

## **Proliferation Security Initiative Asia-Pacific Exercise Rotation Joint Statement**

Japan hosted Pacific Shield 2018 as part of the Asia-Pacific Exercise Rotation (APER) from July 24 to 26, 2018, with the participation of approximately 700 officials from 25 countries, to mark the fifteenth anniversary of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).

Since its establishment in 2003 with 11 countries, the PSI has provided an effective forum to enhance cooperation in preventing illicit transfers of weapons of mass destruction (WMD), their delivery systems and related materials. Today, it has grown and 105 countries have endorsed the PSI Statement of Interdiction Principles.

The Asia-Pacific region hosts key global trade routes and large transshipment hubs with a rapidly increasing volume of international trade and thus faces increased threats of WMD proliferation. To address these threats, APER countries have hosted annual exercises: Fortune Guard 2014 in the United States; Maru 2015 in New Zealand; Deep Sabre 2016 in Singapore; and Pacific Protector 2017 in Australia. Next year, the Republic of Korea will host Eastern Endeavor 2019.

Pacific Shield 2018 brought together experts in foreign affairs, maritime security, border control, law enforcement, defense, counter-proliferation and export control. The participants enhanced their ability to undertake timely information-sharing and decision-making, deepened their understanding of PSI activities, and demonstrated their commitment to countering WMD proliferation through the Live Exercise (LIVEX), Port Exercise (PORTEX), Table Top Exercise, and Academic Session.

Participation in the LIVEX and PORTEX included the Royal Australian Air Force, Republic of Korea Coast Guard, United States Indo-Pacific Command, United States Coast Guard, United States Customs and Border Protection, Japan National Police Agency, Kanagawa Prefectural Police, Japan Ministry of Finance, Yokohama Customs, Japan Coast Guard, and Japan Self-Defense Forces. Experts from the Philippines and Thailand participated in the training on radiological materials alongside counterparts from the United States, Australia, the Republic of Korea and Japan.

These exercises have substantially enhanced capabilities and coordination across the region in relation to counter-proliferation activities. APER countries remain committed to supporting PSI objectives with partners in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

Yokosuka, Japan

July 26, 2018

Australia

Japan

New Zealand

The Republic of Korea

Singapore

The United States