

Strategic Cooperation between Japan and UNODC Goals and Priorities 2024-2026

The Government of Japan and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) have developed their cooperation over a decade, through projects on the ground as well as their annual Strategic Policy Dialogue, which started in 2013. Looking ahead to the next decade, and from a mid-to-long standpoint, during the 11th Strategic Policy Dialogue held on 5 July 2024 in Tokyo, both sides established the following strategic goals and priorities of their cooperation for the period from 2024 to 2026, building on the previous Joint Plans of Action. Based on the principle of common strategic goals and priorities, both sides will review the implementation of projects that appear on the Fact Sheet to be updated every year at the Strategic Policy Dialogue. They also decided to modify the goals and priorities as appropriate, responding to various changes in the strategic environment surrounding the policy areas under the mandate of UNODC, including geopolitical crises and socio-economic challenges.

1. Strategic Goals

(1) Promoting the rule of law

- Japan and UNODC are committed to promoting the rule of law, which is the basis of the international order, as well as an essential cornerstone for a fair and just social and economic development within a free and democratic country, and at the national and international levels.
- Japan-UNODC cooperation will continue to prevent, combat and strengthen resilience to various forms of transnational organized crimes such as trafficking in drugs and other illicit goods, as well as persons, terrorism and violent extremism, cybercrime and technology-enabled crimes including online scams (online and telephone fraud) and illegal casinos, corruption, and other manifestations of organized crimes.
- The geographical focuses of the cooperation will particularly be in the Indo-Pacific region with the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a priority, as well as Afghanistan and its neighboring countries, while it will be extended westward to the coast of the Western Indian Ocean and Africa. Particular countries and regions of interest for 2024 are in the section 2 below of this document.

(2) Rules-based maritime order in the Indo-Pacific and beyond

- Ensuring maritime security based on the rule of law is emphasized in the cooperation, which will resonate with Japan's "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" initiative.
- In this context, Japan has been actively cooperating with UNODC in maritime law enforcement (MLE) including through the outstanding expertise of the Japan Coast Guard particularly by its

Mobile Cooperation Team on MLE and Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA) and has enabled many partners to fight against maritime crime, including fishery crime, piracy and armed robbery against ships, UN sanction evasions at sea and maritime-terrorism. This assistance is provided also in line with the Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness Initiative (IPMDA).

- Leveraging this cooperative framework, Japan and UNODC will continue to drive support in this area in particular.
- Reaffirming the central role of ASEAN in realizing FOIP, the two actors confirmed to pursue a possibility of making further use of the Japan-ASEAN Investment Fund (JAIF) for future cooperation projects related to UNODC mandates based on the outcome of the relevant project in 2024.

(3) Targeted and well-coordinated evidence-based assistance backed by networks of both Japan and UNODC, upholding and respecting ownership of partner countries/regions.

- In order to maximize the impact of the assistance, accurate and up-to-date understanding of the situation on the ground in the partner countries/regions based on threat assessments and research that include consultations with local community actors such as civil society, academia and the private sector, with a clear vision for intended targets and available means of assistance, is critical.
- This will be done by making maximum use of the networks of both the offices, field-based programs, and experts of UNODC and overseas missions of Japan. Coordination between both sides at local levels is essential in this context in all stages of the project.
- All UNODC projects funded by Japan will be conducted with utmost respect for the ownership of the partner countries/regions in close cooperation with relevant authorities' stakeholders and institutions of the partner countries, as well as non-governmental stakeholders such as civil society organizations (CSOs), in order for the effects of the assistance to take root over a long-term fostering self-sustaining capability. This will include through the investment of resources in training academies and institutes so that capacity building efforts can continue into the future.

(4) Further raising awareness and visibility of UNODC and its activities

- Japan and UNODC bear in mind that UNODC projects funded by Japan, with more visibility among both the general public and the leaders of partner countries, will be enhanced in its effect with more visibility and that the fact enhanced visibility will expand possibility of further increasing UNODC's financial base.
- Both sides will cooperate to further raise the visibility of UNODC's activities, including those funded by Japan, through all appropriate means both in partner countries/regions and in Japan.
- UNODC welcomes further active participation of Japanese experts including in the areas of illicit

drugs, organized crime, cybercrime and customs control in UNODC projects funded by Japan.

(5) Addressing emerging issues

Japan and UNODC will further explore possible cooperation to contribute to addressing emerging issues such as critical incident response at sea, the use of technology by organized crime groups, protection of submarine cables and illegal mining and trafficking in critical minerals.

(6) Gender equality, WPS as well as empowerment of youth within UNODC mandate areas

- To mainstream gender equality in all its work is a strong UN-wide imperative. The protection and empowerment of individuals and groups in situations of increased vulnerability, including women, children, and youth, particularly in internal and international crises, the promotion of Women, Peace and Security (WPS) initiative and the empowerment of youth are also extremely important in countering terrorism and transnational organized crimes and advancing crime prevention, the strengthening of criminal justice.
- Japan and UNODC confirmed systematic and effective mainstreaming in the work of UNODC specifically by incorporating such perspectives in all programs and projects funded by Japan, which also supports implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development while leaving no one behind.

2. Priority regions with thematic areas

Japan and UNODC prioritize regions with thematic areas to be addressed as indicated below based on unique challenges that each of the regions mentioned in 1(1).

(1) Indo-Pacific Region

- Southeast Asia: Countermeasures against a wide range of manifestations of organized crime i.e. synthetic drugs and precursor chemicals, scam (online and telephone fraud) and illegal casinos, trafficking in persons (TiP) including for forced criminality, new forms of cybercrime and technology enabled crime, illicit financial flows including through cryptocurrencies, countermeasures against illicit manufacture and trafficking of drugs and organized crime in Myanmar, improving border management and reinforcing liaison offices, maritime law enforcement including MDA and UN sanction evasions and counter-terrorism and violent extremism (CT and P/CVE)
- Pacific Region: Enhancement of MLE and MDA capabilities to address illegal activities at sea, strengthening and improving the capacity of law enforcement agencies.
- South Asia: Countermeasures against maritime-related crimes such as illicit drug trafficking, fishery crime, smuggling of various illicit goods and submarine cable protection.
- Afghanistan and its neighboring countries including Central Asian countries: Countermeasures against illicit drugs; Strengthening border control especially against illicit drugs following the end of

the Paris Pact Initiative, which was an international framework on illicit drugs of Afghan origin.

- West Indian Ocean, including the coasts on East Africa: Strengthening maritime law enforcement capacity against human trafficking, fishery crime, submarine cable protection, etc. in addition to countermeasures against trafficking illicit drugs as the “southern route” of illicit drugs from Afghanistan.

(2) Africa

- Sahel and Mozambique: CT and P/CVE including in prison settings and the prevention of organized crime, especially among children and youth, concerns of which are growing due to unstable socio-economic conditions and violent conflicts, drug prevention and treatment, including through the engagement of non-governmental stakeholders.

- Gulf of Guinea: Maritime law enforcement on illicit drug trafficking and piracy; Counter-piracy including strengthening of legal systems

- Partnership with TICAD 9: Japan and UNODC will continue to strongly support African-led development towards the 9th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 9) in 2025, based on the outcomes of the TICAD 8 and the UNODC’s Strategic Vision for Africa 2030. Japan and UNODC will consider ways for UNODC to actively engage in TICAD Process including TICAD 9 in 2025.

(3) Ukraine

- Strengthen border control measures, in particular Customs with possible involvement of Japanese expertise, to mitigate the impact of the Russia’s aggression against Ukraine.

- Increasing cooperation and expanding assistance to supporting jointly anti-corruption efforts by anti-corruption agencies, other authorities and non-traditional stakeholders including youth and CSOs and in various key sectors (e.g. local recovery, infrastructure, energy, law enforcement, borders, audit, private sector).

- Strengthening capacities of criminal justice actors to detect, investigate and prosecute trafficking in persons and illicit firearms.

3. Defining further Partnership between Japan and UNODC

(1) Strengthening personnel representation of Japan

- UNODC is fully aware of the interest of Japan in strengthening Japanese personnel representations in UNODC, through internal promotion, recruitment of Junior Professional Officers (JPOs) as regular staff based on a fair assessment of their good performance and appointment of qualified external Japanese candidates.

- Japan and UNODC will consider appropriate and impartial measures that could be taken to address

this interest, such as outreach efforts to attract qualified Japanese candidates to apply for positions both in HQs and in UNODC field offices, including at senior level.

- Japan will also contribute to the work of UNODC in terms of human resources through sending outstanding personnels to UNODC from government agencies including the Ministry of Justice and the Japan Coast Guard, and UNODC will provide utmost consideration and favorable treatment to it within the scope of the UN recruitment system.

- Increasing the number of Japanese staff members in UNODC, ideally to 32, in proportion to the financial contribution from Japan, including at senior level. Japan and UNODC will enhance their joint efforts such as career seminars for youth in Japan to be materialized in such form as a list of “talent pool”.

- Japan and UNODC decided to strengthen joint efforts to cultivate youth-level human resources in developing countries to build future UNODC workforce, including as part of projects funded by Japan, and will work on building networks of youth across countries and regions.

(2) Governance and Finance

Ensuring accountability through transparent, responsible, and rapid reporting by UNODC on the activities funded by Japan.

(3) Follow-up to the Kyoto Congress legacies

- Japan and UNODC recommit to continue with the effective and steady implementation of the Kyoto Declaration adopted as the outcome document of the 14th UN Conference on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in March 2021. In this context, UNODC appreciates the development for new model strategies on reducing reoffending under the leadership of Japan.

- Both sides also recommit to contribute to the promotion of crime prevention, criminal justice, and the rule of law for the next Congress to be hosted by the UAE in 2026.

Signed in Tokyo, 5 July 2024

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