

Section 4

Europe

1 Overview

<The Growing Fluidity of the Situation in Europe>

For Europe in 2018, the economy continued to recover at a moderate pace. Although the number of asylum applicants had decreased sharply in comparison with 2015, there has been a rise of Eurosceptic political parties in the respective countries with a particularly critical stance toward the existing migration and refugee policies. This trend, which has been labelled as “populism,” is on the rise, and there are widespread concerns over it, while the unity of Europe appears to be wavering. Hence, with the struggles over Brexit negotiations, the year was marked by an uncertain outlook and a fluid situation.

With regard to Brexit, although the 27 European Union (EU) member countries except for the UK, endorsed the Brexit withdrawal agreement and approved the political declaration on future EU-UK relations at the special meeting of the European Council held in November, deliberations by the UK Parliament were deferred to 2019. As for the issues surrounding migrants and refugees, conclusions that included a certain degree of response measures were adopted by the European Council in June, but the contents of the conclusion retained significant vestiges of the major differences in standpoint among

the member countries. Over the past few years, moves by some member countries to oppose the European Commission with regard to their domestic systems such as judicial reform, were observed within the EU.

With regard to the domestic politics of the respective countries, in the UK, there was a lack of agreement between the parliament and the government, and within the government itself on the direction of Brexit negotiations. In France, there was an opposition movement against President Macron and drop in his approval ratings, as demonstrated by the “yellow vests movement” In Germany, Chancellor Merkel is not able to run in the next elections for the party leader due to the results of local elections. In Italy, political disorder erupted as a result of the change of government.

Furthermore, European countries continue to face with hybrid threats, which involve the combination of multiple means of attack, such as terrorism and cyberattacks. Its relationship with Russia, including the Ukrainian crisis that has serious implications for Europe’s security environment, remains a critical issue for Europe. In addition, China is also using the “16+1” framework (a cooperative framework of China and countries in Central and Eastern Europe) under the “Belt and Road Initiatives” to exert influence over Central and Eastern European countries.

<Importance of a Europe that Shares Fundamental Values and Principles>

Despite such unrest, the fact that Europe is an important partner for Japan remains unchanged. The EU and European countries share with Japan fundamental values and principles such as freedom, democracy, rule of law, and human rights, and continue to be proponents of free trade and multilateralism. In economic terms, the 28 EU member countries account for about 21% of the world's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

In addition, European countries pursue common policies across a broad spectrum of fields that range from diplomacy to security, economy, and state finance, through various frameworks including the EU. They also play a major role in formulating standards in the international community, with some countries among them serving as permanent members of the United Nations Security Council, G7 member states, and other member states of major international frameworks. Also, they often adopt a similar standpoint as Japan on a wide range of international issues.

Moreover, Europe also continues to exert 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.

<Multi-layered and multifaceted European diplomacy>

A Europe that is strongly united benefits the entire international community including Japan, which shares the fundamental values and principles. While continuously supporting such European unity, Japan is, at the same time, also strengthening its cooperative relations more attentively with the EU and the increasingly diverse European countries such as the UK, France, and Germany, from a multi-layered and multifaceted perspective.

With the EU, Japan signed the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) and the Japan-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA)

in July (entered into force/commenced partial application respectively on February 1, 2019). Hence, 2018 was a historical year that saw the significant strengthening of Japan-EU relations. The Japan-EU EPA clearly demonstrates to the world the unwavering political will of Japan and the EU to lead the global economy against the spreading movement of protectionism in the world. The SPA holds extremely great significance, serving as an agreement that sets out provisions toward deepening cooperation across a wide range of areas between Japan and the EU, which share common values.

Through dialogues with the heads of state, foreign ministers and other ministers of the UK, France, and Germany, Japan has also deepened cooperation toward maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order. Japan held summit meetings with the UK at the G7 Summit and G20 Summit, and held the Japan-UK Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue in September. In addition, Prime Minister Abe visited the UK in January 2019. With France, the Japan-France Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") was held in January 2018, while Prime Minister Abe visited France in October. Furthermore, a maritime seminar was held in Tokyo in December with the aim of engaging in discussions on a wide range of maritime policies with France, which is also a Pacific Country. After the seminar, a comprehensive maritime dialogue was established between Japan and France. In these ways, Japan made significant progress in bilateral cooperation with the UK and France, including cooperation to achieve a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific." With Germany, in addition to the mutual visits of the Foreign Ministers of Japan and Germany and the issuance of a joint declaration in 2018, Chancellor Merkel visited Japan in February 2019 and affirmed Germany's commitment to cooperating with Japan in the Indo-Pacific region.

Japan also engaged in careful diplomacy and advanced its cooperative relations with other European countries and regional frameworks

in the region, while taking into consideration the situation in each country and region. In January, Prime Minister Abe became the first Prime Minister of Japan to visit the three Baltic States (Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania), as well as Bulgaria, Serbia and Romania. He held the Japan-Baltic Cooperation Dialogue to promote overall cooperation with the three Baltic States, and launched the “Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative” to support the economic and social reform of the Western Balkans, which has been seeking accession to the EU. Prime Minister Abe visited Spain in October and elevated Japan-Spain relations to a “strategic partnership.” Furthermore, during the visit by Foreign Minister Kono to Italy in November, he became the first foreign minister of Japan to attend the Mediterranean Dialogues organized jointly by Italy’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and think tanks. The Second “Visegrad Group (the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia) plus Japan” Summit Meeting was held in October after a five-year hiatus, while the sixth GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova) + Japan Foreign Ministers’ Meeting was held in September.

With the recognition that the security of Asia is indivisible from that of Europe, Japan has also advanced cooperation with regional security organizations including the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and further strengthened collaborative relations



Prime Minister Abe attending the 12th ASEM Summit Meeting (October 18 to 19, Brussels, Belgium. Photo: EU)

between Asia and Europe through the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

In addition to the abovementioned efforts, Japan is actively involved in public diplomacy activities including dispatching experts and promoting “MIRAI,” a program for personal and intellectual exchange that allows students from Europe and other regions to visit and learn about Japan. Through these efforts, Japan has built myriad connections with European countries and organizations 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.

2 Regional Situations in Europe

(1) European Union (EU)

The EU is a political and economic union 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)

In 2018, the EU has been confronting various challenges continuously since the previous year, including Brexit negotiations, responses to the migration and refugee issue, and the rise of populist forces. Partly because the large amount of time was devoted to addressing these issues, little progress was made in discussions about the future vision of European integration and reform of the EU, which had been gradually growing in momentum since several years ago.

With regard to Brexit negotiations, which commenced in June 2017, challenge was to reach an agreement on framework of their future relationship while avoiding the building of a

physical barrier between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, which holds the only land border between the UK and the EU. However, negotiations on matters including measures to maintain an open border did not go smoothly, and there was no prospect of reaching a conclusion even at the meeting of the European Council (EU Summit Meeting) held in October, which had been set as the target deadline for concluding negotiations. An agreement was finally reached on the draft withdrawal agreement on November 14 between the negotiators. Thereafter, it was approved by the British Cabinet, and then by the EU27 excluding the UK on November 25 at the special meeting of the European Council. On the other hand, the House of Commons of the UK rejected a motion to approve the withdrawal agreement in January 2019, and the situation where a concrete breakthrough solution has not found was continued before the scheduled date for the UK to leave the EU at the end of March.

With regard to the migrant and refugee issue, the number of arrivals into the EU fell to an even lower figure than the previous year. However, discussions suggesting that the EU's refugee protection system is not necessarily functioning effectively came under the spotlight once again, with examples such as Italy's refusal to allow boats carrying refugees to enter its ports, and confrontation in Germany over the movement of refugees who first enter other countries in the EU to Germany.

In the area of security, moves to strengthen cooperation within the EU continued to be observed in 2018 from the previous year. In the Permanent Structured Cooperation (PESCO), a defense cooperation framework under the Treaty on European Union established in December last year, decisions were made to implement a total of 34 projects in 2018.

The EU also demonstrated growing interest in Asia and took an approach toward strengthening cooperation in a wide range of areas, with the adoption of a document titled "Deepening EU

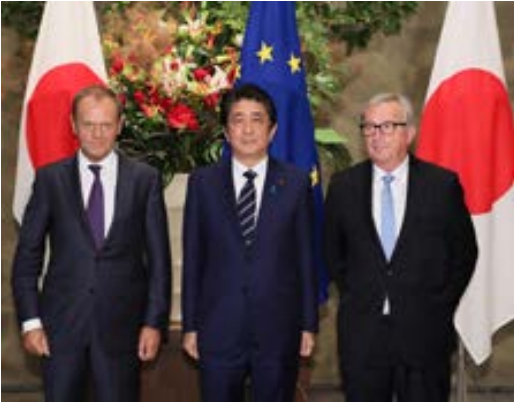
security cooperation with Asian partners" by the Foreign Affairs Council held in May, and the issuance of "EU Strategy on Connecting Europe and Asia" in September.

On the economic front, economic growth rate of the Eurozone for 2018 fell below that of 2017, when it achieved the highest growth rate on record in the past decade. Nevertheless, it continued to stay strong even after the first half of the year.

<Japan-EU Relations>

In 2018, Japan and the EU achieved historical progress to strengthen mutual relations, as marked by the signing of the Japan-EU EPA and Japan-EU SPA at the 25th Japan-EU Summit held in July. The Japan-EU EPA and SPA were adopted by the Diet of Japan in December, and obtained the consent of the European Parliament during the same month. As a result of the mutual notification between Japan and the EU on the completion of domestic procedures within the year, the Japan-EU EPA entered into force while the application of some provisions of the SPA were commenced on February 1, 2019.

In addition to the Japan-EU Summit in July, Prime Minister Abe also took the opportunity of the 12th ASEM Summit in Brussels, Belgium in October and the G20 Buenos Aires Summit in November to hold Japan-EU leaders' meetings, where he exchanged opinions with EU leaders on Japan-EU relations, Brexit, and global economy and trade, among other topics. He consistently requested that transparency and predictability in the Brexit process, as well as legal stability be ensured through the establishment of a transition period, so as to minimize adverse impacts of Brexit on Japanese corporations and the global economy. Close dialogues were also held between the Foreign Ministers. Dialogues between Japanese and EU foreign ministers were also held during the Brussels conference on "Supporting the future of Syria and the region" in April and the ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meeting in August, and a total of four telephone conferences were held.



25th Japan-EU Summit (July 17, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

On the economic front, dynamic efforts were put into coordinating the entering into force of the Japan-EU EPA in 2018. In April, Foreign Minister Kono held a dialogue with European Commissioner for Trade Malmström, during his trip to Brussels, where he affirmed mutual cooperation toward the early entering into force of the same agreement. After the agreement was signed at the Japan-EU Summit in July, a delegation of the European Parliament's Committee on International Trade visited Japan in September. They paid a courtesy call on Foreign Minister Kono and Special Advisor to the Prime Minister Miyakoshi, and affirmed their commitment to cooperating toward the early adoption and entering into force of this agreement. European Commission Vice-President Kattinen visited Japan in October, and the first Japan-EU High Level Industrial, Trade and Economic Dialogue was held (Co-chairs from the Japan side: Foreign Minister Kono and Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry Seko. Chair from the EU side: Vice-President of the European Commission Kattinen). In addition to exchanging views on challenges faced by Japan and the EU in areas such as international trade, energy, environment, investment and digital economy, both sides affirmed their commitment toward the early entering into force of the Japan-EU EPA.

(2) United Kingdom

There has been continued disagreement within the UK concerning the direction of Brexit, and the political situation remains unstable, with a number of ministers resigning in protest against the government's Brexit policy. In July after the Cabinet approved the negotiations policy on future relations with the EU, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Johnson and Brexit Secretary Davis resigned. Furthermore, in November after the UK and EU had concluded their negotiations and the Cabinet had approved the draft withdrawal agreement and the political statement on future relations, further four members including Brexit Secretary Raab and other Ministers of State resigned. In January 2019, the UK Parliament rejected the motion to approve the withdrawal agreement with a historic majority. On the other hand, the vote of no confidence submitted to the government was opposed by all the ruling parties and rejected. Thereafter, some newly submitted motions including about a renewed discussion with the EU on the Irish border was carried at the Parliament. However, as of January 2019, the outlook on the situation remains unclear.

The situation on Brexit negotiations are impacting the economy in the form of uncertainty risks. The UK Office for National Statistics has forecasted economic growth rate for 2018 to be 1.4%, the lowest in the past six years. Unemployment rate in October, at 4.1%, reached the lowest level since the mid-1970s, but growth in real wages stays stagnant. Inflation rate for 2017 was 2.7%, the highest since 2013, while policy interest rate was raised to 0.75% in August 2018.

Both Japan and the UK have strengthened the bilateral relations through policy cooperation and mutual exchange at various levels, including summit and ministerial-levels. Prime Minister Abe and Prime Minister May held summit meetings during the G7 Charlevoix Summit, Canada, in June 2018 and G20 Buenos Aires Summit, Argentina,



Japan - UK Summit Meeting (January 10, 2019, London, UK; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

from November to December. Furthermore, in January 2019, Prime Minister Abe visited the UK and held a summit meeting with Prime Minister May. The two leaders affirmed that Japan-UK relations had made significant progress after Prime Minister May's visit to Japan in August 2017, and looking ahead to the challenges and opportunities for the next ten years, issued the "UK-Japan Joint Statement." They also concurred that the two countries should play a leadership role at the G20 and other forums, as well as strengthen cooperation toward achieving a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" and maintaining and expanding an open free trade system based on rules. Prime Minister Abe also requested to Prime Minister May that the UK should avoid a "no-deal Brexit."

Foreign Minister Kono and Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Johnson held a Foreign Ministers' Meeting during the G20 Buenos Aires Foreign Ministers' Meeting, Argentina, in May. In September, Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Hunt visited Japan and the two ministers held the Seventh Japan-UK Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue.

In the area of security and defense, the British Royal Navy frigate "HMS Sutherland" and the amphibious assault ship "HMS Albion" called at port in Japan in April and August respectively, and carried out joint exercises in southern waters of Kanto with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (MSDF). The British Royal Navy frigate "HMS Argyll" also participated in a joint

exercise with the MSDF in the Indian Ocean in September. In May, the British Royal Navy frigate "HMS Sutherland" engaged in monitoring and surveillance activities on illegal maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers by North Korean vessels, and Japan and the UK cooperated through the mutual exchange of information and in other ways. In October, a joint exercise between the ground forces of Japan and the UK was held in Japan, marking the first such bilateral ground exercise apart from Japan-U.S. exercises, and a Japan-UK-U.S. joint exercise in southern waters of Honshu was held in December. These exercises demonstrated progress in Japan-UK security and defense cooperation in their relationship as the closest security partners in Asia and Europe. In the area of cooperation on defense equipment and technology, the two countries have continued to make progress in cooperation, such as the launch in February of a cooperative research project on the certification process for jet engines.

With regard to culture, Japan House London opened in June, and the Grand Opening event was held in September. This was attended by Prince William, the Duke of Cambridge, and Deputy Prime Minister Aso from Japan (See Chapter 3, Section 4(1)). Preparations are also moving ahead for the intensive implementation of a wide range of Japan-related events in 2019 and 2020, designated "Japan-UK Season of Culture" to serve as a bridge linking two major sporting events—the Rugby World Cup 2019 and the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, as set out in the Japan-UK Joint Declaration on Prosperity Cooperation issued during the visit by Prime Minister May to Japan in August 2017.

(3) France

In May 2017, President Macron, who has been rallying for the unity of the traditionally divided right-wing and left-wing groups, assumed office as the President of France. Backed by a stable majority in the National Assembly, he promoted

reforms on domestic issues. Although he produced a certain degree of results, including improving unemployment rate and fulfilling the requirement of keeping the budget deficit below 3% of the GDP for the Eurozone countries, his approval ratings fell for reasons such as opposition to his reforms as represented by the “yellow vests movement,” and successive resignations by key ministers. The Macron administration’s reform faces a crucial moment.

The specific domestic reforms that he had addressed include the enactment of the SNCF (Société Nationale des Chemins de Fer, the national rail of France) reform bill in June, which covers the incorporation of SNCF and reviews of the privileges granted to employees of the rail company, reform of institutions, which primarily involve reform of the parliamentary system, pension system reform, medical system reform, and action plans for corporate growth and innovation. With respect to external affairs, President Macron actively made visits abroad, including visits to China and the U.S. in January and April respectively as a state guest. In November, a ceremony commemorating the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I was held in Paris, and was attended by the heads of state of more than 70 countries (Deputy Prime Minister Aso attended as the Japanese representative). President Macron continued to raise the banner for multilateralism, and exerted his leadership in promoting EU integration as well as addressing climate change and commerce and trade issues.

As for Japan-France bilateral relations, 2018 marked the 160th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Based on a decision between the both governments, a large-scale project featuring Japanese culture, titled “Japonismes 2018,” was held from July 2018 to February 2019 (See Column “160th Anniversary of the Establishment of Japan-France Diplomatic Relations - Spreading Japanese Culture Through ‘Japonismes 2018’”, and Special Feature “Promoting Cultural Diplomacy Through



Joint press declaration by the leaders of Japan and France (October 17, Paris, France; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

‘Japonismes 2018’”). With regard to exchanges among key officials, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Le Drian visited Japan in January as a guest of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, when he participated in the fourth Japan-France Foreign and Defense Ministers’ Meeting (“2 + 2”) and the seventh Japan-France Foreign Ministers’ Strategic Dialogue with Minister Kono and other Ministers. During these talks, he expressed that France welcomes an agreement in principle of the Japan-France Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA). During the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum (Russia) held in May, Prime Minister Abe held a summit meeting with President Macron, while Foreign Minister Kono visited France on behalf of Prime Minister Abe in July to attend the opening ceremony of “Japonismes 2018” and the Bastille Day parade. On these occasions, foreign minister meetings were held, and the two countries advanced cooperation on security issues, such as with the signing of the Japan-France ACSA with Minister of the Armed Forces Parly. In October, Prime Minister Abe visited France, and together with President Macron, affirmed close cooperation between Japan and France as the respective chairs of G20 (Japan) and G7 (France) in 2019. As a part of the concrete cooperation initiatives put in place by Japan and France to achieve a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific,” a Japan-France maritime seminar was held in Tokyo in December, which encompassed a wide range of maritime policies.

160th Anniversary of the Establishment of Japan-France Diplomatic Relations – Spreading Japanese Culture through “Japonismes 2018”

Tsutomu Sugiura, President of Maison de la culture du Japon à Paris
(The Japan Cultural Institute in Paris)



KOHEI NAWA | Throne
©Nobutada OMOTE
SANDWICH

“Japonismes 2018: les âmes en resonance (the Souls in Resonance)” is an exposition of Japanese culture taking place in Paris and other parts of France that could be described as the largest event of its kind in this century. It is being held from July 2018 to February 2019 to commemorate the 160th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-France diplomatic relations. In addition to exhibitions featuring art from ancient to contemporary times, other programs are also being held almost every day. These include performances of “Gagaku” (Japanese court music), “Bunraku” (Japanese puppet theater shows), “Noh” and “Kyogen”, “Kabuki”, contemporary theater, different styles of dances, and “Taiko” (Japanese drumming); programs introducing everyday Japanese culture such as Japanese film features, food culture, and “Zen” culture; and programs introducing the attractions of regional culture such as local festivals.

The event makes us feel as if Paris has been completely transformed into the capital of Japan. The number of participants and visitors for the various programs has exceeded 2.5 million people as of December 31, 2018*. This number includes an estimated 400,000 people who turned up to watch the live illumination of the Eiffel Tower for which His Imperial Highness the Crown Prince pressed the button to unveil the show.

At the same time, the aforementioned number, 2.5 million people, does not include those who saw the massive golden throne sculpture titled “Throne,” produced by Kohei Nawa and installed inside the Pyramid of the Louvre Museum. As visitors in the square and passengers outside are able to view this work day and night, the number of people who have seen it is almost immeasurable.

Based on my observations, the impact of “Japonismes 2018” can be summarized by the following two points.

Firstly, the general public, ranging from children to grown-ups, gained greater familiarity with Japanese culture. This was most clearly demonstrated in the “Au-delà des limites” exhibition presented by teamLab, and the programs introducing regional attractions such as festivals and dances. The teamLab exhibition is an interactive art featuring projections of digital images such as an 11-meter-high waterfall and water flowing around on the floor, flocks



Exhibition View, teamLab: Au-delà des limites,
2018, Grande Halle de La Villette, Paris
©teamLab

of crows flying on the four walls, and flowers of the four seasons. These projections respond when coming into contact with visitors, with the water splitting around their feet or the grass withering, for example. The exhibition drew crowds of visitors accompanied by children from as early as the day of the sneak preview. For this reason, the preview had 2,000 visitors for the 1,000 guests originally invited. As for regional attractions, the Tachineputa Festival of Aomori Prefecture, the On Matsuri Festival of Nara Prefecture, the Shingen-ko Matsuri Festival of Yamanashi Prefecture, as well as the Awa-odori dance of Tokushima Prefecture and the Sansa-odori dance of Iwate Prefecture, were held at the spacious Jardin d’Acclimatation located in Bois de Boulogne. These festivals drew 60,000 people over three days, filling the park with immense crowds. A lot of French visitors were putting their children on their shoulders to

see the festivities here and there.

Secondly, “Japonismes 2018” became the talk of the town even among intellectuals. At the November convention of the Institut de France, whose membership comprises the most prominent intellectuals, Mr. Jean-Robert Pitte, Permanent Secretary of the French Académie des Sciences Morales et Politiques, delivered a 30-minute special lecture on the history of Japan, and touched on “Japonismes 2018” at the beginning of his lecture. Even members of the institute who were not usually familiar with Japan remarked that the lecture gave them a good understanding of Japan. It also seemed to have stirred their interest in the programs of “Japonismes 2018.”



Vitality of Local Cultures and Matsuri

Although these are just a few of the examples, there is no doubt that Japanese culture has spread widely among the citizens of France at an unprecedented scale. As Mr. Pitte said in the closing of his lecture, “the Japanese people know France better than the French people know Japan. The time has come to restore the balance (through “Japonismes 2018”), and we, académie, can and should contribute to the restoration of that balance”.

* By the point of the closing ceremony in February 2019, the number of visitors had exceeded 3 million.

(4) Germany

In Germany, confrontation within the federal grand coalition (Christian Democratic Union (CDU), Christian Social Union (CSU), and Social Democratic Party (SPD)) surfaced after summer over issues such as response to the migrant issue and personnel matters related to the head of the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution. With the support rate for the ruling coalition party falling under such circumstances, state elections were held for Bavaria (October 14) and Hesse (October 28). In the Bavarian state elections, the independent ruling party CSU

saw a significant decline in the percentage of votes it gained (from 47.4% in the last elections to 37.2%), while Alternative for Germany (AfD), which advocates an anti-refugee policy, received double-digit votes (10.2%). In the Hesse state elections, the CDU retained its position as the leading party, but along with the SPD, saw the percentage of its votes fall by more than 10% from the last elections. The percentage of votes received by AfD reached a double-digit figure (13.1%), gaining it entry into the parliament of the state of Hesse. As a result, the party was able to advance into all parliaments, including the federal parliament (Bundestag).

On the day after the Hesse state elections (October 29), Chancellor Merkel (leader of the CDU) announced that she will not be standing for the next elections of party leader, a position that she had been holding since 2000, in response to the results of these state elections. (However, she announced at the same time that she will stay on as Chancellor for this parliamentary term lasting till 2021.) In light of this, three CDU members announced their candidacy for the elections of the CDU party leader—CDU Secretary-



Japan-Germany Summit Meeting (February 4, 2019, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Column DAIKU2018: Japan-Germany Exchange through Beethoven's Ninth Symphony

Did you know that 2018 marked the 100th anniversary of the first full performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, which has become a tradition of the year-end season in Japan?

During the First World War, some German soldiers taken captive by Japanese troops in Qingdao of China, a concession of Germany, were held at the Bando Prisoner-of-war Camp in today's Naruto City, Tokushima Prefecture. The Head of the Camp, Toyohisa Matsue, treated German soldiers humanely at the camp and let them interact with local residents through cultural, art, and sports activities. The knowledge and techniques for vegetable farming, livestock raising, dairy products and bread baking possessed by the German soldiers spread to the area via their exchanges with the local residents. Local residents called the German soldiers "Doitsu-san" (with "Doitsu" meaning "Germany" in Japanese) with a sense of familiarity. The movie "Ode an die Freude" starring Ken Matsudaira illustrates such exchanges. One hundred years ago, the orchestra formed by German soldiers at this camp performed the Ninth Symphony in full score for the first time in Japan.

The Governments of Japan and Germany named the year 2018 "DAIKU2018" to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the first performance of the Ninth Symphony (known as "daiku" in Japanese) in Japan. They approved commemorative projects related to the Ninth Symphony in the two countries and have promoted exchanges and mutual understanding between Japan and Germany through the Ninth Symphony.

In June 2018, as part of the commemorative events, the Japan Ground Self Defense Force's (JGSDF) Central Band visited Germany and held a concert to perform the Ninth Symphony at the Japanese Ambassador's residence in Germany, inviting descendants of the former German soldiers and their families. One of the family members in attendance offered to donate a sketch collection (lithographic printing) made by a German soldier. The research on the sketch collection revealed that these sketches were a precious historical resource, not even possessed by the German House in Naruto City that has many historical documents related to the Bando POW Camp. With the family's consent, these sketches were donated to the Naruto German House. These sketches made at the Bando POW Camp found their way back "home" to Naruto, Tokushima after 100 years, thanks to the Ninth Symphony.

The sketch collection depicts a race walk event watched by local residents and a lively image of German soldiers playing billiards, shedding light on their exchanges with local residents and life at the POW camp. Japan hopes that the "return home" of these sketches will contribute to mutual understanding and further advancement of friendly relations between Japanese and German people.



From sketch collection: Race walk scene



From sketch collection: German soldiers playing billiards

General Kramp-Karrenbauer, former chairman of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group Merz, and Federal Minister of Health Spahn. On December 7, at the elections for party leader held during the CDU's Congress in Hamburg in the northern part of Germany, CDU Secretary-General Kramp-Karrenbauer ran a close race in the voting with former chairman of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group Merz, but eventually emerged as the new leader of the CDU.

As for Germany's relations with Japan, Federal Minister for Foreign Affairs Maas, who assumed office in March, visited Japan in July as the first stop of his first tour of Asia as foreign minister. During his visit, he held a foreign ministers' meeting with Foreign Minister Kono, and paid a courtesy call on Prime Minister Abe. In September, Foreign Minister Kono visited Germany. On this occasion, he paid a courtesy call on Chancellor Merkel, and attended a parliamentary group meeting of the ruling party CDU/CSU. He explained Japan's position on issues such as the East Asia situation and the international economic system, and spoke about the importance of furthering the close cooperation between Japan and Germany, both of which have developed as peace-loving nations under a free and open international order after the war, so as to maintain and strengthen international order based on rules. Thereafter, a Japan-Germany Summit Meeting was held on the occasion of the ASEM Summit in Brussels in October. In February 2019, Chancellor Merkel visited Japan for the first time in four years, not to attend any international conferences, but in the context of bilateral relations. During her trip, she held a Japan-Germany Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Abe.

(5) Italy

Following the general election held in March, a coalition government led by Prime Minister Conte and comprising the Five Star Movement and the League was formed in June. The new

government is tackling the priority issues raised in its manifesto, including measures related to the domestic economy, social security, and migrant.

In June, Prime Minister Abe held the first Japan-Italy Summit Meeting with the newly appointed Prime Minister Conte, on the sidelines of the G7 Charlevoix Summit, during which they exchanged views on the response to the regional situation and global issues. The two leaders also held a summit meeting during the ASEM Summit in October. Foreign Minister Kono and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Moavero Milanesi held a foreign ministers' meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly in September. The two countries, which are members of the G7 and share fundamental values, affirmed to continue close cooperation. Furthermore, in November, a foreign ministers' meeting was also held during Foreign Minister Kono's visit to Italy to attend the Mediterranean Dialogues.



Japan-Italy Foreign Ministers' Meeting (November 23, Rome, Italy)

(6) Spain

In June, a motion of no confidence in the government of Mariano Rajoy's People's Party was passed, and at the same time, Pedro Sánchez, Secretary-General of the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE) assumed office as Prime Minister.

2018 marks the 150th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Spain, and many commemorative

Other European Regions

Japan places emphasis on its cooperative relationship with the Visegrád Four (V4), a regional cooperative framework comprising the four countries of Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Hungary, with which Japan shares the fundamental values of democracy and rule of law. Efforts were made to strengthen the relationship between Japan and the V4, including the V4+Japan seminar concerning Brexit matters held in February, and the second V4+Japan Summit Meeting convened after a five-year hiatus on the occasion of the ASEM Summit in October.

Poland: Foreign Minister Kono visited Poland in July and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Czaputowicz, during which the ministers affirmed cooperation toward 2019, which marks the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-Poland diplomatic relations. At the press conference held after the foreign ministers' meeting, the logo commemorating the 100th anniversary, produced under the supervision of Junko Koshino, was unveiled.

Czech Republic: The legislative election was held in October 2017 and was won by ANO, the centrist party led by Andrej Babiš. Although the Babiš cabinet was inaugurated in December the same year, a no-confidence motion was put through in the lower house in January 2018. After that, renewed negotiations were carried out on the formation of a coalition, resulting in the inauguration of the Babiš cabinet once again in June based on the formation of a coalition with the Czech Social Democratic Party (ČSSD) and support from outside the cabinet from the Czech Communist Party. This cabinet won the confidence of the lower house in July. The Protocol Amending the Agreement Between Japan and the Czech Republic on Social Security entered into force in August, while the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Czech Republic regarding Working Holiday Visas entered into force in November.

Slovakia: By the initiative of Slovakia, which is serving its presidency of the V4 from July, the second V4+Japan Summit Meeting was held in October coinciding with the ASEM Summit. In December, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abe held a meeting with State Secretary of Foreign and European Affairs Parizek during the OSCE Ministerial Council.

Hungary: A general election was held in April. Fidesz, the political party led by Prime Minister Orbán, made a landslide victory, winning more than two-thirds of the seats. As a result, the third Orbán administration was inaugurated.

V4

[Benelux countries]

The Netherlands: With regard to Japan's relations with the Netherlands, which served as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2018, Foreign Minister Kono held a meeting with Foreign Minister Blok during the G20 Buenos Aires Foreign Ministers' Meeting in May. Prime Minister Abe visited the Netherlands in January 2019. During the visit, he held a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Rutte, where they affirmed close cooperation with the Netherlands, which has been invited to the G20 Osaka Summit.

Belgium: Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Reynders visited Japan in October and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Kono. In light of Belgium's appointment as a non-permanent member of the Security Council from 2019, the two ministers affirmed further cooperation between the two countries including on regional affairs. In addition, a memorandum of agreement on the implementation of political talks between Japan and Belgium was also signed, signaling the further deepening of Japan-Belgium relations.

Austria: Foreign Minister Kono visited Austria in February, during which he held a meeting with Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Secretary-General Greminger. He also paid a visit to the Provisional Technical Secretariat of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO). Foreign Minister Kono visited Austria again in July, and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Kneissl during this trip. The Tax Convention between Japan and Austria entered into force in October. In February 2019, Prime Minister Kurz visited Japan as prime minister for the first time, where he held a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Abe.

Ireland: Maintaining the momentum of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Ireland in 1957, active exchanges continued to take place between the two countries, with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane visiting Ireland in January 2018, and Minister for Housing, Planning and Local Government Murphy visiting Japan in March.

Switzerland: President and Head of the Federal Department of Home Affairs Berset visited Japan in April and held a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Abe. In September, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane visited Switzerland. In November, the third meeting of the Joint Committee established under the Japan-Switzerland Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) was held.

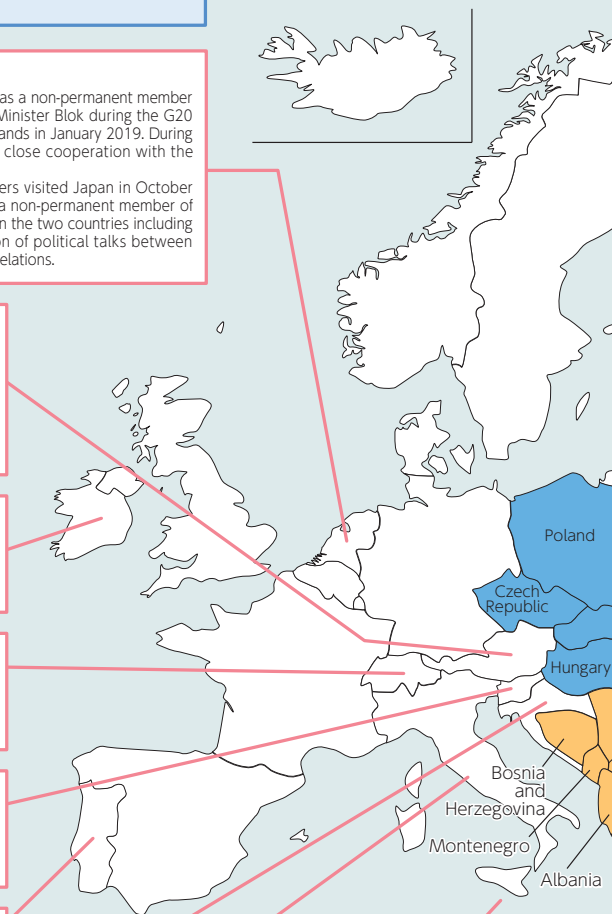
Slovenia: Parliamentary elections were held in June. The Slovenian Democratic Party (SDS) led by Janez Janša became the leading party, but met with difficulties in the coalition negotiations. An agreement was eventually reached to form a coalition with the center-left, led mainly by the second party, the List of Marjan Šarec. A new cabinet was inaugurated in September.

Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP): The CPLP Summit and Ministerial Meeting was held on Sal, Cape Verde, in July. Japan participated in this conference as an observer.

Croatia: Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Yamada visited Croatia in October, during which the Tax Agreement between Japan and Croatia was signed.

Vatican: In November, Foreign Minister Kono visited Vatican for the first time since he assumed office. He paid a courtesy call on Secretary of State Parolin and held a foreign ministers' meeting with Secretary for Relations Gallagher. They affirmed that Japan and Vatican will strengthen cooperation toward resolving international issues such as the pursuit of peace, development, human rights, and environmental protection, and also engaged in discussion toward the realization of the visit to Japan by Pope Francis, who has expressed the intention of visiting Japan in 2019.

Malta: In August, Prime Minister Muscat visited Japan, the first visit by an incumbent prime minister in 28 years. He held a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Abe, during which they affirmed that Japan and Malta will cooperate closely in many areas, including the rule of law over the oceans in the two countries, which are both maritime countries, as well as the North Korea issue. During the Mediterranean Dialogues held in November (Rome, Italy), Foreign Minister Kono held a meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Promotion Abela.



[Nordic countries]

Denmark: In October, Foreign Minister Kono visited Denmark and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Samuelsen. They welcomed progress in Japan-Denmark cooperation across a wide range of fields, and exchanged views toward further strengthening bilateral relations. In December, the New Tax Convention Between Japan and Denmark entered into force.

Finland: Foreign Minister Soini visited Japan in February and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Kono. They affirmed that Japan and Finland will further develop their strategic partnership toward the upcoming 100th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 2019.

Norway: Prime Minister Solberg visited Japan in February and held a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Abe. They concurred on further strengthening future economic relations, as well as cooperating on promoting sustainable development goals. In May, Foreign Minister Søreide visited Japan. She held a meeting with Foreign Minister Kono, during which they concurred on promoting free trade and investment, and advancing cooperation in areas such as whaling and the Arctic sector.

Sweden: His Majesty the King Carl XVI Gustaf and Her Majesty the Queen Silvia paid an Official Visit to Japan in April. During their informal meeting with Prime Minister Abe and his spouse, they spoke about expectations of further development in people-to-people exchanges and economic exchanges between Japan and Sweden, and agreed on further strengthening bilateral relations.

Iceland: Foreign Minister Thórdarson visited Japan in May, and held a meeting with Foreign Minister Kono. In October, Foreign Minister Kono visited Iceland as the first foreign minister of Japan to do so. During their foreign ministers' meeting on this trip, they affirmed progress in cooperation in various areas, including welcoming the start of the working holiday system in September. The Tax Convention between Japan and Iceland entered into force in October.

[Baltic countries]

In January, Prime Minister Abe visited the three Baltic countries, a first for a prime minister of Japan. In addition to meeting with the leaders of each country, he also announced the establishment of the Japan-Baltic Cooperation Dialogue. The first conference was held in Lithuania in September, and was attended by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Okamoto.

Latvia: Foreign Minister Kono took the opportunity of the Munich Security Conference held in February to hold a meeting with Foreign Minister Rinkēvičs. They affirmed that effort will be made to further develop bilateral relations in many areas including politics and economy, and education and science.

Lithuania: The Tax Convention between Japan and Lithuania entered into force in August. Prime Minister Skvernelis visited Japan in October and held a Summit Meeting with Prime Minister Abe.

The two leaders welcomed the prospect of the start of the working holiday system, and expressed their expectations of progress in people-to-people exchange between the two countries in the future.

Estonia: The Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO) deployed a correspondent to Tallin in May to collect and disseminate information on the three Baltic countries. The Tax Convention between Japan and Estonia entered into force in September.

GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova)

A workshop based on the theme of revitalizing small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) was held in Tokyo in January. Foreign Minister Kono attended the 6th GUAM-Japan Ministerial Meeting held in New York (United States) in September, where he reaffirmed the cooperative relations between the GUAM countries and Japan.

Moldova: In July, a Japan-Moldova Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held on the occasion of the visit to Japan by Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration Ulianovschi. Foreign Minister Kono announced during this meeting Japan's decision to introduce visa exemption for diplomatic and official passport holders of Moldova.

Belarus: Taking the opportunity of the visit to Japan by Minister of Health Malashko in May, the Japan-Belarus Economic Forum was held in Tokyo and Osaka.

Romania: During Prime Minister Abe's visit to Romania in January, he agreed that the two countries will elevate their cooperative relations to a higher dimension in a wide range of fields. Foreign Minister Kono held talks with Vice Prime Minister Birchall in New York in September, and with Foreign Minister Meleşcanu in Qatar in December. They exchanged views on areas of cooperation that should be strengthened.

Bulgaria: A number of high-level exchanges took place starting with Prime Minister Abe's visit to Bulgaria in January. This was followed by the visit to Japan by Deputy Prime Minister Donchev in February, the Japan-Bulgaria Foreign Ministers' Meeting in New York in September, and the visit by President of the National Assembly Karayancheva to Japan in November at the invitation of the President of the House of Councilors.

Greece: A Japan-Greece Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in January for the first time in 21 years. In July, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane visited Greece. The financial assistance program lasting about eight years ended in August.

Cyprus: The Embassy of Japan in Cyprus was opened in January. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane visited Cyprus in July, when he attended the opening ceremony of the Embassy and signed a memorandum of agreement on the repatriation of Japanese citizens with Foreign Minister Christodoulides. In October, Foreign Minister Christodoulides visited Japan, and the Japan-Cyprus Foreign Minister Meeting was held.

The Western Balkans

Although there still remains ethnic divisiveness, overall progress has been made for stability and development in the Western Balkan region owing to each country's commitment to reforms toward European integration. Prime Minister Abe visited Serbia in January 2018, the first visit ever by a Japanese Prime Minister. During the visit, he announced the Western Balkans Cooperation Initiatives designed to advance cooperation with the Western Balkans (Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, North Macedonia, and Montenegro), which aims for EU membership: Japan has promoted cooperation with the entire Western Balkans region in areas such as youth and economic exchanges. High-level exchanges took place actively: the visit of Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Manabu Horii to Kosovo in February, the Japan-Albania Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Japan-Macedonia Foreign Ministers' Meeting (country name at the time) at the Munich Security Conference. As for visits to Japan, Kosovo's First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Pacolli visited in March, Bosnia-Herzegovina's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Brkić visited in May, and Albania's Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Bushati visited in June, and Montenegro's Foreign Minister Đukanović visited in November. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Yamada also visited Serbia in October.



Prime Minister Abe exchanging a handshake with Prime Minister Sánchez of Spain (October 16, Madrid, Spain; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



Meeting between State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Dastis of Spain (January 16, Madrid, Spain)

events were held in the two countries. In January, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakane visited Madrid and attended the opening ceremony for the 150th anniversary celebrations. He also held a meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation Dastis. In October, Prime Minister Abe visited Spain. During the visit, he had an audience with His Majesty King Felipe VI and held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Sánchez, where the two leaders concurred on elevating bilateral relations between Japan and Spain to a “strategic partnership.” Taking the opportunity, the New Tax Convention between Japan and Spain was signed. In November, the 20th Japan-Spain Symposium was held in Yamaguchi City themed on “Beyond the 150th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Spain.”

(7) Ukraine

In November, three Ukrainian Navy vessels attempting to navigate through waters near the Kerch Strait, in the eastern part of the Crimean Peninsula, were captured by the Border Service of the Russian Federation. In response, the Ukrainian government imposed martial law for 30 days in some parts of the country, and there were heightened tensions between the two countries. Various countries, particularly in Europe and America, expressed their concerns over this situation, and called for restraint and calm.

In the eastern part of Ukraine, the situation remains unstable as a result of the failure to fulfill the ceasefire agreements. By the end of August, Alexander Zakharchenko, the “head of state” of the self-proclaimed Donetsk People’s Republic that has been occupied by separatist militants, was assassinated by terrorists. In response, an “election” was held in the occupied territory in the east in November. Japan and other countries in Europe and America do not acknowledge the legitimacy of this “election” as it was not carried out based on an agreement between the relevant parties, including agreements on local elections in the occupied territory in the east (Minsk Agreements). No significant progress has been achieved in talks over implementation of the Minsk Agreements among the nations concerned.

With regard to internal affairs, various reforms have been ongoing under the Groyzman Cabinet formed in April 2016. Against this backdrop, a law on the establishment of the High Anti-Corruption Court of Ukraine was adopted in June. During the same month, the Ukraine Reform Conference was held in Copenhagen, Denmark, and was attended by many high-level officials from Europe and America. In addition to discussing the status of reforms in Ukraine, the respective countries also announced that they will continue to support efforts in this regard. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Horii attended the meeting as Japan’s representative. In his speech, he praised

the outcomes of reforms in Ukraine so far, but appealed for the continued need for reforms, as well as confirmed Japan's continued support toward Ukraine's reform efforts.

With regard to bilateral relations, the Ukraine-Japan Bilateral Consultations on Security Issues were held in October in Tokyo as a new initiative. In January, Japan also decided to provide additional support of about 396 million yen (3.6 million US dollars) to support reform efforts and the stabilization of Ukraine.

3 Collaboration with European Regional Institutions, and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)

(1) Cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

As a military alliance aimed at providing collective defense for its 29 member countries, NATO provides collective defense for its member countries, and engages in crisis management inside and outside of the region that could pose a direct threat to the security of the territories and peoples of NATO member countries, including security-keeping operations in Kosovo, support in Afghanistan, and counter-terrorism efforts. Also, NATO makes efforts in cooperative security through coordination with countries and organizations outside of the region. As a partner that shares fundamental values with NATO, Japan is taking specific steps toward collaboration based on the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP), which Prime Minister Abe signed while visiting NATO headquarters in May 2014. In May, the IPCP was revised to further facilitate smoother cooperation between Japan and NATO, and in July, the Mission of Japan to the NATO was established. To date, Japan has participated as an observer in NATO's 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 officials

to the NATO headquarters in order to promote cooperation on matters concerning women, peace and security (WPS). Through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) Trust Fund, a project that aims to promote arms control and disarmament, as well as democratization and regional stabilization through the utilization of NATO's specialized military expertise, Japan is also providing support for clearing unexploded ordnance in Azerbaijan, removing unexploded ordnance and landmines and conducting explosive ordnance disposal training in Georgia, as well as 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 bridge differences between member countries and foster trust through conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict recovery and review 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 in Afghanistan and central Asia including through the Border Management Staff College (a capacity building organization) and other organizations, and also lends support in conducting election monitoring as well as to the projects that support women's social advancement. OSCE plays an important role in improving the situation in Ukraine. Japan provides financial support to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) and has been dispatching experts to the SMM since August 2015. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Abe attended the Ministerial Council in Milan, Italy, in December, where she pointed out that amidst the upheavals in international order, the security of Asia and Europe have a mutual impact on each other. She also refers to the security environment

of East Asia, including the North Korea issue and maritime security, and called for understanding and cooperation toward the early resolution of the abductions issue.

(3) Cooperation with the Council of Europe (CoE)

The CoE is a regional organization comprising 47 member states in Europe. It has played 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 it began participating in the organization in 1996. In July, Japan provided financial support for the Octopus Conference 2018 (Strasbourg, France), which aims to promote international cooperation against cybercrime. It also dispatched Japanese staff from international organizations to the 7th World Forum for Democracy (also held in Strasbourg) in November, and delivered a statement about Japan's efforts in the area of women's policies.

(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 Summit Meetings, Ministers' Meetings, seminars, and other activities focused on three pillars, namely (1) politics, (2) economy and (3) society and culture.

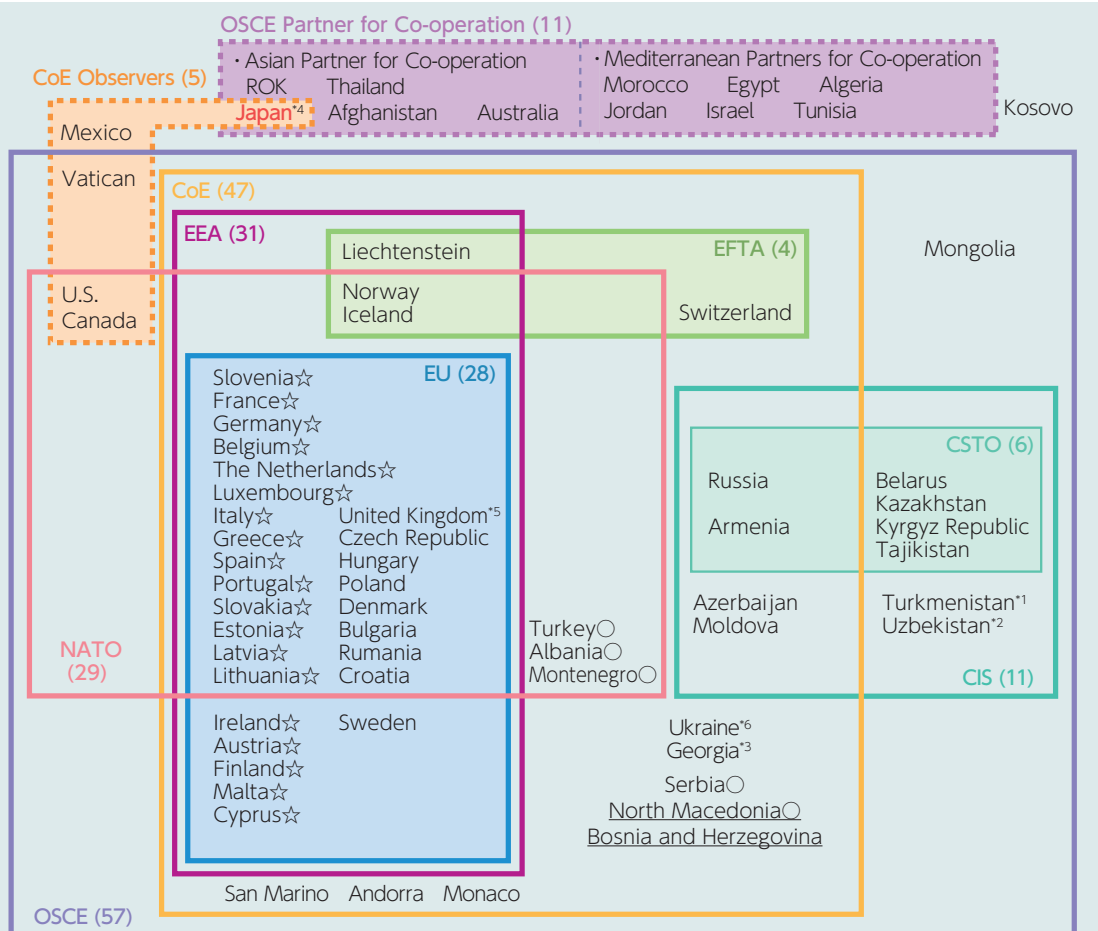
The 12th Summit Meeting was held on October 18 and 19 in Brussels, Belgium. Prime Minister Abe attended the meeting, where he spoke about the need to promote efforts to resolve excessive production capacity and eliminate market-distorting measures with regard to a free trade system, the need to establish international standards for Quality Infrastructure toward

strengthening connectivity and the development of Asia and Europe, and further, emphasized that achieving a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" that Japan is promoting will also contribute to strengthening connectivity between Asia and Europe.

With regard to the North Korea situation, Prime Minister Abe spoke about the need for the international community to work in solidarity and ensure the full implementation of UN Security Council Resolutions toward the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. At the same time, he reiterated Japan's determination to resolve the abductions issue at the earliest possible date. With regard to maritime security, he emphasized the need for peaceful settlements of conflicts in accordance with international law, without the use of force or coercion, and reiterated that unilateral changes in the status quo are absolutely unacceptable.

The chair's statement issued at this Summit Meeting set out the importance of peaceful settlement for maritime security conflicts in accordance with international law, and called on North Korea to completely, verifiably, and irreversibly dismantle (CVID) all its nuclear weapons, other Weapons of Mass Destruction, and ballistic missiles as well as related programmes and facilities. Furthermore, it also incorporated a strong message through the declaration by leaders on their determination to support a comprehensive solution of the issue through the full implementation of the UN Security Council Resolutions. The abductions issue was clearly set out in the chair's statement following the previous Summit Meeting and Foreign Ministers' Meeting. In addition, Japan supports ASEM's activities through funds contributed to the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) and co-organizing the ASEM Symposium on Promoting Tourism in Jakarta (February) with the Government of Indonesia.

Major Frameworks of Europe



<Legend>

- : Candidate to be an EU member (5)
- ☆: Euro member states(19)
- : Members of the Membership Action Plan (MAP) (2)

Number of member countries in ()

*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 a partner country of NATO

*5 As a result of the citizens' referendum held in June 2016, the UK is in negotiations towards withdrawing from the EU (as of January 2019).

*6 Ukraine signed a Presidential Decree in April 2018 to withdraw from the CIS.

<Abbreviations>

- CoE (Council of Europe) : (47)
- CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States) : (10)
- 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)