

U.S.-Japan Joint Committee Statement

The strength of our Alliance is grounded in a commitment to close coordination that is critical to our enduring partnership. Through constant communication, the Government of Japan and the U.S. Government have addressed issues of mutual concern over the years. Under the framework of the Joint Committee established by the Japan-U.S. Status of Forces Agreement, the two Governments made agreements and established practices designed to notify one another of a wide variety of issues. Under these agreements and practices, the two Governments appropriately exchange information including notifications of incidents and accidents affecting Japanese public and U.S. Forces in Japan. Today, our bilateral communication remains strong, and we reaffirmed our pledge to constant communication and close coordination to maintain our strategic partnership and make our Alliance more robust.

The purposes of the bilateral communication processes concerning incidents and accidents affecting Japanese public and U.S. Forces in Japan are to further supplement existing communications channels, and minimize the impact of incidents and accidents while enabling U.S. Forces to fulfill the responsibilities of the United States outlined in the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty for the security of Japan and the maintenance of international peace and security in the Far East. Implementation of these processes must ensure the protection of: privacy, sensitivities of individuals involved in incidents and accidents, law enforcement and investigatory processes, and due process rights enshrined in the constitutions of Japan and the United States. The two Governments reaffirmed that the party who first obtains information about those incidents and accidents should share it with the other party expeditiously and that such information should be shared promptly with the necessary authorities to ensure swift response in light of the purposes of the bilateral communication processes.