

# Chapter 1 Overview of the International Situation and Outlook for Japan's Diplomacy

In order for Japan to ensure its national interests in the diplomatic, security, and economic domains, to prevent crises, and to secure the safety and prosperity of the lives of its citizens, including Japanese nationals living abroad, it is necessary to maintain and develop an international order based on values and principles such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, as well as to proactively create a peaceful and stable

international environment. To this end, Japan needs to advance its foreign policy strategically and flexibly, while grasping trends in international affairs with a clear view and adapting to changes.

This chapter outlines a broad overview of the international situation surrounding Japan and the outlook for Japan's diplomacy.

## 1 Overview of the International Situation

The international community is currently at a major turning point in history once again. For some time since the end of the Cold War, a stable international order has expanded throughout the world. Advanced democracies, including the overwhelmingly powerful United States (U.S.) and Japan, took the lead in maintaining and developing an international order based on values and principles such as freedom, democracy, respect for fundamental human rights, and the rule of law, as well as the rules-based economic order, with the World Trade Organization (WTO) at its core. A trend toward international cooperation to enhance fairness, transparency, and predictability of international relations grew stronger. Furthermore, on the premise of such an international order, economic globalization and interdependence have advanced, bringing a certain degree of stability and economic growth to the international community, including developing countries.

Although globalization has reduced the overall disparities among nations, some countries, such as Least Developed Countries (LDC), have not been able to fully enjoy its benefits. On the other hand, in some developed countries, domestic disparities have rather widened, which has led to political and social tensions and divisions, destabilizing democratic political systems. Furthermore, the rise of emerging and developing

countries that developed under the international order described above has led to the diversification of the international community in recent years. Some of these countries of the Global South are aware of this shift and are seeking greater influence and a stronger voice commensurate with their national power.

In addition, some states are strengthening their military power in a rapid and non-transparent manner, and are becoming more assertive and challenging the existing international order based on their own historical views. There also exists a tendency to “weaponize” economic dependencies to achieve their own political goals. On the other hand, the scope of security has expanded to fields such as strengthening resilience of supply chains for critical materials including semiconductors and critical minerals, promotion and protection of critical and emerging technologies, cybersecurity, and countering disinformation. Against the backdrop of these changes in the power balance and security environment, competition among nations has become more intense and complex.

Turning to the entire international community, there is an urgent need to address global challenges including environmental issues like climate change, global health, disaster risk reduction, and issues such as nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and terrorism and transnational organized crime. In recent

years, informatization and digitization have made these issues widely recognized throughout the world, but these issues cannot be solved by any one major power alone, and cooperation within the international community is more important than ever. In addition, economic globalization and interdependence, which have advanced in the post-Cold War world, persistently remain in the era of competition among nations, in which complete decoupling is not realistic. These developments show the complexity of international relations where confrontation, competition, and cooperation are intricately intertwined.

Against this backdrop, Russia launched its aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, shaking the very foundations of the international order that had supported peace, stability, and prosperity in the post-Cold War era. In the Middle East, the entire region has become unstable after the terror attacks against Israel by Hamas and others in October 2023, making the axis of confrontation in the international community, particularly over the situation in Gaza, more complex. It is difficult to say that the United Nations (UN), including its Security Council, is adequately fulfilling the expected roles in the face of various issues caused by serious humanitarian crises and conflicts. Some countries, including the Global South, are becoming increasingly dissatisfied with the existing global governance<sup>(1)</sup> system. This has led to a serious division in the international community.

With international relations complexly intertwined today, conflicts in the two regions of Europe and the Middle East are not only problems in themselves but have also revealed new threats such as cyberattacks and the spread of disinformation, thus hampering international cooperation in solving global issues and affecting the stability and prosperity of all regions of the world, including Japan. Under these circumstances, in 2024, important elections, including the U.S. presidential election, were held in various parts of the world, and there were also cases of severe domestic divisions and political tensions in several countries. The international community going forward will face the challenge of building global governance in which all countries, including the Global South, share responsibility in

order to overcome divisions and surmount the common challenges of all humanity.

With the above recognition, the following part explains the major international issues facing the international community.

### **(1) Challenge to the Free and Open International Order based on the Rule of Law**

With conflicts raging in two of the three regions that have been important to global stability in history — Europe, the Middle East, and East Asia — the stability of the Indo-Pacific region, including East Asia, is more important than ever.

Russia has been continuing its aggression against Ukraine since February 2022. The act of a permanent member of the UN Security Council blatantly violating the principles of the UN Charter, such as sovereignty, territorial integrity, and the general prohibition of the use of force, is an outrageous act that shakes the very foundations of the existing international order, which the international community has built up over a long period of hard work and much sacrifice, and the international community must not allow such an act. Furthermore, Russia has repeatedly threatened Ukraine with the use of nuclear weapons, but the international community must firmly reject Russia's threat to use nuclear weapons, let alone any use of nuclear weapons. The achievement of a just and lasting peace in Ukraine is essential to upholding the rule of law in the international community.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine and unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in East Asia are not geographically separate and distinct issues, as they pose a challenge to the international order based on the rule of law itself. In East Asia, including the area surrounding Japan, North Korea has been advancing its nuclear and missile development, including the launches of Intercontinental Ballistic Missile (ICBM)-class ballistic missiles. In addition, China has been continuing and intensifying its unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in the East China Sea, including the waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands, and the South China Sea, as well as a series of military activities around Japan. The security environment

<sup>(1)</sup> Global Governance: The totality of institutions, policies, norms, procedures, and initiatives that provide predictability, stability, and order in dealing with interstate issues in the international community where there is no higher level of governing bodies unlike the domestic system.

surrounding Japan is as severe and complex as it has ever been since the end of World War II. Peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait are also important.

In addition, moves to advance Russia-North Korea military cooperation have been revealed, including the engagement of North Korean troops in combat against Ukraine, as well as Russia's procurement and use of North Korean weapons and munitions, including ballistic missiles. Japan is seriously concerned about these moves which not only lead to further deterioration of the situation in Ukraine, but also affect the security of the region surrounding Japan.

In order to achieve stability in the Indo-Pacific region, first of all, it is essential that the United States maintains and strengthens its commitment to the region. It is necessary for Japan to foster the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and the credibility and resilience of extended deterrence<sup>(2)</sup>. The cooperation with like-minded countries that share values, such as the G7, Australia, India, the Republic of Korea (ROK), Southeast Asian countries, and the Pacific Island countries, is also important. Furthermore, from the perspective that the security of Indo-Pacific and Euro-Atlantic is inseparable, it is also important to cooperate with like-minded partners, including European countries, the European Union (EU), and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO).

At the G7 Apulia Summit, the G7 stated that they seek constructive and stable relations with China and recognize the importance of direct and candid engagement to express concerns and manage differences. They also expressed that they continue to engage in areas of common interest, and called on China to step up efforts to promote international peace and security.

At the same time, between Japan and China, it is necessary, as two countries that have a responsibility for the peace and prosperity of the region and the international community, to comprehensively promote a "Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests" and to make joint efforts to build "constructive and stable Japan-China relations."

## **(2) Challenges Posed to Global Governance and Global Issues by the Shift in the Power Balance**

The international community is witnessing a historic shift in the power balance, as many developing countries have achieved economic development under the stable international order that developed throughout the post-Cold War era. With developing and emerging countries becoming aware of these changes, the world has witnessed moves among the Global South to increase their unity. It is not appropriate to treat the Global South as a single entity, since the geopolitical position, economic situation, and challenges they face vary from country to country.

Against this backdrop, in recent years, there is growing dissatisfaction with the existing rules and systems of the international community, particularly among the Global South, over situations such as when the UN Security Council, which has primary responsibility for peace and security of the international community, has not necessarily been fulfilling its expected roles in response to the situations in Ukraine and the Middle-East due to the exercise of vetoes by permanent members.

Global challenges such as environmental issues including climate change, disaster risk reduction, and global health including infectious diseases, are becoming graver. In order to bridge the funding gap faced by developing countries in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there is a growing call for reforms in Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs).

In this context, the Summit of the Future was held in New York, U.S. in September to restore trust in the UN and effectively respond to the SDGs and new challenges through international cooperation. In the negotiation process, there were conflicts of interest between developed countries and developing and emerging countries, but in the end, "the Pact for the Future," which reflects the calls for strengthening the functions of the UN, including reform of the UN Security Council, and sets out 56 actions to protect the needs and interests of present and future generations, was adopted by consensus. This is the first time that the heads of the world jointly highlighted the urgent

<sup>(2)</sup> Providing deterrence that a country possesses to its allies and partners. Japan possesses its own deterrence, while also receiving extended deterrence from its ally, the U.S.

need for reforming the UN Security Council, calling for concrete actions to be taken going forward.

While the multilateral systems centered on the UN face difficulties, cooperation among allies and like-minded countries such as the G7, Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad), Japan-U.S.-ROK, Japan-U.S.-Australia, and Japan-U.S.-Philippines, is becoming increasingly important. As it is no longer possible for the international community to converge under a single set of values and principles, Japan needs to take an inclusive approach that overcomes conflicts in values and interests and extend a fine-tuned diplomacy to seek cooperation that is truly needed by each country.

### (3) Impacts of Economic Globalization and Development of Science and Technology

The global economic network that developed during the post-Cold War era continues to support growth as the common foundation of the international community, and global interdependence is further deepening.

In this context, in recent years, the vulnerabilities of food and energy supply chains have been revealed due to COVID-19 and Russia's aggression against Ukraine. In addition, some countries attempt to expand their own interests and power by leveraging economic dependencies and their own large markets as tools for economic coercion. This shows that in an era when complete decoupling is no longer possible, economic globalization and interdependence can bring not only growth and prosperity, but also security threats. Challenges such as theft of intellectual property and sensitive technologies, and development finance that ignores other countries' debt sustainability have also been identified, and the scope of security has expanded to include the fields of the economy and technology. In light of such demands of today, there is growing international interest in economic security.

In order to address economic coercion and non-market policies and practices and to maintain and expand the rules-based free and fair international economic order, it is also becoming increasingly important

to strengthen the multilateral trading system with the WTO at its core, and to create new rules adapted to the times. Integrating social and environmental sustainability into the economy is also a need of the times, and it is necessary to address environment, human rights, and gender equality with the achievement of SDGs in mind, while aiming for economic growth.

Turning to scientific and technological developments, technological innovations such as fifth-generation mobile communications systems (5G), the Internet of Things (IoT), quantum technology, and others have brought about substantive and irreversible changes in society and daily life, while the development of social media has ushered in an era where geographically distant places are instantly connected through information. Digitalization and information technology have improved the convenience of human life and facilitated cross-border communication. In particular, while Artificial Intelligence (AI), which has developed rapidly in recent years, provides us with the opportunity to transform human society for the better, security risks such as cyberattacks and information manipulation, including the spread of disinformation, have been identified, particularly for advanced AI systems, including generative AI. Such technological advances are also directly linked to national competitiveness, leading to moves to strengthen military power as dual-use military and civilian technology, and democracy itself is being put to the test as the formation of confirmation bias<sup>(3)</sup> through social media has made it more difficult to form public opinion based on correct information and sound debate.

That peace and development in the international community now cannot be achieved solely through the development of globalization and interdependence is evident under the current international situation. In order to utilize free economic activities, science and technology, and innovation for a better future for humankind, cooperation for appropriate risk management and fair governance is important.

(3) Confirmation Bias: Refers to the tendency, when testing a hypothesis, to have a bias for selecting information that supports the hypothesis from among many pieces of information, and to devalue or ignore information that does not support the hypothesis. (Source: imidas)

## 2 Outlook for Japan's Diplomacy

The international situation remains severe with Russia's aggression against Ukraine, the situation in the Middle East, and the security environment in East Asia. While the free and open international order based on the rule of law is under serious challenges throughout the world including in the Indo-Pacific region, the Global South is enhancing its presence, and the international community is diversifying. In addition, some countries are experiencing increasing domestic divisions and political tensions. Multilateralism with the UN as its core faces difficulties, but there are a host of global issues including climate change and new threats such as cyberattacks and information manipulation, including the spread of disinformation, which need to be addressed by the international community as a whole, thus calling for cooperation among nations more than ever before.

In the international community at this turning point in history, Japan must ensure the peace, security, and prosperity of its own country and people and proactively create a peaceful and stable international environment by maintaining and strengthening the international order based on values and principles such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. To this end, Japan needs to develop a diplomacy that leads the world toward reconciliation and cooperation from division and confrontation.

Japan has consistently followed the path of a peace-loving nation since the end of World War II, contributing to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the international community including the Asia-Pacific region, and working to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order based on the rule of law. It has also developed a fine-tuned diplomacy with all countries, respecting the diversity of each country, discussing common issues from the same perspective, and providing support that is truly needed by the other party. Furthermore, Japan as a flag-bearer of free trade has promoted a rules-based free and fair economic order under a multilateral trading system. At the same time, Japan has cooperated with developing countries

based on the principle of human security<sup>(4)</sup> and worked toward the resolution of global issues, including the achievement of SDGs, through capacity building support and other measures. It has also actively contributed to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation and international peacebuilding efforts. As the world reaches a turning point in history, Japan will continue to conduct proactive diplomacy based on the trust that it gained through these diplomatic efforts.

### (1) Maintain a Free and Open International Order based on the Rule of Law

#### A Strengthening of the Japan-U.S. Alliance

The Japan-U.S. Alliance is the cornerstone of Japan's foreign policy and security, and the foundation of the peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific. In February 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba visited the U.S. and concurred with U.S. President Donald J. Trump, who took office in January of the same year, to work closely to realize a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" and to elevate the Japan-U.S. Alliance to new heights.

On the security front, Japan and the U.S. will further strengthen deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, strengthen the credibility and resilience of extended deterrence, and optimize the response capabilities of U.S. forces in Japan. Japan will also promote efforts to mitigate impact on local communities, including Okinawa, through efforts of expeditiously relocating Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma to Henoko while maintaining the stable presence of U.S. forces.

On the economic front, Japan and the U.S. will further expand and deepen broad Japan-U.S. collaboration in the economic field, including efforts to increase investment between Japan and the U.S., partnership in advanced technology, and cooperation for sustainable and inclusive economic growth in the Indo-Pacific region. The two countries will also further strengthen their multilayered people-to-people exchanges.

Through these efforts, Japan will strive to build a strong relationship of trust with the Trump administration and

(4) Human security is a concept that pursues the creation of a country and society where individuals can live happily and in dignity, free from fear and want.



further deepen Japan-U.S. relations. At the same time, Japan will continue to communicate with the Trump administration on the various issues facing the international community and make its contribution.

## **B Cooperation with Allies and Like-minded Countries**

The realization of FOIP, which upholds the core principles of defending “freedom” and “the rule of law” and respecting “diversity,” “inclusiveness,” and “openness,” is one of the most important tasks for Japanese diplomacy. In order to realize FOIP, it is important to build and expand networks with allies and like-minded countries, in addition to the Japan-U.S. Alliance. To this end, Japan will further expand practical cooperation among Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad), Japan-U.S.-ROK, Japan-U.S.-Australia, and Japan-U.S.-Philippines, the G7, as well as with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Australia, India, the ROK, the EU, NATO, and others.

The G7 is working closely to address the various issues facing the international community, such as Russia's aggression against Ukraine and the situation in the Middle East. As the security of Europe, the Middle East, and the Indo-Pacific becomes increasingly intertwined, Japan will contribute to the further strengthening of cooperation among the G7 in order to maintain and strengthen the free and open international order based on the rule of law.

With Australia, as a central pillar of the coordination among like-minded countries, Japan has established a close cooperative relationship in a wide range of fields. The two countries will work to further deepen their “Special Strategic Partnership,” including by strengthening security cooperation, in fields such as cyber and economic security.

With the EU and NATO, Japan will further strengthen security cooperation based on the recognition that the security of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions is inseparable and in light of the progress made in cooperation in recent years.

In addition to Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) and Japan-U.S.-ROK, the first-ever Japan-U.S.-Philippines Summit was held in 2024, and Japan is strengthening the multilayered cooperation with like-minded countries. Japan will continue to strengthen

such multilayered cooperation in the future.

## **C Japan's Own Efforts**

As Japan faces the most severe and complex security environment since the end of World War II, it will work to improve its response capabilities in cybersecurity, as well as promote the transfer of defense equipment and Official Security Assistance (OSA) program, under the National Security Strategy.

In addition, in countering the threat of terrorism and violent extremism, as well as transnational organized crime, including cybercrime, Japan will continue its efforts and international contribution.

On economic security, Japan will also continue to work on enhancing supply chain resilience, addressing economic coercion, and protecting and promoting critical and emerging technologies, in close coordination with its ally and like-minded countries.

In response to international information warfare, such as the spread of disinformation, Japan will strengthen its capabilities to collect and analyze information, and ensure timely and appropriate dissemination, while building and reinforcing its information security infrastructure. At the same time, Japan will provide information to gain the understanding and support of the Japanese public for its foreign policy by intensifying communication through social networking services (SNS) and other means.

## **(2) Relations with Neighboring Countries and others**

Japan will build stable relations with neighboring countries, while dealing head-on with difficult issues.

### **A Japan-China Relations**

While there are various potentials for improved ties between Japan and China, there are a number of issues and concerns, such as unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in the East China Sea, including the situation surrounding the Senkaku Islands, and the South China Sea, and a series of military activities around Japan, including those coordinated between China and Russia. Peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait are also important. Japan is also seriously concerned about the human rights situation in China and the situation in Hong Kong.

At the same time, both Japan and China share significant responsibility for the peace and prosperity of the region and the world. Under a broad direction of comprehensively promoting a “Mutually Beneficial Relationship Based on Common Strategic Interests” and building “constructive and stable Japan-China relations,” Japan and China should make joint efforts to reduce issues and concerns, and increase cooperation and coordination.

### **B Japan-Republic of Korea (ROK) Relations**

The ROK is an important neighbor which should work as a partner on challenges in the international community. In light of the current strategic environment, the importance of Japan-ROK relations remains unchanged. Japan continues working closely together bilaterally with the ROK and trilaterally with the U.S. and the ROK, including on policies toward North Korea.

Takeshima is an inherent territory of Japan in light of historical facts and based on international law. Japan will deal with the issue in a resolute manner based on this consistent position.

### **C Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Cooperation**

Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Cooperation is important for regional and global peace and prosperity from a broad perspective. Japan will continue to steadily advance this framework as the chair country.

### **D North Korea**

North Korea's nuclear and missile development is totally unacceptable. Japan is also seriously concerned about the moves to advance the Russia-North Korea military cooperation such as the deployment of North Korean troops to Russia, including the recent developments, and Russia's procurement and use of weapons and munitions including ballistic missiles from North Korea, given their impact not only on the situation in Ukraine but also on the security of the region surrounding Japan. Japan will work closely with the international community toward the full implementation of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

Japan's basic policy remains unchanged: Japan will achieve the normalization of relations with North Korea, in accordance with the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang

Declaration, by comprehensively resolving outstanding issues of concern, such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues, as well as settlement of the unfortunate past. In particular, with the aging of the abductees and their families, the abductions issue is a time-sensitive, humanitarian issue with no time to spare, as well as a matter of infringement of the sovereignty of Japan in nature. In order to realize the return of all abductees at the earliest possible date and resolve the outstanding issues of concern between Japan and North Korea, Japan will spare no effort in taking the most effective measures toward that goal.

### **(3) Response to Russia's Aggression against Ukraine**

Russia's aggression against Ukraine is an outrageous act that shakes the very foundations of the international order. In addition, threats by Russia of nuclear use, let alone its use, are inadmissible. In order to stop Russia's aggression against Ukraine and achieve a just and lasting peace as quickly as possible, Japan will work in close cooperation with the international community, including the G7, to strongly promote support for Ukraine and sanctions against Russia. Japan will also strengthen its efforts to support Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction, through collaboration between both the public and private sectors.

While Japan-Russia relations continue to face a difficult situation, it is unacceptable to shift the responsibility onto Japan. Japan will continue to take a firm stance against unilateral disseminations and measures taken by Russia. At the same time, there are pending issues between Japan and Russia that need to be addressed by both countries as neighbors, thus it is essential to communicate appropriately with the Russian side. Japan will firmly maintain its policy of concluding a peace treaty through the resolution of the Northern Territories issue. Regarding the resumption of the Four-Island Exchange and Visit Program, which is one of its top priorities, Japan will continue to strongly urge the Russian side to resume the program, with particular focus on visits to graves in the Northern Territories.

#### (4) Response to the Situation in the Middle East

The Middle East is one of the major sources of energy supply for the international community, including Japan, and peace and stability in the region, including the safety of navigation, are extremely important for energy security as well as the stability and growth of the global economy.

On the other hand, the situation in the Middle East remains uncertain. Regarding the Gaza Strip, in January 2025, the agreement reached by the parties on the release of hostages and a ceasefire is an important step forward, improving the humanitarian situation and de-escalating tensions. The agreement should be implemented steadily and in good faith. The full implementation of the ceasefire agreement between Israel and Lebanon is also essential. In Syria, Japan strongly hopes for an inclusive political solution through dialogue among the Syrian people.

Japan will continue to make efforts as a responsible member of the international community, to de-escalate the situation as quickly as possible, improve the humanitarian situation, and establish a medium to long-term peace and stability in the region, in close coordination with the G7, the UN, and other relevant countries and organizations, as well as by leveraging its good relations with countries in the Middle East. Furthermore, Japan will proactively engage in diplomatic efforts in close cooperation with the countries concerned, while taking into consideration the issues of concern and needs of each country through various dialogue frameworks such as the “Japan-Arab Political Dialogue” and the “Japan-Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC)<sup>(5)</sup> Foreign Ministers’ Meeting.”

#### (5) Regional Diplomacy Issues

While the Global South is enhancing its presence, in order to lead the international community toward cooperation, and to work together to create solutions to various challenges that face the international community, it is important to engage with each country and region

in a fine-tuned manner, taking into account their circumstances and characteristics, through an approach that emphasizes diversity and inclusiveness. Japan will also promote fine-tuned diplomacy through close dialogue, utilizing Official Development Assistance (ODA) and Official Security Assistance (OSA). With regard to ODA, Japan will build new mechanisms, such as promoting the mobilization of private finance.

The stability and prosperity of ASEAN, which is the key of the Indo-Pacific, is extremely important for Japan and the entire Indo-Pacific region. Japan will promote cooperation with Southeast Asia, a region of strategic importance as a marine transportation hub and a global growth center, through initiatives<sup>(6)</sup> such as the outreach activities to Southeast Asia through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the expansion of collaborative projects in a wide range of fields, such as AI and digital, energy, and human resource development in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC).

India is an important partner in the realization of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP),” that shares fundamental values and strategic interests. Japan and India, both democratic countries in Asia, share a great responsibility for peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region and the world. Both Japan and India will further deepen cooperation in a wide range of fields, including economy, security, people-to-people exchanges, etc., under the “Special Strategic and Global Partnership.”

Southwest Asia, including India, is a strategically important region located at a key point along the sea lanes of communication linking Japan with the Middle East and Africa. This region, with a population of approximately 1.9 billion and high economic growth rates, is an attractive market and production base for Japanese companies. The countries in Southwest Asia and Japan have longstanding friendly ties, and over the years, Japan has deepened its engagement in a wide range of areas. Based on this foundation, Japan will further deepen its relations with the countries in Southwest Asia, which are important partners.

<sup>(5)</sup> Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC): Established in 1981 by Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, and Kuwait. The objective of the GCC is to achieve coordination, integration, and interconnection among member states in a wide range of areas, including defense and economy.

<sup>(6)</sup> The OECD is strengthening its relationship with ASEAN member states through outreach activities in Southeast Asia, including the “Southeast Asia Regional Programme (SEARP),” established by Japan’s initiative with the aim of promoting OECD standards in economic and social fields, such as investment, competition, taxation, and small- and medium-sized enterprises. In addition, the number of APEC projects proposed by Japan in collaboration with Southeast Asian countries has been increasing year by year, and the scope of these projects has been expanding to include a wide range of fields such as AI and digital, energy, and human resource development.



The Pacific Islands countries region is a critical region from the perspective of realizing FOIP. Based on the outcome of the 10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM10) held in July 2024, Japan will strongly support the development of Pacific Island countries and their unity, respecting the needs of each country.

Africa, which is expected to account for a quarter of the world's population by 2050, is a young and hopeful continent with great potential for dynamic growth. For over 30 years since the launch of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 1993, Japan has been making efforts based on the spirit of supporting African-led development. Japan will make efforts to co-create solutions to various issues with African countries, building on its past efforts and seizing the opportunity of the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9), to be held in Yokohama in August 2025.

Latin American and the Caribbean (LAC) countries, many of which share values and principles with Japan, are important partners in countering the challenges to the current international order. Japan promotes cooperation with LAC countries through the “Diplomatic Initiative toward Latin America and the Caribbean,” under the policy of recognizing the diversity of LAC and tackling common challenges through dialogue. LAC is an important region for Japan's economic security, producing critical minerals and food resources, and the Nikkei (Japanese immigrants and their descendants) communities, numbering approximately 3.1 million in this region, are the foundation of the friendship and trust. In 2025, Japan will continue to accumulate new cooperation initiatives through such opportunities as diplomatic anniversaries with Brazil and Central American countries, as well as the 30th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP30) hosted by Brazil.

The countries in Central Asia and the Caucasus, while having close historical and economic ties with Russia, have been affected in various aspects by Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Japan will promote cooperation as a partner in maintaining and strengthening

a free and open international order based on the rule of law, while also utilizing frameworks such as the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue.

## **(6) Promotion of Cultural and People-to-people Exchanges**

For the peace and stability of the international community, promoting mutual understanding through exchanges — both between countries and among people — is crucial. Japan will further promote people-to-people exchanges with other countries and actively develop cultural diplomacy, while also focusing on fostering understanding of Japan in other countries.

## **(7) Economic Diplomacy**

To contribute to the growth of Japan's economy and regional revitalization, Japan will support the overseas expansion of Japanese companies, increase exports of Japanese food products, and promote foreign direct investment in Japan. At diplomatic missions overseas, heads of missions lead efforts to assist Japanese companies, working with the officials in charge of cross-border economic affairs and Japanese business support, and will also promote direct investment in Japan.

Japan will promote initiatives to ensure the success of the 2025 World Exposition (Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan) and the International Horticultural Expo 2027, Yokohama, Japan (GREEN×EXPO 2027).

It is also important to work toward maintaining and expanding a rules-based, free, and fair economic order. Japan will make efforts to pursue the WTO reform to further strengthen the multilateral trading system, promote Economic Partnership Agreements, including the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), and establish international rules in emerging fields, such as promotion of the “Hiroshima AI Process”<sup>(7)</sup> and Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT).

## **(8) Promotion of Multilateral Diplomacy**

In 2025, as the UN marks its 80th anniversary, Japan will promote multilateral diplomacy with the UN at its core and work to strengthen UN functions, including

<sup>(7)</sup> Hiroshima AI Process: A process for discussing international rules about generative AI, launched at the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May 2023, under Japan's presidency. In the G7 leaders' statement of December 2023, the “Hiroshima AI Process Comprehensive Policy Framework” including “Hiroshima Process International Guiding Principles for All AI Actors” and “Hiroshima Process International Code of Conduct for Organizations Developing Advanced AI System” was endorsed.

reform of the UN Security Council, with the aim of leading the increasingly divided and confrontational international community toward reconciliation and cooperation.

Japan will continue to promote human rights diplomacy in its own way and diplomacy centered on the participation of women, as the 2025 co-chair of the Women, Peace and Security (WPS) Focal Points Network.

With regard to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, Japan will advance realistic and practical efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons, maintaining and strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime, the only universal framework in which both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon States widely participate. In particular, 2025 marks the 80th year since the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during war, will further promote across generations and borders an accurate understanding of the realities of the atomic bombings, which is the starting point for all measures toward nuclear disarmament.

Regarding the safety of the discharge of ALPS treated water<sup>(8)</sup> into the sea, Japan will maintain close coordination with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), provide detailed explanation both domestically

and internationally, based on scientific evidence in a highly transparent manner, and gain understanding.

### **(9) Resolving Global Issues**

On global issues such as climate change, global health, and disaster risk reduction, Japan will accelerate its efforts to achieve SDGs by the year 2030 based on the concept of human security. Japan will also lead the international rule-making efforts for global issues, looking toward the SDGs and beyond. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) will support activities of Japanese nationals who work in international organizations.

### **(10) Strengthening of the Comprehensive Foreign and Consular Policy Implementation Structure**

In order to achieve these goals, MOFA will work toward strengthening its personnel structure, improving its financial basis, streamlining operations, promoting Digital Transformation (DX), and workstyle reforming, and fundamentally enhancing the diplomatic and consular implementation structure.

MOFA will also promote the strengthening of diplomatic missions overseas to ensure full preparedness for responding to crises, protecting Japanese nationals, and implementing information security measures.

<sup>(8)</sup> ALPS treated water is water which is processed by devices such as ALPS (Advanced Liquid Processing System) to ensure that the radioactive materials other than tritium surely meet the regulatory standards for safety. ALPS treated water is then sufficiently diluted so that the concentrations of the radioactive materials including tritium are far below the regulatory standards for safety, and then finally discharged into the sea.