

## New Plan for a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)”

The Indo-Pacific region, which extends from the Asia-Pacific Ocean through the Indian Ocean to the Middle East and Africa, is the core of vitality for the world and home to half of the world’s population. To establish a free and open order based on the rule of law with the countries and regions of the Indo-Pacific and with various partners in the international community that share these ideals, Japan has promoted efforts to realize the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” that Japan advocated in 2016.

On March 20, 2023, Prime Minister Kishida, who was on a visit to India, delivered a policy speech entitled “the Future of the Indo-Pacific—Japan’s New Plan for a ‘Free and Open Indo-Pacific’ — ‘Together with India, as an Indispensable Partner.’” With this speech, he announced Japan’s new plan for a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP),” which launches the four pillars of cooperation for FOIP: (1) Principles for Peace and Rules for Prosperity, (2) Addressing Challenges in an Indo-Pacific Way, (3) Multi-layered Connectivity, and (4) Extending Efforts for Security and Safe Use of the “Sea” to the “Air.”

The new plan reaffirms FOIP’s core principles of “freedom,” “openness,” “diversity,” “inclusiveness,” and the “rule of law” at a time when the international community is at history’s turning point, and states that efforts to realize FOIP will be

strengthened. As part of such efforts, Prime Minister Kishida announced that Japan would mobilize a total of more than \$75 billion in public and private funds in the Indo-Pacific region by 2030 in infrastructure and grow together with other countries.

The Development Cooperation Charter, revised in June 2023, states the maintenance and strengthening of a free and open international order based on the rule of law as a priority policy for Japan’s development cooperation. In particular, under the vision of FOIP, the revised Charter demonstrates Japan’s strong determination to endeavor to promote these efforts and cooperate with developing countries to enable them to proactively engage in such an international order and enjoy its fruits, free from force or coercion.

Japan has promoted various initiatives that are in line with the four pillars of the new plan for a FOIP. One example is the construction of a new port in Patimban, located in the eastern part of the Jakarta metropolitan area in Indonesia. This project aims to strengthen the logistics functions of the metropolitan area with the construction of a container terminal at Patimban Port along with a car terminal and other facilities. This will help resolve capacity shortages at ports in the Jakarta metropolitan area, and facilitate exports by improving the efficiency of cargo logistics, which, in turn, will boost regional and international economic connectivity. The development of Patimban Port, which has good access from auto-related local manufacturers, including Japanese-affiliated companies, will contribute to the increase in exports from Indonesia, benefiting Japanese companies.

As this example shows, facilitating smooth logistics by securing connectivity also contributes to supporting Japanese companies’ exports to the Indo-Pacific region and overseas expansions. Japan supports developing countries to build “quality infrastructure” toward the realization of connectivity across the Indo-Pacific. In doing so, Japan works through its unique technical cooperation and human resources development so that the competitiveness of Japanese companies in ODA tendering and trust in Japan can be enhanced.



Access road to Patimban Port in Indonesia (Photo: Oriental Consultants Global Co., Ltd.)

Japan also contributes to securing maritime peace and security. For example, in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, a logistics hub for a large number of Japan-related vessels, Japan utilizes ODA to support capacity building for anti-piracy measures in coastal countries, thereby reducing the number of piracy incidents. Similarly, in the Indian Ocean, Japan contributes to ensuring marine traffic safety by providing capacity building assistance to coast guard agencies for maritime rescue, technical cooperation for nautical chart preparation, and support for enhancing Vessel Traffic Service (VTS).

Furthermore, Japan strengthens the promotion and consolidation of the rule of law in developing countries by assisting in the development of legal systems and judicial reforms. In this era where the international community faces compound crises, these efforts become increasingly important. Japan contributes to establishing good governance

in developing countries, creating a foundation that is crucial to the realization of sustainable growth, and fostering an effective trade and investment environment for Japanese companies’ overseas expansions.

Japan is an island country and the fourth-largest trading country in the world. Its industries and the lives of its people are heavily reliant on maritime transportation and cargo. From this perspective, securing connectivity and ensuring the safety of sea lanes are important for Japan’s economic, energy, and food security. The stability and prosperity of Japan and the Indo-Pacific region cannot be realized without a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” where diverse people, goods, and wisdom are actively exchanged, supported by highly transparent rules. Japan will continue to make efforts to realize FOIP, while aiming to maximize the impact of its development cooperation, with ODA at its core.



Prime Minister Kishida delivering a policy speech and announcing Japan’s new plan for a FOIP at the Indian Council of World Affairs (ICWA) (Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



Video “New Plan for a ‘Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)’”



JICA and the Japan Coast Guard conducting an arresting technique training course for the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency (MMEA)



A seminar for students at a school of judges and prosecutors conducted under the “Legal and Judicial Development Project” in Cambodia (Photo: JICA)



## The Second Global Refugee Forum – Co-Convenor Japan’s Effort –

The number of forced displacements has more than doubled in the last decade, and the number of people forced to leave their homes exceeded 100 million for the first time in 2022.\*1 This surge is due to prolonged man-made conflicts around the world. While refugees are still unable to return to their home countries, new crises such as Russia’s aggression against Ukraine are causing more outflows. Recent intensified natural disasters caused by climate change have further worsened this situation.

In 2018, the Global Compact on Refugees (GCR) was adopted by the UN General Assembly as a new international framework for refugee assistance. Its aims were; (1) to ease the pressures on host countries, (2) to enhance refugee self-reliance, (3) to expand access to third country solutions, and (4) to support conditions in countries of origin for return in safety and dignity. The Global Refugee Forum (GRF) is a follow-up meeting to the GCR that is held every four years, with the aim of sharing efforts to resolve refugee issues and encouraging cooperation among the international community. The first meeting was held in December 2019.

The second GRF was held in December 2023, with more than 4,200 participants from countries and regions around the world, and Foreign Minister Kamikawa attended from Japan, which served as a co-convenor along with France, Colombia, Jordan, and Uganda.

At the opening ceremony of the second GRF, Foreign Minister Kamikawa stressed in her statement that to halt the worsening humanitarian situation, we must all envision a future where each and every refugee and displaced person can have opportunities to work hard to make their dreams come true. She pointed out that women and children are particularly vulnerable among refugees and displaced persons, and that the concept of Women, Peace and Security (WPS)\*2 is essential when addressing forced displacement. She also explained Japan’s efforts to support the self-reliance of the displaced both overseas and within Japan, and to ease the pressures on host countries. Moreover, the Minister strongly called for greater unity and cooperation in the international community, and announced that Japan would expand the efforts of the Humanitarian-Development-Peace (HDP) Nexus\*3 as a platform for collaboration among the international community.

Foreign Minister Kamikawa held bilateral meetings with refugee host countries of Jordan, Lebanon, Iran, and Uganda, which participated in the GRF. Minister Kamikawa highly valued the fact that these countries contribute to peace and stability in the region by receiving many refugees despite their own difficulties, and announced the intention of the Government of Japan to strengthen support to ease the pressures on the respective countries. At the bilateral meeting between Japan and France, the two foreign ministers concurred to further strengthen cooperation



Refugees and the people in the host community participating in a rice cultivation workshop in Uganda (Photo: JICA)

under an “Exceptional Partnership,” by following up on the Roadmap on Japan-France Cooperation issued by the leaders of the two countries.



Displaced women in Bangladesh receiving sewing skill training as part of self-reliance support, conducted by UNIQLO in collaboration with UNHCR (Photo: Fast Retailing Co., Ltd.)

Japan organized a dialogue with representatives from international organizations on the occasion of the GRF, titled “WPS + Innovation – from the field of humanitarian aid especially for refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs).” Foreign Minister Kamikawa heard from the representatives of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) about the challenges they face on the ground and asked about the role they expect from Japan. Foreign Minister Kamikawa stated that she would like to apply WPS specifically to the current situation in Ukraine and the Middle East, as well as issues faced by countries in Africa and Latin America, while applying the knowledge gained from the international organizations to future international assistance from the perspective of WPS.

The second GRF recommended that multiple countries and organizations form multi-stakeholder pledges (MSP) for various types of support and work together under the pledges. A total of 43 MSPs were announced in areas such as HDP nexus, gender equality, peacebuilding, and education, which will be led by the lead countries and organizations of each MSP over the next four years.



Foreign Minister Kamikawa making a statement at the opening ceremony of the Second Global Refugee Forum

\*1 UNHCR “Global Trends Report 2022”

<https://www.unhcr.org/global-trends-report-2022>

\*2 See Part III, Section 3 (6) on page 81.

\*3 See 38 on page 45.

Human security is a concept that focuses on each and every human being, and advances nation and community building through the empowerment and protection of individuals to live happily, in dignity, and free from fear and want. Japan has long promoted the concept of human security in the international community. Japan's Development Cooperation Charter has also positioned it as the guiding principle that lies at the foundation of Japan's development cooperation. Human security, which puts the spotlight on individuals, is also aligned with the principles of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),\*1 which aim to realize a society that "leaves no one behind."

The revised Development Cooperation Charter, effective from June 2023, continues to position human security as its guiding principle and sets the realization of "human security" in the new era with compound crises as one of Japan's basic policies. This means that, in addition to continuing "investment in people," such as protection and empowerment of individuals, Japan will set the solidarity of various actors as the pillars of human security, and will conduct development cooperation, making human agency a central focus. This idea is based on the 2022 Special Report on human security published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), which advocates the need for human security in the new era that incorporates the concept of "solidarity," into the two conventional pillars of human security, "protection" and "empowerment."

The Government of Japan has made various efforts to promote human security so far, both in terms of the dissemination of the concept and its practical application on the ground. Under Japan's leadership, the UN General Assembly unanimously adopted a resolution on a shared understanding on human security in 2012. Japan also proactively promotes the concept of human security in the international community, such as by holding symposiums on human security. At the G7 Hiroshima Summit in May 2023, as the holder of the G7 Presidency, Japan demonstrated to developing countries facing compound crises its stance of focusing on its efforts to support people who tend to be in vulnerable situations based on the concept of human security in the new era.

Furthermore, through Japan's leadership, the UN Trust Fund for Human Security was established in 1999 to promote the implementation of human security in the field. By FY2022, Japan contributed a total of approximately ¥50 billion to this fund. The trust fund has supported 293 projects implemented by UN agencies to ensure human security in over 100 countries and regions by the end of 2022.

In January 2024, a UN report entitled the "Human Security: Report of Secretary-General" was released. It is expected that this report will further encourage discussions on human security at the UN. Japan, which has advocated human security, intends to actively lead these discussions.

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\*1 See the glossary on page 32.



March 2023, Japan announcing its contribution to UNDP and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) through the UN Trust Fund for Human Security to support displaced Ukrainians and their host communities in Moldova (Photo: UNDP Moldova)

## Promotion of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) – Japan's Efforts at the Midpoint Year toward Achieving the SDGs –

The international community is at history's turning point and facing compound crises. These include poverty and disparity, war and conflict, terrorism, refugees and displaced persons, infectious diseases, natural disasters, climate change, and environmental issues.

The spread of COVID-19, Russia's aggression against Ukraine, and the escalating tension in the situation between Israel and Palestine, among others, reiterate that these global issues closely link to interrelated and compound risks of food and energy security and hit vulnerable people harder, threatening their human security.

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs),\*<sup>1</sup> adopted by the UN in September 2015, are the agenda for the entire international community to tackle global issues in an integrated manner, including peace, the rule of law, and human rights, leaving no one behind. Japan, as a peace-loving nation and a responsible major power, is in a position to lead international cooperation, including for the SDGs, based on the concept of "human security." In line with these views, Japan will continue to work to address and prevent interrelated and compound risks and contribute to the achievement of the SDGs by the international community.



Achieving the SDGs requires cooperation within the international community beyond the conventional concept of developed and developing countries. It also requires action not only by governments and development agencies, but by all stakeholders, including private companies, local public entities, research institutions, civil society, and individuals. The Government of Japan provides multifaceted support by linking various initiatives using ODA as a catalyst and taking a deep approach so that the entire international community, including developing countries, can achieve the SDGs.

The Government of Japan actively works on achieving the SDGs both in Japan and abroad. It established the SDGs Promotion Headquarters, with the Prime Minister as its head and all the Cabinet Ministers as its members, and formulated the "SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles," which sets the direction for the promotion of the SDGs.



Prime Minister Kishida delivering a statement at the SDG Summit 2023  
(Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

While 2023 marked the "midpoint" toward achieving the SDGs by 2030, their achievement is in jeopardy as the international community faces compound crises. Amid such a difficult situation, at the "Summit for a New Global Financing Pact" held in June 2023, then Foreign Minister Hayashi emphasized the importance of three forms of solidarity: "solidarity with the private sector," "solidarity in financing," and "solidarity for ownership." At the SDG Summit\*<sup>2</sup> in September, Prime Minister Kishida reiterated that, with the international community facing various challenges, now is the time to return to the starting point of the SDGs: the promise to "Leave No One Behind." He then emphasized that "human security," which Japan has consistently advocated, is a key to achieving the SDGs based on "human dignity," expressing Japan's determination to strongly lead the international community's efforts to achieve the SDGs and thereby open the way to the future. Additionally, in December, Japan revised the "SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles" to better align them with the challenges of the new era. Based on the revised new Implementation Guiding Principles, Japan will continue to work toward achieving the SDGs with the international community as a whole, while strengthening collaboration with various domestic and international actors.

\*1 See the glossary on page 32.

\*2 The SDG Summit is held every four years under the auspices of the UN General Assembly with the aim of accelerating the implementation of the SDGs. In 2023, it was convened on September 18 and 19, and Prime Minister Kishida participated in the Leader's Dialogue "Unity and Solidarity" on September 19.



## ODA Public Relations – In Order to Make ODA Feel Closer and More Familiar –

### ● Information Dissemination about Development Cooperation

According to a public opinion survey\*<sup>1</sup> conducted by Japan's Cabinet Office in 2022, 84% of respondents answered that in development cooperation in the future "Japan should more actively promote development cooperation" or "The current level of development cooperation is appropriate," indicating a positive evaluation for development cooperation. This positive public opinion in Japan can be attributed to the growing awareness of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It has also been brought about, amid the compound crises the international community faces, including Russia's aggression against Ukraine, by the broader understanding of the need for all countries to cooperate and help each other in addressing global issues such as disasters and infectious diseases, of the importance of development cooperation for ensuring a stable supply of energy resources and for increasing trust in Japan in the international community, and of the importance of development cooperation as a means for strategically advancing Japan's foreign policy.

This column introduces MOFA's various initiatives for information dissemination and public policy communication on the significance of Japan's development cooperation.

### ● Revision of the Development Cooperation Charter and Dissemination of the Significance of ODA

In June 2023, the Development Cooperation Charter was revised for the first time in eight years, against the backdrop of major changes in the situation since its formulation in 2015. In line with this, from the perspective of disseminating the significance and achievements of ODA to a wide range of people, MOFA prepared new materials that focused on the benefits of ODA to Japan and posted them on the ministry's ODA website as the "Significance of Japan's Development Cooperation."\*<sup>2</sup> MOFA also prepared a series of good examples of ODA that have also benefitted Japan under the following themes:\*<sup>3</sup> "Connections through the ocean," "Support for Japanese companies' overseas expansion," and "Strengthening trust in Japan from the international community through ODA and its benefits for Japan's national interests." They were delivered through the ODA email newsletter in three installments.

From October to December, Mr. Kusakabe, Ambassador for Civil Society, from the International Cooperation Bureau, MOFA, appeared in a public relations program of the Japan Platform



Significance of Japan's Development Cooperation (Japanese only)



A scene in which the main character YOSHIZAWA Mizuki (on the right) hands the Maternal and Child Health Handbook to Lien in the first TV drama "First Step: Sekai wo Tsunagu Ainoshirushi" (Japanese only)



Mr. Kusakabe, Ambassador for Civil Society, from MOFA (on the right) appearing in a talk show with current university students as part of information dissemination efforts for the younger generations (Photo: JPF)



(Japanese only)

(JPF)\*<sup>4</sup> on YouTube, an online video sharing service, to disseminate information targeting the younger generations. He talked about the significance and initiatives of Japan's development cooperation in a talk show with current university students (11 episodes).\*<sup>5</sup>

### ● TV Dramas/Documentaries

MOFA also works on producing public relations contents that make use of high-profile performers in order to deliver its message to a broader range of the public.

One of the initiatives is the production of a TV drama series, "The First Step" with the cooperation of Yoshimoto Kogyo Co., Ltd. The series is navigated by TV personality and author Mr. MATAYOSHI Naoki and is set at MOFA's International Cooperation Bureau, as well as at international cooperation sites. In 2023, MOFA produced its second episode "First Step 2: Sekai wo Tsunagu Yuuki no Kotoba"\*<sup>6</sup> that depicts the growth of the characters under the theme of disaster risk reduction cooperation utilizing Japan's experience and knowledge acquired through repeated natural disasters. In this production, the concept of "Build Back Better," which was proposed by Japan at the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai City in 2015 and became a universal term in the field of disaster risk reduction, is used as a keyword. In 2022, MOFA produced the first episode "The First Step: Sekai wo Tsunagu Ainoshirushi,"\*<sup>7</sup> which transmits stories of parent-child affections and the growth of characters, revolving around the Maternal and Child Health Handbook, Japan's initiative introduced to the world through ODA. Both episodes are being broadcast and transmitted.

In addition, amid the occurrence of events around the world that shake the world order, including Russia's aggression against Ukraine, MOFA produced documentary videos titled "Japanese



The second episode of the TV drama series "The First Step 2: Sekai wo Tsunagu Yuuki no Kotoba" (Japanese only), set in MOFA's International Cooperation Bureau and showing scenes of actual international cooperation



Women Delivering Hope in a World of Uncertainty,"\*<sup>8</sup> narrated by freelance newscaster Ms. NAKANO Minako. With the diplomatically important "Women, Peace and Security (WPS)" agenda in mind, those videos focus dynamically on women on various topics. In the field of NGOs, the video features conflict prevention initiatives in countries in civil war or other crises, such as South Sudan. As for the efforts of government agencies, it focuses on the JICA Japan Disaster Relief Team, which utilizes the international standard medical record Minimum Data Set (MDS), devised in the Philippines and developed in Japan, in such areas as supporting displaced Ukrainians in Moldova. Regarding the field of international organizations, humanitarian aid efforts for women and the poor in Afghanistan are featured.



The documentary video "Japanese Women Delivering Hope in a World of Uncertainty"



### ● Global Festa JAPAN 2023

In 2023, the 32nd international cooperation event "Global Festa JAPAN 2023" was held on September 30 and October 1, with approximately 39,000 participants, which was more than the previous year. With the theme "International Cooperation to Build the World – The More Friends the Better!," the number of participating organizations was increased by about 30 from the previous year, in the hope of increasing the number of people who would participate in international cooperation to create a better world. More than 130 organizations involved in international cooperation, including NGOs, international organizations, companies, universities, and foreign embassies in Tokyo, exhibited and reported their activities, sold goods, and held stage programs with various guests and hands-on workshops.

At Global Festa, MOFA carried out stage programs, including the opening ceremony, with the theme of utilizing ODA for overseas expansion of small and medium-sized enterprises that do not usually have much contact with ODA. It was followed by panel discussions featuring social entrepreneurs and people involved in startups on the theme of young people's challenges to address social issues, and the production announcement of documentary videos entitled "Japanese Women Delivering Hope in a World of Uncertainty." MOFA also held an award presentation ceremony for its photo contest, which has become customary.\*<sup>9</sup> This year's contest, with the theme of "Building the future with friends," received many entries that convey the feeling of "love, friendship, and growth." The award-winning works were selected from a record 422 entries, focusing on heartwarming works such as family love, friendship, and natural scenery that we want to preserve for the future. Other



A panel discussion with the theme "Let's talk with young people about ODA! Young people's challenge to solve social issues," a stage program at Global Festa JAPAN 2023

programs included a special lecture by Mr. Ikegami Akira and Ms. Masuda Yuriya entitled "Plain Explanation of ODA found in the international community!" For the sub-stage programs, an international organization career seminar was held by MOFA's Recruitment Center for International Organizations, followed by activity reports from NGOs working on international cooperation, attended by MOFA officials from the Non-Governmental Organizations Cooperation Division of the International Cooperation Bureau and staff members from NGOs. The results are available in the event report\*<sup>10</sup> on the ODA website.



A view of the Lobby Gallery, where exhibits of foreign embassies stationed in Japan, international organizations, and other participants were held. MOFA also had a booth to provide an easy-to-understand explanation of how Japan's ODA contributes to the world.

### ● ODA Email Newsletter, ODA Public Relations X (formerly Twitter)

MOFA publishes an ODA email newsletter once a month, the content of which is also available on the ministry's website. In addition, MOFA disseminates information about ODA on the social media X (formerly Twitter). As of December 2023, the number of email newsletter subscribers is approximately 20,000, and the number of followers on X is over 12,000.



MOFA's ODA X account (Japanese only)



ODA email newsletter (Japanese only)

- \*<sup>1</sup> The FY2022 Public Opinion Survey on Diplomacy took place from October to November 2022. The Cabinet Office entrusted it to a survey organization, which implemented a mail survey of 3,000 Japanese nationals aged 18 and over across Japan (Cabinet Office Public Opinion Survey: <https://survey.gov-online.go.jp/r04/r04-gaiko/index.html> (in Japanese only)).
- \*<sup>2</sup> Significance of Japan's Development Cooperation [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/about/oda/page24\\_000194.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/about/oda/page24_000194.html) (in Japanese only)
- \*<sup>3</sup> ODA email newsletter No. 465–No. 467, ODA that enriches the world and Japan (Cases 1 to 3 regarding benefits to Japan) <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/mail/bn.html> (in Japanese only)
- \*<sup>4</sup> See the glossary on page 137.
- \*<sup>5</sup> JPF public relations program, MOFA vs. Current university students. No. 38–No. 48 <https://www.youtube.com/@milakarma> (in Japanese only)
- \*<sup>6</sup> The First Step 2: Sekai wo Tsunagu Yuuki no Kotoba [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/sanka/page22\\_001633.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/sanka/page22_001633.html) (in Japanese only)
- \*<sup>7</sup> The First Step: Sekai wo Tsunagu Ainoshirushi [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/sanka/page22\\_001443.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/sanka/page22_001443.html) (in Japanese only)
- \*<sup>8</sup> Japanese Women Delivering Hope in a World of Uncertainty [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pgx1\\_EPVos](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6pgx1_EPVos) [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpzl-gQ\\_RkY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bpzl-gQ_RkY) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PvuO3xbNRZs>
- \*<sup>9</sup> Report on the MOFA Photo Contest "Building the future with friends" [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/press/event/page23\\_001395.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/press/event/page23_001395.html) (in Japanese only)  
See also Special Photograph Collection (1) on page viii for the photographs submitted to the contest.
- \*<sup>10</sup> Global Festa JAPAN 2023 event report [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/press/event/page22\\_001739.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/press/event/page22_001739.html) (in Japanese only)