

Japan-UK Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue 2026 – Joint press statement¹

Japan and the UK are the closest of friends and partners, connected by our shared values of freedom, democracy, rule of law, fundamental human rights, and free, open and fair trade. As Enhanced Global Strategic Partners, a status confirmed by the Hiroshima Accord issued in May 2023, we reaffirmed our commitment to working together to tackle the unprecedented global challenges we now face, promoting security, resilience, and prosperity, and advancing the vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific. In this context, we welcomed the significant progress that has been made in advancing cooperation across a wide range of fields and our shared commitment to build an even deeper partnership.

Defence and Security Cooperation

Recognising that the security of the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific are inseparable, we reaffirmed our commitment to strengthen our shared security capabilities to help safeguard global peace and stability. We reconfirmed the importance of accelerating our industrial and technological cooperation in the joint development of the next-generation fighter aircraft, under the Global Combat Air Programme (GCAP) with Italy. We welcomed the significant progress of bilateral defence cooperation and an ambitious programme of larger and more complex joint exercises and reciprocal visits as demonstrated by the visit of the UK Carrier Strike Group (CSG) to Japan in summer 2025, as well as the visit of the Japan Air Self-Defense Force to North America and Europe (Atlantic Eagles) in autumn 2025, to both of which the Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA) was applied. The UK also welcomed Japan's approach to review the Three Principles on Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and its Implementation Guidelines, which would strengthen regional peace and security through enhanced cooperation between like-minded countries.

We concurred on the importance of deepening our security cooperation. We reaffirmed the importance of our cyber collaboration under the "Strategic Cyber Partnership," which was elevated to its current status at the Japan-UK summit in January 2026, and our shared commitment to address hybrid threats, including activity against critical undersea infrastructure. We will further develop bilateral cooperation on crisis management through the implementation of the recently signed Memorandum of Cooperation on Mutual Assistance to Japanese and British Nationals Abroad.

With a view to advancing closer consultation on defence and security issues, we look forward to holding a Japan-UK Foreign and Defence Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") within this year, as confirmed by our two leaders.

Economic Prosperity and Economic Security

Firmly recognising that our economic security is built upon the stability, resilience and dynamism of our economies, we reaffirmed our commitment to deepening our economic relationship to boost innovation, create shared prosperity and increase trade and investment. We are determined to continue to work together to champion a free, fair, and resilient rules-based international economic order particularly through the

¹ The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, H.E. Mr. MOTEGI Toshimitsu, and the Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Affairs of the UK, the Rt Hon Yvette Cooper, met in Tokyo on 20 April 2026 for the tenth Japan-UK Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue.

Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the Japan-UK Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (Japan-UK CEPA). We recognise the critical importance of urgent, deep, comprehensive and inclusive reform of the WTO, and we will take concrete steps to support and strengthen the multilateral trading system.

We expressed serious concerns over all forms of economic coercion, and the use of non-market policies and practices that are leading to overcapacity and market distortions, as well as export restrictions, particularly on critical minerals, that could have a significant negative impact on global supply chains.

We reaffirmed our commitment to the Japan-UK Economic 2+2 Ministers' Meeting ("Economic 2+2") which held its inaugural meeting in March 2025 and looked forward to holding the next Economic 2+2 in the near future. We also confirmed our intention to further strengthen bilateral cooperation based on the Industrial Strategy Partnership and the Economic Security Partnership, that has already led to concrete commercial outcomes, and acknowledged the progress made on practical steps to advance cooperation.

We confirmed our intention to further promote bilateral scientific and technological cooperation to foster robust economic growth.

We recognised the importance of continued coordination to support the stability of energy markets, the safety and security of supply chains and to take necessary measures to support global energy supplies. We reconfirmed our commitment to strengthen our partnership on clean energy - including through building further collaboration on floating/deepwater offshore wind, nuclear and fusion.

Regional Situations

We recognised the importance of UK-Japan cooperation in addressing regional and international issues of mutual interest. We reaffirmed our unwavering support for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity within its internationally recognised borders, in accordance with the principles of the UN Charter, and renewed our determination to work together, including with G7 partners, to sustain pressure on Russia, including through sanctions and other measures, in pursuit of a just and lasting peace. We underlined our continued commitment to support Ukraine and importance of strengthening our assistance to Ukraine, including deepening UK-Japan cooperation on Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction, by working through international coordination mechanisms such as the G7 and the Ukraine Donor Platform.

Regarding Iran, we stressed the importance of ongoing diplomatic efforts and expressed our strong hope that a complete and lasting cessation of hostilities will be promptly realised through talks. We concurred on the importance of an immediate and unconditional reopening of the Strait of Hormuz and respect for fundamental navigational rights, in accordance with international law as reflected in UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). We reaffirmed our commitment to continue diplomatic efforts toward peace and stability in the Middle East, in close cooperation with the international community. We shared the view that we would continue to work for the stabilisation and the reconstruction of Gaza, including support for the

“Comprehensive Plan to End the Gaza Conflict”, upscaling aid access, the full and quick implementation of phase 2 of the Plan, and reaffirmed our commitment to a lasting and sustainable peace in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council, on the basis of a two-state solution. We reiterated our strong opposition to the expansion of settlements and settler violence in the West Bank, and need to stabilise the Palestinian economy.

We reiterated our serious concerns over the situations in the Indo-Pacific, including the East China Sea and the South China Sea, and strongly opposed any unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion. We emphasised the universal and unified character of UNCLOS, the legal framework for governing all activities in the oceans and the seas. We encouraged the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues through constructive dialogue. We expressed deep concern that North Korea reiterated its intent to expand its nuclear and ballistic missile programs and reaffirmed our commitment to the complete denuclearisation of North Korea in accordance with the relevant UN Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. We expressed serious concern over and the need to address together North Korea’s malicious cyber activities, including cryptocurrency thefts and its IT worker activities, and increasing military cooperation with Russia. We emphasised the importance of resolving the abductions issue immediately.

We reiterated our deep concern about the impact of ongoing conflict and instability in Africa, including the Sahel and the Great Lakes regions. We reaffirmed the shared priority of securing a ceasefire to end the fighting in Sudan, and addressing the dire humanitarian crisis sparked by this conflict. We underscored the importance of collective international pressure on the warring parties to provide safe, full and unimpeded humanitarian access into and across Sudan.

Global Issues and Multilateral Cooperation

We confirmed our commitment to addressing global issues despite the growing challenges of multilateral cooperation and to strengthening our development partnership, by jointly advancing essential multilateral reforms, promoting third country cooperation to strengthen energy resilience including through energy transition and secure critical minerals, and cooperating closely for stabilisation and reconstruction in Ukraine and Palestine. We reaffirmed our commitment to the UN Secretary-General’s reform initiatives, and to realising expansion of both permanent and non-permanent membership categories of the UNSC, including support for permanent membership for G4 including Japan. We concurred on enhancing cooperation on arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation efforts that reflect the current security environment, including in the context of the upcoming 2026 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). We reaffirmed our commitment to achieving net zero by 2050 and to keeping the Paris Agreement goal of limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees within reach.

Finally, we welcomed the invitation for Prime Minister Takaichi to visit the UK and Chequers later this year, extended by Prime Minister Starmer at the Japan-UK Summit in January 2026. We confirmed our determination to elevate Japan-UK cooperation to new heights, building on the steady progress of cooperation between the two countries.