

Message from the Minister for Foreign Affairs

It is essential that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) fulfills its accountability to the public and gains greater understanding and support in its efforts to actively carry out foreign policy. These ideas form the basis for the publication of the *Diplomatic Bluebook 2006*.

The year 2005 was a defining year that marked the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II. Post-war Japan has been engaging in diplomacy, placing as the cornerstone of its nation-building universal values achieved by humankind during the course of history, namely, respect for freedom and democracy, basic human rights, and the market economy. Japan has achieved dramatic economic development thanks to its diligent labor force and support from the international community, while also contributing to the world as a nation striving for peace.

In the 2006 edition of the *Diplomatic Bluebook*, the first half of Chapter 1 looks back at the path Japan has traveled over the 60 years since the end of World War II and reviews Japan's diplomatic efforts to build a peaceful and stable international order having gone through its own post-war reconstruction. The second half of Chapter 1 provides an overview of the international situation and Japan's diplomatic efforts in 2005. Notably, it offers an overview of: Japan's efforts toward the reform of the United Nations (UN) and the country's permanent membership on the Security Council; Japan's relations with its Asian neighbors; progress in the Middle East peace process; the holding of the 2005 World Exposition, Aichi, Japan; and Japanese initiatives in the area of Official Development Assistance (ODA). Chapters 2 and 3 are devoted to "Japan's Regional Diplomacy" and "Japan's Foreign Policy in Major Diplomatic Fields," respectively. Chapter 4, "Japanese Nationals Active in the International Community and Diplomatic Roles," describes the activities of Japanese people involved in international organizations and businesses as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Chapter 5, "Japanese Diplomacy That Has Public Understanding and Support," introduces MOFA's efforts in public relations and public hearings concerning foreign policy, and also illustrates improvements of MOFA's institutional base to carry out Japan's diplomacy.

With a view to making a stride toward the future and to resolving the various problems facing the world, Japan is increasingly playing a leading role as a responsible member of the international community. I am resolved to advance diplomacy that ensures the peace and security of Japan and the Japanese people while promoting around the world the road to "Peace and Happiness through Economic Prosperity and Democracy," a path that Japan has been pursuing since the end of World War II. I hope this *Diplomatic Bluebook* helps to provide a deeper understanding of the international situation and Japan's diplomacy as well as our Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

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