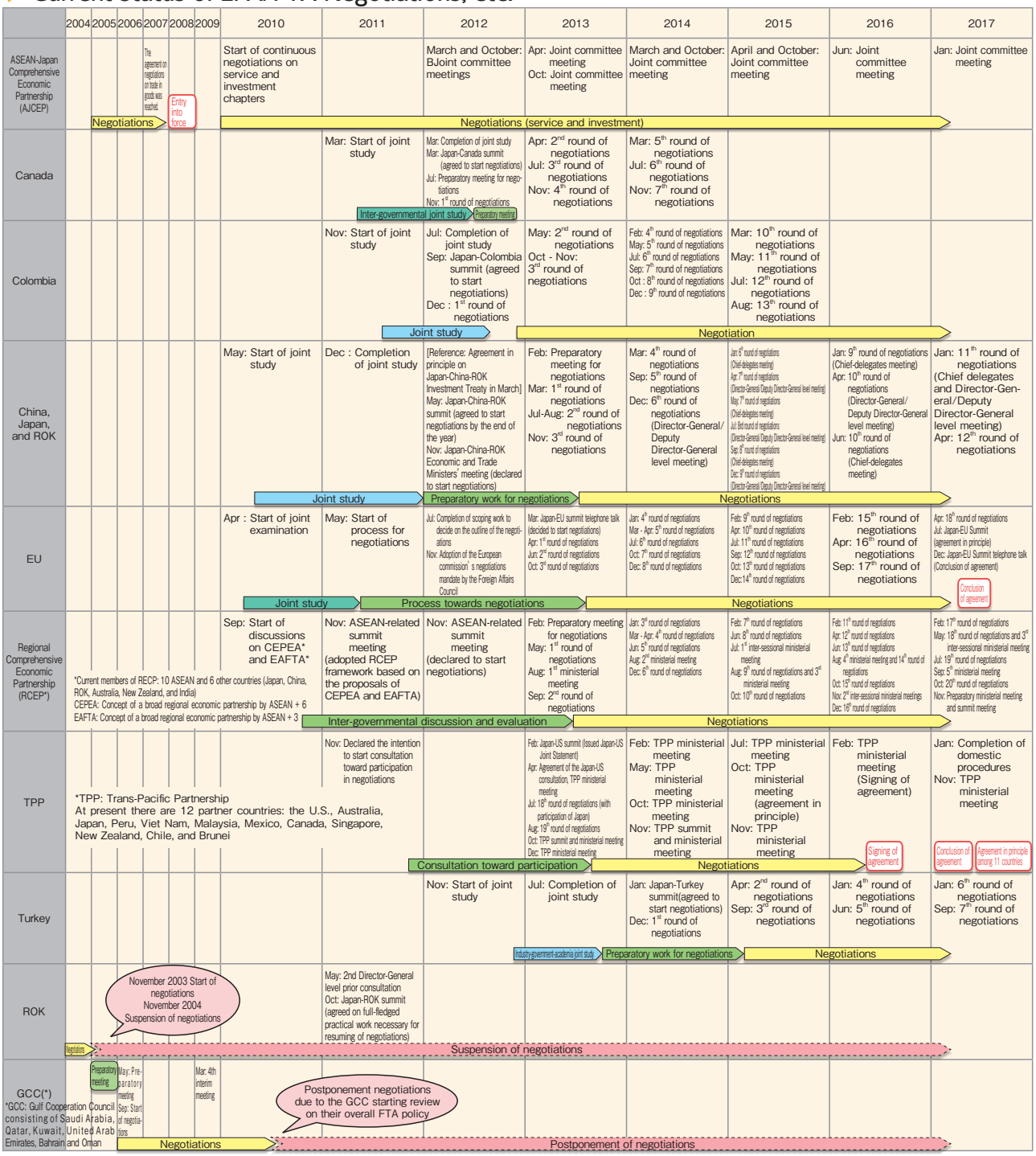
In Japan, domestic procedures for the TPP Agreement were completed in January 2017. Domestic procedures were also completed in New Zealand, which is designated as the Depositary of the Agreement, in May 2017. However, in January 2017, President Trump's new administration in the U.S. announced its withdrawal from the TPP Agreement. While the Agreement cannot enter into force without the U.S. based on the provisions for the entering into force of the Agreement, the TPP Agreement still has great economic and strategic significance as described above.

As such, in order to bring about the early realization of the TPP as soon as possible among the 11 countries, Japan took the lead in dynamic discussions. At the TPP Ministerial Meeting held in Da Nang (Viet Nam) in November 2017, ministers agreed to move forward on the TPP among 11 countries by incorporating the articles of the original TPP Agreement drawn up by the 12 countries into a new agreement entitled "Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP11 Agreement)," and through the exceptional suspension of the application of some of the articles (agreement in principle). Subsequently, the TPP11 was signed in Santiago, Chile, in March 2018. Amidst the spreading wave of protectionism around the world, this served as a powerful message from Japan, a standard-bearer of free trade, to the world. Japan will continue to aim for the early entry into force of the Agreement.

(B) Japan-EU EPA

After Japan decided to launch negotiations

Current Status of EPA/FTA Negotiations, etc.

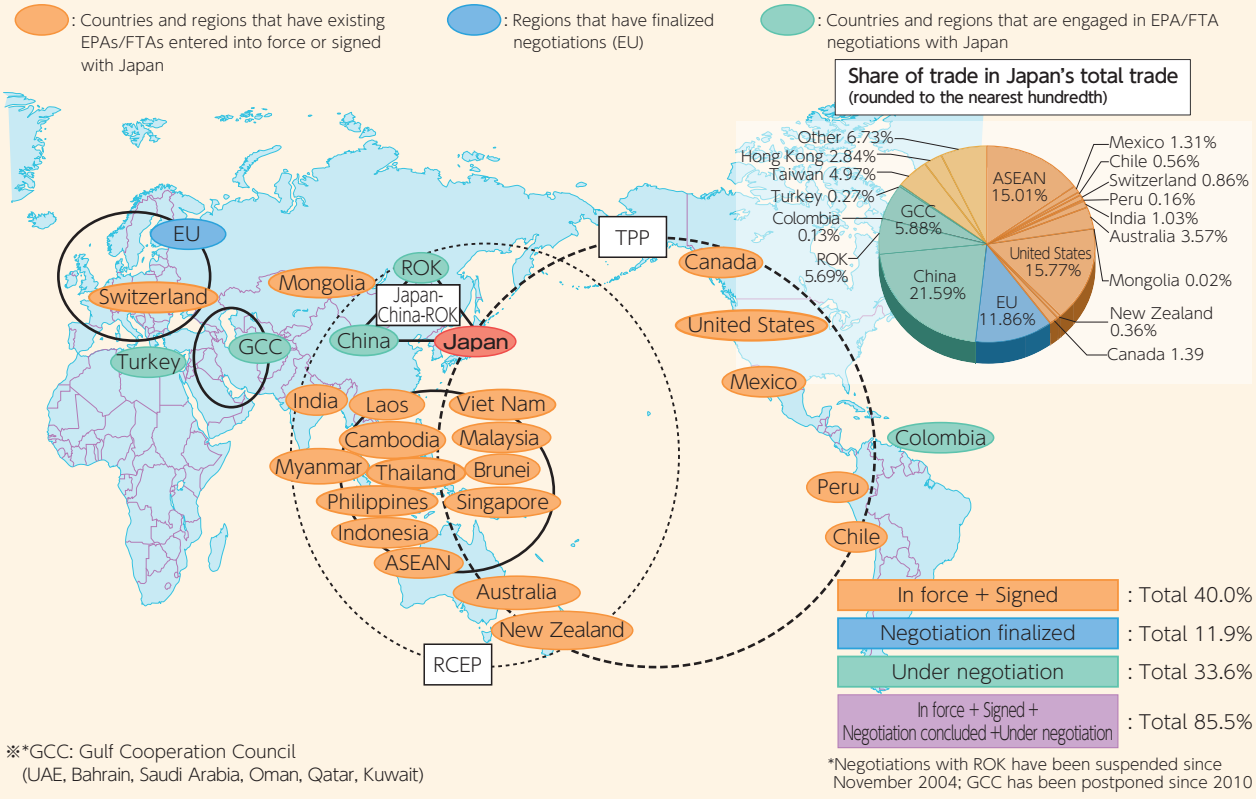


on EPA in March 2013 with the EU, which shares fundamental values and is a major trade and investment partner for Japan, the agreement in principle was reached in July 2017 after four years and three months of negotiations. Negotiations were finalized in December.

Since negotiations on the Japan-EU EPA commenced, the Government has been working as one and engaging actively in negotiations. In particular, at the meeting between Foreign Minister Kishida and European Commissioner for Trade Malmström held in Bonn (Germany) in February 2017, the Japan-EU EPA was positioned as an issue of top priority between Japan and the EU, and the two parties reaffirmed the great importance of

Japan's Initiatives on Economic Partnership Agreement (EPAs)

- 16 Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) have entered into force or been signed with 20 countries to date
- 40.0% of Japan's overall trade is conducted with countries which have EPAs entered into force or signed with Japan
  (*24.2% for TPP11, excluding the U.S.)(Comparison US: 47.5%; ROK: 67.9%; EU: 33.0%)
  The ratio is expected to rise to 51.9% after signing/entry into force of Japan-EU EPA
  (*36.1% for TPP11, excluding the U.S.) (The ratio for the EU is expected to rise to 36.6%)
- 85.5 % of Japan's overall trade is conducted with countries which have EPAs entered into force, signed, or under negotiation with Japan
  Reference: "Investments for the Future Strategy 2017" sets a policy target of raising the FTA ratio to 70% by 2018



Source: Ministry of Finance, Trade Statistics of Japan (April 2017); IMF Direction of Trade Statistics (April 2017) for data on the U.S., ROK and EU
(The ratio of the trade amount of each country was rounded to the nearest hundredth)

reaching an agreement in principle of the EPA as soon as possible in order to counter protectionism movements. Thereafter, negotiations were accelerated; after the Summit Meeting held in May (Taormina, Italy) and a telephone conversation between Foreign Minister Kishida and European Commissioner for Trade Malmström in June, intensive negotiations took place between them from the end of June to July. To align with the progress and pace of the negotiations, Meetings amongst Main Ministers[1] (Second and Third Meetings) were held in Japan in June and July to make the final adjustments towards the realization of an agreement in principle. After various negotiations and coordination, Foreign Minister Kishida

1 Members include Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary, Minister in Charge of Economic Revitalization, Minister of State in charge of general coordination on the Japan-EU EPA negotiations, Minister for Internal Affairs and Communication, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Minister of Finance, Minister of Health, Labour and Welfare, Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry, and Minister of Land, Infrastructure and Transport.

and European Commissioner for Trade Malmström confirmed the agreement in principle in Brussels (Belgium) on July 5. On the next day, at the 24th EU-Japan Summit held in Brussels as well, Prime Minister Abe, President Tusk of the European Council, and President Juncker of the European Commission confirmed the agreement in principle at the leaders' level.

After the agreement in principle, intensive consultations were carried out in order to finalize negotiations as soon as possible. After telephone talks between Foreign Minister Kono and European Commissioner for Trade Malmström on November 15 and December 8, Prime Minister Abe and President Juncker of the European Commission confirmed the finalization of negotiations over the telephone talk held on the same day.

(C) Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP)

The RCEP is the pillar of East Asian economic integration, aimed at realizing the establishment of a broad and integrated economic zone that covers approximately half of the world population, and about 30% of the world's GDP and total trade amount. Since the launch of negotiations in May 2013, the ASEAN member states and their FTA partner states (six countries, namely Japan, China, the ROK, Australia, New Zealand and India) have been working together to achieve a comprehensive and high-level agreement in areas that include trade in goods, trade in services, investment, competition, rules of origin, intellectual property, and electronic commerce. As of December 2017, nine Ministerial Meetings and 20 rounds of negotiations have been held. At the RCEP Leaders' Summit held in November 2017, coinciding with the ASEAN Summit, the leaders issued a joint statement on the RCEP negotiations. This joint statement reaffirmed their commitment towards achieving a modern, comprehensive, high-quality, and mutually-beneficial economic partnership agreement, and instructed to intensify efforts in 2018 to bring the RCEP negotiations to conclusion.

(D) Japan-China-ROK FTA

The Japan-China-ROK FTA is a negotiation with Japan's major trading partners: China (1st, about 21%) and the ROK (3rd, about 6%). The negotiations were launched in March 2013, and 12 rounds of negotiations were held by April 2017. At the Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit held in November 2015, the leaders confirmed to accelerate the negotiations, and the three countries have been engaged in vigorous discussions over a wide range of fields including trade in goods, investment, trade in services, competition, intellectual property and electronic commerce, with the shared objective of pursuing a comprehensive and high-level FTA.

(E) Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) Concept

For the eventual realization of the FTAAP, discussions are being held in APEC on next-generation trade and investment issues that need to be addressed, and capacity building programs mainly for developing economies are implemented to realize greater inclusiveness. At the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting held in Da Nang, Viet Nam, in 2017, the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to these efforts, and encouraged to develop work programs which enhance APEC economies'

ability to participate in the negotiations for a high-quality and comprehensive free trade agreement in the future.

B Bilateral Agreements and Other Agreements (Arranged in Chronological Order According to the Time at Which Negotiations Started)

(A) Republic of Korea (ROK)

Japan has a mutually dependent and strong economic relationship including trade and investment with the ROK. Based on the recognition that an EPA with the ROK will provide both countries with a stable economic framework and bring about mutual benefits for the future, the two countries launched negotiations in 2003. The negotiations were suspended in 2004, and after that both countries continued working level discussions.

(B) Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)

GCC member states constitute one of the most important regions for Japan as an oil and gas supplier, a market for exporting infrastructure and others. The Japan-GCC FTA negotiations were launched in 2006 to reinforce economic ties with GCC member states, but have been suspended since 2009 on the grounds of the GCC side not being fully ready. Japan has been calling for an early resumption of the negotiations with the aim of further strengthening the economic ties with the GCC.

(C) Canada

In 2012, Japan launched EPA negotiations with Canada, with which Japan shares fundamental values and has a complementary economic relationship. The seventh round of negotiation meetings was held in November 2014 in order to achieve an EPA that can contribute to stable supply of energy, minerals and food from Canada to Japan. Since then, no bilateral negotiations have been held since both countries have focused on TPP Agreement negotiations.

(D) Colombia

In 2012, Japan started EPA negotiations with Colombia, a country which is rich in resources and maintains a high economic growth rate. By December 2017, 13 rounds of negotiations had been held. The EPA is also important for the new nation-building in Columbia after the consolidation of peace in the country, and negotiations are at the final stage.

(E) Turkey

With Turkey, which has high economic potential and promotes an open economy, Japan agreed to launch EPA negotiations at a bilateral Summit Meeting between Prime Minister Erdogan and Prime Minister Abe during Prime Minister Erdogan's visit to Japan in January 2014. Japan and Turkey started EPA negotiations in December 2014. By December 2017, seven rounds of negotiations had been held.

C 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 since the entry into force. In addition, a variety of consultations are held in order to smoothly implement the existing EPAs.

D Movement of Persons

In accordance with the EPAs, Japan

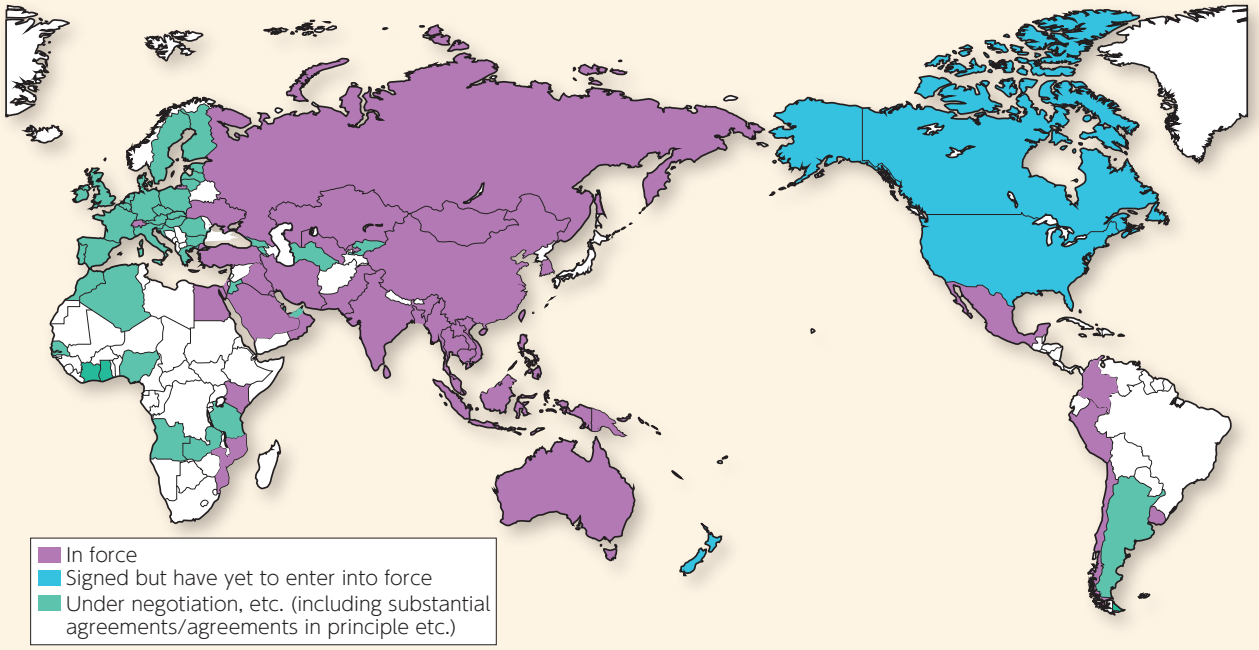
Current Status of Investment Related Treaties

Status of Negotiations on Investment Related Treaties (*) (*) Investment treaties and EPA/FTA including investment chapters

- In force: 41 (29 investment treaties and 12 EPAs)
- Signed but have yet to enter into force: 1 (0 investment treaties and 1 EPAs)

} 44 countries/regions covered

- Under negotiation: 24 (18 investment treaties and 6 EPAs) ——— If these treaties enter into force, 90 countries and regions covered.



■IN FORCE (excluding treaties that have ended) ( ) : Year treaty entered into force *Treaties based on liberalization

Investment treaties

1 Egypt (1978)
2 Sri Lanka (1982)
3 China (1989)
4 Turkey (1993)
5 Hong Kong (1997)
6 Pakistan (2002)
7 Bangladesh (1999)
8 Russia (2000)
9 ROK (2003)*
10 Viet Nam (2004)*
11 Cambodia (2008)*
12 Laos (2008)*
13 Uzbekistan (2009)*
14 Peru (2009)*
15 Papua New Guinea (2014)
16 Kuwait (2014)*
17 Iraq (2014)
18 Japan-China-ROK (2014)
19 Myanmar (2014)*
20 Mozambique (2014)*
21 Colombia (2015)*
22 Kazakhstan (2015)
23 Ukraine (2015)
24 Saudi Arabia (2017)
25 Uruguay (2017)*
26 Iran (2017)
27 Oman (2017)
28 Kenya (2017)
29 Israel (2017)*

Note: Japan has a Japan-Taiwan Private Investment arrangement based on liberalization in 2011.

EPAs including investment chapter

1 Singapore (2002)*
2 Mexico (2005)*
3 Malaysia (2006)*
4 Chile (2007)*
5 Thailand (2007)*
6 Brunei (2008)*
7 Indonesia (2008)*
8 The Philippines (2008)*
9 Switzerland (2009)*
10 India (2011)*
11 Australia (2015)*
12 Mongolia (2016)*

■Under negotiation

Investment Treaty

1 Angola
2 Algeria
3 Qatar
4 The United Arab Emirates
5 Ghana
6 Morocco
7 Tanzania
8 Argentine
9 Cote d'Ivoire
10 Bahrain
11 Turkmenistan
12 Armenia
13 Georgia
14 Jordan
15 Senegal
16 Kyrgyz Republic
17 Nigeria
18 Zambia

EPA/FTA including investment chapters

1 AJCEP*
2 Canada
3 Japan-China-ROK
4 EU
5 RCEP**
6 Turkey

*AJCEP: ASEAN-JAPAN Comprehensive Economic Partnership
**RCEP: Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership

■Signed but have yet to enter into force

- TPP (signed in February 2016 and approved by the Diet) (EPA)*

TPP: TRANS-PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

As of the end of 2017

has been accepting candidates for nurses and certified care workers from Indonesia, the Philippines and Viet Nam. In 2017, 324 Indonesians (29 nurses and 295 care workers), 310 Filipinos (34 nurses and 276 care workers) and 203 Vietnamese (22 nurses and 181 care workers) were accepted into Japan. In 2017, 65 nurses (21 Indonesians, 29 Filipinos, and 15 Vietnamese) and 104 care workers (68

Indonesians and 36 Filipinos) passed the national examination. As for nurses and certified care worker candidates from Viet Nam, Japan began accepting the first group in 2014, and has since accepted a cumulative total of 673 candidates by 2017.

E Investment Treaties/Tax Conventions/ Agreements on Social Security

(A) Investment Treaties

Investment treaties are important pieces of legal infrastructure to promote investments by stipulating the protection of investors and their investment, enhancement of transparency in laws and regulations, expansion of investment opportunities, procedures for investment dispute settlement, etc. In order to promote the improvement of the investment environment overseas and attract foreign investment to the Japanese market, Japan has actively engaged in concluding the investment treaties.

In 2017, investment treaties entered into force with Saudi Arabia, Uruguay, and Iran in April, with Oman in July, with Kenya in September, and with Israel in October respectively. There are currently 41 investment-related treaties that have entered into force (29 investment treaties and 12 EPAs), and one (null investment treaties and one EPA) that has been signed but not yet entered into force, bringing the total to 42, covering 44 countries and regions. Including investment-related treaties that are currently being negotiated, they will cover 90 countries and regions, and around 93% of Japan's direct investments overseas (as of the end of December 2017)[2].

The "Action plan aiming to facilitate an investment environment through promoting the conclusion of investment-related treaties" was formulated in May 2016. It stipulated the goal to sign and enact investment-related treaties with 100 countries and regions by 2020. This goal is also mentioned in the Investments for the Future Strategy 2017. In this context, the Investment Policy Division was established in May 2017, under the Economic Affairs Bureau of MOFA, to fulfill the role of enacting and implementing investment-related policies in an integrated manner.

In an effort to achieve the goals outlined in the Action Plan, Japan intends to engage actively in negotiations to conclude investment-related treaties with the Middle East, Africa, Central and South America, and other resource-producing countries. Japan will continue to actively engage in the conclusion of investment-related treaties from the perspective of incorporating the economic growth of emerging countries through foreign investment, and attracting foreign investment to the Japanese market.

(B) 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 etc.), or to prevent tax evasion or avoidance, and provides an important legal basis for promoting sound investment and economic exchanges between two countries. Initiatives are being implemented proactively in accordance with the policy ("Growth Strategy") of the Government of Japan to expand the tax convention

2 Regional balance of Direct Investment (Assets), Ministry of Finance (All regions) (End 2016)

Special Feature

The Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA)

Joint press conference by Japan and the EU
(July 6, Brussels, Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

On December 8, 2017, after nearly five years of negotiations, Japan and the European Union finalized the negotiations of the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). Amid widening protectionist movements in the world, the agreement in principle was reached in July, and negotiations were finalized in December; the year 2017 could be described as the year when Japan demonstrated to the world its presence as a flag-bearer of free trade through the Japan-EU EPA.

What changes will be brought about when the Japan-EU EPA enters into force? This Special Feature illustrates the merits to be brought by this EPA.

(Securing access to a huge market)

When the Japan-EU EPA enters into force, Japan will be able to capture the massive EU market with 510 million people, and the EPA will create one of the largest free and advanced economic zones in the world, with approximately 640 million people, 28 percent of the world's GDP and 37 percent of the world's trade.

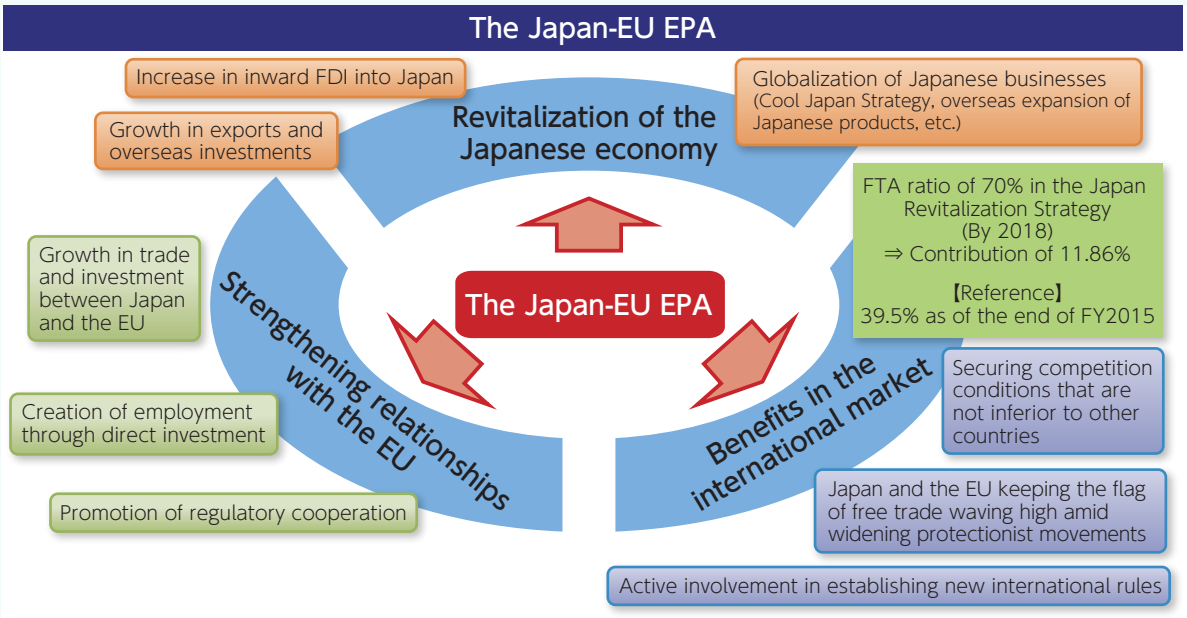
Within this new economic zone, the EU side will eliminate about 99% of customs duties, as well as relax or eliminate various regulations, and these are consequently expected to contribute to the expansion of exports from Japan and the opening up the market for various Japanese products. Specifically, the EPA will lead to the elimination of all customs duties (100%) on the EU side for industrial products. With regard to automobiles, which make up 21.9% (as of 2016) of the value of Japan's exports to the EU, existing customs duties will be eliminated in the eighth year for finished cars, while 92.1% (as of 2016) of customs duties on the basis of trade value will be eliminated immediately for automotive parts. For agricultural, forestry and fishery products, customs duties on the EU side will be eliminated immediately for most goods, including fishery products, green tea, and beef, which are priority items for Japan to export to the EU. In addition to these, the oenological practices of Japanese wine, which is made only from grapes harvested in Japan and is produced in Japan, will be authorised by the EU, and wine producers in Japan will be able to export Japan wine with their self-certifications. Furthermore, the protection of geographical indication (GI) for agricultural products and alcoholic beverages (such as Japanese sake) will be mutually secured.

(Establishing high-standard rules)

Additionally, in the 21st century, the Japan-EU EPA will be the model of high standard, free, open and fair trade and investment rules. It provides comprehensive rules that encompass a wide scope, including service trade, liberalization of investment, intellectual property, government procurement, and trade and sustainable development. Therefore, the EPA offers Japanese businesses, including small and medium-sized enterprises, opportunities to break into the EU market with their excellent services and technologies along with a broad agreement in principle reached on the TPP among 11 countries in November 2017. It is also expected to become an important driving force for Japan's economic growth, as a "decisive tool" in our growth strategy.

(Effects on the Japanese economy)

In the analysis of the economic impact of the Japan-EU EPA and other trade agreement, the Japan-EU EPA is estimated to increase the real GDP by about 1%, or approximately 5 trillion yen if converted based on GDP levels in FY2016. Japan will aim at realizing the early signing and entry into force of the Japan-EU EPA, and measures incorporated into the "Comprehensive TPP-Related Policy Framework" will be steadily implemented.



network. In 2017, the Information Exchange Agreement with Panama (March), Tax Convention with Latvia (July), and Tax Convention with Slovenia (August) entered into force, while the New Tax Agreement with Austria (January), Protocol Amending the Tax Information Exchange Agreement with the Bahamas (February), the Multilateral Convention to Implement Tax Treaty Related Measures to Prevent Base Erosion and Profit Shifting ("MLI") (June), Tax Convention with Lithuania (July), Tax Convention with Estonia (August), New Tax Convention with Russia (September), and New Tax Convention with Denmark (October) were signed. Moreover, negotiations for tax conventions with Iceland (May) and Colombia (December) were agreed to in principle. As of the end of 2017, Japan has concluded a total of 69 tax-related conventions, and these conventions, combined with the private-sector arrangement with Taiwan, are applicable to 123 jurisdictions.

(C) Agreements on Social Security

The purpose of agreements on social security is to resolve the issues of double payment of social security insurance premiums and no refund of annuity insurance. It is expected to facilitate people-to-people exchange and strengthen further bilateral relations including economic exchanges, 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 20 as of the end of 2017. In addition, in 2017, Japan held negotiations for new agreements with Finland, China, and Sweden.

(2) Initiatives with International Organizations (WTO, OECD, etc.)

A World Trade Organization (WTO)

(A) History of WTO Negotiations

The development of the Japanese economy has largely benefited from the multilateral trading system with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its center, and maintaining and enhancing the system is a central pillar of Japan's trade policy. On the other hand, negotiations in the WTO have not necessarily made smooth progress. The WTO Doha Development Agenda (DDA) negotiations launched in 2001 aimed to achieve the single undertaking of eight areas[3]. However, since 2008, negotiations have remained in a stalemate. Nevertheless, a certain degree of success was achieved later, boosted by allowing Members to reach agreements based on consensus earlier than the full conclusion of the single undertaking at the 8th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC8) held in 2011. For example, the Trade Facilitation Agreement (TFA), which is the first binding agreement for all WTO Members since the establishment of the WTO, was agreed upon at the 9th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC9) in 2013, and entered into force in February 2017. At the 10th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC10) held in 2015, Members concluded the ITA expansion negotiations led by Japan as the chair, and Japan eliminated tariffs on the targeted items based on this agreement in May 2017.

3 Agriculture, non-agricultural market access, services, rules, trade facilitation, development, environment and intellectual property rights

(B) Plurilateral Negotiations

Against this backdrop, since the 8th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC8) in 2011, the following plurilateral negotiations have been carried out.

a The Information Technology Agreement (ITA) Expansion Negotiations

While implementing the Information Technology Agreement (ITA)[4] since 1997, the ITA expansion negotiations were launched in 2012 with the aim of including newly-developed IT products[5] reflecting technological innovations to the coverage, and the negotiations were concluded in December 2015. In May 2017, Japan eliminated tariffs on the targeted items.

b Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA) Negotiations

In order to contribute to further liberalization of trade in services, intensified negotiations on the Trade in Services Agreement (TiSA) have been underway among 50 countries and regions since the summer of 2013, and Japan has participated actively in the negotiations. The parties did not achieve the goal of reaching a substantive agreement by 2016, and since then no negotiation rounds were held to date (as of December 2017). Japan has nevertheless taken advantage of various opportunities to appeal for the early resumption of negotiations.

c Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA) Negotiations

Environmental Goods Agreement (EGA) negotiations, launched in July 2014, are aimed at eliminating tariffs on environmental goods. Japan has been actively taking part since the beginning of the negotiations, and these negotiations are expected to expand the trading of environmental goods, and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. To date, 46 countries and regions have participated in the negotiations with the aim of reaching an agreement during 2016. However, negotiations could not be concluded, and no negotiation rounds were held to date (as of December 2017). Japan has nevertheless taken advantage of various opportunities to appeal for the early resumption of negotiations.

(C) Visit by WTO Director-General Azevêdo to Japan

Amidst concerns for the rise of anti-globalism and an inward-looking trend around the world, the Government of Japan invited WTO Director-General Azevêdo to Japan in May, in anticipation of a series of economic diplomacy events including the G7 Summit, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Ministerial Council Meeting, the G20 Summit, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) meetings, and the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC11). During his visit to Japan, Director-General Azevêdo paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Abe and held talks with Foreign Minister Kishida and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takisawa, engaging in fulfilling exchanges of opinions. In particular, during

4 Plurilateral framework to eliminate tariffs on IT products (such as semiconductors, computers, cellular phones, printers, fax, and digital still image cameras) ("Ministerial Declaration on Trade in Information Technology Products"). Agreed in 1996 and implemented from 1997. Currently, 82 WTO Members (including 28 EU member states) such as Japan, the U.S., the EU, China and Russia are participating.

5 Digital audiovisual equipment (camcorders, DVD/HD/BD players etc), digital multifunction machines and printers, medical equipment (electronic endoscopes, etc.), semiconductor manufacturing equipment, etc.

his courtesy call to Prime Minister Abe, a Joint Statement between Japan and the World Trade Organization entitled "Three Cornerstones for the Promotion of Free Trade" was issued by Japan and the WTO. They shared the recognition of the three cornerstones for the promotion of free trade: (1) Free Trade as a Key Driver of Growth; (2) Achievement of an Inclusive Economy; and (3) Further Reinforcement of the Multilateral Trading System. They also concurred on strengthening cooperation in delivering this message across the world. Furthermore, they also affirmed that Japan and the WTO will work even more closely towards the 11th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC11), as well as towards the further increasing of confidence in the multilateral trading system through revitalization of negotiations function, enhancement of the monitoring function, and ensuring the enforcement through the dispute settlement mechanism.

(D) 11th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC11)

MC11 was held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in December 2017. Although intensive discussions were held at the ministerial level on this occasion, they did not lead to the issuance of a ministerial declaration based on consensus among the WTO Members. The differences in positions between the developed and developing country Members once again highlighted the difficulty of reaching a consensus among all Members. On the other hand, decisions were made at the Ministerial Conference pertaining to the work programme in the area of e-commerce, work programme in the area of fisheries subsidies, and the extension of the moratorium on non-violation complaints related to the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property (TRIPS) Agreement. They presented some guidelines for future WTO negotiations. Furthermore, with regard to today's challenges in trade such as e-commerce, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), and investment facilitation, a large number of Members demonstrated their willingness, in the form of ministerial statements by like-minded Members, that discussions should be pursued in the WTO on these matters. Particularly with regard to e-commerce, prior to MC11, Japan had announced that it is prepared to provide support of 33 billion yen over the next three years in the field of information and communications technology (ICT), including e-commerce. During MC11, Japan also explained the importance of promoting discussions to ministers from each country, and asked for their cooperation. Japan took an active lead in discussions, including organizing a ministerial meeting of like-minded Members. As a result, 71 WTO Members including the U.S., EU and developing countries participated in the joint statement. This demonstrates Japan's ability to exert its leadership in WTO discussions and serve as a bridge connecting a wide range of WTO Members of differing positions.

(E) Dispute Settlement in International Trade

The WTO dispute settlement system[6] is a quasi-judicial system among WTO Members for resolving trade disputes regarding the WTO Agreements in accordance with the dispute settlement procedures. It serves as a pillar in providing security and predictability to the WTO system. In recent years, the increase in the number of dispute cases and the growing complexity of cases has led to the increase of the burden on the dispute settlement system. Other problems have also arisen in 2017, such as the lack of consensus on launching the selection process for the appointment of the new Appellate Body Members to fill vacancies. These are now posing a major challenge to the system. Japan has been involved as a party in the following cases:

- The Republic of Korea (ROK)'s import bans on Japanese fishery products[7]: A panel was established in September 2015. In February 2018, a panel report finding the ROK's measures are inconsistent with the WTO Agreement was circulated.
- Brazil's measures concerning taxation[8]: A panel was established in September 2015. In August 2017, a panel report that found inconsistencies between Brazil's measure and the WTO Agreement was circulated. In September 2017, Brazil, dissatisfied with the panel report, appealed to the Appellate Body. The Appellate Body proceedings are currently under way.
- The Republic of Korea (ROK)'s measures imposing anti-dumping duties on pneumatic transmission valves produced in Japan: A panel was established in July 2016. As of December 2017, the panel proceedings are currently under way.
- India's safeguard measures on imports of certain steel products[9]: A panel was established in April 2017. As of December 2017, the panel proceedings are currently under way.

B Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

(A) Features

The OECD is the "world's largest think tank" covering a wide range of economic and social fields such as macro economy, agriculture, industry, environment, science and technology. The OECD makes policy recommendations and forms international norms through discussions at committees and working groups. Japan acceded to the OECD as the first non-European and non-American country in 1964 when it hosted the summer Olympic Games in Tokyo. Since then Japan has been actively engaged in the OECD through discussions

6 If a dispute is not resolved through the consultations process the dispute settlement procedures provide for, the disputing member may refer the disputed measure at issue to a panel for addressing, inter alia, the consistency of the measures concerned with the WTO Agreements. A party dissatisfied with a finding by the panel may appeal to the Appellate Body to contest the panel's findings. Since the establishment of WTO in 1995 through to December 4, 2017, Japan was involved as a party in 38 out of 534 disputes (the number of cases for which requests for consultation were made). The Appellate Body is composed of seven Members and the term of Members is four years (Members may be reappointed once). To date, three Japanese nationals have served as Appellate Body Members.

7 The case involving import bans on Japanese fishery products, as well as testing and certification requirements for radionuclides the ROK introduced after the accident at TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant in March 2011 and reinforced in September 2013.

8 The case of the tax advantage scheme put in place by the Government of Brazil, which treats domestic products and exporting companies of Brazil favorably in the automotive and information and communication technology sectors.

9 The Government of India applied provisional safeguard measures on hot-rolled coils in September 2015. In 2016, it moved to impose definitive safeguard measures.

at committees and working groups as well as through contributions in terms of financial and human resources.

(B) Visit by OECD Secretary-General Gurria to Japan

During the visit by OECD Secretary-General Gurria to Japan in April 2017, he engaged in talks with Prime Minister Abe, Foreign Minister Kishida, and other officials. Both sides reaffirmed the importance of resisting protectionism and maintaining and strengthening the multilateral trade system, as well as the importance of the future membership of Southeast Asia. The first International Economic Forum on Asia was also held during his visit, which highlighted the importance of the development of quality infrastructure, and the provision of funds for that purpose.

(C) The 2017 OECD Ministerial Council Meeting

The OECD Ministerial Council Meeting (MCM) was held in June, chaired by Denmark and under the theme of "Globalization." Japan emphasized the importance of maintaining and strengthening the multilateral trade system, ensuring level playing field, and developing quality infrastructure with open and fair access. Japan contributed to discussions in the OECD, as exemplified by the incorporation of its views into the outcome documents. Furthermore, MCM adopted a "framework" that sets out the standards for considering whether to open accession discussion with a prospective member, and had a discussion aimed at its application to prospective members. In addition, it was also reaffirmed that Southeast Asia is a strategic priority region for outreach efforts by the OECD.

(D) Initiatives in Various Sectors

The global steel market faces the problem of excess capacity for crude steel and other products, which far exceeds actual demand (looking at the global market situation in 2016, the gap between crude steel production capacity and actual production volume was approximately 740 million tons (according to OECD)). In view of this problem, following the G20 Summit held in Hangzhou (China) in 2016, the Global Forum on Steel Excess Capacity (GFSEC) was established with the participation of China, which makes up approximately half (about 810 million tons) of the global production volume of crude steel (about 1.63 billion tons). After discussions in six working level meetings, the Forum adopted a report identifying the concrete policy solutions at the Ministerial Meeting held at the end of November 2017.

Furthermore, regarding excessive tax avoidance strategies by multinational enterprises, the "Base Erosion and Profit Shifting (BEPS) Project" was launched in 2012, and the BEPS Action Plan presented in 2013. After discussions spanning two years, the BEPS 2015 Final Reports were released in 2015. In order to ensure the faithful and consistent implementation of the measures incorporated in the Final Reports, the first meeting of the Inclusive Framework on BEPS was held in Kyoto in 2016. Taking the opportunity of the Ministerial Council Meeting held in June 2017, a signing ceremony was held for the Multilateral Convention to Implement Tax Treaty Related Measures to Prevent Base Erosion and Profit Shifting ("MLI"). 67 countries and regions, including Japan,

signed the Convention (State Minister for Foreign Affairs Sonoura attended as Japan's representative).

(E) Strengthening Relations with Asia

In view of the growing importance of Southeast Asia as a center for the growth of the global economy, OECD places importance on strengthening relations with the region. At the Southeast Asia Regional Forum held in Thailand in August, discussions were held, based on OECD's knowledge and analysis, on the opportunities and policy challenges brought about by digitalization. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane attended the Forum as Japan's representative. In addition to emphasizing the importance of utilizing digitalization in Southeast Asia, he also expressed his anticipation of the further development of OECD's Southeast Asia regional program.

(F) Contributions in Terms of Financial and Human Resources

Japan was the second biggest financial contributor to the OECD after the U.S. in 2017, covering 9.43% of the OECD's mandatory contributions (Part I Budget). Moreover, Japanese nationals have successively served as the Deputy Secretary General, the number two post of the OECD Secretariat. Japan is also the greatest contributor (contributing the same amount as Germany in 2017) to the OECD Development Centre, and a Japanese national has been serving as a Deputy Director of the center. Japan has supported the OECD through such contributions in terms of financial and human resources.

(3) Initiatives in International Meetings (G7 and G20 Summits, APEC, etc.)

A G7 and G20 Summits

G7 and G20 Summits continue to play an essential role in providing an opportunity to show Japan's own efforts to the international community and to form a global economic order desirable for Japan.

(A) G7 Taormina Summit (Italy)

At the G7 Taormina Summit (Italy) held in May 2017, Prime Minister Abe, as the first speaker, and based on his experiences as the former chair, appealed strongly for the significance of unity amongst the G7 members. He also took the lead in discussions on the following topics in particular: (1) North Korea, (2) Maritime security, (3) The global economy, and (4) Trade.

Prime Minister Abe expressed that the G7 has, until now, worked in unity to lead the international community in addressing various issues, and pointed out that the international order underpinned by the fundamental values that the G7 has consistently promoted is now being exposed to serious challenges. It is precisely at times like this when it is important for G7 leaders, including the new members in their midst, to build a new foundation for trust, and for G7, which shares fundamental values, to stand united and promote an international order that is based on rules. The leaders of the G7 concurred with his remarks.

Concerning (1) North Korea, members concurred on the recognition that it is a matter of the highest priority among issues confronting the international community, and that it poses a new level of threat of a serious nature. At the same time, they affirmed that the G7 is prepared to

strengthen its measures towards ensuring North Korea's immediate and complete compliance with the UN Security Council Resolution, and its abolition of its nuclear and missile programs.

In regard to (2) Maritime security, the members concurred on the importance of order based on rules in the maritime sector, and reaffirmed their commitment towards the peaceful resolution of disputes over the seas, including the use of arbitration. At the same time, they expressed their concern over the situation in the East and South China Sea, and concurred on requesting all the parties involved to pursue demilitarization in the disputed territories.

As for (3) Global economy, with growth remaining at a moderate level and the continued presence of downside risks, discussions were held concerning the G7's efforts to realize higher living standards and quality job. Continuing from the Ise-Shima Summit, the leaders also reaffirmed their commitment towards the use of all policy tools, including monetary, fiscal, and structural policies.

With regard to (4) Trade, the G7 stands firm against unfair trade practices, including the problem of excess capacity, based on the recognition that free, fair, and mutually-beneficial trade and investment are the key driving forces for growth and job creation. At the same time, the leaders reaffirmed their commitment to keep their markets open and to fight protectionism, recognized the importance of the rules based an international trading system, and committed to working together to improve the functioning of the WTO and to achieve a successful 11th WTO Ministerial Conference. In addition, an independent statement summarizing the discussions on terrorism and violent extremism was adopted and signed by the leaders of the G7 member states.

(B) G20 Hamburg Summit (Germany)

At the G20 Hamburg Summit (Germany) held in July, Prime Minister Abe took the lead in discussions among the leaders as the lead speaker for the first session on economic growth and trade of the Premier Forum for International Economic Cooperation, which addresses the most important issues for G20. With regard to the themes of counter-terrorism measures and promoting female empowerment, he also contributed to discussions at the Retreat Session based on the theme of counter-terrorism measures, and played an active role by participating in the events for the launch of the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi). At Japan's strong urging and encouragement, the G20 reached an agreement mainly on the following areas, which were also areas of focus at the G7 Taormina Summit (Italy) held in May.

(1) The use of all policy tools—monetary and fiscal policies, as well as structural reform—either individually or collectively, to respond to downside risks and strengthen the growth of the global economy. Furthermore, in pursuing economic growth and the job creation, to promote greater inclusiveness and fairness, and to reduce inequality.

(2) To keep markets open, and continue to fight protectionism including all unfair trade practices.

(3) To further strengthen cooperation in order to tackle the problem of excess capacity in industrial sector, including steel.

(4) For the U.S. to commit strongly to an approach to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and for other G20 member states to promptly implement strong commitments to the Paris Agreement.
(5) In addition to promoting female empowerment, and from that perspective, to launch the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) aimed at expanding support for female entrepreneurs in developing countries.

At the closing session, Japan was elected to the G20 presidency for 2019 with the support of the G20 leaders. Based on Japan's efforts and contributions to the G20 Summit until now, Japan will further demonstrate its leadership towards its assumption of Presidency in 2019.

B Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

APEC is a forum that aims at sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific region on a voluntary basis by each of the 21 countries and regions in order to promote regional economic integration and cooperation. APEC consists of 21 countries and regions in the Asia-Pacific region. This region is the "world's growth center," with about 40% of the world population, around 50% of the trade volume, and about 60% of the world GDP. Regional trade accounts for about two-thirds of the total trade, being comparable with the EU in terms of establishing a close regional economy. Strengthening economic cooperation and trust relationships in the APEC region is extremely important in pursuing Japan's further development. APEC Economic Leaders' Meetings and Ministerial Meetings provide the member economies with significant opportunities to exchange frank views among leaders and ministers regarding major interests in the international community, specifically focused on various economic issues.

At the APEC 2017 hosted by Viet Nam, under the overall theme of "Creating New Dynamism, Fostering A Shared Future," the four priorities were identified as (1) deepening regional economic integration, (2) strengthening MSMEs' competitiveness and innovation in the digital age, (3) promoting sustainable, innovative and inclusive growth, and (4) enhancing food security and sustainable agriculture in response to climate change.

At the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting held in Da Nang, Viet Nam, in November 2017, Prime Minister Abe spoke about the need to remain committed to the "three arrows" of monetary and fiscal policies, and structural reform, in order to consolidate the foundations of the economy. He declared that Japan will put its fullest effort into tackling the issue of population decline through the "productivity revolution" and the "human resource development revolution." Furthermore, Prime Minister Abe stated that Japan will proactively contribute to digital trade, the "Asia Health and Human Well-Being Initiative" for

The APEC Economic Leader's Meeting in Da Nang, Viet Nam, in 2017 (November 11, Da Nang, Viet Nam (pool photo); Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Outcome of the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in Da Nang, Viet Nam in 2017

		Points of the Leaders' Declaration
Promoting Innovative Growth, Inclusion and Sustainable Employment	Mobilization of all policy measures Inclusive growth	●Reaffirm the aspirations towards balanced, inclusive, innovative, sustainable, and secure growth through monetary, fiscal, and structural policies; highlight the importance of achieving quality growth.
	Energy	●Resolve to strengthen energy security; encourage the facilitation of energy-related trade and investment, enhancement of access to affordable and reliable energy, and promotion of sustainable, efficient and clean energy sources.
	Sustainable development	●Resolve to advance economic, financial, and social inclusion with a vision to build an inclusive, accessible, sustainable, healthy and resilient APEC community by 2030, consistent with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
	Women	●Acknowledge that greater economic participation by women spurs economic growth, encourages APEC economies and private sectors to implement initiatives that enhance women's economic empowerment, and promote women's leadership, entrepreneurial spirit, and skills and competencies.
Creating New Drivers for Regional Economic Integration	Bogor Goals	●Agree to accelerate efforts to address WTO-inconsistent barriers to trade and investment, and take concrete actions towards the achievement of the Bogor Goals by 2020.
	E-commerce Digital economy	●Work together to realize the potential of internet and digital economy. Welcome adoption of the APEC Internet and Digital Economy Roadmap and the APEC Framework on Cross-Border E-Commerce Facilitation.
	Services	●Commit to further actions to increase APEC's competitiveness in the services sector.
	Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP)	●Reaffirm the commitment to advance in a comprehensive and systematic manner the process toward the eventual realization of FTAAP; Encouragement to develop work programs to enhance ability to participate in high quality, comprehensive FTA negotiations.
	Multilateral Trading System	●Underline APEC's crucial role in support of a rules-based, free, open, fair, transparent, and inclusive multilateral trading system; Commit to work together to improve the functioning of the WTO to adequately address challenges facing the system.
	Open markets/Fight against protectionism	●Work to ensure a level playing field through continuing APEC's leadership in pursuing open markets. ●Recall pledge to extend standstill commitment until the end of 2020 and recommit to fight protectionism, including all unfair trade practices, recognizing the role of legitimate trade defense instruments.
	Quality infrastructure	●Reiterate the importance of quality infrastructure for sustainable economic growth.
	Global value chains	●Encourage further actions to enable better participation of developing economies and MSMEs in the global value chains.
	Supporting industries	●Acknowledge efforts to promote supporting industries, and encourage APEC economies to enhance competitiveness and facilitate participation in the global value chains.
Enhancing Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture in Response to Climate Change		●Underscore that APEC can play a key role in ensuring food security and sustainable agriculture in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. ●Call for working together to promote sustainable agriculture and enhance resilience against climate change.
Looking forward		●Look forward to intensity efforts to achieve free and open trade and investment in the region by 2020, and set a strategic, aspirational and action-oriented vision for the future.

realizing UHC[10] and responding to aging societies, promoting sustainable agriculture and energy cooperation, with the aim of creating positive cycles of growth for the Asia-Pacific region. With regard to trade, Prime Minister Abe stated that free trade is

10 Universal Health Coverage (UHC): Where all people are able to receive the appropriate healthcare services, including prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation, when they need them, and at affordable costs.

the foundation of peace and prosperity and also stressed the importance of eliminating unfair trade practices, alongside with correcting market distorting measures and expanding the "level playing field" across the world. Prime Minister Abe also emphasized the importance of enhancing the rules-based multilateral trading system centered on the WTO, and declared that Japan, as a standard-bearer of free trade, will continue to actively promote economic cooperation treaties and investment treaties, such as the TPP Agreement and high-quality RCEP. Furthermore, Prime Minister Abe explained that quality infrastructure is indispensable towards appropriately fulfilling the growing demand for infrastructure in the Asia-Pacific region, as well as strengthening connectivity.

The Leaders' Declaration was adopted at the end of the Meeting. It encompassed the issues, such as ensuring a "level playing field," supporting a multilateral trading system, quality infrastructure investment, growth through monetary and fiscal policies and structural reform, enhancing women's economic empowerment, and disaster risk reduction.

In 2018, Papua New Guinea will host APEC for the first time.

(4) Intellectual Property

Strengthening the protections of intellectual property is extremely important for the promotion of technological innovation, and eventually for the development of the economy. Japan has actively participated in multilateral consultations, such as APEC, the WTO (TRIPS Council) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and is working to develop an environment to ensure that Japanese intellectual property is appropriately protected and utilized overseas. In the area of EPAs as well, Japan strives to establish regulations on intellectual property right and thereby to ensure the adequate and effective protection of intellectual property. TPP11, for which an agreement in principle was reached in November, and the Japan-EU EPA, for which the finalization of negotiations was reached in December, both incorporate contents on further promotion of the protection and use of intellectual property. Moreover, MOFA has been taking measures to reinforce the protection of intellectual property rights overseas, and countermeasures against counterfeited or pirated goods. For example, for the purpose of rapidly and efficiently providing assistance for Japanese companies that have suffered from counterfeit and pirated goods overseas, Intellectual Property Officers are assigned at almost all of the diplomatic missions overseas, so that they can advise Japanese companies and make inquiries with or requests to their counterpart governments. Japan is also engaged in efforts to improve the capacity of government employees in developing countries to counter the spread of counterfeit and pirated goods, and to strengthen the protection of intellectual property, such as by dispatching experts through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

2 Support for Japanese Companies' Overseas Business Expansion in Promoting Public and Private Partnerships

(1) Promotion of Japanese Companies' Overseas Business Expansion by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) and Accompanying Diplomatic Missions Overseas

The number of branches for Japanese companies holding overseas branches has increased in recent years, reaching 71,820[11] as of October 2016. One of the reasons behind this is that many Japanese companies, which underpin the economic development of Japan, have embarked more actively than ever before on expansion overseas, with the aim of further cultivating foreign markets. To incorporate vigorous economic growth abroad, mainly in Asia, into the Japanese economy, support for Japanese companies by the Government has become more important.

In light of this situation, MOFA is actively engaged, alongside the diplomatic missions overseas, 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 various information and lobby foreign governments under the leadership of ambassadors and consuls-general, with the aim of providing meticulous and specific support that corresponds with the conditions in the respective regions, and under the motto of being "the most open and responsive government office in the world." They also offer legal services such as seminars and consultations about local laws. In FY2017, these were provided at 15 diplomatic missions in 11 countries, with a focus on Asia.

Among the activities implemented at diplomatic missions overseas, in addition to consultations about business troubles, the promotion and publicity of the "Japan Brand" for products, technologies, services, and agricultural, forestry, and fishery products by Japanese companies at receptions to celebrate the Emperor's birthday and various other events and exhibitions, also forms an important part of their support for Japanese companies. They actively offer the embassies and official residences of the Ambassadors as publicity spaces for Japanese companies to hold product exhibitions or local governments to hold local products exhibitions and food-tasting events, as spaces for conducting seminars on business expansion, and as spaces for exchanges with local companies and the relevant organizations. A wide range of publicity activities are being implemented, from countries that already have a strong affinity with Japan, to countries that have not had much contact with Japan until now.

From the perspective of public-private cooperation and support for companies, it is important not only to support Japanese businesses which are seeking to expand their businesses overseas, but also to support those which already have business interests overseas. In June 2016, the UK held a national referendum on whether to remain or leave the EU. Negotiations towards the UK's withdrawal from the EU are currently ongoing between the UK and the EU. As actions taken by the UK and the EU and

11 MOFA "The Statistics on the Japanese Nationals Residing Overseas"

Taking the opportunity of the reception celebrating the Emperor's birthday to promote Japanese products (December 7, Embassy of Japan in Russia, Russia)

the results of their negotiations could have a significant impact on Japanese businesses and the global economy, the Government of Japan launched the Government Task-force regarding the Withdrawal of the UK from the EU[12], chaired by the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary, in July 2016. Information was consolidated across all sectors of the government, and Japan's message to the UK and the EU[13] was adopted at the third meeting of the Task-force and swiftly delivered to the UK and the EU. In these ways, Japan has been engaged in efforts that harness its strategic diplomatic relationship with the UK and the EU.

The fourth meeting of the Task-force was held in January 2017, and Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Koichi Hagiuda issued instructions for activities to be implemented in 2017. Thereafter, in response to the UK's official submission of its notice to withdraw from the EU on March 29, the fifth meeting was held on March 30. The sixth meeting was held thereafter on August 28 to prepare for the visit to Japan by the UK's Prime Minister May, which was scheduled on August 30, and the seventh meeting was held on December 18 in response to the decision by the European Council to move into the second phase of UK-EU negotiations on December 15 (in which discussions are to be held on matters including the future economic relations between the UK and the EU).

MOFA has commissioned investigation in Japan, the UK, Belgium, and Germany to analyze the relation between Japan and the UK and Japan and the EU after the UK's withdrawal from the EU. In addition to reporting on the results of this investigation at the 5th meeting, these reports and other materials have also been published on MOFA's website[14].

(2) Promotion of Overseas Business Expansion of Japanese Infrastructure System

In order to respond to infrastructure demands mainly in emerging countries and promote infrastructure exports by Japanese companies, a "Ministerial Meeting on Strategy Relating to Infrastructure Export

12 The Government Task Force regarding the Withdrawal of the UK from the EU, chaired by Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Hagiuda, was established in July 2016. It compiled concerns and requests of the business community, especially Japanese businesses operating in Europe, through the relevant Ministries and Agencies (the Cabinet Office, Financial Services Agency, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, Ministry of Land Infrastructure and Transport, and the Personal Information Protection Commission Secretariat). Seven meetings have so far been held (the 1st meeting was held on July 27, 2016, the 2nd on August 18, the 3rd on September 2, the 4th on January 19, 2017, the 5th on March 30, the 6th on August 28, and the 7th on December 18).

13 The main points of Japan's message to the UK and the EU are as follows: (1) Japan expects to continue cooperating and collaborating closely for peace, stability and prosperity of the UK, the EU and the international community, (2) Japan expects the maintenance of an open Europe with its free trade system, and an agreement in principle on the Japan-EU EPA during the year, (3) Japan requests securing of predictability in the BREXIT negotiations through an uninterrupted and transparent process, (4) Japan requests the UK and the EU to heed the voices of Japanese businesses to the fullest extent and to do their utmost to cooperate in taking the necessary measures, and (5) Japan would like to cooperate with the UK and the EU so that the process of negotiations for the UK's withdrawal will not cause a major disturbance to the world economy.

14 Refer to http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/ecm/ie/page4_002892.html (In Japanese)

and Economic Cooperation," consisting of relevant cabinet ministers with the Chief Cabinet Secretary serving as chair, was established in 2013. Since then, a total of 35 meetings have been held (as of February 2018). In addition to discussing the formulation and follow-up of the "Strategy for Exporting Infrastructure Systems," with the aim of strengthening qualitative and quantitative support through the implementation of strategic publicity, this Ministerial Meeting also engages in discussions on issues in the respective fields as well as issues in specific regions such as India and the Middle East (32nd meeting) and ASEAN (33rd meeting).

The first edition of the Infrastructure System Export Strategy was drawn up in May 2013, and it has undergone successive follow-up revisions since. The revised edition for 2017 sets out guidelines based on the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy," including support for strengthening physical, institutional, and human connectivity within and among regions, including Asia, Middle East, and Africa, through the development of quality infrastructure based on international standards, the strengthening of the economic and social infrastructure of the relevant countries and securing stability and prosperity for the target regions by promoting the development of the said regions, support towards efficient economic activities by Japanese companies, and supporting business expansion efforts by Japanese companies.

Japan has also been driving forward the dynamic development of trade promotion by the Government, and systemic improvements aimed at the strategic use of ODA loans and overseas loans and investments, and has steadily produced results. For example, during his visit to India in September, Prime Minister Abe attended the groundbreaking ceremony for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Railway Project that will introduce Japan's Shinkansen (bullet train) system, and the two countries exchanged notes on the provision of yen loan of 100 billion yen. Moreover, after the conclusion of the Japan-Philippines Summit Meeting in November, the two leaders witnessed an exchange of notes on the provision of yen loan for the Metro Manila Subway Project, which is expected to utilize the technologies of Japanese companies. As described, steady results have been produced.

Furthermore, with regard to diplomatic missions overseas, MOFA has appointed "officers in charge of Infrastructure Projects," who gather and consolidate information on infrastructure projects, in the diplomatic missions overseas in countries of focus (192 personnel, at 93 diplomatic missions overseas in 72 countries as of the end of December 2017). This initiative has also proven to be effective.

(3) Promotion of the Export of Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Products and Food

The Government of Japan has set a goal of expanding the value of the export of Japanese agricultural, forestry and fishery products and food to 1 trillion yen by 2019 ("Economic Measures for Realizing Investment for the Future"). MOFA, in collaboration with relevant ministries and agencies, Japanese companies, local governments, etc., and by utilizing the function and facilities of diplomatic missions etc. all over the world, is energetically

promoting the attractiveness of Japanese products. In particular, Japanese business support officers (in charge of the food industry) have been assigned to 58 diplomatic missions overseas in 54 countries and regions to strengthen initiatives to promote the export of agricultural, forestry and fishery products and food.

Although seven years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake and the accident at Tokyo Electric Power Company's (TEPCO) Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, some countries and regions have continued to place import restrictions on Japanese agricultural and fishery products and food. MOFA is requesting there countries and regions to consider the abolition of import restrictions as soon as possible based on scientific evidence, by providing them with timely and accurate information and using WTO frameworks in collaboration with the relevant ministries and agencies. MOFA is also working hard to disseminate information about the safety of Japanese food products in countries and regions around the world, with the aim of dispelling harmful rumors about Japanese agricultural, forestry, and fishery products as well as food products.

As a result of these efforts, import restrictions were lifted in Qatar (April), Ukraine (April), Pakistan (October), Saudi Arabia (November), and Argentina (December) in 2017, as well as Turkey (February) in 2018. So far, 26 countries have removed their import restrictions (Canada, Myanmar, Serbia, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Guinea, New Zealand, Colombia, Malaysia, Ecuador, Viet Nam, Iraq, Australia, Thailand, Bolivia, India, Kuwait, Nepal, Iran, Mauritius, and the five countries mentioned above). In addition, restrictions were eased in 2017 by Lebanon, Russia, the U.S., 28 EU Member States, Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein, and the number of regions and items subject to import restrictions are on the decline (as of the end of February 2018).

MOFA will continue persistent efforts, collaborating with relevant ministries and agencies, to urge countries and regions which maintain their import restrictions to remove restrictions as soon as possible, by such means as making requests at the leaders' and ministerial levels and through all routes, including bilaterally and through the WTO.

3 Promoting Resource Diplomacy along with Foreign Direct Investment in Japan

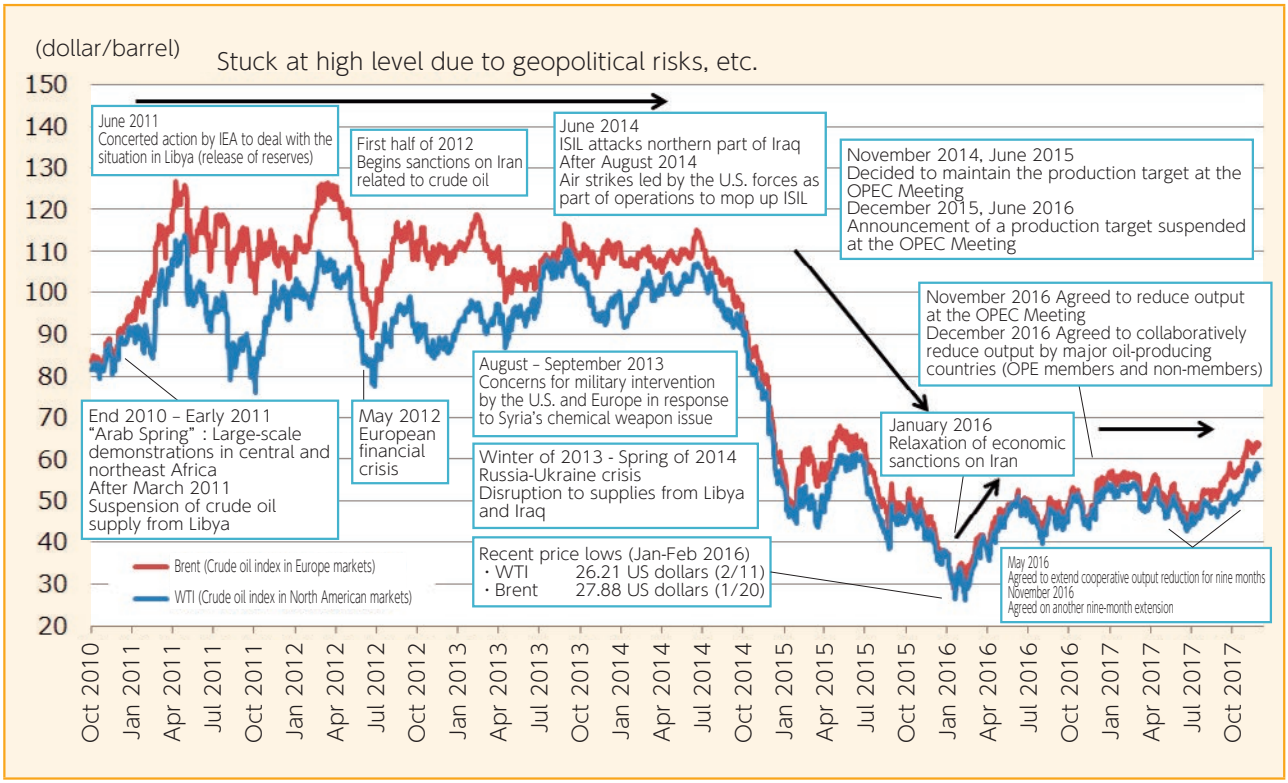
(1) Securing a Stable Supply of Energy and Mineral Resources at Reasonable Prices

A Current Situation of Energy and Mineral Resources at Home and Abroad

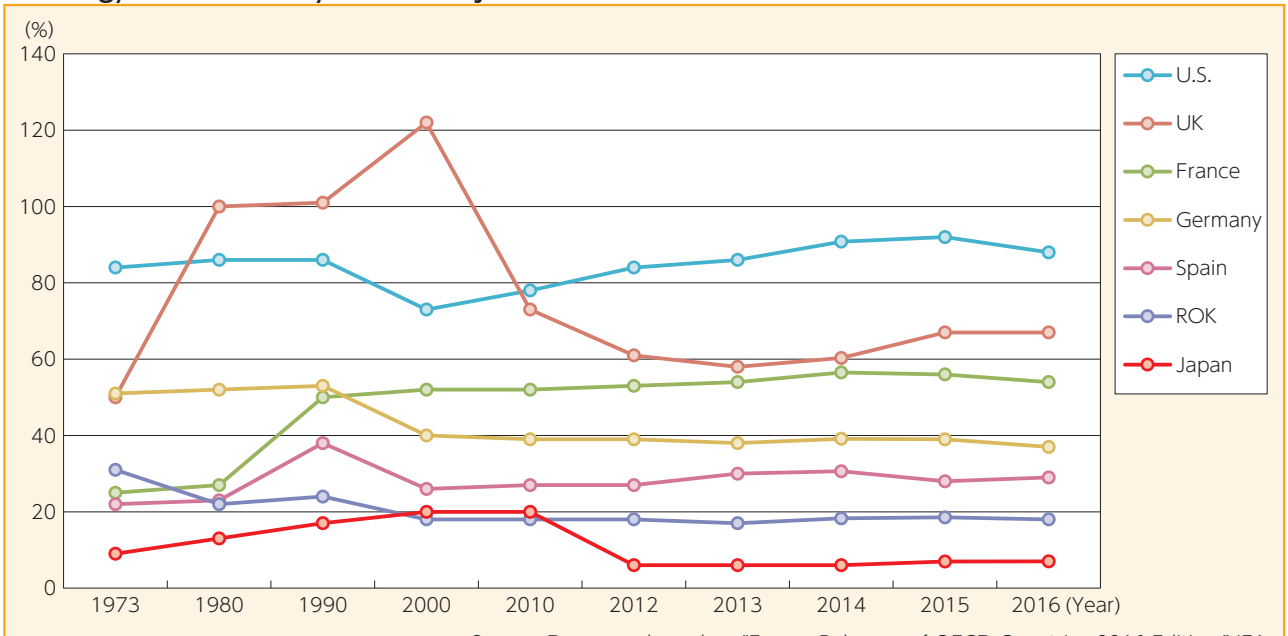
(A) Situation in the World

Crude oil prices had remained at the high level of around 100 US dollars/barrel since the end of 2010, reflecting factors such as increased energy demand centered on emerging countries, the rise of resource nationalism, and geopolitical risks in the Middle East. However, since the second half of 2014, crude oil prices have fallen significantly on the back of sluggish demand in China and other countries due to a slowdown in the economy, increased production of shale oil in the U.S., the sustained high-level production in major oil producing countries, excess supply and the high levels of inventory accompanying that. By February 2016,

Crude Oil Price Trends



Energy self-sufficiency rate in major countries



Source: Drawn up based on "Energy Balances of OECD Countries 2016 Edition," IEA

prices fell at one point to as low as 30 US dollars/barrel. Thereafter, prices rose as a result of observations of the tightening of supply and demand in the second half of the year. After OPEC member states and major oil producers that are not members of the OPEC agreed, at the end of the year, to coordinate and reduce production by approximately 1.8 million barrels per day, prices have generally stabilized at around 50 US dollars/barrel.

In the second half of 2017, growth in

demand accompanying strong economic growth and coordination among major oil producers to reduce production contributed to a fall in the high level of oil stocks, and this in turn contributed to a rising trend in the prices due to the tightening of the demand and supply environment. The re-extension of a coordinated reduction in production decided on at the OPEC meeting held at the end of November 2017, geopolitical risks such as the uncertain situation in the Middle East, as well as increased shale oil production in the U.S. that could potentially inhibit the rise in crude oil prices are some of the issues that bear watching.

On the other hand, according to the International Energy Agency (IEA), although the amount of upstream investment for oil and gas worldwide in 2016 declined for two consecutive years in 2015 and 2016, the amount for 2017 is expected to exceed that of the previous year slightly, driven by the significant increase in the amount of investment in shale oil in the U.S. brought about by the decline in investment costs.

(B) Situation in Japan

After the Great East Japan Earthquake, the proportion of fossil fuels among Japan's power generation sources rose from about 65% before the earthquake to about 85%, as a result of the suspension of the operation of nuclear power stations. In particular, the proportion of liquefied natural gas (LNG) has been on the rise. At the same time, Japan's primary energy self-sufficiency ratio (including nuclear power), which relies heavily on overseas imports for virtually all its oil, natural gas, and coal, fell significantly from 20% before the earthquake to 8%. Furthermore, more than 80% of Japan's crude oil imports come from the Middle East. In light of this situation, efforts to secure stable and cheap supplies of energy are becoming increasingly important. Against this backdrop, the Long-term Energy Supply and Demand Outlook (Energy Mix) was decided upon in July 2015. This Outlook, which presents the ideal vision for energy supply and demand, serves as a forecast of the future energy structure that should be realized when measures are put in place based on the basic direction of policies, based on the assumption of policy goals that should be achieved in the aspects of stable supply, economic efficiency, environmental compliance, and safety (3E + S), which are the basic perspectives of the energy policy, and taking into account the Basic Energy Plan approved by the Cabinet in April 2014. In August 2017, discussions commenced on the review of the Basic Energy Plan.

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 forms the foundation for the vital economy of Japan and the livelihoods of its people. Japan has been strengthening diplomatic efforts, focusing on the following activities.

(A) The Foreign Minister's Policy Speech on Japan's New Energy and Resource Diplomacy

To present its vision and strategy on Japan's new energy and resource diplomacy, MOFA published the Foreign Minister's policy speech entitled "Energy and Resource Diplomacy of Japan – global vision for a shared future." This speech was read by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for

Foreign Affairs Takisawa on behalf of the Minister at the international symposium on "Energy Security and Investment in Asia" hosted by MOFA in July 2017.

This speech sets out Japan's future vision for energy and resource diplomacy, as well as its strategies towards the realization of this vision. Specifically, it states that Japan's efforts will focus on "three pillars": (1) Strengthen the strategic approach to energy and resource issues as part of Japan's diplomacy; (2) Take a multi-layered approach when conducting energy and resource diplomacy so that Japan can provide solutions to diverse needs; and (3) consolidate "Japan's unique strengths" and apply them in the field of energy and resources.

(B) Strengthening Comprehensive and Mutually-Beneficial Ties with Resource-Rich Countries

In order to secure a stable supply of energy and mineral resources, Japan has been making efforts to strengthen comprehensive and mutually-beneficial ties with resource-rich countries by approaching them at the leaders' and ministerial level, and offering cooperation utilizing its ODA, including technical cooperation and human resources development in the resource sector. In particular, since the inauguration of the Abe Administration, the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister have engaged in proactive resource energy diplomacy, visiting major resource-rich countries such as North America, the Middle East, Africa, Central and South America and the Asia-Pacific region.

(C) Ensuring Security of Transportation Routes

Piracy incidents have been occurring along the sea lane stretching from the Middle East to Japan, through which approximately 80% of the total oil imports to Japan passes, and along other internationally important sea lanes such as those off the coast of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden. In response to this situation, Japan has supported the coastal countries through such measures as supporting the capacity building for maritime law enforcement, cooperating on information sharing among countries concerned, and developing navigation facilities. Japan has also been dispatching units of the Japan Self-Defense Forces and Japanese Coast Guard officers to areas off the coast of Somalia and the Gulf of Aden to engage in escort operations of ships from all over the world (See 3-1-3(4) Oceans and Seas).

(D) Gathering and Analysis of Resource-Related Information at the Diplomatic Missions Overseas

With a view to strengthening the function of the diplomatic missions overseas, "Special Assistants for Natural Resources" have been assigned to 60 diplomatic missions overseas in 53 countries to work intensively on the acquisition and stable supply of energy and mineral resources (as of the end of December 2017). Furthermore, MOFA holds "Strategy Meetings on Natural Resources" every year, which bring together officials who are assigned to the diplomatic missions overseas in countries that are important in terms of ensuring a stable supply of energy and mineral resources. In 2017, the Meeting was held in Tokyo in February, and was also attended

by representatives of the relevant ministries and private-sector agencies. Active discussions were held on the international situation surrounding energy and mineral resources, as well as on the direction of Japan's strategies corresponding to the international situation.

(E) Making Use of International Fora and Rules

Japan makes active use of international fora and rules to cooperate with the international community towards maintaining a stable supply of energy. Japan endeavors to strengthen its capability to respond to emergencies such as disruptions in oil supply, while striving to quickly and accurately grasp information, such as trends in the global energy markets and resource-producing countries, and revisions to the medium and long-term outlooks for supply and demand.

The G7 Energy Ministerial Meeting was held in Rome, Italy, on April 9 and 10. Taking into account the international energy situation, which has entered a period of significant change in recent years, discussions were held on the role of natural gas, the shift towards low-carbon energy, and improvements to energy access in Africa. Italy, as the chair of the Meeting, issued the Chair's Summary "Energy Security: from Rome 2014 to Rome 2017."

At the G20 Hamburg Summit held in Hamburg, Germany in July, the leaders affirmed their close cooperation on making the economic and energy systems consistent and aligned with the 2030 Agenda, and their continued efforts to develop an open, flexible, and highly transparent market for energy products and technology, in order to ensure energy security. In addition, the

Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Takisawa attending the G7 Energy Ministerial Meeting in Rome (April 9, Rome, Italy)

Climate and Energy Action Plan for Growth was adopted as an annex to the Leaders' Declaration.

At APEC, the APEC Energy Working Group (EWG) is convened as a framework to promote energy trade and investment and strengthen energy security, so as to contribute to the sustainable economic growth of the Asia-Pacific region. The 53rd EWG was held in Singapore in April 2017, and the 54th EWG was held in New Zealand in November. Japan participated actively in both meetings.

In relation to ASEAN, the ASEAN+3 (Japan, China, and ROK) Ministers on Energy Meeting and the East Asia Summit (EAS) Energy Ministers Meeting were held in Manila, the Philippines in September. At the 2017 meeting, the respective countries agreed to put effort into promoting investment, human resource development, and the development of legal systems in the field of LNG, in order to build a highly transparent and fluid LNG market. Furthermore, Japan proposed the strengthening of precise energy conservation cooperation that matches the levels of progress of each ASEAN country, and this proposal was received with gratitude from the respective countries.

Column

Japan's New Energy and Resource Diplomacy
- Unveiling the "Global Vision" -

In recent years, dramatic changes that could even be described as cataclysmic have been taking place in the global energy landscape. Firstly, there has been "the shift in suppliers" with the rise of new energy exporters such as the U.S. as a result of technological innovation such as the shale revolution. Secondly, there has also been "the shift in consumers" as the center for rising energy demand moves towards emerging economies, in particular Asian countries such as India, China, and ASEAN member states. Thirdly, as climate change becomes a common challenge faced by all countries in the world, the wave of "the shift towards low-carbonization" has been applying pressure on the energy sector, which makes up more than two-thirds of the greenhouse gas emissions generated in the world. Moreover, policy trends in countries around the world including changes of the energy policy under the Trump administration in the U.S. are also drawing attention to the impact they may have on the global energy situation.

Responding to such changes in the international situation, Japan is fully aware of the need for its energy and resource diplomacy. With this awareness, in 2017, MOFA conducted in-depth discussions on how to reshape Japan's energy and resource diplomacy, harnessing the opportunities such as meetings involving Special Assistants for Natural Resources deployed in Japan's diplomatic missions all around the world. Taking into account the outcome of the discussions, a new vision and strategy were unveiled in July entitled "Energy and Resource Diplomacy of Japan – global vision for a shared future."

Given Japan's limited resources, securing a stable supply of energy and resources continues to be a greatly important issue. However, it is difficult for any country to achieve energy security on its efforts alone under the current international situation; rather, there is a need to consider an approach for energy and resource diplomacy on the premise of mutual dependence. The Global Vision sets out five points of particular emphasis (refer to the chart below), based on the idea that contribution to providing solutions for global key issues concerning energy will assure Japan's own energy security. "Win-win" relationships with resource-rich countries will be strengthened by making Japan's utmost efforts to achieve this vision, eventually leading to a stable supply of energy and resources to Japan. At the same time Japan can demonstrate leadership in strengthening energy security in the world. In addition, towards realizing this vision, Japan has also announced that it will focus on "three pillars" (refer to the chart below) as the core of its "Roadmap for a strengthened energy and resource diplomacy."

Energy and resource security is a challenge not only for Japan, but also for the world, and is directly connected to economic, social, and environmental issues on a global scale. MOFA will continue to take a proactive approach towards energy and resource diplomacy,

based on the stance set out in the Global Vision.

Strategy for Japan's Resource Diplomacy and Vision for Contribution to the world

Contributing to the resolution of global issues while positioning the secure provision of energy and resources as the top priority

(1) Promoting free trade and investment in energy and resources and sophisticated markets
(2) Energy access for all
(3) Reducing environmental costs and improving energy efficiency
(4) Promoting development and deployment of new energy and renewable energy
(5) Strengthening international preparedness for emergencies in oil and gas supplies and global energy governance

To achieve these goals…

"Three-Pillar" approach

(1) Positioning energy and resource issues as an important part of Japan's diplomatic strategy
(2) Taking a multi-layered approach when conducting energy and resource diplomacy so that Japan can cater to various needs
(3) Consolidating "Japan's unique strengths" and applying them in the field of energy and resources while strengthening its communication and public relations activities

Five points and three pillars of the Global Vision

C Oceans and Seas (continental shelves and deep seabed)

As Japan is not abundant in energy and mineral resources on its land, marine living resources and natural resources in the continental shelf and the sea-bed and ocean floor and subsoil thereof beyond the limits of national jurisdiction (the Area) in the surrounding waters are important, from the perspective of securing stable supply sources and ensuring the sound development of the economy. Japan is proceeding with necessary measures to secure its interests at sea based on the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Toward the establishment of its outer limits of the continental shelf beyond 200 nautical miles, Japan received the recommendations from the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) in April 2012, in which four out of seven regions that Japan made its submission to the CLCS, were recognized. Following this, in October 2014, Japan established extended continental shelves in two regions in accordance with the "Future Policy for Extending the Continental Shelf" decided by the Headquarters for Ocean Policy in July of the same year. Japan is also coordinating with a state concerned regarding another two regions and is making continuous efforts for early recommendations of the remaining one region, on which recommendations were deferred (See 3-1-6).

With regard to deep seabed, two Japanese contractors concluded contracts with the International Seabed Authority (ISA) and gained exclusive rights to explore for deep-sea mineral resources in a designated exploration area in search of manganese nodules[15] and cobalt-rich ferromanganese crusts[16].

D Efforts toward Green Growth and a Low Carbon Society

Japan has been making contributions toward the realization of green growth and

15 Black agglomerate precipitate that contains much copper, nickel, and cobalt
16 Ocean floor mineral resources with a high percentage of cobalt content, and present on the slopes and tops of sea mounts

Japan's diplomatic efforts for Food Security

[Background]

Japan's situation

- 60% (in terms of calorie supply) or 30% (in terms of production value) of food supply is imported
- Challenges for production increase (decrease in farmland area, aging of farmers, etc.)

World's situation

- Increase in the world population
- Changes in diet caused by economic development of emerging countries
- Increase in bioenergy generation
- Climate change and frequent abnormal weather
- Only a few countries have export capacity
- Expanding volatility in food prices; agricultural products made into financial products

[Japan's Diplomatic efforts]

1. Enhance global food production

- **Promote investment:** Promotion of responsible agricultural investment through promoting the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems adopted by the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) and supporting research studies by FAO, the World Bank and others; establishment of food value chains by public-private partnership through holding bilateral dialogues and public-private missions
- **Promoting agricultural/rural development, Research and Development and technology dissemination** Example: Coalition for African Rice Development (CARD), etc.
- **Response to climate change:** Construction of prevention and early warning systems for droughts and other natural disasters

2. Form a stable market and trade system of agricultural products

- **Efforts to maintain and strengthen the free trade system and surveillance of market functions:** Encourage acceptance of the ban on export restrictions in principle under the WTO; stricter discipline on export restrictions in economic partnership agreements; monitoring price trends (the Agricultural Market Information System (AMIS), etc.); measures against price volatility, etc.

3. Support and safety net for the vulnerable

- **Cooperation with international organizations:** FAO, World Food Programme (WFP), etc.
- **Nutritional support:** Nutrition guidance, provision of supplements, Nutrition Japan Public-Private Platform (NJPPP), etc.
- **Support for building of social safety net:** Provision of means of livelihood to the poorest

*Toward the realization of the G7 Elmau Summit (held in Germany, 2015) commitment to raising 500 million people out of hunger and malnutrition by 2030, the G7 Vision for Action on Food Security and Nutrition was formulated at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit. In addition, "G7 International Symposium on Food Security and Nutrition" was held as a follow-up to the Summit.

4. Constructing a structure for emergencies and food crises

- **International framework for cooperation:** ASEAN + 3 Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR), G20 Rapid Response Forum (RRF)

Note: FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization

the promotion of a low-carbon society in the international community, including in developing countries (e.g., in human resources development and cooperation through international frameworks) through the use of renewable energy (solar, wind, biomass, geothermal, hydraulic, the use of the oceans, etc.) and promotion of energy-efficient technologies. With a view to disseminating and promoting the sustainable use of renewable energy, Japan has been engaged actively in the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA) and served as President of the Assembly in January 2015. Moreover, in March 2016, Prime Minister Abe announced

the "Fukushima Plan for a New Energy Society"[17] to promote Fukushima as the center of research into renewable energy. Based on this plan, MOFA organized a study tour in August 2016 of the "Fukushima Renewable Energy Institute," and a study tour of the Nakoso Power Station and other reconstruction-related facilities in June 2017 for ambassadors of each country in Tokyo. The tours promoted Japan's proactive stance toward the spread and promotion of renewable energy externally.

(2) Ensuring Food Security

According to reports by the UN Population Division, global population in 2017 is estimated to be about 7.6 billion. However, global population is expected to increase mainly in Sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia in the future, and to reach about 9.8 billion by 2050. Furthermore, as demand for grains will double with the increase in consumption of livestock, demand for feed for livestock will also increase rapidly in tandem with the rise in the amount of livestock consumed, should dietary habits in developing countries change in the future. According to a report by the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 2017, there is a need to increase food production by approximately 50% by 2050, against food production levels in 2012. On the other hand, if we were to turn our eyes to the domestic situation in Japan, while the country's food self-sufficiency rate (calorie basis (published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries)) has been on a downward trend in the long-term, it has been levelling out in recent years, and reached 38% in FY2016. Japan continues to be dependent on the import of much of its food over the long-term; in order for Japan to avoid the problem of food supply shortage, it needs to increase domestic food production, and at the same time, actively promote food production worldwide in order to ensure the stability of imports. In the event that global food supply falls short due to a large-scale drought or other factors, it is also necessary for Japan to contribute as a member of the international community, including providing support to other countries. Furthermore, rather than temporarily increasing food production amidst rising food demand, there is a need to secure the sustainability of increased food production while reducing the burden on the environment. In addition, food also suffers from quality deterioration over time, and is easily damaged by diseases and pests. As such, to ensure the efficient consumption of agricultural produce, it is necessary to create stable markets for agricultural products as well as trading systems, and to improve logistics. It is vital to consolidate Japan's food security through these efforts.

A Efforts in the International Frameworks Concerning Food Security

In the G7/G8 frameworks, since the topic of food security was raised at the Toyako Summit held in Hokkaido in 2008, various initiatives have been implemented to strengthen food security. At the G7 Taormina Summit (Italy) held in May 2017, food security was brought up as an important issue; in particular, a decision

17 Plan based on Prime Minister Abe's initiative to create a model in Fukushima for the realization of a future new energy society, while providing the world with information on this model, and establishing Fukushima as a pioneering location with regard to renewable energy and the future hydrogen society.

was made to enhance joint support towards food security, nutrition, and sustainable agriculture in Sub-Saharan Africa. At the G7 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting held in October 2017 (Italy), the focus was placed on strengthening the resilience of farmers and the development of agricultural communities. Discussions were held on risk management policies in agriculture and the tools for disaster prevention and countermeasures, as well as food security and the increasing number of refugees.

In the G20 framework, at the G20 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting held in Germany in January 2017, the ministers agreed to take serious responsibility for realizing agriculture-related goals aimed at ensuring food security and improving nutrition around the world, including the second goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture). They also affirmed their commitment towards the regular convention of the G20 Agriculture Ministers' Meeting, and the implementation of action plans.

There has also been progress in regional cooperation. In APEC, the relevant cooperation has been ongoing through the APEC Policy Partnership on Food Security (PPFS), which involves cooperation not only among the agencies of the participating countries and regions, but also with their private sectors. In August, the APEC High Level Policy Dialogue on Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture in Response to Climate Change was held in Viet Nam, where the Can Tho Statement On Enhancing Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture in Response to Climate Change, the Food Security and Climate Change Multi-Year Action Plan, and the Action Plan on Rural - Urban Development to Strengthen Food Security and Quality Growth, were adopted.

The ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve Agreement (APTERR) entered into force in 2012, under the cooperative framework of ASEAN+3 (Japan, China, and ROK). Based on this, Japan provided the Philippines and Cambodia with assistance in rice supply in 2016. At the ASEAN+3 Summit Meeting held in Manila, the Philippines, in November 2017, the Statement on Food Security Cooperation was adopted.

B Japan's Efforts to Promote "Responsible Agricultural Investment"

While promoting international agricultural investments aimed at increasing global food production, large-scale "land grabbing" in developing countries has been a concern. In light of this issue, Japan advocated the concept of "Responsible Agricultural Investment" at the G8 L'Aquila Summit held in Italy in 2009, so that investments would be promoted in a manner to create a triple win situation for recipient countries, local communities, including smallholders, and investors. In April 2010, four relevant international organizations (FAO, IFAD, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and the World Bank (WB)) adopted the "Principles for Responsible Agricultural Investment (PRAI). Building on this, the "Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems" was adopted at the general assembly of the Committee on World Food Security (CFS) in October 2014. At the G7 Ise-Shima Summit in 2016, these principles were also incorporated into the "G7 Vision

for Action on Food Security and Nutrition," forming the basis for actions to be taken by G7 countries. Japan will continue to lead the execution of these principles as the main issues in realizing worldwide food security.

(3) Fisheries (Including Tuna and Whaling Issues)

Japan is one of the major fishing and consuming countries of marine products in the world and plays an active role in the proper conservation, management and sustainable use of living marine resources.

Japan, as one of the largest tuna-consuming countries, has joined all Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) for tuna, and leads discussions on strengthening measures for the conservation and management of the resources. In 2017, at the annual meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), conservation and management measures that enable changes in catch quotas, based on the results of resource evaluations on Pacific bluefin tuna and the extent of changes in the probability of achieving the interim recovery target, were adopted. With regard to bigeye tuna, yellowfin tuna, and skipjack tuna, the prohibition period for fish aggregating devices (FAD) was reduced for purse seine fishery, and new regulations on the limit for the number of FAD were established, as temporary measures for a one-year period in 2018. With regard to longline fishing, measures that include increasing Japan's catch quota for bigeye tuna from 16,860 tons to 18,265 tons, were adopted. At the annual meeting of International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), an agreement was reached to increase the total allowable catch (TAC) for Atlantic bluefin tuna resources gradually from the existing 23,655 tons to 36,000 tons by 2020.

In the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC), discussions were carried out based on Japan's proposals, and decisions were made on the following matters: (1) For Pacific saury, measures to prohibit an increase in the number of vessels permitted to fish in deep-sea fishery countries and regions (limited for one year); (2) For mackerel, completion of resource evaluation as soon as possible, and during that time, measures to prohibit an increase in the number of fishing vessels permitted to fish for mackerel in international waters; (3) To place 23 non-flag vessels on the list of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing vessels. Japan recognizes the importance of the role of the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (entered into force in 2016), which provides for the adoption of measures on denying the entry of IUU vessels into ports of calls, on countermeasures against IUU fishing vessels. In May 2017, Japan deposited its instrument of accession, and the Agreement entered into force for Japan in June.

With regard to the Japanese eel (Anguilla japonica), which was also discussed at the 17th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (CoP17) to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), the 10th Informal Consultation was held in June 2017. Four countries and regions, namely Japan, China, Taiwan, and the ROK, are strengthening initiatives to build an international management system,

Column

Strengthening Relations with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) is the leading United Nations' specialized agency in the fields of food, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and plays an important role in strengthening food security around the world. Since it became a member of FAO in 1951, Japan has maintained its cooperative relationship with the organization for many years. Recently, Japan is working toward a further strengthening of relations with FAO, with a focus on efforts to have closer consultations with FAO, to make information on FAO's activities more readily available in Japan, and to increase the numbers of Japanese employees at FAO.

In January 2017, the first Japan-FAO Strategic Consultation Meeting was held at FAO Headquarters in Rome. Looking back at many years of collaboration, Japan and FAO reaffirmed the importance of further advancing their strategic partnership to address major challenges and opportunities related to food security, nutrition, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, as they move towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The two sides also discussed how to further boost the visibility of the FAO's mandate, work and achievements in Japan.

Following this first Strategic Consultation Meeting, FAO Director-General Graziano da Silva visited Japan in May for the first time in four years. During his stay, he held dialogues with key government officials including Foreign Minister Kishida, attended various events in Tokyo, visited a site designated as Globally Important Agricultural Heritage Systems (GIAHS) in Gifu Prefecture, and gave interviews to various media outlets as a part of their active efforts to spread information about overview and importance of FAO's activities.

With the aim of increasing the number of Japanese employees at FAO, Director-General Graziano da Silva also delivered a lecture at Sophia University, where he spoke about FAO's role in increasing food production, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture and fisheries, as well as about the appeal and rewarding aspects of working at FAO to Japanese youths, and contributed to potential candidates for FAO employees.

Director-General Graziano da Silva also tasted sweets made from fruits produced in Fukushima City at the Fukushima Sweets Tasting Event organized by MOFA. He highly appraised the safe and delicious agricultural products of Japan, and explained that food products from Fukushima are safe and that there is no need to raise concerns about safety. In this way, he provided support for Fukushima's reconstruction to counter the reputation damage

Introducing sweets at the Fukushima Sweets Tasting Event (May 10, Tokyo)

caused upon food and agriculture products following the Great East Japan Earthquake.

To coincide with Director-General Graziano da Silva's visit to Japan, French chef Katsuhiro Nakamura and journalist Hiroko Kuniya were appointed as Japan's first FAO National Goodwill Ambassadors. After their appointment, they have both played active roles as Goodwill Ambassadors by harnessing their respective experiences. Going forward, as the "face" of FAO in Japan, they are expected to continue spreading information about FAO's activities and the importance of these activities in an easy-to-understand and friendly manner.

Ceremony for the appointment of FAO's National Goodwill Ambassadors: From left, National Goodwill Ambassador Nakamura, Director-General Graziano da Silva, National Goodwill Ambassador Kuniya (May 10, Tokyo)

Together with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries, MOFA will continue its efforts toward a further strengthening of Japan-FAO relations.

such as by issuing the joint press release that includes reviews on the management measures adopted by each of the countries or regions.

While conditions at the high seas of the Arctic Ocean are not suitable for direct commercial fishery soon, there have been growing concerns on future unregulated fishing there with the partial melting of the ice due to global warming. Against this background, Meetings on High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean have been held six times since December 2015, involving nine countries and one organization: the five Arctic coastal countries (Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russia, and the U.S.), Japan, China, the ROK, Iceland, and the EU. At the sixth meeting in November, an agreement in principle was reached on the draft agreement, which covers contents such as the prevention of unregulated fishing.

Regarding the whaling issue, under the basic policy of pursuing the resumption of commercial whaling by conducting scientific whale research programs, based upon scientific evidence and international law in order to gather scientific data that is necessary for the proper management of whale resources, Japan has been implementing the "New Scientific Whale Research Program in the Antarctic Ocean (NEWREP-A)" since December 2015, which was finalized taking into account the Judgment of the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in March 2014 as well as issues pointed out by the Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission (IWC). Moreover, regarding the western North Pacific, a proposal for the "New Scientific Whale Research Program in the Western North Pacific (NEWREP-NP)" was submitted to the Scientific Committee of the IWC in November 2016. The research program was finalized fully taking into account the discussions within the Scientific Committee in May 2017, and the research program was implemented from June 2017. Anti-whaling countries occupy the majority at the IWC, and while the international

situation regarding whaling still remains difficult, Japan is making persistent efforts to deepen understanding among the international community based on scientific evidence and international law.

(4) Foreign Direct Investment in Japan

The target to double foreign companies' direct investment in Japan to 35 trillion yen by 2020, addressed in the 2013 "Japan Revitalization Strategy," was reaffirmed in the "Investments for the Future Strategy 2017." (27.8 trillion yen as of the end of 2016) With the "Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan," which has been held since 2014 to spearhead the initiative to promote activities for discovering and attracting investments, while gathering opinions from foreign company managers, Japan continues to make further progress in implementing additional measures such as regulatory and institutional reforms contributing to the improvement of the investment environment in Japan, responding to the needs of foreign companies, and supporting measures to expand investments effectively. Based on the Five Promises for Attracting Foreign Businesses to Japan[18], decided at the 2nd meeting of the Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan held in March 2015, foreign companies have been utilizing the Investment Advisor Assignment System[19] since April 2016, and are meeting with the relevant State Ministers in charge. In addition, the Working Group for Revising Regulations and Administrative Procedures has been convened since August 2016, to review the streamlining of regulations and administrative procedures that pose a challenge to foreign companies when they are investing in Japan. The summaries of the Working Group meetings have also been reflected in the Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2017 and Investments for the Future Strategy 2017.

MOFA has been implementing various measures adopted by the Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan, initiatives making use of diplomatic resources through diplomatic missions overseas, and trade promotion by key government officials. It is also strategically implementing various initiatives towards promoting foreign direct investment in Japan. The "Contact Points for Direct Investment towards Japan" established at 126 diplomatic missions overseas in April 2016, have been working in collaboration with the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), carrying out surveys of requests for improvements to Japanese regulations and systems, calling for investments in Japan by making use of networks of contacts at diplomatic missions overseas, holding events for promoting foreign direct investment in Japan, and implementing other proactive initiatives. The track record of activities at each diplomatic mission one year after the establishment of the "contact points" exceeded 700 cases. Recently, seminars to promote investment in Japan have been organized through cooperation

18 (1) Bolstering of the multilingualization of the service in the retail industry, restaurants, medical institutions, public transportation, etc., (2) Promoting the preparation of free public wireless LAN in cities and simplifying procedures for use, (3) creating an environment in which all regional airports are able to receive business jets with short advance notice, (4) support for international students in looking for employment in Japan, and (5) the implementation of the "Investment Advisor Assignment System."

19 A system in which a State Minister will be assigned as an advisor to each foreign company that has made important investments in Japan. A State Minister will be assigned according to the company's field of specialty, and the State Minister for Foreign Affairs will attend all meetings.

between the JETRO overseas office and the Japanese embassy or local public organization, and such seminars were held in Switzerland in February 2017, Finland in May, and Ireland in June. In Japan, MOFA hosted the Japan-U.S.-Europe Business Seminar on "Ringing in a Renewed Economic Relationship between Japan, the U.S. and Europe Pioneered by Mutual Investments" in March 2017 (organized jointly with the relevant ministries, the Japan Institute of International Affairs, and JETRO). During Prime Minister Abe's visit to the U.S. in September 2017, he introduced the results and future direction of reforms through Abenomics, and called for greater investment in Japan at a meeting with U.S. CEOs and in his economic speech delivered at the New York Stock Exchange.

Column

Bringing the World Expo 2025 to Osaka, Kansai!

Preparations for the Olympic and Paralympic Games 2020 Tokyo have been generating much excitement across Japan. However, are you aware that Japan is also bidding to be the host country for the World Expo 2025? In fact, the public and private sectors of Japan are now working together on activities to pitch Osaka, Kansai as the host for the World Expo in 2025.

In 1970, about half a century before today, the World Expo was held in Osaka based on the theme "Progress and Harmony for Mankind." It attracted as many as 64 million visitors—the largest number of visitors to an Expo up to that point, and became an Expo that would be much talked about by future generations. That had precisely been the apex of Japan's period of rapid economic growth, and the World Expo, alongside with the Tokyo Olympic Games of 1964, provided Japan with a splendid opportunity to disseminate the new image of postwar Japan to the international community.

This time, the proposed theme for EXPO 2025 Osaka, Kansai is "Designing Future Society for Our Lives." It places the focus on people, and aims to consider, together with people around the world, the way how each individual can live a happy life, and the future vision for a sustainable socio economy that supports that life. Our approach is to connect the 8 billion people of the world to co-create the society of the future. To realize this aim, we plan to come up with mechanisms that can offer various encounters and discoveries even to those who are not able to come to the venue itself by harnessing technologies to facilitate participation by all the people around the world, such as the Internet and Virtual Reality (VR).

The World Expo is also a venue that provides people with an opportunity to experience new technologies of the future. Technologies such as the moving walkway and mobile phones, which were featured at the last World Expo held in Osaka in 1970, have now become indispensable parts of our daily life. The World Expo 2025 will provide mobility

systems that harness self-driving technology which can be used by the elderly and disabled. Health check-up services that utilize Internet of Things (IoT) technology in the pavilions and restrooms that automatically check the participants' health conditions as well as mechanisms that enable participants from around the world to enjoy the World Expo without being hindered by any language barriers using machine translation systems are also under consideration. Participants may even have the chance to experience delivery systems of future societies, such as the delivery of a pre-booked lunch to a specific location using drones.

The host city for the World Expo 2025 will be selected in November 2018. Moving towards that date, we are taking advantage of Japan's attractiveness such as its soft power and are actively engaged in an all-Japan effort to bring the event to Osaka. Pokemon and Hello Kitty, which enjoy immense popularity worldwide, are also offering their cooperation as Special Envoys (Mascot Characters) to bring the World Expo to Japan. Enthusiasm among the citizens is important in efforts to promote Osaka as the host city. We ask for everyone's support towards success in bringing the World Expo to Japan!

Yumeshima Island, the planned venue for the World Expo. It is a man-made island surrounded by the sea, allowing visitors to enjoy the beautiful scenery of the Seto Inland Sea. Yumeshima Island is easily accessible, about 30 minutes from the heart of Osaka City. (Photo: METI)

Ceremony for the appointment of Pokemon and Hello Kitty as Special Envoys (Mascot Characters) to bring the World Expo to Japan (November 28, Tokyo)

*You can register as a supporter of Osaka's bid by visiting the following link.
http://www.expo2025-osaka-japan.jp/recruit-ind

Section 4
Efforts to Promote Understanding and Trust in Japan

Overview

(Strategic Communication in 2017)

In 2017, in light of pressing issues of the increasing severity of the North Korea situation, and challenges to the international order through unilateral attempts to change the status quo, Japan expressed the importance of freedom, democracy, human rights, the rule of law and other fundamental values, as well as its intention to continue contributing greatly to the peace and development of the Asia-Pacific region and the world. In regard to the "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy" advocated by Prime Minister Abe (See Special Feature "Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy"), Japan also placed great emphasis on communicating it at various opportunities including the visit by U.S. President Trump to Japan in November, the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting, and the ASEAN Summit. By taking advantage of various opportunities and utilizing various tools, Japan is also engaged in efforts to information about matters on the recognition of history, including the issue of the so-called "comfort women" and various issues on maintaining Japan's territorial integrity.

(Initiatives in Strategic Communications)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is implementing strategic communications based on the three-pillar approach of (1) working to convey Japan's views, policies and initiatives, (2) sharing Japan's rich and varied attractiveness, and (3) cultivating understanding and support for Japan while strengthening the system of the diplomatic missions overseas. Initiatives in communications have continued to be bolstered, with focuses on increasing the understanding of Japan's contributions towards the peace, stability and prosperity of the international community, maintenance and strengthening of the international order based on the rule of law, and on promoting understanding of issues regarding history.

To convey Japan's views, policies and initiatives, in addition to direct diplomatic communication from the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister at various opportunities and proactive communication from the heads of the diplomatic missions overseas, MOFA took advantage of the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister's official overseas visits to disseminate information

to foreign media through the Press Secretary and other officials. In those occasions, MOFA promptly provided information to the media, offered assistance for press coverage and was actively engaged in communicating with the public through the invitation of experts and media personnel, frequently in collaboration with think tanks. In cases where erroneous reports based on misunderstandings or biases about Japan were found, MOFA took corrective measures, including sending rebuttal pieces by the head of the diplomatic mission overseas or the Press Secretary.

To share Japan's rich and varied attractiveness, MOFA has been moving forward on the development of "Japan House," which are overseas hubs aimed at expanding the base of deeper understanding of and affinity for Japan in London (UK), Los Angeles (U.S.), and São Paulo (Brazil). Also, diplomatic missions around the world have implemented cultural projects, while the Japan Foundation (JF) has taken initiatives such as the "WA Project." Among these cultural projects was the 11th Japan International MANGA Award. Moreover, initiatives were implemented in cooperation with people in Japan and overseas to preserve tangible and intangible cultural heritage throughout the world, and promote inscription of Japan's cultural heritage on the World Heritage List and the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. To cultivate understanding and support for Japan, MOFA promoted the exchange of young people with Asia, the U.S., Europe, and Latin America, held a U.S.-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON), and provided support for Japanese studies at universities in major countries, in an effort to promote personal and intellectual exchanges and Japanese language education. Moreover, to ensure the success of the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, "Sport for Tomorrow (SFT)" was launched as a sports-based international contribution project. To continue implementing these initiatives strategically and effectively, MOFA will continue to enhance Japan's strategic communication based on the three-pillar approach described above, through the effective use of its budget for strategic communication.

1 Strategic Communications

(1) Overview

The Government of Japan has been actively communicating Japan's stance and way of thinking on the occasions of daily press conferences, interviews, contributions to the media, and speeches at official visits to foreign countries and international conferences by the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, and Government officials. The diplomatic missions overseas have actively communicated to the government of the appointed countries, their citizens, and the media on Japan's fundamental stance and views on a range of issues including the recognition of history or maintenance of territorial integrity. When the media publish reports that include factual errors, the diplomatic missions overseas, especially ambassadors and consuls general, or Press Secretary, explain by sending rebuttal pieces based on objective facts. MOFA also actively engages in communications with the public via social media and websites, in addition to creating publicity materials including videos on Japan's foreign policy.

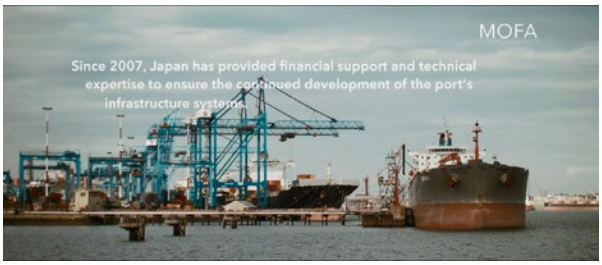
In order to make Japan's fundamental

stance on policy issues understood, it is also important to enhance coordinated efforts with experts and think tanks. Based on this recognition, MOFA has invited influential experts and media personnel from around the world, providing them with opportunities to exchange views with Government officials and others, and to visit various places around Japan. Furthermore, Japan has dispatched Japanese experts abroad while extending its support for holding Japan-related seminars.

Moreover, in order to expand the base of deeper understanding and affinity for Japan, including among those who have not had a strong interest in Japan, the following actions are important: (1) providing information on the diverse attractiveness of Japan through "All-Japan" efforts by the Government, private sectors and local governments; (2) promoting outreach that reflects the needs of local communities, utilizing the expertise of experts from both inside and outside Japan; and (3) providing a "one-stop-service" where all information related to Japan can be obtained. With this in mind, "Japan Houses" have been successively established since 2017 in São Paulo (Brazil), Los Angeles (U.S.), and London (UK) as communication hubs to bring about the realization of these actions. (See Column "Japan House -From a Highly Rated Japan, to an Influential Japan-")

(2) Reports by Foreign Media on Japan and Communications through Foreign Media

In 2017, when Japan continued to serve as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council from 2016, the foreign media paid much attention to Japan's foreign policy including its response to



Foreign policy video "Japan's Efforts toward Connecting and Prospering the World for Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (Released on November 9, and broadcast on CNN from November 11 onward. It is viewed at MOFA's YouTube channel.)

Japan House São Paulo (Photo: Japan House São Paulo Secretariat/Rogerio Cassimiro)

issue of North Korea, security, economics and society, as well as its international cooperation. Moreover, active foreign visits by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, in line with "Japan's foreign policy that takes a panoramic perspective of the world map," captured the attention of the local media of destination and other international media.

Amidst increasing interest in Japan, MOFA actively provides timely information and offers assistance with press coverage to foreign media in order to gain understanding and support from the international community about Japan's positions and its activities. MOFA makes efforts to achieve strategic and effective communications by providing information to relevant media outlets at the appropriate times.

In terms of communications through foreign media, MOFA conducts press conferences, such as those held by Foreign

Minister Kono, and provides information to correspondents in Japan via press releases and other materials. MOFA arranges interviews, press conferences, and op-ed article contributions to foreign media during overseas visits by Prime Minister Abe and Foreign Minister Kono, and their participation in international conferences such as the G7 Taormina Summit, the G20 Hamburg Summit, the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, and the UN General Assembly. In 2017, Prime Minister Abe gave a total of 12 interviews and article contributions, while Foreign Ministers Kishida and Kono gave a total of 21 interviews and article contributions. Prime Minister Abe also conducted four independent press conferences during his visits overseas, and Foreign Minister Kono conducted two press conferences to the foreign press during his visits overseas.

For example, taking the opportunity of his visit to Southeast Asia in January, Prime Minister Abe communicated his messages about the enhancement of bilateral relations with each country, expansion of trade and investment and cooperation in the field of maritime security of the Philippines, Indonesia, and Viet Nam. Prior to his visit to Russia in September, Prime Minister Abe appeared in an interview conducted by a Russian TV station, and spoke about the Joint economic activities on the Four Northern Islands and Japan's resolve to conclude a peace treaty. When attending the UN General Assembly during the same month, he contributed an article to the New York Times (U.S.) about the issues of North Korea. During the visit of U.S. President Trump to Japan in November, Prime Minister Abe accepted an interview with Fox News (U.S.), where he communicated information about cooperation with the U.S. regarding the issues of North Korea, and strengthening Japan-U.S. relations. In August, Foreign Minister Kono took the opportunity of his visit to the U.S. to appeal for further strengthening of the Japan-U.S. Alliance by accepting an interview with the Washington Post. On the occasion of the TICAD Ministerial Meeting the same month, he also accepted an interview with Euronews and Africanews in Mozambique, and introduced Japan's efforts to support Africa. In addition, he appeared in an interview with CNN (U.S.) in November, and spoke about Japan's response to North Korea and the strengthening of the Japan-U.S. relations.

Active efforts were also made by the Press Secretary and others to provide information to the foreign media during overseas visits by the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister. For example, a total of about 130 people attended the press briefings held during the APEC and ASEAN Summits in November.

In addition, MOFA invited 78 journalists and six TV teams from abroad, with a focus on media outlets with no correspondents in Japan, to provide opportunities for them to enhance their understanding of Japan's priority policies and positions. For example, taking the opportunity of Foreign Minister Kishida's visit to Kumamoto in March for the project of "Local to Global," a total of 11 journalists from five countries in Asia and six countries in Central and Eastern Europe were invited to Japan, and MOFA provided with the opportunities to cover the current situation of recovery and reconstruction of Kumamoto from the earthquake. As a result, numerous articles were published in various countries about

reconstruction efforts made by the local government. In April and November, five journalists from Asia, Europe, and Central and South America visited Iwaki and Soma cities in Fukushima prefecture, given the situation that incorrect information was still widespread in the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake in some countries. Opportunities were also provided for journalists to cover Japan's energy diplomacy and energy-related technologies in October. Five journalists from five countries in Asia, the Middle East, and Africa were invited to cover facilities related to the Fukushima Plan for a New Energy Society, and this was subsequently reported in each country. In December, five journalists were invited from the Arab states and given the opportunities to cover Japan's Middle East policies as well as its cooperative relation with the Middle East.

In some cases where reports on Japan by the foreign media included factual errors, MOFA promptly delivered explanations to the media or sent letters to the editor in order to promote reports based on accurate facts and understanding.

Column

Japan House

- From a Highly Rated Japan, to an Influential Japan -

The establishment of Japan House (www.japanhouse.jp/) is proceeding in the three cities of London (UK), Los Angeles (U.S.) and São Paulo (Brazil). This is a new hub that aims to spread Japan's diverse points of appeal to the world, based on the concepts of "a surprising, insightful encounter with the authentic stories of Japan" and "a place that opens people's eyes to Japan."

Japan has an incomparably rich and diverse range of cultures, including cultures and customs rooted in profound spirituality, traditions, and Japan's rich nature and climate, arts that convey a sense of Japan's sensitive and delicate aesthetic, innovative cutting-edge technology, and extreme and penetrating fashion and pop culture. These cultures can carry diplomatic value that can enhance Japan's presence in the international community as well as maintain and strengthen its influence. Japan House offers the opportunity for visitors to "encounter" and experience Japanese culture and arts that touch their hearts and stir their emotions, with the aim of expanding the base of people who take an interest in, and feel affinity and resonate with, Japan and the Japanese people who are producing such culture and arts. Furthermore, it aims to spread the recognition of Japan's value as a global partner that has positive influence on the world.

The Japan House in São Paulo, which opened in April, attracted more than 550,000 visitors from within and outside the country in the eight-month period until the end of December, and has become a new place of interest in São Paulo. In addition to organizing exhibitions at the gallery, this Japan House also operates a restaurant, shop, and café

that actively harness the vitality of the private sector and the appeal of the local region. There is also a library where visitors can obtain various information about Japan. Participatory workshops and lectures that are tied in with the exhibitions, as well as campaigns and events organized by the local governments and Japanese companies, are being held in the seminar room.

Japan House aims to support not only artists with an established reputation, but also to serve as a foothold for talented and passionate people such as young artists, local governments, and companies, who express Japan and promote their expression to the world. After São Paulo, the Japan House in Los Angeles, U.S., was also opened partially (gallery and shop) in December. Currently, preparations are underway towards the full opening of the Japan House in Los Angeles, and the opening of the Japan House in London, UK.

Visitors forming a long queue to enter the Japan House in São Paulo (São Paulo, Brazil)

Visitors viewing the exhibition (São Paulo, Brazil)

MOFA's official website

(3) Dissemination of Information through the Internet

MOFA has been actively engaged in disseminating information through the internet, including its website and social media, with the aim of gaining the understanding and support of people in and outside Japan on Japan's foreign policy.

MOFA considers its English website an important tool of public diplomacy, and has been enhancing the distribution of information in English on Japan's foreign policy (including territorial issues, historical issues and security), Japan's position on international affairs and Japan's rich and varied attractiveness. Furthermore, MOFA has been making efforts to disseminate information in local languages through the websites of Japan's embassies and consulates-general overseas.

MOFA speedily distributes a wide range of information to the international community speedily through social media

platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

2 Cultural and Sports Diplomacy

(1) Overview

MOFA and the Japan Foundation (JF) implement various projects, through introducing Japanese culture and sports overseas, to create positive images of Japan in foreign countries, boost the value of brands in Japan while encouraging deeper understanding of Japan, and foster individuals and groups knowledgeable about Japan for the future. For example, the "Cultural Projects of the Diplomatic Missions Overseas" introduce a wide range of Japanese culture, from traditional culture such as the way of tea and flower arrangement (Ikebana), to contemporary culture such as animation, manga, and fashion. Under the "Japan Brand Program," MOFA has dispatched experts of various fields overseas to share Japan's outstanding cultural assets, experience and wisdom with other countries, as well as to establish Japan's national brand with stronger presence in the world. MOFA holds seminars, workshops and demonstrations reflecting each event's characteristics, and share values and experiences with the audience, paving the way for international exchanges. Currently, "All-Japan" efforts are also being made to boost the number of inbound foreign visitors through various overseas PR projects through communication via social networking services (SNS) and other means: promoting the regional diverse attractiveness.

Towards the success of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, it is also important to enhance Japan's presence in the field of sports. As part of the "Sport for Tomorrow (SFT)" program, MOFA is engaged in various initiatives including sports exchanges and sports promotion support projects overseas, the dispatch of sports instructors through the JICA volunteer program or the JF, and the provision of sporting equipment and development of facilities by utilizing the Cultural Grant Assistance. It also supports the Host Town Initiative that promotes mutual exchanges with the countries and regions participating in the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020.

In addition, in order to promote understanding and support for Japan and better understanding of Japan through Japanese studies, MOFA implements the following activities: provision of information on studying in Japan through Japan's diplomatic missions overseas; building alumni networks of the foreign nationals who have studied in Japan; cooperation for the JET Programme which invites young people from abroad to the local governments in Japan; exchange programs for youth and adults from Asia and North America; sending visiting professors to universities and research institutions overseas; and grant program for research activities.

Promoting Japanese language education overseas helps foster future leaders who will build a bridge between Japan and overseas, deepen understanding towards Japan, and lay a foundation for friendship with other countries. Therefore, MOFA engages in sending Japanese language specialists overseas, providing training for foreign Japanese language teachers in Japan, and developing Japanese language teaching materials through the JF.

In addition, by utilizing the budget

Ikebana demonstration/workshop (October 17 and 18, Riga, Latvia)

Japanese Culture/Pop Culture Festival (August 12, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

"The Harmonious Sound of Koto," an anniversary concert for the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Denmark (June 15 and 16, Copenhagen, Denmark)

allocated to the strategic communications, MOFA intends to continuously strengthen its support for Japan studies, expand the scope of people-to-people exchanges and sports exchange programs, and promote Japanese language education.

In cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Japan has made earnest efforts to preserve the world's tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Moreover, Japan is actively taking part in promoting the international framework for safeguarding heritage through the World Heritage Convention, the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, etc. (see 3-4-2 (7) "Cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)" for details).

By promoting such cultural and sports diplomacy, MOFA contributes to introducing Japan's attractiveness overseas, and to increasing the number of foreign visitors to Japan.

(2) Culture Programs

It is important for Japan's diplomatic policies to be smoothly implemented in the international community to boost understanding towards Japan among individual foreign nationals who form the foundation of public opinion and policy making, as well as to make Japan's image even more positive. Based on this recognition, MOFA engages in promoting the diverse attractiveness of Japan through diplomatic missions overseas and the JF. As part of diplomatic activities to promote a better understanding of Japan and to cultivate pro-Japanese groups, the diplomatic missions overseas organize diverse cultural activities. For example, they plan and implement workshops on tea ceremony, flower arrangement, and origami, screening of Japanese films, Japanese music performances, martial arts demonstrations, exhibitions of traditional crafts, as well as Japanese speech contests. Moreover, Japanese pop culture such as anime and manga, as well as Japan's food

culture, are being actively promoted in recent years.

Furthermore, MOFA conducts large-scale and comprehensive programs in commemorative years celebrating diplomatic events in cooperation with government and private organizations through mutual visits of dignitaries, various conferences, and public relations/cultural projects, with the aim of effectively promoting understanding about Japan. For example, a Japanese music performance, with the *koto* Japanese zither and *shakuhachi* flute, took place in 2017 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Denmark.

In collaboration with MOFA and the diplomatic missions overseas, the JF runs interactive arts and cultural exchange projects to promote Japanese culture and arts in a variety of forms throughout the world. The JF also promotes and provides support for Japanese language education and research on Japan. During the Year of Japan-India Friendly Exchanges, the diversity of Japanese culture in a wide range of fields was showcased in India at the Japan Festival in autumn, including Japanese music, jazz, traditional Japanese dance, and a Japanese film festival. The events deepened the bonds of friendship between Japan and India through the medium of culture.

Furthermore, the Japan Foundation Asia Center is steadily implementing the "WA Project: Toward Interactive Asia through Fusion and Harmony" announced by Prime Minister Abe in December 2013, with main pillars of support for Japanese language education and interactive arts and cultural exchange projects. Through the "NIHONGO (Japanese language) Partners" program, which is the core project to support Japanese language education, 994 teaching assistants in total were dispatched to mainly secondary education institutions in ten countries in Southeast Asia, as well as China and Taiwan, and implemented the exchange program through the introduction of Japanese culture as well as Japanese language education by the end of 2017. As a result, many school officials who received the "NIHONGO Partners" highly evaluated the program, saying its activities contributed to increased motivation for students to learn.

In the interactive arts and cultural exchange program implemented by the Japan Foundation Asia Center, the largest Southeast Asia contemporary art exhibition ever held in Japan to date, entitled "SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now," was held for the area of arts. In the area of film, efforts were made to promote film exchange through collaboration with the Tokyo International Film Festival, and through the Japanese Film Festival (JFF): Asia-Pacific Gateway Initiative. In the area of sports, a soccer exchange program was held in collaboration with the Japan Football Association (JFA) and J-League, among other initiatives.

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. The 11th International MANGA Award of 2017 received 326 entries from 60 countries and regions, and the Gold Award went to a work from Colombia. Moreover, applications were received for the first time from the Netherlands, Kenya,

Activities of the NIHONGO Partners at their host institutions (January, Cambodia; Photo: Japan Foundation)

"SUNSHOWER: Contemporary Art from Southeast Asia 1980s to Now" Exhibition, Japan's largest exhibition of Southeast Asian contemporary art to date, mobilizing 350,000 people (July to October, Tokyo Venues: The National Art Center, Tokyo, and Mori Art Museum Photo taken by Kioku Keizo; Photo: Mori Art Museum)

Pakistan, and Belarus, making for a record number of countries and regions from which applications were received.

(3) People-to-People Exchange and Exchanges in the Area of Education and Sports

MOFA carries out a number of invitation projects to build personal connections and promote understanding of Japan by inviting foreign nationals who have a great influence on shaping public opinion and policy making process, and who are expected to play a leading role in various fields. Also, in the area of education and sports, MOFA carries out various activities to promote exchanges among a wide range of people. These projects not only promote mutual understanding and friendships but also enhance Japan's presence in the international community, which considerably benefits the national interest of Japan.

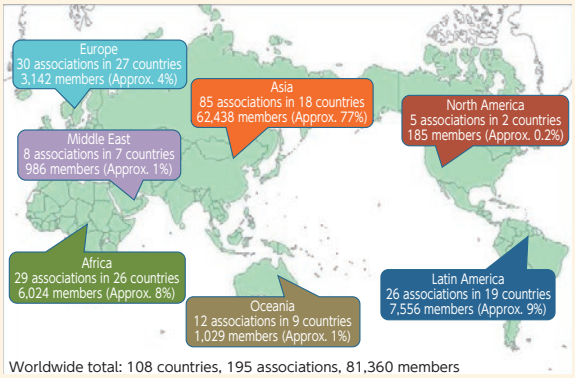
A Student Exchange Programs

MOFA actively introduces the attractiveness and opportunities of studying in Japan to foreign students through diplomatic missions overseas. It also implements application and selection procedures to accept competent students from around the world as the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship students. Furthermore, it is making efforts to maintain relations with former foreign students who have returned to their home countries through Japan Alumni Associations and to foster pro-Japan individuals and groups.

B JET Programme (The Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme)

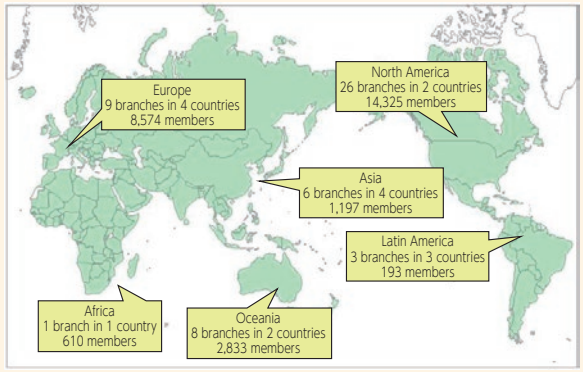
The JET Programme was launched in 1987 to improve foreign language education and promote international exchanges in local areas. In FY2017, a total of 5,163 people, including 1,906 new participants from 44 different countries, took part in the program and were dispatched all over Japan. This program is administered by local authorities, 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). They invite young foreign nationals to Japan and appoint them to posts in local governments and schools. MOFA is responsible for the application and selection process, pre-departure orientation, and support for the activities of the JET Alumni Association in 16 countries (JETAA has about 27,000

Number of Japan Alumni Associations and Their Members by Region



Worldwide total: 108 countries, 195 associations, 81,360 members
(As of November 2017)

Number of Branches of JET Alumni Association and Their Members



(As of December 2017)

ASEAN Festival ASEAN 50 (organized by ASJA International) (December 17, National Olympics Memorial Youth Center, Tokyo; Photo: ASJA International)

JET participants prior to departure for Japan (July 7, Embassy of Japan in Singapore, Singapore)

members). JETAA engages in activities to introduce Japan in various countries, and many former JET participants engage actively in various fields as pro-Japanese in different parts of the world. Former JET participants are valuable human/diplomatic assets for Japan.

C Sport Exchange

Sports enable communication beyond languages and can be an effective tool for promoting friendly relations and understanding of Japan. While Japan draws more attention from the world as the host country of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, the Government of Japan has been implementing the "Sport for Tomorrow (SFT)" program as an international cooperation initiative through sports since January 2014. This program offers various sports exchanges, promotional support, and human development projects in different countries with the aim of spreading the value of sports among over 10 million people in more than 100 countries by 2020. Starting in FY2015, MOFA has been implementing "Projects for Sports Diplomacy Enhancement" to dispatch and invite athletes and instructors, provide equipment, and hold receptions at diplomatic missions overseas, among other initiatives. It also contributes to developing bilateral relations by implementing the programs more promptly and closely in response to requests from the foreign governments and sports associations. These

Column

Diplomacy Through Sports

MOFA, in cooperation with organizations and individuals in the sports sector, is engaged in various projects that are related to sports. 2018 marks the year when FIFA holds the World Cup in Russia, which is held once every four years. This Column features an example of MOFA's international contributions in cooperation with the Japan Football Association, and an article by Tsuneyasu Miyamoto, the former captain of the Japanese national football team.

Cooperation with Sports Associations - Football Exchanges between Japan and Nepal -

Occasionally, sports are described as a universal language shared across the world. In the field of sports, we often see people around the world engaged in exchange activities that transcend differences in nationality and language. Sports are commonly associated with victory or defeat, but this is possible only when there are people one can compete with.

Many of the Japan's sports associations not only provide support to help Japanese athletes improve their performance; but also actively contribute to the international community, from the perspective of boosting games and improving performance in the world. In this article, we will introduce an episode of contributions made through football, as an example of an initiative implemented jointly by a sports association and MOFA.

The Japan Football Association (JFA) provides active support to Asian countries with the vision of "giving children a bright future through football and contributing to the promotion and the development of Asian football." One of its initiatives is the dispatch of coaches. From February 2017 to January 2018, JFA dispatched two Japanese coaches to Nepal. Although it was no easy task to organize external matches or conduct training overseas due to financial reasons and other factors, the two coaches strived every day to improve the football skills in Nepal.

As a part of this endeavor, MOFA invited five football

Exchange match with Kwansei Gakuin University
(August, Hyogo Prefecture, Photo: Japan Football Association)

Disaster relief friendly match with Vissel Kobe U-18
(August, Hyogo Prefecture, Photo: Japan Football Association)

Courtesy call on MOFA from Nepalese football coaches
(June, MOFA, Tokyo)

coaches from Nepal to Japan in June 2017 under the Project for Sports Diplomacy Enhancement, which is a framework for promoting diplomacy by utilizing sports. This framework is realized through cooperation of MOFA, the sports associations and others that wish to implement international exchange programs. Launched in 2015, it is now in its third year in 2017. The five coaches who visited Japan commented in their report, "It was an invaluable experience to visit Japan which was ahead of putting an effort into training coaches in Asia, to observe coaches of the J. League clubs train athletes, and to try our hands at training Japanese athletes to receive feedback from JFA instructors on our coaching methods."

Furthermore, in August, the Nepalese national team was invited to Japan as a part of the Japan-China Afforestation and Tree-Planting International Solidarity project. This project aims to raise awareness of the environment and disaster readiness for both Nepal, which experienced a major earthquake in 2015, and for Japan, which is also an earthquake-prone country. It also aims to promote mutual understanding through sports exchanges. During their stay, in addition to participating in football exchanges, the team visited disaster prevention facilities in Osaka and Hyogo Prefectures, where the Great Hanshin Earthquake had struck, and partook in tree-planting activities to commemorate the earthquake reconstruction exchange in Hyogo Prefecture. The Nepalese national team that visited Japan was grateful for the opportunity to improve football standards of Nepal through football exchanges, and expressed that they had learnt much with regards to knowledge about disaster readiness. Hence, the program was a meaningful bilateral exchange.

In the run-up to the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, MOFA will continue to work through effective diplomatic measures that bring together different fields and sectors.

Building a Bridge Through Sports in the History of Ethnic Conflict -Reconciliation Through Sports-

Tsuneyasu Miyamoto, former captain of the Japanese national football team

A desire to nurture children who will become leaders of their towns, instead of nurturing professional athletes

"Is it feasible to create a youth sports academy for peaceful coexistence and intercultural living in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina?"

This was the theme of the Master's thesis that I worked on in the FIFA Master course (a Master's degree conducted by FIFA), which I undertook after I retired as a professional football player. We proposed various themes in our group, and finally decided on this theme partly because there was a female student from Bosnia and Herzegovina in my group.

The armed conflict among different ethnic groups in Bosnia and Herzegovina ended in

1995 by the signing of the Dayton Accords. However, a sense of distrust remains deeply rooted among the ethnic groups even today, and it affects various aspects of daily life such as different educational curriculums among them.

Our activity places the focus on the acquisition of social values, by encouraging children to work together in teams through sports instead of dividing them by their different ethnic groups, and to respect others and understand diversity. The aim is for the children who have gone through this learning program to become future leaders of their towns.

Realization of the project through the cooperation of MOFA and JICA

After I wrote about this research project in a newspaper column, I was contacted by staff from MOFA and JICA who suggested taking action to bring about the project. This gave our research project a chance of becoming a reality, which had only been a hypothetical plan.

Coaching children in Mostar
(January, Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Photo: Little Bridge)

When we first visited Mostar, the project site for our activities, the local people were skeptical; however, our repeated visits eventually convinced them and we were able to win their cooperation. I believe that it was also because the town of Mostar had already been a recipient of Japan's assistance through Japan's ODA program. With the help from the Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects provided by the Government of Japan, facilities in the central part of the town were converted into a football ground laid with artificial turf and a club house, which would serve as an activity space for the academy.

Football exchange between Japanese children and children from Mostar visiting Japan
(August, Sakai City, Photo: Little Bridge)

In the summer of 2017, ten children from the academy visited Japan on a study tour, and joined a football exchange program with Japanese children of the same age group. I believe the interaction with those who speak a different language left an impression on the hearts of these children. There are still many challenges for the management of the academy, but we aim to further expand the scope of our activities.

SFT projects have enhanced the presence of those engaged in sports in Japan in the international sports community.

(4) Exchange in the Intellectual Realm

A Japanese Studies

MOFA comprehensively supports a range of overseas research activities related to Japan's politics, economics, society and culture. In FY2017, MOFA sent visiting scholars, enhanced the collection of books on Japan, provided research grants, and provided support for organizing seminars and symposiums, to 70 institutions of Japanese studies in 34 countries and regions. Fellowship status was also granted to 143 researchers in Japanese studies from 39 countries and regions, including those who were granted in the previous year. This helped the researchers conduct research and study activities in Japan (including those scheduled in the 4th quarter of FY2017). MOFA also helps academic societies to promote network building among researchers and research institutions on Japan in different countries and regions.

B Intellectual Exchanges

MOFA implements intellectual exchange projects, putting emphasis on cooperative work and exchange with other countries. Specifically, MOFA implemented seminars and symposia on common international agendas, and programs to deepen the understanding of modern Japan at major universities overseas through the Japan Foundation. MOFA plans and supports exchange programs to strengthen relationships and deepen mutual understanding through holding conventions in various fields and at various levels in cooperation with NPOs and other institutions.

C U.S.-Japan Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON)

CULCON is a public-private binational advisory panel comprised of experts from Japan and the U.S. to discuss issues on educational and cultural exchanges between the two countries. Based on a proposal put forth at the 27th Plenary Session held in 2016, a new "Next Generation Task Force" was established in addition to the existing Arts Dialogue Committee, Education Review Committee, and Japanese Language Education Committee, with the aim of placing the focus on nurturing leaders who can play a key role in Japan-U.S. relations in the next generation. In October, a forum was held as a project under the Next Generation Task Force. External experts who are active in both Japan and the U.S. were invited to attend this forum in Tokyo. On the U.S. side, in response to a proposal raised by the Arts Dialogue Committee in 2016, an official website to publicize events related to Japanese art in the U.S., entitled "Arts Japan 2020," was launched in June as a project under the Japan-United States Friendship Commission. In addition, the Education Review Committee has continued with initiatives towards achieving the goal of "doubling two-way student exchanges by the year 2020," which was also mentioned in the Joint Statement at the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting in 2014. All the working groups of CULCON are actively engaged in dialogue and activities.

D Cooperation with the United Nations University (UNU)

The Government of Japan recognizes the importance of the establishment of UNU, which contributes to the international community through study and research on global issues and human resources development. Japan invited UNU to set up its headquarters in Japan (Tokyo) and has provided various cooperation and support for 40 years. UNU, in collaboration with Japanese universities and research institutions, is engaged in international issues such as peace, development, and the environment on which Japan focuses and contributes to the dissemination of the policies of the Government of Japan. UNU established Master's and Doctoral Programmes in 2010 and 2012 respectively, and has made efforts to improve the quality of its global human resources development programs.

(5) Promotion of Japanese Language Education

There has been growing interest in the Japanese language among foreigners, especially the youth, as Japanese companies have been expanding their operations overseas along with the globalization of Japanese economic structure, and Japanese pop culture is prevailing worldwide. Further promotion of the Japanese language overseas leads to the creation of a favorable international environment for Japanese people and companies. Based on a survey conducted in FY2015, the JF has found that about 3.66 million people in 137 countries and regions overseas are currently learning the Japanese language. In 2017, the Japanese Language Proficiency Test offered by the JF was conducted in 286 cities of 81 countries and regions worldwide, and the number of applicants reached over 1 million for the first time (includes applicants taking the test in Japan). On the other hand, a shortage of Japanese education specialists to meet the interests and needs for the study of the Japanese language in many of these countries and regions is clearly becoming a significant challenge.

MOFA engages in accommodating the diverse needs of Japanese-language educational institutions overseas through the JF. Specifically, it dispatches Japanese language specialists overseas, provides training in Japan for Japanese teachers and foreign diplomats overseas, conducts preparatory Japanese courses for potential nurses and care workers before they come to Japan, which is based on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with Indonesia and the Philippines, encourages educational institutions and other organizations in each country and region to introduce Japanese language education, develops teaching materials, and promotes the "JF Japanese Language Education Standard" that corresponds with international standards for foreign language education. In addition to these efforts, the JF is also engaged in the promotion of Japanese language education overseas, through the utilization of IT such as learning support websites that use anime and manga as well as smartphone apps, and support for the activities of Japanese language educational institutions including the Japanese language teachers' associations in each country or region. As a result of these efforts, countries that are newly introducing Japanese language education as a part of the school curriculum

have been emerging in recent years. For example, Japanese language education has been introduced as a part of secondary education in Laos in 2015, and primary education in Vietnam in 2016. At the Japan-India Summit Meeting held in September 2017, the leaders agreed to cooperate on expanding Japanese language education at universities and other institutions.

(6) Cultural Grant Assistance

The Government of Japan provides Cultural Grant Assistance, as part of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to promote culture and higher education in developing countries, thereby enhancing mutual understanding and friendly relations between Japan and such countries. The activities implemented in 2017 included four General Cultural Grant Assistance projects (total of around 470 million Japanese yen) and 21 Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects (total of around 180 million Japanese yen). In 2017, General Cultural Grant Assistance put emphasis on the preservation of the cultural heritage and the broadcasting sector, while Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects put emphasis on the fields of sports and the Japanese language.

(7) Cooperation through United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

Japan is actively involved in various projects of UNESCO in the fields of education, science, and culture. UNESCO is the international organization of which post-war Japan first became a Member State in 1951. Since then, UNESCO has been cooperating with Japan in support of education, science, culture, etc., in developing countries.

Completion ceremony for the Botswana judo hall (Sensei Itsubo Memorial Dojo) built through the Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects. Judo gold medalist in the Rio Olympics Haruka Tachimoto attended the ceremony carrying a photograph of Mr. Itsubo, who had been teaching judo in Botswana but died in an accident (February 28, Botswana).

In the field of culture, Japan offers active cooperation for the prevention and promotion of tangible and intangible cultural heritages of the world and support in the field of human resources development. At the same time, Japan actively participates in the international framework for safeguarding cultural heritage. As a part of such activities, Japan provides voluntary contributions to UNESCO aimed at the protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritages. With a part of these contributions, and with Japanese experts playing a leading role, Japan supports many projects for conservation and restoration of sites, such as Angkor in Cambodia, Kasubi Tombs in Uganda, and the restoration of cultural heritage in Nepal after the earthquake, while contributing to human resources development so that local people can protect their cultural heritage by themselves in the future. In particular, Japan provides continuous support for the preservation and restoration work of the ancient ruins of Angkor in Cambodia, which started in 1994. With regard to the safeguarding of

intangible cultural heritage as well, the following projects have been implemented: the handing down of traditional performing arts such as music and dance, and traditional crafts in developing countries to the next generation; development of domestic institutions and capacity building of relevant parties to enhance the ability of countries to protect intangible cultural heritage by themselves.

In the field of education, Japan provides voluntary contributions with the aim of fostering human resources in developing countries. It also provides support for human resources development, mainly in the area of education, through promoting, for example, "Education for All (EFA)" led by UNESCO. As for the Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), Japan provided various support for the Aichi Nagoya Declaration adopted at the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), co-hosted by UNESCO in Okayama City, Okayama Prefecture, and Nagoya City, Aichi Prefecture in November 2014. Moreover, in September 2016, the "Okayama ESD Project" nominated to UNESCO by Japan was awarded second UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development. In September 2017, three organizations from Jordan, UK, and Zimbabwe were awarded the third UNESCO-Japan Prize on Education for Sustainable Development.

Gender equality is another field that UNESCO is investing effort into. In addition to implementing a project for maintaining schooling rates among female students and improving learning effectiveness in Ethiopia (concluded in March 2017), a project to promote STEAM (science, technology engineering, art, and mathematics) education, with a focus on gender, is also being implemented in Sub-Saharan Africa through teacher education.

UNESCO is promoting organizational reform, decentralization and program reform, and Japan has continued providing support to UNESCO in these reform initiatives. The new Director-General of UNESCO Azoulay assumed office in November, and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Kono in December.

A World Heritage Convention

The World Heritage Convention aims to protect cultural heritages and natural heritages internationally as heritages to all of mankind. Japan became a party to the Convention in 1992 (as of December 2017, the number of parties to the Convention is 193). The sites listed on the "World Heritage List" are so-called "World Heritage" sites. They are classified into "Cultural Heritage" (monuments and remains), "Natural Heritage" (natural areas) and "Mixed Heritage" (having both cultural and natural elements). As of December 2017, a total of 1,073 World Heritage sites are inscribed on the World Heritage List. At the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee held in Krakow, Poland, in 2017, it was decided to inscribe the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region (Fukuoka), upon nomination by Japan, on the World Heritage List. This has raised the number of World Heritage sites in Japan to 21: 17 cultural heritage sites and four natural heritage sites.

B Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Convention for the Safeguarding

Okinoshima, one of the heritage sites that make up the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region (Photo: World Heritage Promotion Committee of the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region)

Okitsu-miya Yohaisho, Munakata Taisha (one of the heritage sites that make up the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region) (Photo: World Heritage Promotion Committee of the Sacred Island of Okinoshima and Associated Sites in the Munakata Region)

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 2017, the number of parties to the convention is 175). Japan, which has a wealth of experience in safeguarding domestic intangible cultural properties, has contributed actively by taking on a leading role in developing the Convention, laying down the main sections of the operational directives for the implementation of the Convention. As of December 2017, a total of 21 elements of intangible cultural heritage in Japan are inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity established in accordance with the Convention. These include: Nogaku Theatre, Ningyo Johruri Bunraku Puppet Theatre and Kabuki Theatre, which have been proclaimed by UNESCO as "Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity." Japan is currently nominating "Raiho-shin: ritual visits of deities in masks and costumes," as a candidate for inscription on the list of intangible cultural heritage of Japan.

C UNESCO Memory of the World Programme

The UNESCO Memory of the World Programme was established in 1992 to preserve and promote valuable historical documents. As of December 2017, 427 items have been inscribed. "Kozuke Sanpi" (the Three Cherished Stelae of Ancient Kozuke), as well as the "Joseon Tongsinsa/ Chosen Tsushinshi: The History of Peace Building and Cultural Exchanges between Korea and Japan from the 17th to 19th Century," submitted as a joint nomination by a joint organization of Japan and the ROK, were inscribed to the "Memory of the World" in October.

Moreover, as seen in the submission and inscription of the documents related to the Nanjing Massacre[1] by organizations in China in October 2015, the emergence of political conflict due to unilateral submission and inscription based only on the assertions of one country, despite there being clear discrepancies between the views of the countries involved, is in violation of the founding principle of UNESCO

1 The UNESCO Memory of the World Programme calls for access to the documents in question as the criteria for inscription. However, the browsing of documents related to the Nanjing Massacre is not permitted.

of promoting friendly ties and mutual understanding among member countries. As such, Japan is continuing efforts to advance the review process. At a meeting of the Executive Board of UNESCO held in October 2017, a resolution was adopted to avoid the political tensions and improve the review process. At the inscription review held thereafter, the inscription of documents related to wartime "comfort women" was shelved in a bid to encourage dialogue between the relevant parties. In December, the secretariat announced that it will not be accepting new applications for the inscription to the "Memory of the World" in the immediate future.

Column

Buddhist Remains of Bamiyan

- Ensuring that Cultural Heritage is Passed on to Future Generations -

Two majestic large Buddha statues stand quietly in the Bamiyan Valley, located in the central part of Afghanistan. For more than a thousand years, they have continued to fascinate many people. Even the Buddhist monk Xuanzhang, who once visited this land, had once lifted his eyes to these great Buddhas. Yet, they were destroyed in an instant by the Taliban in March 2001.

Landscape of Bamiyan

During the same year, the prolonged Afghanistan conflict came to an end, and Japan came quickly to the support of the Afghanistan people as they worked towards peace and recovery. In January 2002, Japan hosted the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan in Tokyo, which triggered the start of the recovery and reconstruction process thereafter. At the International Seminar on the Rehabilitation of Afghanistan's Cultural Heritage held in Kabul in May 2002, Japan announced that it will provide assistance for the conservation and repair of the Bamiyan cultural heritage through the UNESCO Japanese Funds-in-Trust for the Preservation of the World Cultural Heritage. The late Ikuo Hirayama, UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador (then President of Tokyo University of the Arts) who attended this seminar as a representative of Japan, suggested that it is important to preserve the damaged great Buddhas in their current state as a form of "negative heritage," and at the same time, expressed that the rebuilding of the heritage should be a decision made by the Afghanistan people themselves in the future.

The Japanese experts who entered Kabul soon after the war ceased, in order to make preparations to launch Japan's assistance, first saw the National Museum of Afghanistan that had been destroyed and completely robbed of all traces of its former glory as the home to collections of the essence of Eastern and Western civilizations. However, a banner

with the words "A nation stays alive when its culture stays alive," written by hand, had been put up above the ruined entrance.

Restoring wall murals in the cave

Taking courage from these words, Japan launched its conservation and repair work on the Bamiyan heritage through UNESCO in 2003. Until today, it has provided financial assistance of approximately 700 million yen, as well as dispatched Japanese experts armed with an advanced level of expertise in fields such as archaeology and the conservation of valuable murals that remain on the caves surrounding the great Buddhas. These Japanese experts worked together with the people of Afghanistan on the site to conserve and repair the heritage. The project is now ongoing, facilitated by the collective capabilities of highly-skilled international experts not only from Japan, but also including Germany and Italy.

Based on these results, an international conference was held at the Tokyo University of the Arts in the fall of 2017 to discuss the future direction of the Bamiyan heritage. The focus was placed on the rebuilding of the Buddha in the eastern temple, which Afghanistan has expressed its wishes for. Experts from various countries as well as the relevant persons involved from Afghanistan exchanged views on the principles for the rebuilding of this cultural heritage, which is also a world heritage, as well as the methods that would be applied in the event that rebuilding actually takes place. Several concrete proposals were put forth at this conference, including Japan's suggestion to conserve the ruined site as it is while erecting a great Buddha statue on a separate site as a monument alongside with an integrated museum that exhibits and stores other artifacts discovered on the Bamiyan site, as well as the proposal from Germany to combine the individual fragments of the great Buddha and restoring it at its original location. A decision was made to review the respective proposals with the Government of Afghanistan takes the lead.

Japan offers its cooperation based on the approach that cultural heritage should be protected by the people of the country in the future. However, in light of the current security conditions in Afghanistan, it is becoming increasingly difficult for Japanese experts to cooperate with the local people at the site on repair and conservation work. Japan will continue to provide support with a view to the future, so that Afghanistan's culture will bloom once again on the foundations of peace and stability in the country.

Chapter 4

Japan's Diplomacy Open to the Public

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Section 1 Japanese Society and People Deepening Their Ties with the World

Overview

(Tapping the Power of Foreign Nationals for the Growth of Japan)

Increasing the number of people traveling between Japan and other countries stimulates the economy and promotes mutual understanding among different cultures. Based on this view, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) takes steps to facilitate the entry of foreign nationals into Japan and also their stay in the country.

The Government of Japan attaches importance to promoting Japan as a tourism-oriented country based on the recognition that "Tourism is a main pillar for Japan's growth strategy and regional revitalization." To this end, MOFA has engaged in strategic relaxation of visa requirements. With efforts to attract tourists including showcasing the various attractiveness of Japan and other factors, the number of foreign visitors to Japan reached the highest record of 28.69 million in 2017. MOFA strives to contribute to the increase of foreign visitors while continuing to maintain "Japan, the safest country in the world," and to a tourism-oriented country both in quantity and quality by attracting the wealthy class, repeat visitors, and the young generations.

In order to further vitalize the Japanese economy and increase Japan's competitiveness, it is critical to secure capable human resources irrespective of their nationality. The "Investments for the Future Strategy 2017" set forth utilization of foreign human resources. To realize it, MOFA works with relevant ministries and agencies to ensure the effective policy and measures for accepting foreign human resources taking into account human rights. Moreover, MOFA encourages national debate on the challenges arising from the acceptance of foreign nationals and their integration into Japanese society, as well as appropriate measures to be taken.

(International Organizations and Japanese Nationals)

At international organizations, staff from all over the world capitalizes on their respective skills and traits to carry out activities for addressing global issues.

Japan has been providing personnel contributions as well as financial and policy contributions to international organizations. By having larger numbers

of talented Japanese nationals play active roles in international organizations, Japan's presence in the international community will be enhanced and the human resources of Japan will also be enriched.

MOFA strives to recruit, train, and support Japanese nationals who can play active roles in international organizations and contribute to them. MOFA will more actively strengthen its efforts to create an environment where a larger number of outstanding Japanese nationals can play active roles on the global stage.

(NGOs and Volunteers)

The Government of Japan has promoted All-Japan diplomacy which draws on the strengths of non-governmental actors. In this context, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have become even more important in recent years as implementers of support activities in developing countries and as channels for offering policy proposals. Japanese NGOs play a significant role in fields that Japan excels in and can make international contributions to, such as health, water and sanitation, education, disaster risk reduction, environment and climate change, and emergency humanitarian assistance for refugees and disaster victims. MOFA regards NGOs as important partners in development cooperation, and strives to strengthen partnerships with NGOs through financial assistance, improving their operational environment, aid and NGO-MOFA Regular Consultation Meetings.

Participants in the volunteer programs of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), including the Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) and the Senior Volunteers (SV), are crucial actors in international cooperation. In the countries and regions where they are dispatched, JICA volunteers work on development challenges together with local people from the same perspective. Such programs are highly appreciated by local people including government officials in various countries and earn their gratitude, as symbols of the "Visibility of Japanese International Cooperation." In addition, the programs play a substantial role not only in local economic and social development, but also in fostering mutual understanding, friendship, and goodwill between Japan and these countries and regions. Furthermore, these programs are also significant from the viewpoint that JICA volunteers utilize their experience and stay active at home and abroad upon their return.

(Cooperation with Local Governments)

Cooperation with local governments is one of the top priority issues of the Cabinet. MOFA is implementing All-Ministry efforts under initiatives to showcase the regions' attractiveness to the world and to attract as many tourists and investments as possible with the goal of collectively reinforcing diplomatic capabilities through collaboration with regions to assist regional revitalization. At home, MOFA, together with local governments, has continued to carry out projects to support regional revitalization using MOFA's Iikura Guest House, the "Local to Global" project where the Foreign Minister travels to regions together with foreign diplomatic corps, as well as "Regional Promotion Seminars" and "Diplomats' Study Tours," to showcase the various attractiveness of local areas. Overseas, in order to support Japan's local governments in developing regional

economies for promoting their local tourism industries, etc., MOFA has continued to carry out "Regional Promotion Projects" by using Japan's diplomatic facilities overseas, and conduct the comprehensive PR program called the "Project to Support Overseas Presentations to Promote the Attractiveness of Regions" as part of efforts to dispel damage from international rumors stemming from the Great East Japan Earthquake. In addition, MOFA actively promotes to government leaders in each country alcoholic beverages (Japanese sake, wine, etc.) produced in various regions in Japan through its diplomatic missions overseas and supports overseas operations of local governments and local SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises) by making use of ODA.

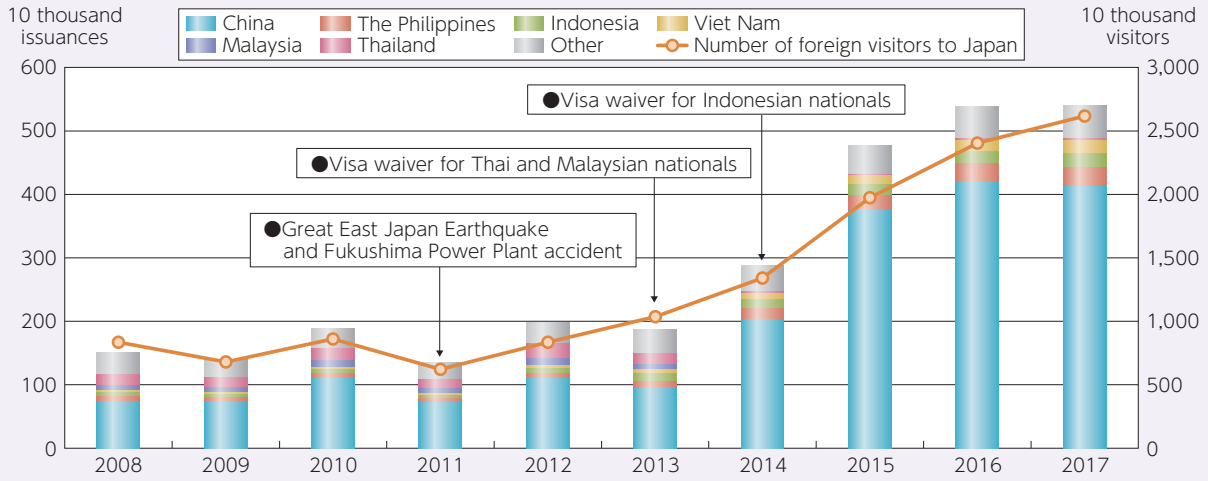
1 Linking the Energy of Foreign Nationals to the Growth of Japan

(1) Growth Strategy and Relaxation of Visa Requirements

In 2017, the number of foreign visitors to Japan reached the highest on record at 28.69 million. The Government of Japan set new goals for the number of foreign visitors to 40 million in 2020 and 60 million in 2030 in the "Tourism Vision to Support the Future of Japan" issued at the end of March 2016. In the Vision, it is stated that the Government will engage in strategic relaxation of visa requirements for the five countries of China, Russia, India, the Philippines and Viet Nam, for which visas are required to visit Japan despite their high market potential to attract tourists. Based on these, in 2017, MOFA again engaged in examining and implementing strategic relaxation of visa requirements not only for these five countries but also for other countries from the perspective of promoting people-to-people exchanges and strengthening bilateral relations, etc. Specifically, the introduction of multiple entry visas for tourism purposes, etc. for Russian nationals began on January 1, 2017, the simplification of visa application procedures for Indian students and the expansion of the number of visa application sites was instituted on February 1, the relaxation of single and multiple entry tourist visas for Chinese nationals began on May 8, the visa exemption for nationals of the United Arab Emirates who have pre-registered their passports began on July 1, and the relaxation of multiple entry visas for nationals of CIS countries (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Belarus and Moldova) and Georgia was also instituted on July 1. In addition, Japan instituted a working holiday program with Hungary, Spain and Argentina.

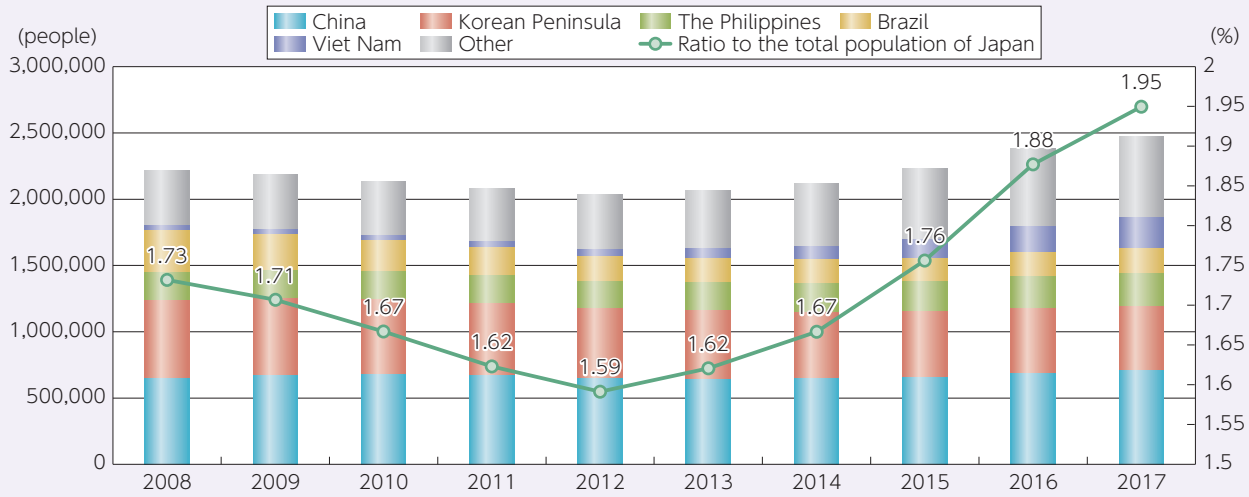
As described above, further expansion of the relaxation of visa requirements is expected as it is effective for promoting people-to-people exchanges and Japan's economic growth. On the other hand, the Government intensifies visa control as a part of border measures to prevent the entry of criminals and foreign visitors with the intention of illegal labor, as well as those who could become victims of human trafficking. MOFA is determined to continue working on the relaxation of visa requirements, aiming to increase the number of visitors to Japan while maintaining "Japan, the safest country in the world," and contribute to achieving a tourism-oriented country both in quality and quantity and attract the wealthy class,

Changes in the Number of Visa Issuances and Foreign Visitors to Japan



Note 1: The number of foreign visitors to Japan is based on Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO) statistics (The number of 2017 is the estimated figure as of the end of November 2017)
Note 2: The number of visa issuances in 2017 are provisional figures (as of the end of November)

Changes in the Number of Foreign Residents and their Ratio to the Total Population of Japan



Note 1: "Number of foreign residents" is based on the statistics as of the end of December of each year (the end of June only for 2017) (Number of registered foreign nationals before 2011; that of foreign residents since 2012) (Source: Ministry of Justice)
Note 2: "Ratio to the total population of Japan" is calculated based on the population as of October 1 of each year by the "Census" and "Population Statistics" of the Statistic Bureau, Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications.

repeat visitors, and the young generation. Also, MOFA intends to conduct such relaxation of visa requirements from a comprehensive perspective, taking into account factors such as bilateral relations and their diplomatic significance.

(2) Acceptance of Foreign Nationals and their Social Integration

Since the financial crisis in 2008, the number of long-term foreign residents in Japan had kept decreasing until 2012 when the trend turned upward. While the aging of the population continues with low birth rate resulting in the decrease of the population, it is important for Japan to secure capable human resources, irrespective of their nationality, in order to further vitalize Japan's economy and improve its competitiveness. The "Investments for the Future Strategy 2017" specifically aims at an effective utilization of foreign human

International workshop on acceptance of foreign nationals and their integration into Japanese society (March 1, Tokyo)

resources, and it is expected that the number of competent foreign nationals living in Japan will further increase in the future.

MOFA cooperates with the relevant ministries and agencies to assure the series of measures to be considerable and effective to the principle of human rights of the foreign nationals. MOFA also hosts "International workshops 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. In March, MOFA co-hosted a workshop with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) under the theme of "Toward an Intercultural Society: Focusing on Life and Active Participation of Foreign Women in Japan." The participants mainly discussed how women from foreign countries can live and play an active role in Japanese society.

In June, MOFA and the Tokyo Metropolitan Government co-hosted the Disaster Management Seminar for Diplomatic Missions and Foreign Delegations in Tokyo, in order to facilitate and reinforce information communication as well as collaboration with diplomatic missions and foreign delegations in Tokyo, considering the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games set to take place in 2020.

2 Japanese Taking Active Roles in the International Community

(1) Japanese Taking Active Roles 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; for instance, conflict prevention/peace-building, sustainable development, food, energy, climate change, health, education, employment, human rights/humanitarian issues, and gender equality, among others.

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. In order for each international organization to pursue its agenda, in addition to policy contributions and financial contributions through regular budget and voluntary contributions, Japan also makes contributions in terms of human resources through the active roles of Japanese staff.

Currently, about 800 Japanese nationals are working as professional level staff in UN-related agencies around the world. The number of Japanese employees continues to increase, signifying the expansion of Japan's

personnel contributions. However, taking into account the number of professional level staff of other G7 member countries, which exceed 1,000, Japanese personnel contribution remains insufficient.

The Government of Japan has set the objective of increasing the number of Japanese staff working at UN-related agencies to 1,000 by 2025. To this end, MOFA is actively recruiting, training and supporting, in collaboration with universities and related ministries and agencies, Japanese nationals who can play active roles and make a contribution on the global stage. As part of this effort, to identify talent, MOFA works on PR initiatives, including organizing guidance sessions to provide information on the process of recruitment by international organizations and hosting Outreach Missions of human resource staff from international organizations visiting Japan.

Furthermore, MOFA seeks to develop young people dispatched to international organizations by strengthening and expanding the Junior Professional Officer Programme (a system of sending young Japanese nationals who aspire to work in international organizations as regular staff for two years in principle to provide them with opportunities to gain necessary knowledge and experience in international organizations and to aim for regular employment after their dispatch). MOFA is also working to coordinate with international organizations and gather information for the promotion and employment of Japanese staff, including those at the mid-career and managerial level.

MOFA is also committed to supporting for the application process, providing useful information including vacancy information and using its website and social networking services such as Facebook and Twitter to Japanese candidates seeking positions at international organizations.

A larger number of talented Japanese people taking on active roles in international organizations are expected to further enhance Japan's presence in the international community more visibly. Japanese staff are involved in various fields and duties at differing locations, but they share the same goal of solving various issues facing the international community (see Column "The Voices and People Who Have Supported the United Nations" and "Japanese Working on a Global Scale").

In addition, Japanese staff of international organizations may play the role of a "bridge" between the international organization and their home country. For example, Japan's successful co-hosting of the UHC Forum 2017 with the World Bank, World Health Organization (WHO), and United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and others was underpinned by the important role played by Japanese staff members, who understand the stance and work procedures of both Japan and partner organizations. In this manner, the presence of Japanese staff in international organizations has vital significance also from the perspective of promotion of Japan's diplomatic priorities.

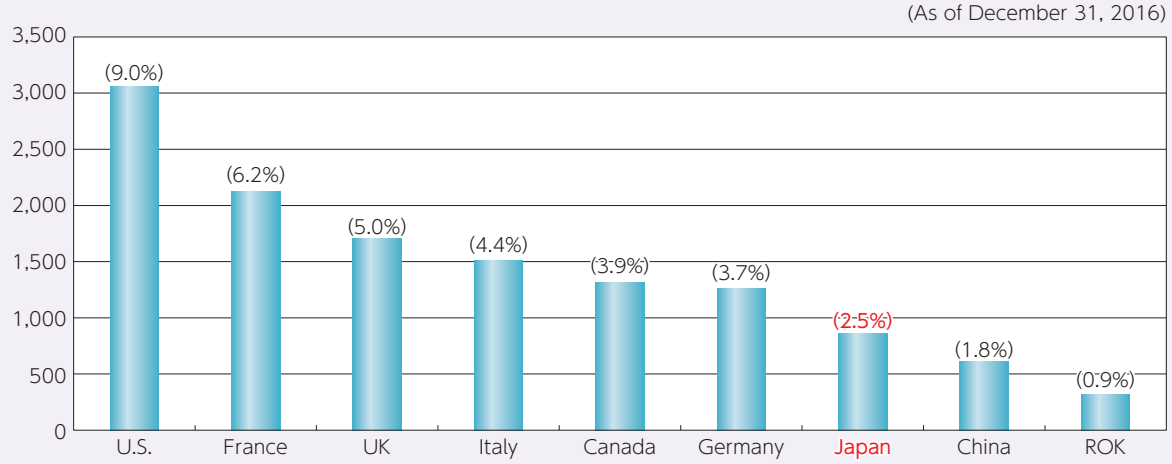
Moreover, increasing the number of globally-minded human resources who have professional experience at international organizations and can play an active role on the international stage will in turn lead to enrichment of human resources of Japan, contributing to the development of Japan as a whole.

MOFA will continue to be even more active in undertaking measures to increase

the number of Japanese nationals working in international organizations 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.

Number of staff members at UN-related agencies by nationality (professional or higher)

(As of December 31, 2016)



Note 1: This graph includes the number of professional staff members or higher and technical cooperation professionals with a term of one year or longer.
Note 2: The percentage represents the ratio against the total number of employees (34,077).
Source: Created by MOFA from UN document (CEB/2017/HLCM/HR/21 Revision 1)

Column

The Voices and People Who Have Supported the United Nations

What is a UN Resident Coordinator?

Norimasa Shimomura, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative in Kazakhstan

What is a UN Resident Coordinator? How can you become one? These are questions I receive frequently these days. UN Resident Coordinator (RC) is entrusted by the UN Secretary-General to provide leadership over the operational activities carried out by various UN agencies on the ground. The RC is expected to speak in single voice for the UN and maximize the impact of UN's work by effectively coordinating them. Usually, UNDP Resident Representative takes on this function, and they are conferred in many countries a similar status as Ambassadors of foreign states. Often the RC also plays central role in coordinating donor assistance provided to the host country. Aside from the important routine work related to development cooperation, the RC attentively follows political and economic developments in and out of the country, and encourages the host country to promote human rights and other international standards and agreements. The RC is usually the UN's Designated Official (DO), responsible for the safety and security of all UN personnel and their families in the country. As such, the RC/DO reports at least to three Under-Secretary-Generals who are in charge of development activities, humanitarian

affairs and staff safety.

In Kazakhstan where I serve, we have 21 UN agencies present in the country. I coordinate their activities through such mechanisms as monthly coordination meetings. When it comes to the issues of staff safety and security, 28 agencies with 500 staff and their families fall under my overall responsibility as agencies like the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and EBRD also come under UN's security management system. Given this broad responsibility, people often jokingly say that RC is almost an impossible job. Despite the vast scope of responsibility, the RC has very limited authorities over UN agencies. This is a part of RC system's structural weakness that is being discussed actively by the Secretary-General and Member States in the context of the ongoing UN reform. Nonetheless, RC – with his/her caliber – can exercise strong influence on issues like SDGs and human rights. I often find it so rewarding to see tangible results at the community level while being able to influence and promote policy reforms by engaging in policy dialogue with high-level decision makers in the Government. This enables us to help replicate and scale-up community-level successes at a national scale. It gives us a great sense of satisfaction when we are able to mobilize the members of diplomatic corps including Japan, civil society, academia and the private sector to collaborate in such efforts.

So then, how can one become a UN Resident Coordinator (RC)? Although it is the UNDP Resident Representative who usually becomes the RC in a given country, one does not necessarily have to build a career in the UNDP. The positions of UNDP Resident Representative is open for staff from other UN agencies – In fact about 45% of all UNDP Resident Representative positions globally are currently occupied by such seconded staff of other agencies. They often say you need to be highly skilled on technical issues. This may be true. But I have always believed that passion is what matters most. As RC, you will indeed have to be versed with matters such as human rights and rights of vulnerable persons including women and children, democratic governance and public administration reform, energy sector transformation, prevention of radicalization and violent extremism. Certain things are more important than mere technical expertise on each of these subject matters.

Signing ceremony for the project to support the development of an assistance system in Kazakhstan, which was implemented through a contribution from the Japan-UNDP Partnership Fund (August 2016, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan)
From the left: Toshinobu Kato, Director General, East and Central Asia and the Caucasus Department, JICA; Mohammad Farooq Baraki, Ambassador of Afghanistan to Kazakhstan; the author; Erlan Idrissov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan; and Ichiro Kawabata, Ambassador of Japan to Kazakhstan

With the UN Secretary-General Guterres, during his visit to Kazakhstan (June, Kazakhstan)

They are the ability to comprehend sensitive backgrounds of various matters often linked with political and security issues, ability to make sound judgment without diverging from the spirit of the UN Charter, ability to make timely decisions while taking calculated risks, and the ability to mobilize human, financial and other resources to make things happen. These I believe are key competencies required to become an RC.

Still to date, I agonize every day if for every challenge I face I have taken the right decision and action. Perhaps it is important that I continue to be humble and ask myself this question, while I continue to appreciate the rewarding aspects of this work including the many smiles in people's face we create as a result of tangible outcomes we deliver.

Column

The Voices and People Who Have Supported the United Nations

Towards the Comprehensive Reforms of the United Nations in an Increasingly Complex World

Ayaka Suzuki, Director, Strategic Planning & Monitoring, Office of the Secretary-General

It's a tired phrase but the world seems to be at a crossroad. The number of conflicts has increased in the recent years and the world is confronted with nuclear and terrorist threats, climate change, as well as "emerging" threats from cyberspace and new technologies such as artificial intelligence. Of course, new technologies also offer a great opportunity to advance sustainable development. Our future largely depends on the direction these developments will take us.

We face the world in which inequality between States and within States is increasing. After 72 years, the UN faces an increasingly complex world and there are fundamental questions about how best to fulfill its mandate under the United Nations Charter. Convinced that the UN is needed more than ever in these circumstances, Secretary-General Guterres has been steadfastly trying to advance comprehensive reforms since he assumed office in January 2017. During the 2017 General Assembly, he said the following:

"We need to reform our world, and I am committed to reforming the United Nations.

Together, we have embarked on a comprehensive reform effort:

- to build a UN development system to support States in bettering peoples' lives;
- to reinforce our ability to safeguard people's peace, security and human rights;
- and to embrace management practices that advance those goals instead of hindering them."

I was serving as joint Chief of Staff of the Departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Field Support when I was appointed in April 2017 as Director of Strategic Planning and Monitoring in the office of the Secretary-General, which is a newly created position. Since the early 1990s, I have been working to advance democracy as well as peacekeeping and

political affairs both in the field and at headquarters. I hope that my past experience will help contribute to the Secretary-General's reform vision. Until now, I had been primarily focused on peace and security issues, in particular conflict resolution, but in the current position, I am working across all the pillars of the UN (peace & security, human rights, sustainable development), which I find to be refreshing. In particular, I'm learning a lot about Agenda 2030 and new technologies/innovation issues.

Among my current responsibilities is to serve the Executive Committee of the Secretary-General, which is a cabinet-style decision-making forum established by Secretary-General Guterres, which takes place on a weekly basis. Preparation of briefing notes and follow-ups to meetings keep us very busy but it is very impressive to witness the political skills of the Secretary-General as the Chair of this meeting, his principled approach as a humanitarian, organized way of thinking as an engineer and his in-depth knowledge and understanding of the world. At the same time, the UN being a complex organization with various intertwined agendas of Member States, the road for the reform is expected to be a long one. Moreover, it is a constant challenge to balance the daily management of mounting crises with the need to pursue mid to longer-term strategies.

In my current position, I have an overview of not only the Secretariat but the UN system at large. What I miss is a direct link to the work in the field. Throughout my career, the positions where I felt the most direct impact of my involvement were often in the field in places such as Africa, Haiti and Latin America. I would like to go back to the field again for future postings but for now, I find my current assignment to be very fulfilling, given the critical juncture where we find ourselves.

With the UN Secretary-General Guterres

With project staff from the Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (DDR) component of the UN Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) program and ex-combatants in Bria, Central African Republic (the author is in the center)

Column

Things Look Different from a Different Standpoint

Masanori Kondo, Deputy Secretary General, Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT)

The author interviewing Viet Nam's Deputy Minister of Information and Communications Nguyen Minh Hong

The inside and outside of international organizations. When I look back at my experiences of being involved in work at international organizations up to now from a perspective like that, there are three different standpoints: a member state (meaning a member that participates in discussions), activities in the field, and working within a secretariat.

The first point is my experience from the standpoint of a member state who participates as a member state in discussions and negotiations on issues requiring international coordination and cooperation in the fields of information and communications technology as well as postal services, which fall under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, and who sought to find a consensus of opinion through those discussions and negotiations. Organizations in these fields include the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) and the Universal Postal Union (UPU). They determine the rules governing the processing of information that circulates internationally (through the use of the Internet and mobile phones, for example), and delivery methods, fee payments and other matters relating to international mail and parcels. Each of these is essential to economic activity, and frequently the respective countries' interests are sharply divided. Particularly, in the Internet-related field, there are pronounced differences in the attitudes and approaches taken to future socioeconomic development, and negotiations often take place from early morning till late at night including weekends. The international organizations that I saw from this standpoint were places for discussions and negotiations aimed at reaching a consensus, and they are valuable entities that provide "platform" for achieving that.

The second point is my experience of being in charge for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) when I was at the Embassy of Japan in Jordan. Rather than being a place that directly decides policies and rules as an international organization, UNRWA is classified as an implementing organization that implements necessary projects and provides necessary services to beneficiaries. It is "field site," so to speak. At that time Japan was one of the UNRWA's largest donor countries, and it has been performing a very major role in achieving peace in the Middle East. Consequently, if a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting is held, for example, the details of Japan's support for UNRWA

and Palestine refugees will also be one of the items on the agenda. My experiences here, which included actually traveling to refugee camps in Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan and listening carefully to the needs of those people, including their troubles, worries and complaints, taught me many lessons. It had been always a difficult decision to make which projects should be listed up considering priority and allocated budget. At international organizations that work in the field, there is a sense of fulfillment in achieving concrete projects and rejoicing together.

The third point is my current position, which is within an international organization's secretariat. Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT) is an organization that 38 countries in the Asia-Pacific region belong to (its membership also includes information and communications companies such as Google and Facebook, as well as NTT Docomo, KDDI and others in Japan), and as a specialized organization in the information and communications field, it undertakes the allocation of frequencies (if these were not coordinated, it would become impossible to use smartphones and Wi-Fi in other countries), implements Internet infrastructure development projects and so on. APT has two sides – a policy-related side and an in-the-field side. Appointment to the post of Deputy Secretary General is based on an election by the member states (international organizations' elections also have many interesting points). Because Information Communications Technology (ICT) is currently used in all fields, the APT's work as an organization continues to increase. From the perspective of an international organization's secretariat, Japan is just one of members, therefore it is possible to observe its sensitivity to information or an event of some sort when they come up. It is also possible to compare how Japan and other countries communicate and coordinate with the secretariat, and furthermore, to observe changes to its presence in the so-called international community. The Asia-Pacific region is rich in diversity and so does APT. The member states, Associate Members (private companies) and secretariat staff are very diverse. So in many cases things do not go as I think they will, but that is a fundamental resource to give me lessons to learn.

In this way, the fact is that things can be seen in different ways from different standpoints. But in working within the secretariat of an international organization, the ability to be flexible and accept a different perspective or to question your own "common sense" is essential in one's day-to-day work. I certainly recommend that individuals who have a multifaceted way of thinking, and individuals who want to develop one, try working at an international organization. I am sure they will enjoy it and accomplish their goal.

Column

Delivering the Benefits of Information and Communications Technology to the World

Yushi Torigoe, Deputy to the Director, Telecommunication Development Bureau (BDT), International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

At a meeting of the ITU

At the recommendation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications, where I worked for around 24 years, I applied for a public recruitment post and was appointed in 2014. This is the third time I have worked at an international organization. I have previous experiences working for a regional organization in Bangkok, and an international organization in Geneva. The ITU is the United Nations (UN) specialized agency for telecommunication and information and communication technologies (ICTs). It was founded in 1865 and celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2015, so it is an agency that boasts a long history even within the UN.

The ITU consists of the Radiocommunication Sector (ITU-R), the Telecommunication Standardization Sector (ITU-T) and the Telecommunication Development Sector (ITU-D). It (1) decides the international usage of radio spectrum and satellite orbits; (2) develops technical standards for information and communication networks; and (3) provides support for developing countries in relation to telecommunication and ICTs.

The ITU-D, which I belong to, was set up in 1992 and celebrates its 25th anniversary this year, making it a relatively new sector within the ITU. The secretariat is made up of the headquarters in Geneva and field offices in six regions worldwide.

In October the World Telecommunication Development Conference (WTDC-17) was held in Buenos Aires (Argentina). The WTDC is a conference that is held once every four years to deliberate and formulate the future direction of the ITU-D's activities. Preparations for this conference started three years ago. As the overall coordinator, I was in charge of the overall coordination.

As part of the preparation, from fall 2016, the ITU-D held regional preparatory meetings in six regions worldwide, where it put the preliminary draft action plan up for discussion.

I too participated in four of the regional meetings, and was surprised that the deliberations were proceeded very actively not only in English but in the common languages of each region (Russian in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region, Arabic in the Arab region, and Spanish in the Americas region). As a result of the deliberations at the regional meetings, it was possible to consolidate the regional views, and at the WTDC-

17 the number of proposals from members was around 30% higher than the previous conference.

To facilitate smooth entries to Argentina, where the WTDC-17 was hosted, the schedule was moved forward and a campaign was run to encourage participants to register for the conference and obtain visas early. As a result, the conference attracted more than 1,360 participants, a record for a WTDC thus far.

These preparations proved successful, and made it possible to close the conference with the successful adoption of the action plan that better reflected the views of each country.

Japan also dispatched a large number of participants and made great contributions, along with an exhibit that showcased its leading-edge technologies.

In recent years the spread and development of ICTs has been remarkable, and the utilization of smartphones and high-speed Internet has become indispensable in business and everyday life. Initiatives aiming to utilize ICTs to enhance productivity at the national level and to create new industries are gaining momentum in various countries, and the expectations being placed on the ITU, as the UN specialized agency for ICTs, are also increasing. Collaboration with other UN agencies is also progressing, and in partnership with the World Health Organization (WHO), the ITU is promoting the use of mobile handsets for the better health in countries worldwide.

Additionally, Japan enjoys a strong reputation globally for leading the world in the development of advanced ICTs. Alongside the U.S., Japan is the largest contributor of funding at the ITU, and it is also making major contributions on the human resources and activities fronts.

Going forward, I want to endeavor to ensure that Japan's new technologies are introduced to the world through the ITU, and that the benefits of those technologies are utilized worldwide. I hope that the ITU will continue to be put to good use.

Japanese Taking Active Roles in the World

It gives me a sense of pride and responsibility to be a staff member of UNICEF, the international organization mandated to support all the member states, both developing and developed countries including Japan in fulfilling the rights of the child. Working with colleagues coming across the globe, I re-recognize myself as Japanese and am feeling a value to appreciate that we are all different and special.

At school where UNICEF supported to equip a water tank, February 10, Nynaza-lac Burundi, taken by the Embassy of Japan in Rwanda (left)

Maki Komura
Planning and Monitoring Specialist, UNICEF Burundi

In partnership with Japan and various development partners, UNOPS is providing humanitarian and development support around the world. Working with colleagues with different backgrounds and nationalities, I am involved in planning and implementation of projects that are designed to meet local needs. This is definitely a rewarding experience.

Monitoring the progress of a construction of moderation center for counter-extremism in Jordan

Naomitsu Nakagawa
Project Support Analyst
UNOPS Operational Hub in Amman (Second from the left)

(2) Activities of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

A Development Cooperation

It is estimated that in Japan there are over 400 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engaged in international cooperation activities. Most of them are familiar with local needs at the grassroots level and provide flexible and detailed support in developing countries/regions with various challenges such as poverty, natural disaster, and conflicts and their importance in development cooperation is increasing.

MOFA provides financial cooperation in the form of grant assistance for economic and social development projects implemented by Japanese NGOs in developing countries/regions (Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects) and actively provides Official Development Assistance (ODA) through NGOs. In 2017, 58 Japanese NGOs implemented 113 Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects in 34 countries in Asia, Africa, the Middle East, etc. The projects cover a wide range of assistance, including health/medical/hygienic care (maternal and child health, countermeasures for tuberculosis/HIV/AIDS, water/hygiene, etc.), rural development (environmental development/technological improvement for agriculture), support for the people with disabilities (vocational training/employment assistance, provision of wheelchairs for children, etc.), education (building schools, etc.), disaster risk reduction, and the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnances (UXO). Moreover, subsidies are provided with the objective of supporting activities

that enhance the project execution capabilities and expert skills of Japanese NGOs and promote NGO projects (NGO Project Subsidies).

The 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 2017, 47 NGOs are members of JPF. In 2017, JPF launched response programs to South Asia and Sierra Leone floods and for people fleeing Myanmar, while continuously implementing response programs for the Syria and Iraq humanitarian crisis. Humanitarian assistance was also provided to Afghanistan, Yemen, Palestine, and South Sudan, etc.

Japanese NGOs conduct a number of activities using contributions from supporters and the income earned from their own business. In recent years, there is growing public interest in Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Creating Shared Value (CSV), an increasing number of companies with technologies and funds implement social action in developing countries in partnership with NGOs with much knowledge on development cooperation.

As seen thus far, NGOs assume important roles in the area of development cooperation. Identifying such NGOs as partners in development cooperation, MOFA and JICA provide indirect support for NGO activities through various policy measures with the aim of enhancing their capacity, and expertise as well as developing human resources so that NGOs

Job Creation Project for Persons with Disabilities in Houaphanh Province, Laos (Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects Photo: Asian Development with Disabled Persons (ADDP; specified non-profit organization)

The 1st NGO Consultants Liaison Meeting of FY 2017 (June 23, Tokyo)

can strengthen the foundation for their activities and perform further tasks. In 2017, MOFA implemented four projects, namely "NGO Consultant Scheme," "NGO Overseas Study Program," "NGO Intern Program" and "NGO Study Group."

Moreover, the general meeting of the "NGO-MOFA Regular Consultation Meeting" was held to promote dialogue/coordination with NGOs. Also the ODA Policy Council to discuss ODA policy and the Partnership Promotion Committee to discuss support for NGOs and cooperation measures was held, too. In addition, MOFA has been working on initiatives to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) while conducting exchanges of views with various stakeholders, including NGOs, through the "SDGs Promotion Roundtable"

and other means.

B Partnership in Other Major Diplomatic Areas

MOFA also cooperates with NGOs in areas other than development cooperation. For instance, at the 61st session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held in March 2017, Ms. Hiroko Hashimoto (professor emeritus of Jumonji University and principal of Jumonji Junior/Senior High School) represented Japan, and NGO representatives actively participated in discussions as members of the Japanese delegation. At the 72nd UN General Assembly, Ms. Yasue Nunoshiba (professor of Bunkyo University) attended the Third Committee, which deals with a range of social and human rights issues, as an advisor to the representatives of the Government of Japan. In addition, the Government of Japan has initiated dialogues with civil society including NGO representatives and experts on matters related to government reports to be submitted based on various conventions on human rights, third country resettlement projects, and the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security based on the UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 and related resolutions.

Japanese NGOs are also increasing their presence in the area of disarmament, and MOFA has been actively promoting cooperation with them. For example, in the area of conventional weapons, cooperation such as participation of MOFA officials in seminars hosted by NGOs, clearance of mines and unexploded ordnances, and risk reduction education projects are going on.

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 atomic bomb survivors' testimonies on the realities of the disaster of the use of nuclear weapons to the international community through the commissioned projects called "the Special Communicator for a World without Nuclear Weapons" and "the Youth Communicator for a World without Nuclear Weapons." As of December, a total of 281 Special Communicators on 91 occasions and a total of 246 Youth Communicators on 23 occasions have been dispatched to the world through these commission programs.

As for the measures against transnational organized crime, especially in the area of trafficking in persons, coordination with civil society including NGOs is essential. With this in mind, the Government actively exchanges opinions with NGOs and other stakeholders to identify recent trends of trafficking in persons and to consult appropriate measures to tackle them.

(3) Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) and Senior Volunteers (SV)

The Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) is a Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) program aimed at cooperation/assistance for the economic and social development of the communities of the developing countries where young people from 20 to 39 years of age, who possess skills, knowledge and experience, live and work together with local people in these countries, fostering mutual understanding. As of the end of October 2017, 43,286 JOCVs had been dispatched to 89 countries in total. Dispatched members have been engaged in about 200 types of work in ten areas: planning

administration, commercial/tourism, public utility works, human resources, agriculture, forestry and fisheries, health/medical care, mining, social welfare, energy and others.

The JOCV program, launched in 1965 and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2015, received the Philippines' Ramon Magsaysay Award[1], otherwise known as the Asian Nobel Prize. The JOCV has been highly appreciated by developing countries as representing the "Visibility of Japanese International Cooperation."

The Senior Volunteers (SV) program is a program to dispatch middle aged persons from 40 to 69 years of age who have wide-ranging skills and rich experiences to developing countries. The program has been expanding every year since its launch in 1990. By the end of October 2017, a total of 6,271 volunteers had been dispatched to 75 countries, and cooperated in the same ten areas as the JOCV program. The SV program has drawn increasing interest in recent years from the perspective of supporting to start a new life after retirement and utilizing the rich experiences and expertise of retired senior citizens.

The JOCV and SV programs are supported by the high aspirations of people who are keen to provide cooperation for the sake of economic and social development and reconstruction of developing countries. MOFA actively promotes these programs, considering them as a core of participatory international cooperation by citizens. As of the end of October 2017, 1,964 JOCVs and 355 SVs are working around the world (70 countries and 57 countries, respectively). The volunteer participants who have returned to Japan contribute to Japanese society by sharing their experiences in educational and local activity settings and private companies. These unique participatory activities of Japan have been highly appreciated and expected both domestically and internationally, including in recipient countries.

Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers assisting mother and child health in Madagascar as midwives (Photo: Hiroshi Wada / JICA)

Senior Overseas Volunteers instructing transportation management techniques in Viet Nam (Photo: Yuki Kato / JICA)

Experiences gained from the JOCV/SV programs can lead to the personal development of the participants as human resources who will make a positive impact on the global arena. Thus, the Government has been working with companies, municipal governments and universities which need such opportunities to develop human resources through the dispatch of

1 Established to commemorate President Ramon Magsaysay of the Philippines, the Ramon Magsaysay Award is awarded each year by the Ramon Magsaysay Award Foundation located in Manila City to an individual or organization that has produced exemplary results in Asia through contributions to society, etc.

their employees, teachers and students to developing countries. This could lead to expansion of the participation from a broad range of areas. For instance, as a program responding to the needs of private companies, such as small and medium-sized enterprises, aiming for international development of their businesses, the Government launched the "Private Sector Partnership Volunteer" program in FY 2012. Furthermore, the Government is committed to developing an environment where returned JOCVs and SVs can feed back their experiences into society, including employment support. Returned volunteers are active in many fields inside and outside Japan. Some have been hired by the Reconstruction Agency to work as support staff for disaster-stricken local governments, utilizing their own specialties and experience gained in the JOCV/SV programs. Some keep on supporting the countries where they were dispatched with other returned volunteers, others work for international organizations.

Column

JICA Volunteers' Activities from the Front Lines

- Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) Nutritionists Playing an Active Role in Fiji -

Hiroko Shimada, Volunteer Coordinator, JICA

A southern island of everlasting sun. Emerald green seas with white sandy beaches, coral reefs and palm trees.

Despite a calm and laid-back image of the Pacific, non-communicable diseases (lifestyle-related diseases, hereinafter referred to as NCDs) such as obesity, diabetes have become a serious problem in Fiji and other Pacific island countries. The main causes for NCDs are considered the custom from British colonial era of having thickly buttered bread and heavily sugared tea for morning and afternoon every day, changes in eating habits over the recent years into imported food high in oil and cholesterol, a lack of exercise and so on. NCDs account for 80% of all deaths in Fiji and the increase of NCDs-related deaths before the age of 70 is of particular concern. In addition, it has also been pointed out that the cost of tackling NCDs is putting pressure on government finances.

NCDs are lifestyle-related diseases and as preventive measures, it is important to acquire accurate knowledge on food and their bodies from childhood and to maintain healthy habits to keep fit accordingly. JICA is dispatching nutritionists as Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (hereinafter referred to as JOCVs) to improve the local people's eating habit and their health. Here in this column, I would like to introduce the "School Lunchbox Program" conducted by a volunteer.

This program began in February 2016 with the aim of helping to support nutrition education at home by improving the menu of children's lunch boxes. The program covers elementary-school children (aged 6 to 13) and begins with the JOCVs and/or

local nutritionists checking the content of the lunch boxes every day with the children's homeroom teachers.

A lunch box of instant noodles and fried cassava tuber

Checking lunch boxes

In Fiji, rice and potato varieties such as taro and cassava are frequently eaten as staple foods. It is common to see lunch boxes that combine rice and instant noodles, or taro or cassava and chicken meat. Rarely is it possible to spot lunch boxes that include a good balance of vegetables, fruit and so on. That being the case, in this program check sheets are filled out to determine whether or not the lunches contain at least one variety of carbohydrate such as rice or a type of potato, protein such as meat or egg as well as vitamins and minerals from vegetables, fruit and so on. The outcomes are conveyed to the children's parents or guardians, and they are encouraged to include these three food varieties in their lunch boxes wherever possible. This initiative is also meaningful as a way of raising awareness among the parents, guardians and elementary school teachers. This activity is being carried out based on the idea that in order to try to enhance the content of children's lunch boxes (in other words, to enhance their nutritional balance), it is not only necessary to provide nutritional education to the children, but also to simultaneously spread interest, concern and knowledge about health and nutrition among the adults who are around them.

This program is scheduled to be rolled out nationwide by Fiji's Ministry of Health in the future.

3 Cooperation with Local Government

Cooperation with local governments is one of the priority issues of the Cabinet. MOFA actively works on regional revitalization and strives to deploy measures that contribute to the vitalization of regions in order to strengthen comprehensive diplomatic capabilities through collaboration with regions.

In Japan, "Projects to Support Regional Revitalization" which started in 2015 using the Iikura Guest House, MOFA's facility, were jointly implemented with Saga Prefecture (February), Yamaguchi Prefecture (March), Fukuoka Prefecture (July) and Okayama Prefecture (August). Under this scheme the Foreign Minister and respective prefectural governors co-hosted seminars and receptions and

invited ambassadors to Japan as well as foreign business communities to the Iikura Guest House in order to broadly disseminate the various attractiveness of regions to audiences both in Japan and abroad. With around 300 people in attendance, each project proved to be a success. The diplomatic corps in Japan and other participants developed interests in the co-hosting local governments, which provided an opportunity for the promotion of further exchanges and collaboration.

In addition, in 2017, MOFA continued to implement the "Local to Global" project, which was initiated in 2016. In this project, the Foreign Minister and other high-level MOFA officials visit regions in Japan with the diplomatic corps in Japan to engage in dialogue with the local people, and promote the attractiveness of the regions to the world, with the aim of connecting Japan's regions with the world and further vitalizing such areas. Foreign Minister Kishida visited Okinawa Prefecture (February), Kumamoto and Fukuoka prefectures (March), Aomori and Hokkaido prefectures (April), Ishikawa Prefecture (June), and Kagawa and Hyogo prefectures (July). During these visits, Foreign Minister Kishida, together with ambassadors and other officials, exchanged views with prefectural governors and mayors while enjoying meals made with an assortment of local ingredients, visited local SMEs in the community with traditional technologies or cutting-edge technologies, and participated in community festivals and other events. Through these activities, participants were able to experience firsthand the attractiveness of Japan's

Kagami Biraki ceremony at a reception co-hosted with the Governor of Yamaguchi Prefecture (March 23, Tokyo, Iikura Guest House of Japan)

Booths set up for a reception co-hosted with the Governor of Saga Prefecture (February 1, Tokyo, Iikura Guest House of Japan)

Stage performance at a reception co-hosted with the Governor of Okayama Prefecture (August 2, Tokyo, Iikura Guest House of Japan)

The 3rd "Local to Global" project: Foreign Minister and others being welcomed by Kumamon (March 12, Kumamoto City)

The 6th "Local to Global" project: Foreign Minister and others planting trees at Roadside Station Shodoshima Olive Park (July 22, Shodoshima Town, Kagawa Prefecture)

The 5th "Local to Global" project: Foreign Minister and others being welcomed by Hyakumansan (June 3, Kanazawa City, Ishikawa Prefecture)

regions and this diverse attractiveness was shared broadly with audiences inside and outside Japan.

Besides this, "Regional Promotion Seminars" were organized by several local governments for the diplomatic corps in Japan as an opportunity to further promote inbound tourism. These seminars featured presentations marketing the attractiveness of tourist destinations in each community and the benefits of investing in these regions. At the seminars, participating local governments set up booths for the diplomatic corps in Japan and other participants to showcase local specialty products and tourism. The seminars were highly praised by participating diplomatic corps and others as a valuable venue where they were able to experience firsthand the attractiveness of regions without leaving Tokyo.

Regional Promotion Seminar: networking session (June 5, Tokyo)

"Diplomats' Study Tours" organized for the diplomatic corps in Japan were conducted in northern Akita Prefecture (May), Miyazaki Prefecture (July), Gunma Prefecture (September), and the Ise-Shima area of Mie Prefecture (November), with around 90 members of the diplomatic corps visiting each location. The diplomatic corps, including ambassadors, visited places of scenic beauty in each region as well as cultural and industrial facilities in the community, which enabled them to experience the many community attractions of each region. The tours resulted in some local governments launching exchanges and collaboration with participating countries while others aim to increase the number of visitors to their communities utilizing the connections with participating diplomatic corps, making the tours contributing to the vitalization of regions.

Diplomats' Study Tour: performance featuring the world's largest taiko drum (May 9, northern Akita Prefecture)

Diplomats' Study Tour: Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Shunsuke Takei participating in a tour with the diplomatic corps in Japan (July 14, Miyazaki Prefecture)

Diplomats' Study Tour: Diplomatic corps in Japan welcomed by mascot characters (September 27, Gunma Prefecture)

Diplomats' Study Tour: at the inner sanctuary of Ise Grand Shrine (November 20, Ise-Shima area of Mie Prefecture)

Furthermore, MOFA actively provides local governments with opportunities to explain Japan's current diplomatic policies and exchange views. As a part of such activities, a "Local Partnership Cooperation Forum" was held in January, which was attended by around 270 people comprising mainly local government officials. Part One of the forum was the foreign policy briefing session, which consisted of a presentation on recent Japan-China relations. In Part Two of the forum, which featured sectional meetings, participants exchanged views on the themes of "results of the sales channel expansion project of the Association for the Promotion of Traditional Craft Industries and future aspirations," "initiatives to unearth overseas demand, open up overseas sales channels, and promote visits to Japan by foreign nationals using a worldwide sellers network and Japanese brand story selected for overseas buyers (B-to-B)," "promoting Japanese sake to the world to become a tourist destination country," and "ways of harnessing 2020 for communities."

Overseas, MOFA continued to conduct the comprehensive PR program called "Project to Support Overseas Presentations to Promote the Attractiveness of Regions" for sharing the attractiveness of regions, promoting exports of prefectural products and supporting tourism for regional revitalization together with efforts to eliminate and ease import and travel restrictions as a way to dispel damage from international rumors stemming from the Great East Japan Earthquake. This project was held in Beijing in February and Taipei (hosted by the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association) in March.

At the PR event held in Beijing in

February, with Hidetoshi Nakata, a former member of the Japanese national football team, in attendance as a special guest, Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Kotaro Nogami delivered an address at the opening ceremony. The event, which was attended by about 15,000 people over the two-day period, featured 16 local governments, including Miyagi Prefecture and Fukushima Prefecture. At the PR event held in Taipei, State Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Akama delivered remarks at the opening ceremony. This event featuring 20 local governments, including Fukushima Prefecture and Chiba Prefecture, was attended by about 8,400 people during the two-day period.

Project to Support Overseas Presentations to Promote Attractiveness of Regions (Beijing): Opening Ceremony (February 25)

In addition, a total of nine "Regional Promotion Projects" were conducted in Asia, North America, and Europe as measures to support local governments in promoting the development of local industries and regional economies through the attractiveness of each region by making use of Japan's diplomatic facilities overseas. For example, in Asia, the event "Charms of Yamanashi" was jointly held by Yamanashi Prefecture and the Embassy of Japan in Viet Nam in October, featuring presentations on the prefecture's tourism resources and its specialty products. During the post-event networking session, the attractiveness of Yamanashi was marketed with grapes and wine tasting, etc.

Regional Promotion Seminar: Booth showcasing prefectural products at the networking session (October 10, Viet Nam, Embassy of Japan in Viet Nam)

In addition, MOFA fully supports sister-city exchanges between Japanese local bodies and their counterparts abroad through various initiatives. Specifically, in order to support the international initiatives of local governments and communities, Japanese diplomats visit sister cities of Japanese municipalities and share each other's opinions with officials responsible for international/economic exchanges. Also, heads of the diplomatic missions overseas visit local cities in Japan to have dialogues and deliver lectures on sister city exchanges prior to leaving for new posts or when they temporarily return to Japan. In addition, if a foreign local governmental body wants to establish a sister-city relationship with a Japanese one, MOFA indirectly supports such a move by providing prefectures and 20 major cities with relevant information and posting it on the "'Glocal' (global and

local) Diplomatic Network" on the website of MOFA[2].

As part of the overseas promotion of alcoholic beverages (Japanese sake, wine, shochu, awamori, etc.) produced in various parts of Japan, diplomatic missions overseas actively promote alcoholic beverages produced in Japan, including Japanese sake, by carrying out proactive PR activities to showcase Japanese alcoholic beverages, by way of offering them at lunch/dinner with government leaders of the assigned countries or diplomatic corps of other countries, and making a toast with Japanese sake at grand events such as the Emperor's birthday receptions.

Moreover, MOFA works on supporting local SMEs (small and medium-sized enterprises). With the rapid economic development, the demand for water treatment, waste disposal, urban transportation, and anti-pollution measures, etc., have sharply increased in developing countries. In cooperation with Japanese local authorities and by making use of ODA, MOFA supports the overseas business expansion of local SMEs, which have accumulated knowledge on countermeasures against such problems, and increases development cooperation. This contributes not only to the global outreach of local companies, development of globally competent human resources, and Japanese style of infrastructure export but also to vitalizing the economy of the whole of Japan as well as some local areas.

2 Currently (as of February 2018), the countries with a large number of Japan's sister and partnership cities (including prefectures and municipalities) are, in descending order, the U.S. (451), China (363), the ROK (162), Australia (109), and Canada (71) and so on. (Calculated by the Council of Local Authorities for Internal Relations; see its website: http://www.clair.or.jp/j/exchange/shimai/countries/)

Section 2 Supporting Japanese Nationals Overseas

Overview

(Risks and Safety of Japanese Nationals abroad)

In July 2016, the terrorist attack in Dhaka, the capital of Bangladesh, occurred, claiming seven Japanese lives. The risk of such terrorism is now spreading from the Middle East and Africa to Europe, the U.S. and Asia, where there are many Japanese nationals and Japanese companies. Besides terrorist attacks, the risk of ordinary crimes and infectious diseases that are unfamiliar in Japan exists worldwide. A total of 17.89 million[1] Japanese nationals traveled abroad in 2017 and approximately 1.34 million Japanese nationals live abroad as of October 2016. Securing the safety of Japanese nationals overseas and promoting their interests is one of the most important missions of MOFA.

In August 2016, in light of the terrorist attack in Dhaka, MOFA reviewed the recommendations from the "Task Force on Bolstering Safety Measures for Japanese Nationals Overseas," issued in 2015, and published a report indicating measures that should be further strengthened. The report pointed out that the public and private sectors need to work mainly in the important areas of (1) enhancing the awareness of safety measures and response capabilities of every single person; (2) delivering timely, appropriate and effective information on safety to the people; and (3) establishing a system to steadily implement these actions, in order to prevent Japanese nationals from being harmed by terrorism. Based on it, MOFA is working to further strengthen security measures through the distribution of "Golgo 13's Security Guidelines for Japanese SMEs abroad" and other means. In addition, ever since the establishment of "International Counter-Terrorism Intelligence Collection Unit" in December 2015, many efforts have been made to gather and concentrate information, including strengthening relationships with security and intelligence agencies of various foreign countries, while reinforcing the unit's structure. The Unit collects information about international terrorism that meets the interests of the Prime Minister's Office. The collected

1 Source: Ministry of Justice "Statistics on Legal Migrants"

information, including terrorism threats, is promptly reported to the Prime Minister's Office and policy making departments and utilized for disseminating warnings, assessing the security situation and making policy decisions for the safety of Japanese nationals overseas.

In addition to terrorism, there are risks of being involved in robbery and other crimes and troubles, political disturbance, natural disasters and infectious diseases such as the Zika virus disease, which has been spreading across Latin America, a part of the U.S., and Southeast Asia. When traveling or staying overseas, it is very important for every individual to have high awareness of safety and health, collect information and take the necessary safety measures. MOFA issues safety information through its Overseas Travel Registration ("Tabi-Regi") and the Overseas Safety Website, calling on people to utilize them.

MOFA also endeavors to protect the safety of Japanese nationals overseas and promote their interests. Efforts to this end include issuing passports and various types of certificates, accepting notifications concerning family register, and nationality, and handling overseas voting.

MOFA, as the "Central Authority" for the implementation of the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (the Hague Convention), provides assistance to realize the prompt return of children who have been wrongfully removed across borders, and/or to realize visitation or contact with children across borders.

1 Overseas Risks and Safety of Japanese Nationals

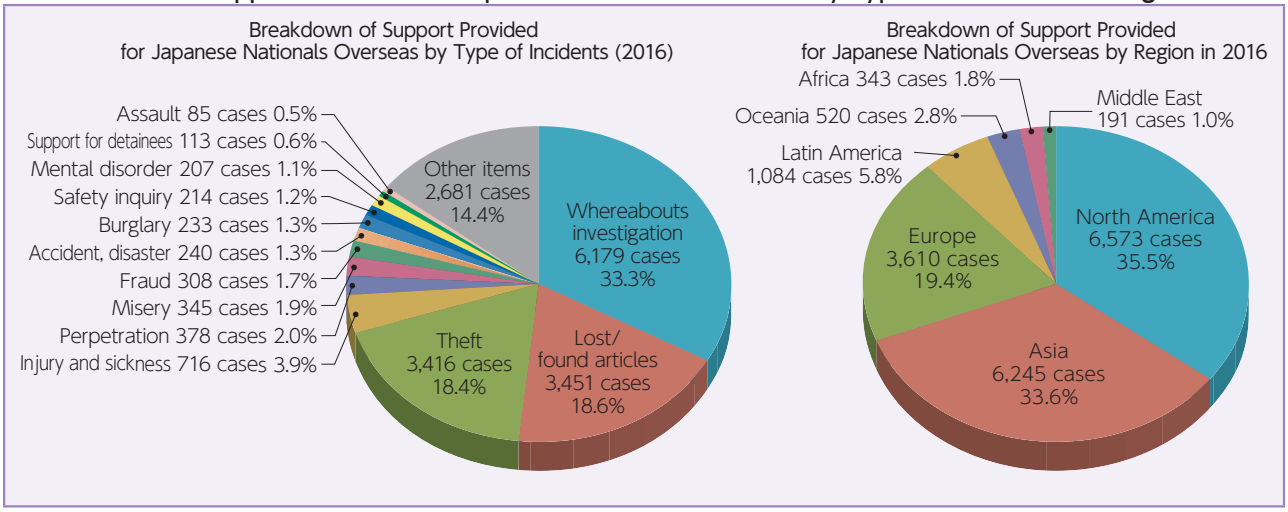
(1) Incidents and Accidents in 2017 and Countermeasures

There were no Japanese victims in terrorist attacks in 2017, despite the world seeing a large number of terrorist attacks. The recent tendency of terrorist attacks includes terrorism happening not only in the Middle East and Africa but also in Europe, the U.S. and Asia where many Japanese travel and reside. Both homegrown terrorism perpetrated by people born in Western countries and indoctrinated through websites or other means by foreign Islamic extremists and lone-wolf terrorism perpetrated by people acting solely with little organizational background are found in tremendous numbers. Additionally, terrorist attacks aimed at "soft targets" where large numbers of the general public gather everyday are on the rise. This tendency has not changed despite the fact that ISIL is losing its territory in Syria and Iraq. Also, foreign fighters of ISIL now are returning to their home countries or moving to third countries. These factors make it more difficult to prevent terror attacks.

The following incidents in 2017 demonstrate this tendency: the bombing at a subway in St. Petersburg, Russia, in May; the suicide bombing at a concert hall in Manchester, UK, in May; the suicide bombing at a bus terminal in Jakarta, Indonesia, in May; the vehicle and knife attack around the London Bridge, UK, in June; the vehicle attacks in Barcelona and Cambrils, Spain, in August; and the vehicle attack at Manhattan in New York, U.S., in October, etc.

As for crimes overseas, murder incidents involving Japanese nationals occurred in

Breakdown of Support Provided for Japanese Nationals Overseas by Type of Incidents and Region (2016)



several countries such as the Philippines, Indonesia, the U.S. and Brazil. One such example victimizing Japanese students overseas is the murder of a male Japanese student by a rampaging driver in Australia in January.

Incidents involving Japanese nationals include: a drowning in a waterfall at a famous tourist spot in Punta Arenas, Costa Rica, in February; a drowning while surfing off the coast of Bali, Indonesia, in June; a fall accident while hiking in Sequoia National Park in California, U.S., in July; falling accidents on Mt. Monch and Mt. Zermatt, Switzerland, in July and August; a death by a hotel fire in Yangon, Myanmar, in October; and a traffic accident in Ayutthaya, Thailand, in November.

Japanese nationals were also affected by various major natural disasters, including the earthquake in southern Mexico in September, the large hurricane that struck the southern U.S. and countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and the volcanic activities of Mt. Agung on Bali, Indonesia. There were a number of incidents of political instability that could have affected Japanese nationals, such as the general and presidential elections in Kenya, the separatist movements triggered by the referendum in the Catalonia Region of Spain and the missile attacks by anti-government forces in Yemen targeting Saudi Arabia.

As was the case previous year, there were continued reports of people dying from sudden illnesses during their trip.

In some of such cases, family members of the victims faced difficulties dealing with higher medical and transportation costs and insufficient medical services compared to those in Japan.

As for infectious diseases, cases of Ebola were reported in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and there continue to be reports of cases of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) in the Middle East and human infection with avian influenza A (H7N9) virus in China. Mosquito-borne diseases, such as Zika virus, Dengue fever and malaria, also continued to spread throughout the world.

MOFA issues "Overseas Travel Safety Information" on infectious disease and air pollution in countries and regions where health and medical caution is required, to provide Japanese nationals staying abroad with information on the current outbreak

situation and prevention measures as well as with relevant warnings.

(Tips for Traveling and Living Abroad)

As described in the above incidents, threatening of the safety of Japanese nationals constantly occurred all around the world. In addition to registration to "Overseas Travel Registration ("Tabi-Regi")" or submission of Overseas Residential Registration, it is important to take the following actions when traveling and living abroad: (1) checking security and other information through the Overseas Safety Website, media and other sources, (2) taking adequate safety measures to avoid risks, and (3) contacting the nearest Japanese diplomatic missions overseas and family in Japan in case of emergency. It is very important for each individual to take out travel insurance with a sufficient coverage since the lack of travel insurance may make it difficult to pay the medical expenses or to receive proper medical care in case of diseases and accident injuries due to expensive medical fees abroad.

(2) Safety Measures for Japanese Nationals Overseas

While Japanese nationals play an active part in the international community, there are many cases of Japanese nationals suffering dameges overseas. The number of cases where Japanese nationals received support or protection from the diplomatic missions overseas and the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association has stayed on a high level. There were 20,437 by person and 18,566 by case in 2016[2].

In order to avoid accidents and troubles overseas, it is important to collect information before traveling abroad. MOFA works to enhance the safety awareness of Japanese nationals and promote its measures by disseminating and sharing information on safety measures.

MOFA issues the latest safety information worldwide on the Overseas Safety Website and emails newly uploaded local information to Japanese nationals staying overseas with Overseas Residential Registrations and short-term travelers with registration in the Overseas Travel Registration ("Tabi-Regi") Diplomatic mission overseas release safety information as well. "Tabi-Regi" is also available to those without travel plans through simple registration. The distributed safety information is widely utilized by Japanese business persons in charge of foreign operations in such a way as to plan safety measures. Since "Tabi-Regi" was launched in July 2014, MOFA has improved its user-friendliness and sponsored many activities to increase registrants. Currently, a cumulative total registration is more than 3 million and the number of registrants per year is close to reach 2 million people.

MOFA strives to enhance the knowledge and capability of the Japanese people concerning safety measures and crisis management through seminars and trainings. MOFA has hosted safety measure seminars in and out of Japan and sent lecturers from the Consular Affairs Bureau to seminars nationwide organized by other organizations and associations (over 100 times in FY 2017). MOFA also hosted "Public-Private Joint Practical Training for

2 The Statistics on Assistance for Japanese Involved in Accidents and Other Incidents, first published in 1986, is an annual report on the number of cases/people where the diplomatic missions overseas and the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association provided assistance to Japanese nationals involved in any kind of troubles overseas, such as incidents/accidents, acts of committing crimes and falling victim to crime or disaster.

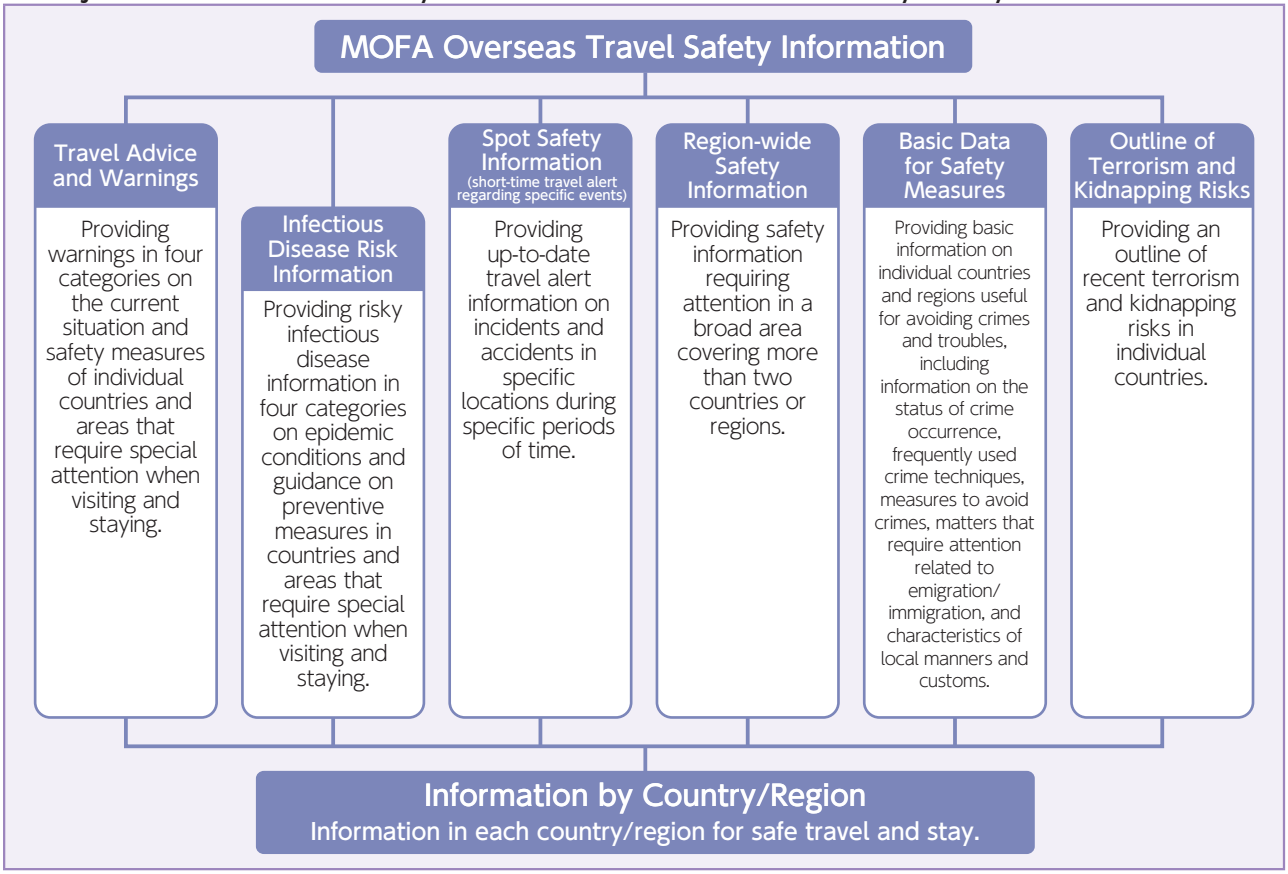
Top 20 Diplomatic Missions Overseas in Terms of the Number of Cases of Assistance Provided for Japanese Nationals Overseas

Ranking	Diplomatic missions overseas	Cases
1	Embassy of Japan in Thailand	1,048
2	Embassy of Japan in the Philippines	890
3	Consulate-General of Japan in Los Angeles, U.S.	851
4	Consulate-General of Japan in Shanghai, China	729
5	Consulate-General of Japan in New York, U.S.	653
6	Embassy of Japan in the United Kingdom	617
7	Consulate-General of Japan in Honolulu, U.S.	551
8	Embassy of Japan in the People's Republic of China	480
9	Embassy of Japan in the Republic of Korea	405
10	Embassy of Japan in France	371

Ranking	Diplomatic missions overseas	Cases
11	Consulate-General of Japan in Barcelona, Spain	348
12	Consulate-General of Japan in Hong Kong, China	339
13	Consulate-General of Japan in San Francisco, U.S.	322
13	Consulate-General of Japan in Hagatna, U.S.	322
15	Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association, Taipei Office, Taiwan	309
16	Consulate-General of Japan in Seattle, U.S.	293
17	Consulate-General of Japan in Houston, U.S.	291
18	Consulate-General of Japan in Boston, U.S.	284
19	Embassy of Japan in Italy	281
20	Embassy of Japan in the United States of America	277

(Based on the Statistics on Assistance for Japanese Involved in Accidents and Other Incidents 2017, these 20 Diplomatic Missions are listed in descending order of the number of cases where the embassies, consulates general, consular offices, etc. provided assistance for Japanese)

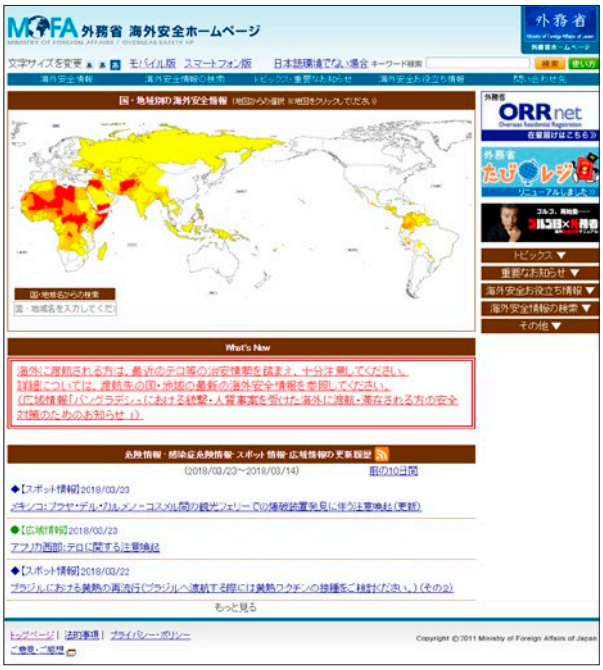
Major Overseas Travel Safety Information on the Overseas Safety HP (System and Outline)



Counter-Terrorism and Anti-Kidnapping Measures" with the participation from private companies. These efforts are beneficial not only for taking preventive measures against dangers like terrorism, but also for enhancing response capabilities in case of emergency.

The public and private cooperation in overseas safety measure is proceeding. The diplomatic missions overseas host regular meetings of "Security Consultation and Liaison Committees" with local Japanese nationals to share information, exchange opinions and bolster collaboration in preparation for emergencies.

After the terrorist attack in Dhaka in



MOFA Overseas Safety Website (https://www.anzen.mofa.go.jp/)

MOFA "Overseas Travel Registration ("Tabi-Regi")"
https://www.ezairyu.mofa.go.jp/tabireg/index.html

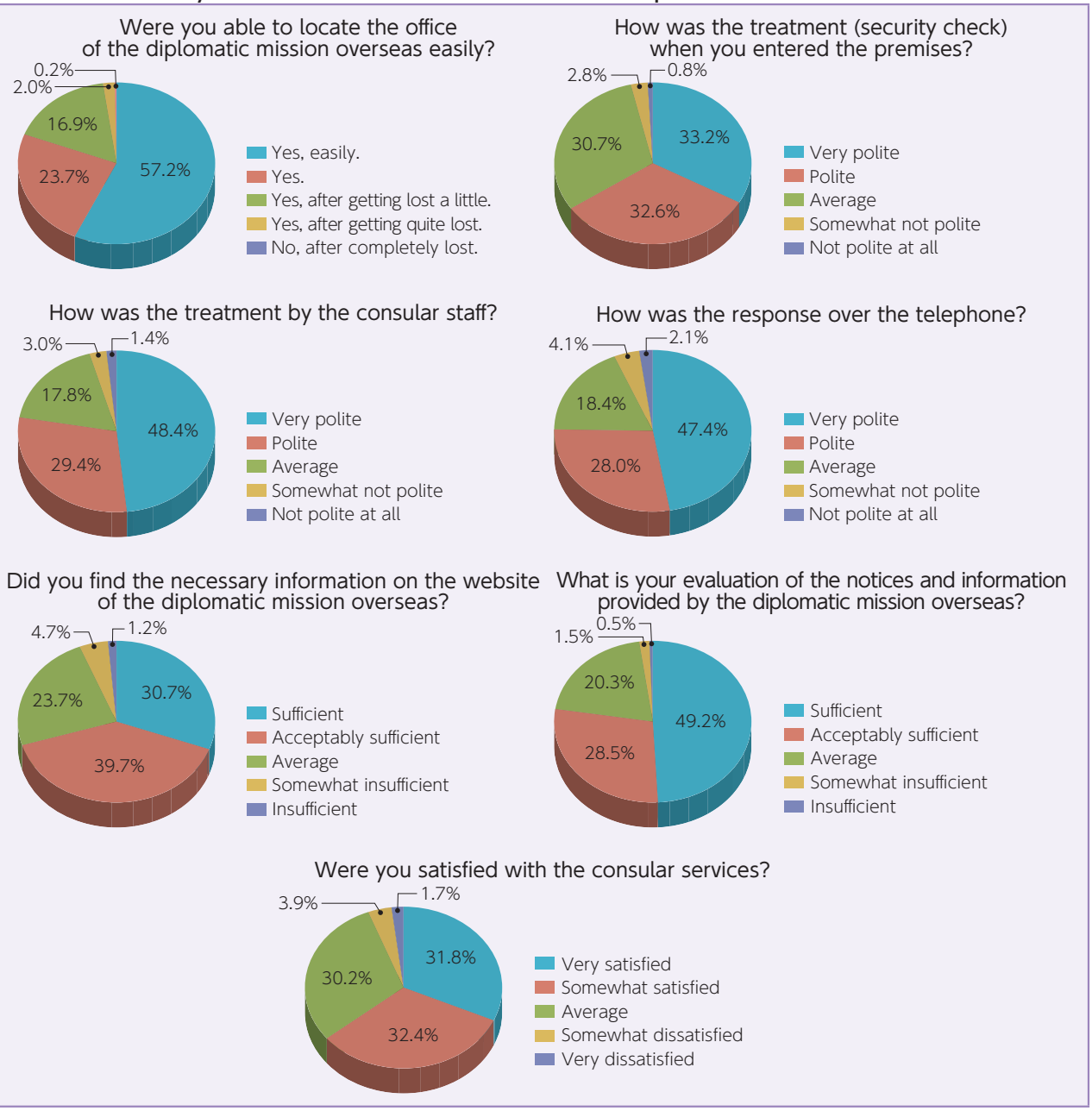
MOFA Overseas Safety App
Overseas safety website "About the Overseas Safety App Services"
Can be downloaded from (http://www.anzen.mofa.go.jp/c_info/oshirase_kaian_app.html)

©Takao Saito
Golgo 13's Security Guidelines for Japanese SMEs Abroad
http://www.anzen.mofa.go.jp/anzen_info/golgo13xgaimusho.html

July 2016, MOFA has worked to enhance the awareness of safety measures and the response capabilities of people, particularly the international cooperation personnel, small and medium enterprises, students studying abroad, short-term travelers and others who have limited access to information on safety.

MOFA launched the "Small and Medium Enterprise Overseas Safety Measures Network," with the participation of 29 organizations and agencies related to overseas expansion of Japanese businesses in September 2016, in order to support SMEs, which account for the vast majority of Japanese companies. The collaboration among members in this network has strengthened safety measures of those companies, such as raising safety awareness through seminars and newsletters, establishing horizontal relationships among participating companies and seeking to provide better support services for business, etc. Furthermore, in March 2017, MOFA released "Golgo 13's Security

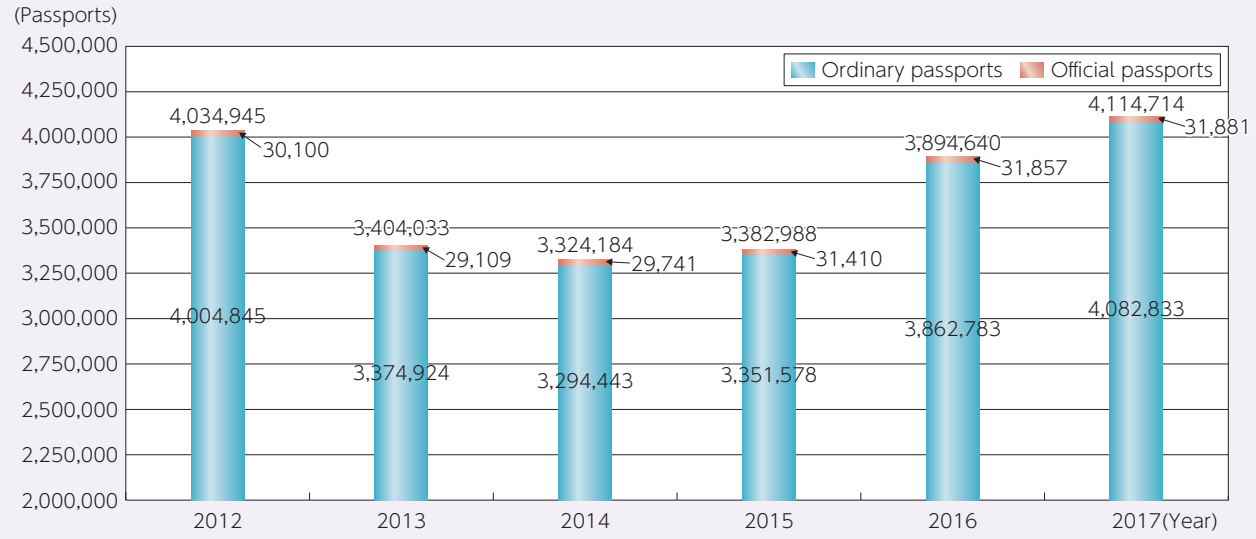
Results of Survey on the Consular Service (2017: 147 diplomatic missions overseas)



Guidelines for Japanese SMEs abroad," which explains the basic safety measures for the companies in an easy-to-understand manner using famous manga (cartoons). After its release, about 90,000 copies of the fine printed version have been distributed and the special webpage has gotten about 1.7 million views, which shows that the guidelines have been used by Japanese businesses widely and contributed to raising awareness on overseas safety measures.

MOFA is working to enhance the awareness of safety measures for Japanese students studying overseas and aid in the establishment of crisis management systems at schools. MOFA sends lecturers to universities and other educational institutions, many of which have insufficient knowhow or experience on safety measures and emergency responses. MOFA is going forward with efforts to connect government agencies with educational institutions, overseas study agencies and students by such means as beginning

Changes in the Number of Issued Passports of Japan



Note 1: Official passports include diplomatic passports.
Source: The graph was created based on the Passport Statistics 2017 Edition (Passport Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

automatic registration to "Overseas Travel Registration ("Tabi-Regi")" with some overseas study institutions.

As for safety measures for short-term travelers, MOFA is engaged in PR activities to encourage them to register in "Overseas Travel Registration ("Tabi-Regi")." MOFA aims to reach 2.4 million as the number of cumulative registrants by the summer of 2018. The number of registrants increased from about 610,000 to about 1.49 million through January to December in 2016.

In addition, MOFA hosted an overseas safety measure seminar for tour guides in June and crisis managers of travel companies in July in an effort to convey the importance of travel companies and tour guides working on safety measures and to call for cooperation in developing safety measures for travelers.

2 Consular Service and Assistance for Japanese Living Overseas

(1) Improving Consular Service

With the aim of providing high quality consular services to Japanese nationals overseas, MOFA conducts a questionnaire survey every year on services such as consular staffs attitudes in over-the-counter consular services and telephone responses at diplomatic missions overseas, information provision, and Visiting Consular Service (targetting only the missions undertaking its service) to reflect the views of Japanese nationals overseas in order to improve consular services. In 2017, the surveys were conducted by 147 diplomatic missions overseas and received 20,801 responses. The results showed a generally high level of satisfaction with regard to the overall consular services provided by the diplomatic missions overseas, including over-the-counter services and telephone responses. At the same time, there were negative responses and requests for improvement, though few in number. As such, MOFA intends to continue its efforts for improvements listening to the views of the users so as to provide consular services at the diplomatic missions overseas in line with user's perspective.

(2) Issuance of Passports and Prevention of Illicit Acquisition of Passports

Approximately 4.08 million passports were issued in 2017. As of the end of December 2017, approximately 29.77 million ordinary passports are valid, and all of them are ePassports[3].

The issuance of ePassports is effective for deterring illicit use of passports such as forged or altered passports. However, there continue to be cases of illicit acquisition of passports by means of impersonation[4]. There were cases where Japanese nationals or illegal foreign residents left and entered Japan using passports acquired illegally under the name of another person. Also, passports with false identities were used for borrowing money from financial institutions, opening bank accounts for the purpose of selling them to those who plot to commit other crimes, and subscribing to mobile phone services without the real passport holders knowing it. In order to prevent illicit acquisition of passports that may nurture these secondary or tertiary crimes, MOFA has been making further effort to enhance strict identity examination in issuing a passport, for example, by such means as designating a stringent examination period against illicit acquisition of passports through identity theft at passport offices located in each prefecture.

While the integrated circuit (IC) chips in Japanese passports contain facial images and other information identifying the passport holders, ePassports with improved security against counterfeiting using biometric information such as fingerprints have become widespread in other countries, and possibilities for more effective use of IC chips are under consideration at the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO).

Consignment of passport-related work such as application and delivery, from the prefectural governments to city/town offices has been permitted since 2006. 834 cities/towns had started passport service by the end of 2017, which make up almost 50% of all the cities/towns in Japan.

(3) Overseas Voting

The overseas voting system allows Japanese voters living overseas to vote in national elections. In the elections after June 2007, it was made possible to vote from overseas for the small electoral district election of the House of Representatives and the electoral district election of the House of Councillors (including by-election and recall election), in addition to voting for the proportional representation segment of elections of the both Houses. In order to vote from overseas, it is necessary to be registered in advance on the overseas voter directory managed by the election board of the city/town government and to obtain overseas voter identification. Voters with valid overseas voter identification 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 disseminate the

3 An ePassport is a passport embedded with an integrated circuit (IC) chip which contains a digitized facial image (biometric information) and other information of the passport holder to prevent passport forgery and its illicit use by a third party. It was first issued in 2006.

4 The number of illegal acquisitions of passports through identity theft discovered: 52 in 2013, 41 in 2014, 31 in 2015, 22 in 2016, and 21 in 2017.

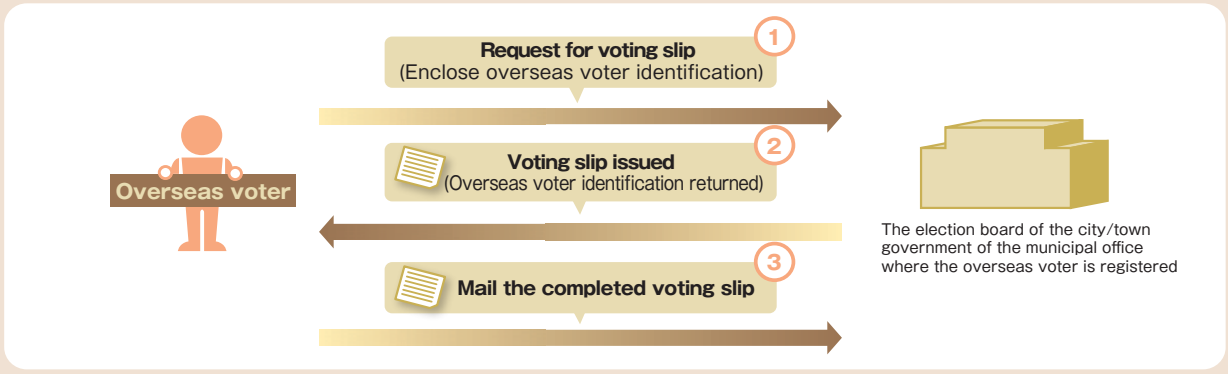
Overseas Voting

a) Voting at diplomatic missions overseas

Voters registered on an overseas voter directory can vote by presenting their overseas voter identification and ID such as a passport at a diplomatic mission (period and time for voting vary depending on the mission)

b) Voting by mail

A voting slip can be requested by sending his/her overseas voter identification and written request for a voting slip to the chair of the election board of the city/town government where the voter is registered. Completed voting slip needs to arrive at the voting venue before the end of voting time (20:00 Japan time) of the domestic voting day in Japan.



c) Voting in Japan

If overseas voters are temporarily staying in Japan during the election time, or in case voters are not yet registered on a domestic voter directory after their permanent return in Japan, the voter may vote in the same way as other domestic voters with their overseas voter identification for overseas voting (early voting, absentee voting, and voting on the election day).

system and to increase the number of registered voters by publicizing this system and carrying out a visiting service for the registration of Japanese nationals living in remote areas. In December 2016, revisions (that will take effect by June 2018) were made to the Public Officer Election Act in order to simplify the voter registration process for the absentee voter register. Once the act is revised, in addition to the conventional method of applying through diplomatic missions overseas after moving overseas, Japanese nationals will be able to apply at their municipal office at the time they report their move abroad.

(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, MOFA carries out assistance for the Japanese Schools (partial assistance for school building rental fees, rewards for locally hired teachers and safety measures expenses) so that the overseas school children at the age of domestic compulsory education can receive education equivalent to that of Japan. MOFA also provides the same assistance as that for the Japanese Schools to the Supplementary Education Schools (educational institutions established to maintain children's ability, such as Japanese language ability) mainly in areas where the Japanese Schools are not located. In addition, MOFA is further strengthening and expanding assistance related to safety measures in light of the recent changes in the international terrorism situation.

B Medical/Health Measures

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 support of domestic medical institutions (one country, seven cities in FY2017). MOFA also dispatches medical specialists to regions where infectious diseases or air pollution become serious, and organizes health and safety lectures (nine countries, 17 cities in FY2017).

In addition, MOFA collects information on infectious diseases outbreak overseas and provides them publicly through the Overseas Safety Website and the websites and emails of diplomatic missions overseas.

C Other Needs

In order to eliminate the complexity of various procedures for Japanese nationals living overseas (such as converting Japanese driving licenses to the country of residence, obtaining stay/work permits) and to make living abroad more comfortable, MOFA continues talks with foreign governments.

When converting driving licenses issued in foreign countries to Japanese driving licenses, all persons with driving licenses issued in a foreign country are exempted from taking certain examinations, when it is confirmed that they have no problems with operating vehicles. On the other hand, it is mandatory to take driving tests when converting Japanese licenses to local licenses in some countries and states, such as North and South America. MOFA is calling for those countries to simplify the procedures for license conversion as in Japan.

MOFA also supports victims of atomic bomb attacks living overseas in applying for the authorization of Atomic Bomb Diseases and for the issuance of Health Check Certificates, via diplomatic and consular missions.

3 Cooperation with Emigrants and Japanese Descendants, Nikkei

The migration of Japanese nationals overseas has a history of 149 years as of 2017. There are estimated 3.6 million overseas Japanese and Nikkei, with especially large numbers residing in North, Central and South America. They make positive and great contributions to the development of the countries in various fields, including politics, economy, academics and culture, and at the same time, they act as a bridge between Japan

and these countries in developing close relations.

Together with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), MOFA provides cooperation in Central and South America, where an estimated 2.13 million Japanese descendants live. Various forms of assistance are offered, including welfare support for aging emigrants, training in Japan for Japanese immigrants and descendants, and dispatch of volunteers to the local Nikkei communities. In May, the report from the "Panel of Experts on Collaborating with Communities of Japanese Immigrants and Descendants ("Nikkei") in Latin America and the Caribbean" was submitted to Foreign Minister Kishida. The report advocated the importance of building further relationships with Nikkei communities.

To date, invitation programs for Nikkei leaders in various fields have been carried out in North, Central and South America. Also, efforts are underway to strengthen relations with Japanese descendants in these regions. As part of this, diplomatic missions in each country are working closely to cooperate with Nikkei communities, including actively establishing an occasion to meet with Nikkei persons during visits of Japanese government high-level officials.

The 58th Convention of the Nikkei and Japanese Abroad was successfully held by the Association of Nikkei and Japanese Abroad in Tokyo in October, in which around 250 emigrants and their descendants from 19 countries participated. As for MOFA, Foreign Minister Kono held a welcome reception to deepen exchange with emigrants and their descendants. Japan intends to provide support for Japanese emigrants and their descendants, promote cooperation with the young generation and strengthen the bond between these people and Japan.

4 The Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (the Hague Convention) and its Implementation

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 came into force in Japan on April 1, 2014. Currently, 98 countries including Japan are parties to the Convention.

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 communicates/cooperates with foreign Central Authorities, and provides assistance to the parties such as locating whereabouts of the child and arranging mediation services aimed at amicable resolutions.

In the three years and nine months between the entry into force of the Convention and the end of December 2017, MOFA received a total number of 272 applications: 152 applications seeking the return of the child and 120 applications seeking access to the child. Of these, in 47

cases seeking the return of the child from Japan to another country, children were returned or conclusions not to return the child were reached. A conclusion was reached in 35 cases requesting the return of the child from another country to Japan.

In January and March 2017, study group meetings were hosted by the Director-General of the Consular Affairs Bureau, MOFA, in view of the three-year anniversary since the entry into force of the Convention. In these meetings experts with in-depth knowledge of the Hague Convention discussed Japan's implementation of the Convention to date and related issues. In the "Summary of Discussions" that was presented as the results of the seminars, it was evaluated that Japan has been implementing the Convention smoothly in general and also indicated points to be improved and the direction of reviews, etc. In February 2017, MOFA held the "Seminar on the Hague Convention for Diplomatic Missions in Tokyo" and in March a psychological expert with expert knowledge on children's welfare in disputes was invited to Japan from Australia to share her insight with people involved in Japan's implementation of the Hague Convention. In addition, a meeting of the Special Commission (held once every five years) took place in October in The Hague, the Netherlands, which attracted representatives from 62 countries and regions and about 290 people. Japan attended the Commission and held discussions with various countries. Furthermore, MOFA, together with the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH), co-hosted the "Tokyo Seminar on the 1980 Hague Convention in Asia Pacific" in December. Frank and active discussions were held among participants from 14 countries and regions of Asia Pacific on the domestic framework required for acceding to the Convention and approaches to the proper implementation of the Convention, etc (see Column "Making the Hague Convention Widely Known: Public Relations Activities").

▶ Number of Applications for Assistance Received by the Minister for Foreign Affairs Based on the Implementation Act of the Hague Convention (as of end-December 2017)

	Application for assistance in child's return	Application for assistance in visitation or contact with child
Application concerning a child (children) in Japan	83	92
Application concerning a child (children) outside Japan	69	28

Column

Making the Hague Convention Widely Known: Public Relations Activities

The "Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction" (hereinafter referred to as "the Hague Convention") entered into force in Japan on April 1, 2014. The Hague Convention Division of the Consular Affairs Bureau at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs performs the role of the Central Authority of Japan under the Hague Convention. Based on the perspective that it is important to prevent children being inconsiderately removed due to a lack of awareness of the Hague Convention, the Hague Convention Division undertakes a various range of public relations activities aimed at making the Convention more widely known.

1. Seminars

The Hague Convention Division has been holding seminars nationwide for local municipalities, bar associations, the police, the immigration bureaus, the courts, domestic violence victims support groups and other entities since the Convention entered into force. In the fiscal year 2016, the Hague Convention Division explained the Hague Convention and the various types of its support to around 1,200 people in 34 locations. Furthermore, in June 2016, 64 specialists from 21 countries and regions, centering on the Asia-Pacific region were invited to the Asia Pacific Symposium on the 1980 Hague Child Abduction Convention, which was co-hosted by the Permanent Bureau of the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH), Waseda University, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Along with seeking to deepen the knowledge of those who are tasked with implementing the Convention and strengthen the implementation framework, the goal of the Symposium was to share the knowledge of Contracting States of the Hague Convention with non-Contracting States. In February 2017, the Seminar on the Hague Convention for Diplomatic Missions in Tokyo was held and attracted 77 participants from 59 countries, including 17 non-Contracting States. Additionally, in December, the Tokyo Seminar on the 1980 Hague Convention in Asia Pacific was held to encourage non-Contracting States in Asia to join the Convention and to promote establishing the environment for implementing the Convention for new Contracting States.

2. Leaflets

The Hague Convention Division created materials that include an A4-size pamphlet using manga comics to explain the Hague Convention in an easy-to-understand manner and a palm-size leaflet presenting an overview of the Convention. These materials are distributed through domestic related organizations, embassies in Tokyo, Japanese embassies/consulates abroad, and so on. The leaflet was translated in 13 languages: Japanese, English, Italian, Korean, Cantonese, Spanish, Thai, Tagalog, German, French, Beijing dialect,

Portuguese and Russian. Furthermore, in 2017, the Hague Convention Division newly created a leaflet for the parents whose children have been removed, and a poster in order to prevent the inconsiderate removal of children. In addition to these materials, it also created and broadcasted (in March 2017) an online advertisement and public-relations television program.

MOFA leaflet
"To parents traveling abroad with children / To parents returning to Japan with children"

MOFA leaflet
"For Parents Wanting to Bring Children Living Overseas Back to Japan or See Them"

In this way, the Hague Convention Division has been carrying out a variety of activities in order for more people to correctly understand the Hague Convention. It will continue to endeavor to carry out broader PR activities in order to prevent wrongful child removals by one parent.

Section 3 Diplomacy with the Support of the Public

Overview

(Proactive Communications to the Public)

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 government is crucial. Accordingly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is committed to agile and effective public relations, using various forms of media, lectures, and publications.

To provide information in an effective fashion, regular press conferences are conducted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Press Secretary, while extraordinary press conferences are held as necessary. MOFA releases statements by the Minister for Foreign Affairs or Press Secretary announcing the stance of the Government of Japan on specific issues, and issues press releases that provide information on MOFA's activities. In addition, the Minister, State Ministers, and Parliamentary Vice Ministers explain the Government's foreign policies directly to the public through appearances on TV and other means. MOFA also assists in facilitating reporting activities of the diplomatic events.

MOFA's official website swiftly provides information about diplomatic activities of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, the latest and basic information on Japan's foreign policy, as well as Japan's stance on historical issues and international affairs. In addition, MOFA transmits information through various social media platforms.

MOFA organizes speeches by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to promote public relations through dialogue with Japanese nationals and also holds various lectures by its officials at international exchange organizations, universities and high schools nationwide to promote understanding of Japan's foreign policy and the international situation, as well as to cultivate the next generation of Japanese leaders. Moreover, MOFA strives to improve two-way communication with the public through such public consultation initiatives as receiving comments and opinions on its official website.

(Declassification of Diplomatic Records)

To further enhance the public understanding of and confidence in

Japan's foreign policy, MOFA established the "Committee for the Promotion of the Declassification of the Diplomatic Records" and is actively engaging itself in the smooth transfer of records and in their declassification. In addition, MOFA has been engaged in efforts to facilitate the public use of the diplomatic documents in accordance with the Public Records and Archives Management Act.

(Strengthening Foreign Policy Implementation Structure)

While the security environment surrounding Japan has become increasingly severe, and diplomatic challenges are diversifying, it is vital to strengthen the foreign policy implementation structure. As such, MOFA is updating the organizational and personnel structures at both overseas diplomatic missions and within the ministry. With regard to the diplomatic missions, which are overseas bases for Japanese diplomacy, MOFA established an Embassy in Cyprus, a Consulate-General in Recife (Brazil), and a Mission of Japan to the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) in January 2018.

The number of staff members at MOFA remains relatively small compared to that of other major countries. In addition to the establishment of more diplomatic missions overseas, in order to better respond to the complex international challenges and make international contributions comparable to other major countries, it is necessary to further increase the number of staff members. At the same time, the training system for staff members should be strengthened to improve the practical knowledge, capability, and foreign language ability of each individual diplomat as well as the enhancement of public relations skills through them. MOFA continues its efforts to ensure the necessary foreign policy implementation structure while further streamlining its organization.

MOFA appropriated 692.6 billion yen in the budget for FY2017 to enhance the foreign policy implementation structure as well as more proactively promote diplomacy as a leading player in international initiatives and discussions.

(Role of Intellectuals in Diplomacy)

As is referred to in the National Security Strategy, expanding the intellectual base for Japan's diplomacy and security and promoting diplomacy that involves a broad range of people will lead to a strengthening of Japan's diplomatic power in the middle to long-term. Therefore, MOFA will deepen interaction with think tanks in the diplomacy and security fields, strengthen their development and reinforce support, and actively make use of the insights of private sector intellectuals.

1 Proactive Communications to the Public

(1) Providing Information through Domestic Media

MOFA has committed itself to 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. The press conferences of the Foreign Minister are open to various media including Internet media and the records and videos of the press conferences are posted on the website of MOFA. On the occasion of overseas or local visits by the Prime

A regular press conference by the Foreign Minister (MOFA, Tokyo)

Dissemination of Information through Press Conferences

Minister for Foreign Affairs	161 times
Press Secretary	40 times
Total	201 times

*From January 1 to December 31, 2017 Text posted MOFA website

Dissemination of Information through Documents

Statements by the Minister for Foreign Affairs	21 times
Statements by the Press Secretary	51 times
Press releases by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1,488 times
Total	1,560 times

*From January 1 to December 31, 2017 Counted by MOFA

Minister or the Foreign Minister, MOFA also provides information from the visited countries/places so that the people can easily follow and understand the processes and outcomes of the visits. In addition, MOFA carries out providing information and making cooperation for media coverage in various forms, which include distribution of information by documents such as MOFA press releases, transmission of information on foreign policy using email newsletters, and interviews of high-level officials of MOFA by newspapers of their respective hometowns.

When factual errors and insufficient information are reported by the media, MOFA submits an appeal for correction,

MOFA's Official website

MOFA's Official Facebook Page

MOFA for Kids

contributes its views, and posts its views on the website of MOFA upon announcement at a press conference. These are all efforts to gain an accurate understanding of Japan's approach and stance domestically and internationally.

(2) Providing Information through the Internet

MOFA's Japanese website, like its English website, swiftly provides information about diplomatic activities of the Prime

Minister and the Foreign Minister, as well as the latest news on Japan's foreign policy and international affairs. Moreover, MOFA's Japanese website posts a wide range of contents including "Easy Ways to Understand International Situations," which explains international situations in simple ways, and "MOFA for Kids" for the students of elementary and junior/senior-high schools.

MOFA provides information through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube.

(3) Dialogue with Japanese Nationals

MOFA promotes "Public Relations through Dialogue with Japanese Nationals" to provide the people of Japan with an opportunity to directly talk to the Foreign Minister and its officials.

As a part of such opportunities, MOFA holds "Talk to the Minister" to give explanations on Japan's foreign policies and the principles and other themes in which the people have much interest and give candid answers to the questions and opinions of the participants. In 2017, Foreign Minister Kishida visited Kyushu University (Fukuoka Prefecture) in March, Hokkaido University (Hokkaido Prefecture) in April, Kanazawa University (Ishikawa Prefecture) in June, and Kobe University (Hyogo Prefecture) in July as part of the "Local to Global" Project and held the symposium "Dialogue with Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida," which featured a keynote speech by Foreign Minister Kishida and a panel discussion.

MOFA is committed to using various occasions to promote understanding of foreign policies and international affairs. For instance, MOFA organizes lectures by its officials at international exchange organizations, universities and high schools throughout Japan, through "Lecture on the International Situation," "Diplomatic Talks," and "Talks for High School Programs." It also holds the "International Issue Presentation Contest" for university students, and debate sessions between university students and young officials of the ministry through "Dialogue with Students," as well as providing opportunities for young students to visit MOFA under the program "Visits by elementary, junior and senior-high school students to MOFA."

▶ Number of Lectures on Various Topics Offered by the Ministry and the Number of Visits to the Ministry by Elementary and Junior/Senior-High School Students

Lecture on the International Situations	16 times
Diplomatic Talk	57 times
Talk for High school	120 times
Visits by elementary and junior and senior-high school students to the Ministry	187 times

(*From January 1 to December 31, 2017)

MOFA also introduces Japan's ODA policies and specific measures to the public through various symposia, lectures, and "ODA Delivery Lectures" in which officials from MOFA are dispatched to schools, etc. (40 lectures in 2017).

Additionally, MOFA is sharing discussions taking place in various areas and at various levels concerning diplomacy and international affairs relevant to Japan widely with the public through the publication of the journal "Diplomacy."

▶ Number of Public Opinion Communications

By e-mail	104,561 times
By phone	7,273 times
By fax / letter	1,851 times

(*From January 1 to December 31, 2017)

Visit by Foreign Minister Kishida to Hyogo Prefecture under the "Local to Global" Project (July 23, Hyogo Prefecture)

Visits by elementary, junior and senior-high school students to MOFA: Students from Teikyokani Senior High School (Gifu Prefecture) (November 7, Tokyo, MOFA)

Lecture on the International Situation (September 15, Makuhari Public Hall, Chiba Prefecture)

Journal on foreign affairs entitled "Diplomacy"

Moreover, in order to promote further understanding on the organizational structure and foreign policies of MOFA, various pamphlets that explain them in an understandable manner were released. In addition to the above, MOFA surveys public opinion through various forms of media, including the website of MOFA, the website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet, and the electronic governmental Public Comment Procedure ("e-Gov"), as well as through telephone calls, fax messages and letters. Opinions and comments gathered from the public are shared throughout MOFA and used as a reference in policy making and planning.

(4) Promotion of the Declassification of Diplomatic Records and the Access to Information

MOFA has voluntarily declassified its diplomatic records at the Diplomatic Archives since 1976. The Rules on the Declassification of Diplomatic Records, which were established in May 2010, stipulates: (1) 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 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 which has been transferred to the Diplomatic Archives and made public since May 2010 reached approximately 29,000 by the end of 2017.

Furthermore, MOFA discloses information pursuant to the Act on Access to Information Held by Administrative

Organs while giving considerations to the national security, the relationship of mutual trust with other countries, the impacts on diplomatic negotiations, and the protection of personal information. In 2017, MOFA received 512 requests for disclosure, and the documents totaling 80,953 pages were disclosed.

2 Strengthening Foreign Policy Implementation Structure

While the security environment surrounding Japan has become increasingly severe and diplomatic challenges are diversifying, including nuclear tests and missile launches by North Korea, it is vital to further expand Japan's foreign policy implementation structure. With this in mind, MOFA is enhancing the organizational and personnel structures of overseas diplomatic missions such as Embassies and Consulates General, and the Ministry.

Diplomatic missions overseas, such as Embassies and Consulates General, not only represent Japan but also play a key role in areas such as information gathering on the frontline of diplomacy, strategic communication to the public overseas, promotion of diplomatic relations, and international contribution. At the same time, diplomatic missions overseas are also responsible for operations directly related to the improvement of benefits for 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 2018, Japan established an Embassy in Cyprus, a Consulate-General in Recife (Brazil), and a Mission of Japan to the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia). As of FY2017, the number of the diplomatic missions overseas is 223 (150 Embassies, 64 Consulates General and nine Permanent Missions).

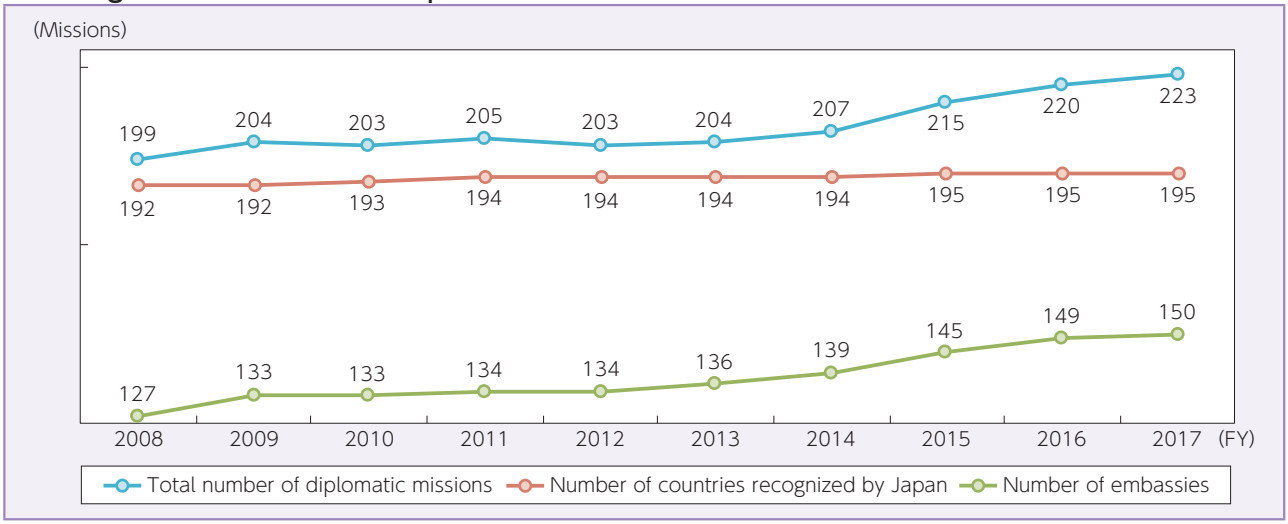
Amidst the destabilization of the Middle East in recent years, Cyprus, an EU member state that is close to the Middle East, is gaining geopolitical significance. In addition to further developing a friendly relationship between Japan and Cyprus, it is important to enhance timely information gathering and to strengthen coordination with local authorities as Cyprus may serve as a destination for evacuation in the case of an emergency in the Middle East or North Africa.

Recife in Northeast Brazil has been gaining importance in the Brazilian economy. Moreover, Recife is home to approximately 180,000 Japanese immigrants and descendants ("Nikkei"), and is an important region for strengthening ties with the Nikkei community, to which Japan attaches importance.

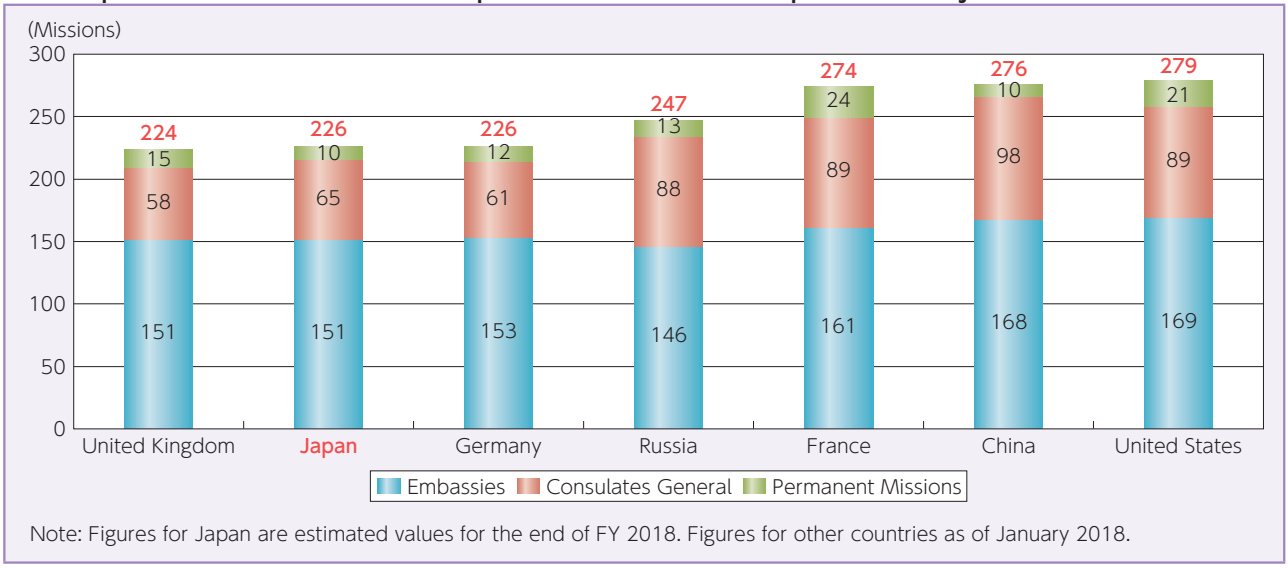
The Mission of Japan to the African Union (AU) in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) serves an important role in strengthening relations with the African Union Commission (AUC), the executive organ of the AU, and also with the respective African countries to further promote support for the development of Africa through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) and efforts regarding important policy issues such as UN Security Council reform.

In order to strengthen the foreign policy implementation structure in a sustainable manner, the following diplomatic missions will be established in FY2018: an Embassy in Belarus, a Consulate-General in Davao in the Philippines, a Delegation of

Changes in the Number of Diplomatic Missions



Comparison of the Number of Diplomatic Missions of Japan with Major Countries



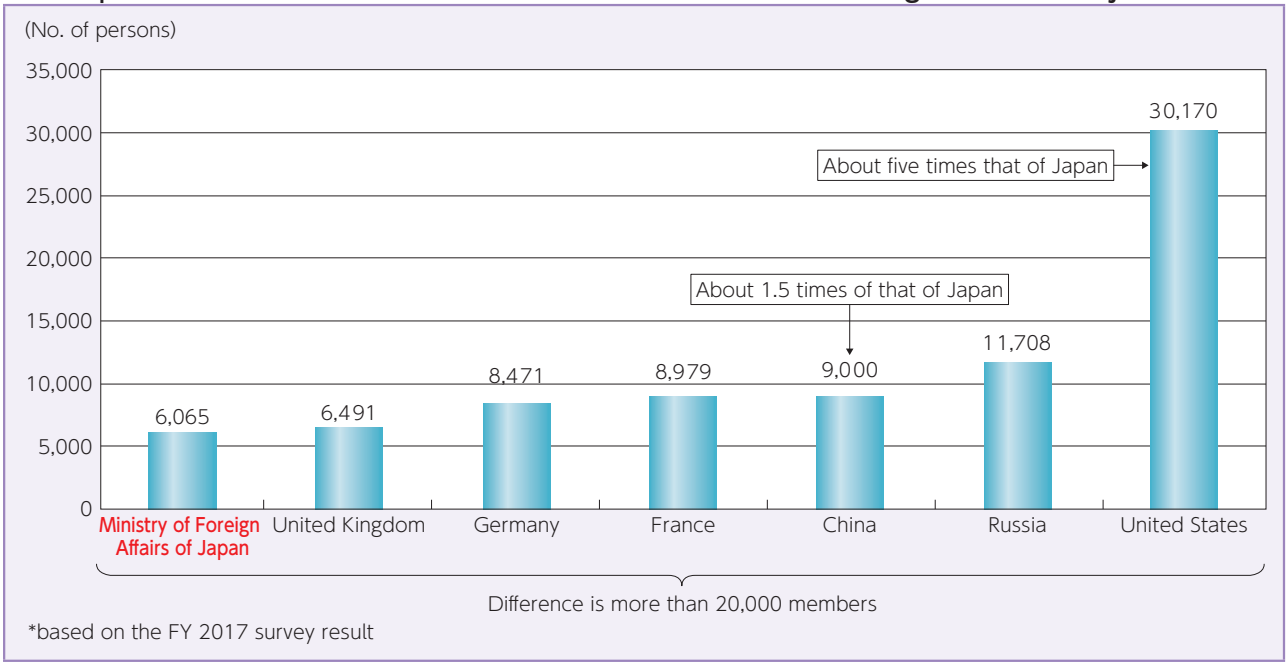
Note: Figures for Japan are estimated values for the end of FY 2018. Figures for other countries as of January 2018.

Japan to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) in Montreal, Canada, and a Mission of Japan to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in Belgium.

Belarus occupies a position of geopolitical and economic importance as a country bordering the EU and Russia, which provided its capital of Minsk as a location for peace negotiation for resolving the Ukraine issues. Moreover, given that it was the country most damaged by the Chernobyl Nuclear Accident, Japan has concluded the agreement on cooperation to advance aftermath response to accidents at nuclear power stations with Belarus following the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. The two countries work together as valuable partners in sharing knowledge in the field.

Davao (the Philippines) is the home town of President Duterte (former mayor of Davao), which is gaining political significance as the president goes back and forth between Davao and Manila while serving his term in office. As there is a growing trend of Japanese companies and Japanese nationals residing in the city, the need to support Japanese businesses and

Comparison of the Number of Staff Members at Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Major Countries



*based on the FY 2017 survey result

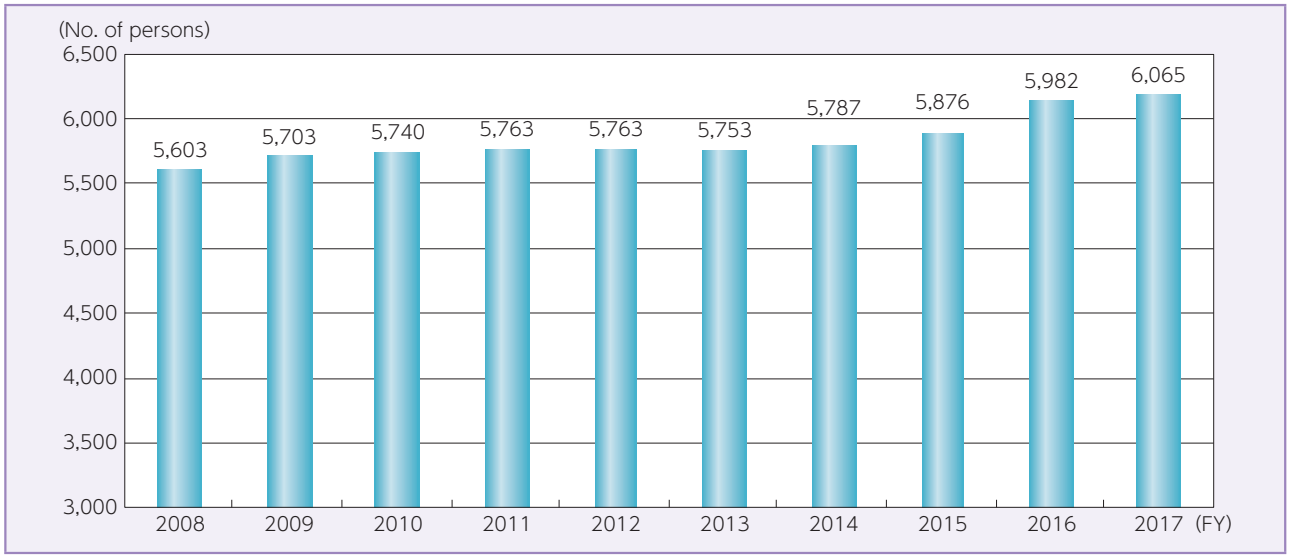
protect Japanese nationals is increasing. Meanwhile, due to the unstable factor of terrorist attacks carried out by Islamic extremists, initiatives aimed at ensuring the safety of Japanese nationals is crucial.

The International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) is a specialized organization under the United Nations involved in ensuring the formulation and implementation of rules concerning international civil aviation, and is closely associated with aviation diplomacy and security assurance. As events that greatly impact the security assurance of Japan as well as civil aviation have occurred, including repeated ballistic missile launches by North Korea and the designation of an air defense identification zone by the Chinese Government, Japan collects information via ICAO, while working collaboratively with other Member States such as the U.S. and Republic of Korea in urging ICAO to take appropriate measures.

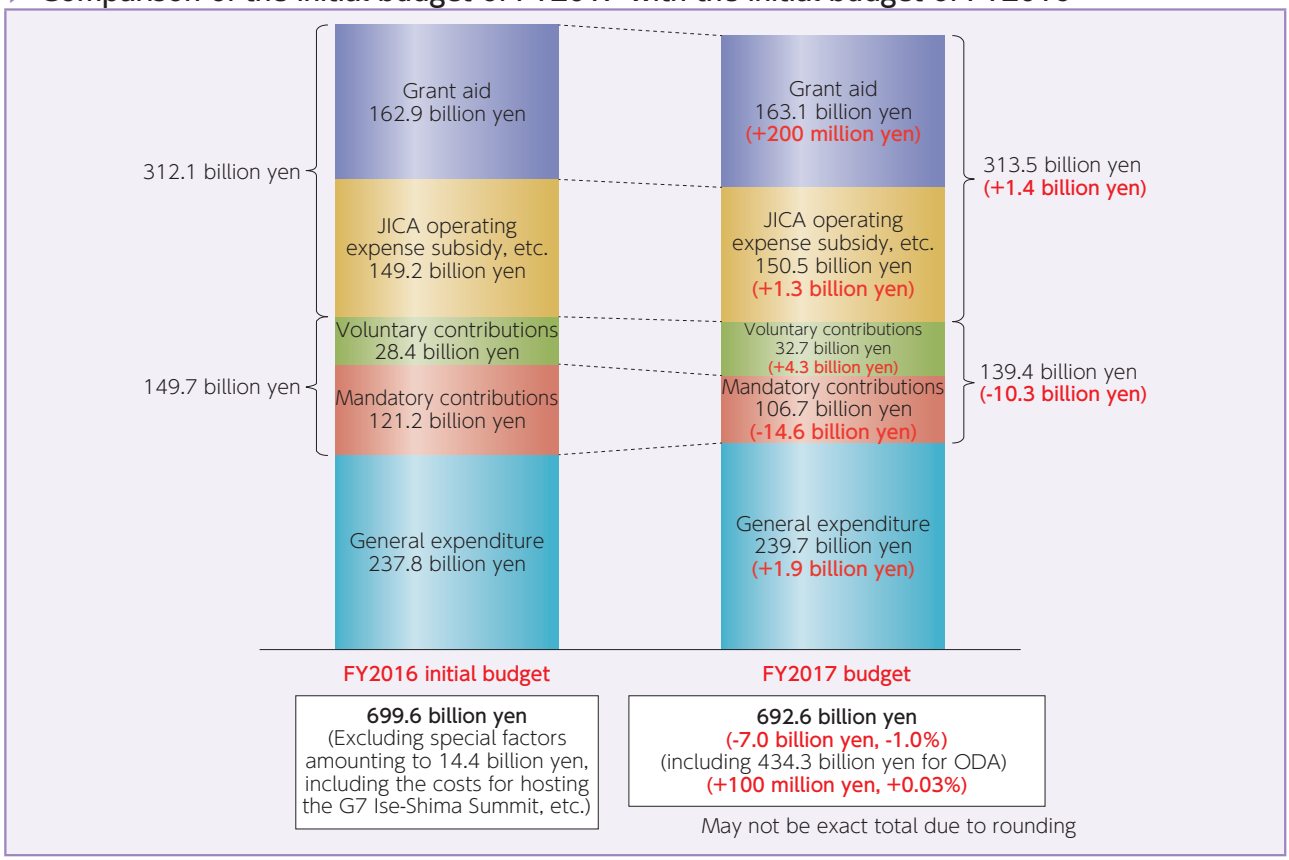
The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) is engaged in addressing urgent issues concerning the peace and stability of the international community as well as conducting activities to ensure stability outside of the region. NATO and Japan share common security challenges such as cyber issues and terrorism. Japan has been conducting practical cooperation with NATO based on the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP) signed by Prime Minister Abe upon his visit to NATO's headquarters in May 2014. The establishment of a Mission to NATO will contribute to the cooperative relationship, which is important in strengthening the alliance network among Japan, the U.S. and European countries, as well as maintaining order in the international community as a whole and contributing to peace and stability.

In addition to the establishment of more diplomatic missions overseas, it is important to secure and increase the number of staff members to support diplomacy at MOFA and diplomatic missions overseas. Under the Government's policy to reduce the overall personnel expenses across all ministries in light of the current severe budget situation,

Number of Staff Members at MOFA



Comparison of the initial budget of FY2017 with the initial budget of FY2016



the number of staff members at MOFA amounted to 6,065 in order to bolster safety measures for Japanese nationals overseas, strengthen the functions for gathering terror-related information, further expand the "Proactive Contribution to Peace" initiative based on the principle of international cooperation, promote economic diplomacy, support the overseas activities of Japanese nationals, as well as promote strategic communications. This number is, however, still insufficient when compared to that of other major countries. MOFA continues its efforts to build a

structure suitable for Japan's national power and diplomatic policy. In the meantime, based on the understanding that enhancing the foreign policy implementation structure remains necessary in FY2018, MOFA plans to increase its staff members by 90 persons in order to address important issues such as bolstering safety measures and strengthening capabilities of information gathering and analysis, vitalizing economy including infrastructure exports, further bolstering strategic communications, and responding to global challenges.

MOFA appropriated a budget of 692.6 billion yen in the budget for FY2017 (a decrease of 1.0% from FY2016 (excluding expenses on special factors)) to enhance the foreign policy implementation structure for the above-mentioned activities and to take on an even more proactive role in diplomacy as a leader in international initiatives and discussions. The total amount of MOFA's FY2017 supplementary budget was 155.4 billion yen for matters of an urgent nature such as responses to issues related to North Korea, assistance on global issues including epidemic diseases, humanitarian, counter-terrorism or social stabilization assistance including refugee issues. MOFA's FY2018 initial government budget proposal appropriated 696.7 billion yen in order to strengthen the foreign policy implementation structure to undertake such issues and further expand official development assistance (ODA) that contributes to the national interest by identifying the following priorities: (1) dealing with an increasingly opaque international situation and implementing strategic foreign policy (2) protecting Japanese nationals abroad and Japan from threats such as terrorism, (3) strongly supporting Japanese economy through diplomacy, and (4) maintaining and strengthening strategic communications.

In order to promote Japan's national interests, it is essential to strengthen the foreign policy implementation structure. Japan will continue to proceed strategically with enhancements, while making efforts to streamline operations, to further expand the foreign policy implementation structure.

3 Role of Intellectuals in Diplomacy

In building a future international order in the drastically changing world, it is becoming more apparent that experts from the private sector can take the initiative in freely conducting policy discussions on a global scale without being bound by the official views of governments, which in return have an impact on the world's opinion, as well as on the policy decisions of each government.

Some of the examples include the World Economic Forum (Davos), which has a large influence on the international economic policies of each country, and the Shangri-La Dialogue, which provides prominent experts and ministers of the world with an opportunity to discuss Asian security issues. There is an ever increasing importance to develop human resources of think tanks (study and research institutions) to take part in such discussion arenas and to utilize experts of universities and other organizations in major countries.

Expanding the intellectual base for Japan's diplomacy and security and promoting diplomacy that involves a broad range of people is expected to yield improved diplomatic capabilities over the medium- to long-term. Under this premise, MOFA launched a subsidy scheme for study/

research on foreign policy and security which aims to enhance think tanks' abilities to collect/analyze/release information and to make policy recommendations. In addition, since FY2017, MOFA has also launched a subsidized support project for territory, sovereignty, and history studies.