

Japanese Diplomacy That Has Public Understanding and Support

Overview

In order to respond actively and swiftly to the various issues the international community faces and to pursue Japan's national interests, it is essential to reinforce the institutional framework of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). At the same time, where possible, cooperation with the private sector should be actively promoted so as to conduct multi-tier foreign policy. It is also vital to gain the understanding and support of the Japanese people.

In response to the above, MOFA has been undertaking various measures, including efforts in the areas of budgeting, diplomatic organizations, and staffing; reinforcement of information gathering and analysis mecha-

nisms; promotion of operational efficiency utilizing Information and Communications Technology (ICT); promotion of information disclosure; and implementation of policy evaluation.

Furthermore, MOFA utilized various media including the Internet for public relations activities, promoted "public relations through dialogue with the people" in which MOFA officials including the foreign minister convened direct dialogue with the people, cooperated with experts from various fields as well as domestic and international think tanks, held symposia and other fora, and took steps to gather public comments in order to find out the public consciousness toward diplomacy, thereby endeavoring to gain the understanding and support of the people.

A Public Understanding and Support for Foreign Policy

Overview

In the following respective areas with regard to information dissemination to the people, (1) public relations through dialogue with the people, (2) track II meetings, (3) public relations through various media including the Internet, and (4) steps to gather public comments and opinions, MOFA has been making efforts to provide greater information and enhance the steps to gather public comments.

(a) Public Relations through Dialogue with the People

MOFA has been striving to promote "public relations through dialogue with the people," in which MOFA officials actually in charge of diplomatic work, including the foreign minister, hold direct dialogue with the people. In April 2002, MOFA Town Meetings¹ were launched to conduct direct dialogue between the public and the foreign minister, and a total of 13 meetings have been held in various cities across the country as of February 2006.² At the MOFA Town Meetings, the foreign minister endeavored to deepen the public's understanding of diplomacy by giving clear explanations on themes of great public interest using footage and sign language interpreters and candidly responding to ques-



Foreign Minister Aso attending a town meeting (February 18, 2006; Tokyo; Theme: "Japanese Diplomacy From Here On")

tions and opinions regarding the modality of Japan's foreign policy and the international situation.

In regard to Official Development Assistance (ODA), ODA Town Meetings are held across Japan to explain to the public the latest development including ODA reform.³ In October, MOFA newly started an ODA Lecture Series, wherein officials from the Economic Cooperation Bureau of MOFA visit universities, local

1. http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/annai/honsho/gaisho/t_meeting (Japanese only)

2. The venues in 2005 were Tokyo (theme: "UN Reform," March) and Osaka (theme: "UN Security Council Reform and Asian Diplomacy," July).

3. The venues in 2005 were Osaka (theme: "ODA as a Strategy – Has a Relationship of Trust been Established in Asia?" February) and Tokyo (theme: "Report from the Monitoring Group of Citizens on Japan's ODA," October).



Town meeting venue at which a large audience gathered

governments, and other entities to deliver lectures.⁴

MOFA has also been offering opportunities for direct contact between its staff and the public by jointly organizing lectures and symposiums nationwide with local governments, international exchange groups, and the media, including “Lecture on the International Situation”⁵ and “Town Meeting: Gateway to Foreign Affairs.” In particular, to foster greater understanding of international affairs among the younger generation, MOFA has also been dispatching its officials to lecture at universities (Diplomatic Talks) and high schools (Talks for High Schools). These programs have been highly praised by participants. Town Meetings: Dialogue with Students (held three or four times a year), where university students exchange opinions with junior staff of MOFA, have gained great popularity as an opportunity to directly debate the questions and opinions they harbor on international issues and foreign policy issues with MOFA staff. These events not only contribute to the dissemination of information to the public, but also offer the MOFA staff invaluable opportunities to come into direct contact with the views of the public in putting diplomacy into practice. By means of public relations through dialogue with the people, MOFA intends to continue its efforts to gain the public’s understanding of Japan’s foreign policy and obtain a wide range of views and draw on them in policymaking.

(b) Efforts through Symposia and Seminars

MOFA has been creating opportunities for discussion with experts and opinion leaders from various wide-ranging sectors including academia, economic circles, the press, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The aim of such discussions is to draw upon the knowl-

edge and experiences of these experts in policymaking, as well as to deepen the public’s understanding of individual policies. Specifically, MOFA organizes many symposia, seminars, and workshops that are attended by experts from Japan and abroad. In 2005, over 60 such events were held in Japan and abroad. They took up as their themes the changing international order and challenges facing the international community, such as United Nations (UN) reform, including the addition of Japan as a permanent member of the Security Council, peace building, and the fight against terrorism.

In addition, many dialogues at the non-governmental or private-sector level, as well as dialogues including both the government and the private sector (Track II meetings), were held as complementary fora for inter-governmental discussions. MOFA also actively cooperated toward these dialogues.

These fora that bring experts from Japan and abroad together with the people provide an opportunity for candid exchanges of views and to bring questions and concerns to the floor. They thus complement discussions at inter-governmental negotiations and international conferences, and MOFA is making active use of them as invaluable opportunities for promoting creative diplomacy by taking into consideration a wide range of opinions.

(c) Public Relations through Various Media Including the Internet

The Internet is a very important means of accurately and promptly conveying information on foreign policy directly to the public. With this understanding, the Internet PR Division was established in July to drastically reform the MOFA website, which may be deemed the face of MOFA, and to develop comprehensive IT public relations. Accompanying this move, MOFA renewed the design of its top page. The Internet PR Division uniformly administers the Japanese and English versions of the website and advances various improvement programs for the websites of Japan’s diplomatic missions abroad that serve as the base for the overseas activities of the Japanese government. The MOFA website⁶ provides daily up-to-date information on Japan’s foreign policy and the international situation as well as practical and useful information, such as travel advisories and infor-

4. The venues in 2005 were Chukyo University (theme: “Japan’s ODA from the Viewpoint of Officials – Based on the Case of Afghanistan,” November), Meiji Gakuin University (theme: “Middle East Assistance Policy – Peace-Building Assistance,” December), and the Iwate Prefecture Sawauchi-mura International Association (theme: “Significance of Official Development Assistance (ODA),” December).

5. http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/event/koku_josei.html (Japanese only)

6. <http://www.mofa.go.jp>

Major Symposia and Track II Meetings Involving the Foreign Ministry

1. Symposia and seminars

(1) Japan's activities coupled with major international conferences

- World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Tokyo Ubiquitous Network Conference (May)
- Commemorative Symposium on the Fifth Anniversary of the Kyushu-Okinawa Summit (June)
- Tokyo Seminar on G8 Global Partnership (June)
- APEC Human Security Seminar (October)

(2) Those looking into the transformation of the international order and challenges facing Japan and the international community

- The First Meeting of the Promotion of East Asia Studies (January)
- Lecture "The Future of the UN" (February)
- Tokyo Seminar on the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) (February)
- Symposium "Post-Election Afghanistan and Peace-Building Support" (March)
- Liberalization of Services Trade under Free Trade System: Efforts and Challenges (March)
- Symposium "The Future of the UN" (April)
- Symposium "Comprehensive Approach toward the Millennium Development Goals" (June)
- 4th Canada-Japan Symposium on Peace and Security Cooperation (June)
- Public Forum concerning UN Reform (August)
- WTO at 10: International Conference (October)

(3) Bilateral relations and regional issues

- 3rd Meeting of the Arab-Japan Dialogue Forum (January)
- Asia Barometer Conference and Symposium (March)
- Japan-India Symposium "Japan & India: Challenges & Responsibilities as Partners in the 21st Century in Asia" (March)
- 3rd Japan-Middle East Cultural Exchanges and Dialogue Mission (September)
- EU-Japan Seminar on Youth (November)

(4) Issues in other areas

- Symposium "How Should Japan Respond to the Issues of Foreigners?" (February)
- Symposium on the International Humanitarian Law (March)
- The Role of Japanese Descendants in the Economic Development of Latin American and Caribbean Countries: Review and Prospects (March)
- Symposium: "Establishment of responsible fisheries for sustainable use of marine living resources" (March)
- United Nations Workshop on Small Arms and Light Weapons in Beijing (April)
- World Civilization Forum 2005 (July)
- International Public Symposium on Project for Support for Environmental Management of Iraqi Marshlands (August)

- Asia Cup 2005 (International Law Moot Court Competition) (August)
- 2nd Dialogue on Environmental Education (September)
- 2nd Asia Cooperation Dialogue (ACD) Dialogue on Environmental Education (September)
- Symposium on Bhutan and Gross National Happiness, 2005, Tokyo (October)
- Crisis Management Workshop for NGO Operations and Symposium (November)
- Crisis Management Seminar (year-round)

2. Track II meetings

(1) Japan's activities coupled with major international conferences

- APEC/WTO Trade Facilitation Roundtable (February)
- Seminar "ASEM's Role in Enhancing Asia-Europe Cooperation: Ten Years of Achievements and Future Challenges" (December)

(2) Those looking into the transformation of the international order and challenges facing Japan and the international community

- 41st Munich Conference on Security Policy (February)
- 3rd Annual Conference of the Network of East Asian Think-tanks (NEAT) (August)
- 6th United Nations Conference on Disarmament Issues in Kyoto (August)
- 5th General Conference of the Council for Security Cooperation in the Asia Pacific (CSCAP) (December)

(3) Bilateral relations and regional issues

- New Age of Japan-The First Dialogue of Experts (January)
- 2nd Meeting of the Japan-Russia Eminent Persons' Council (February)
- Seminar on Second Bush Administration and the Korean Peninsula: North Korean Nuclear Issue and Japan-US-ROK Trilateral Cooperation (February)
- 21st Conference of the UK-Japan 21st Century Group (March)
- "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue: Symposium for Intellectual Dialogue (March)
- Japan-US Security Seminar (March)
- 16th Northeast Asia Cooperation Dialogue (NEACD) (April)
- 3rd Japan-Canada Forum (May)
- 8th Japan-Spain Symposium (June)
- Japan-ROK Exchange Symposium (June)
- New 21st Century Committee for Japan-China Friendship (July)
- 3rd Japan-Australia 1.5 Security Dialogue (July)
- 8th Sakhalin Forum (September)
- Japanese-Austrian Committee for the 21st Century (October)
- Japanese-German Forum (October)
- 3rd East Asia Forum (October)
- Japan-Arab-Islamic Journalists Meeting (November)
- Hungarian-Japanese Cooperation Forum (November)

(4) Issues in other areas

- 5th Meeting for the Promotion of Asia Forest Partnership (AFP) (November)

mation about the situation in various countries and regions. Access to the website has been increasing each year (over the past three years, access [page views] has increased from 96.4 million views in 2003 to 119.4 million in 2004 and 129.22 million in 2005). Feature pages on topics of great public interest, including "The Issue of Iraq" and "Japan and North Korea," were also expanded, and improvements are being made in the web design so as to facilitate easy access to needed information. Photos of major diplomatic activities of the foreign minister and other officials are available at the Photo Gallery. The Internet PR Division is also coming up with

innovative features, such as enabling people to access the website using their mobile phones. MOFA accepts comments regarding diplomacy on a "comments and suggestions" page that takes advantage of the information interactivity on the Internet, and delivers its views on the website in response to the many questions and opinions it receives.

Conveying accurate information through newspapers and television, with which many people come into contact on a daily basis, is vital to nurturing people's trust and deepening understanding of Japan's foreign policy. Therefore, MOFA actively conveys messages to

the public through such official occasions as regular press conferences by the foreign minister, senior vice-ministers, vice-minister, and the press secretary/director-general for press and public relations, as well as through the issuance of statements, announcements, and materials for the press.

Furthermore, in order to promote diplomacy with the correct understanding and support of the people regarding Japanese foreign policy and the international situation, MOFA produces one to two PR television programs annually. The aim of this endeavor is for the public to have a wider knowledge about the efforts MOFA is taking to address and respond to the international situation while leading the international community.

MOFA has also been striving to provide highly detailed information, including background information, on key foreign policy issues in which the public has particularly strong interest. Efforts toward clear and easy-to-understand public relations include coverage cooperation for television and radio broadcasters, editorial cooperation for periodicals, and creation of pamphlets. In particular, various types of brochures using figures and tables to describe abstract diplomatic

incidents have been in high demand from the people and have been widely distributed at town meetings and other such opportunities.

(d) Steps to Gather Public Comments and Opinions

MOFA established the Office for Comment and Opinion in 2003 with a view to gathering as much as possible a broad range of public opinions, which it is drawing on in the planning, formulation, and execution of foreign policy. The office collects comments and opinions through a variety of methods, including the feedback posted on the websites of MOFA and the Prime Minister's Office, telephone calls, facsimiles, and letters. The office provides the opinions it has collected to top officials and policymaking divisions of MOFA. It also conducts public opinion surveys on designated diplomatic themes. The opinions of the people forwarded to the "comments and suggestions" page of the MOFA website that are of great public interest are uploaded on the page. The survey results are also introduced by uploading them on the "PR and publications" page.

B Japan's Diplomatic Structure

Overview

In order to respond more actively and swiftly to the surge of diplomatic challenges facing the international community, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), within its limited number of personnel and budget, has been striving to improve and reinforce the institutional framework for the implementation of foreign policy.

In particular, its efforts are aimed at the reinforcement of budgeting as well as diplomatic organizations and staffing—the foundation of Japan's diplomatic structure. The areas of reinforcement include information gathering and analysis mechanisms, information dissemination, and information processing capacity through the promotion of Information and Communications Technology (ICT).

(a) Efforts Regarding Budgeting, Diplomatic Organizations, and Staffing

In light of the need to ensure Japan's security and prosperity, as well as to contribute to the peace and development of the world amidst the further advance of globalization, MOFA secured a budget of 707.2 billion yen in FY2005 (down 1.9% from the previous year) with the following four pillars: (1) protecting Japanese nationals at home and abroad: measures for security and safety of Japanese abroad; (2) Japan taking the lead: toward building a new international order; (3) letting Japan's voice be heard: strategic information dissemination; and (4) solid foundations of Japanese foreign policy: reinforcement of intelligence, ODA, cultural exchanges, and organizational support.

Also, a supplementary budget of 130.4 billion yen for FY2005 was allocated to tackle issues requiring emergency disbursements, including (1) contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, (2) contribution to support ASEAN integration, (3) assistance for earthquake disaster in Pakistan, (4) assistance for measures against avian and pandemic influenza, (5) Japan-China 21st Century Exchange Program, (6) assessed contributions to the United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) budget, and (7) assessed contributions to the UN regular budget.

With regard to MOFA's structure, with a view to taking more prompt and appropriate cross-organizational responses to crisis management cases amid the increase in the number of and the rapid changes in the quality and form of international crises that should be addressed by MOFA, the Crisis Management Coordination Division was newly created in the Management and Coordination Division of the Minister's Secretariat. Thus, MOFA's crisis management system was reinforced under the auspices of the deputy assistant vice-minister in charge of crisis management, established in FY2004. With respect to the structure of overseas establishments, in January 2006, MOFA newly established an embassy in Slovenia and a consulate-general in Denpasar to respond to new diplomatic and consular needs. The total number of Japan's overseas diplomatic and consular establishments as of the end of FY2005 was 189, consisting of 117 embassies, 65 consulates-general, and seven permanent missions or delegations.

In terms of expanding the number of personnel, in addition to maintaining its focus on strengthening the urgent government matters of crisis-management and security systems, there has been a heightened perception of the need to further strengthen the security and public safety measures at overseas establishments and protection of Japanese nationals abroad following the November 2003 attack on Counsellor Katsuhiko Oku of the Embassy of Japan in the United Kingdom (UK) and Third Secretary Masamori Inoue of the Embassy of Japan in Iraq. As a result, in spite of severe constraints in the budgetary and employment situation, MOFA in FY2005 increased the number of personnel at its headquarters by 16 and at overseas establishments by four, for an overall increase of 20 to a total of 5,434 staff members (2,159 at its headquarters and 3,275 at overseas establishments). Despite this increase, the total number of employees is still inadequate in comparison with that of other developed countries, and there is a lingering shortage of personnel. While MOFA is looking to increase its staffing, it is also working to utilize existing staff more effectively and rationalize administrative and clerical work.

Priority Items in the FY2005 MOFA Budget

**Main Budgetary Steps for FY2005 Priority Foreign Policies:
 “Protecting Japanese Nationals at Home and Abroad and Letting Japan’s Voice Be Heard”**

Total: 2,723 (Unit: 100 million yen)

1. “Protecting Japanese nationals at home and abroad” 363.8

1. Ensuring the security of Japan and its surroundings	83.5
2. Measures to counter new threats facing the people	159.9
3. Ensuring the safety of Japanese abroad	120.4

2. “Japan taking the lead” 1,849.4

1. Realizing UN reform and demonstrating leadership as a non-permanent member of the Security Council	98.6
2. Comprehensive efforts for peace and stability	1,679.2
3. Active diplomacy through regional frameworks	2.1
4. International rule-making for responding to globalization	69.4

3. “Letting Japan’s voice be heard” 42.8

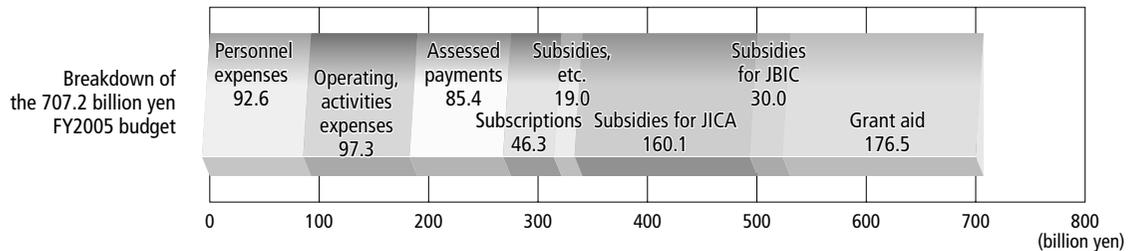
1. Strengthening effective communication at home and abroad	29.7
2. “Nippon Promotion” to showcase Japan’s charms	13.2

4. “Solid foundations of Japanese foreign policy” 466.7

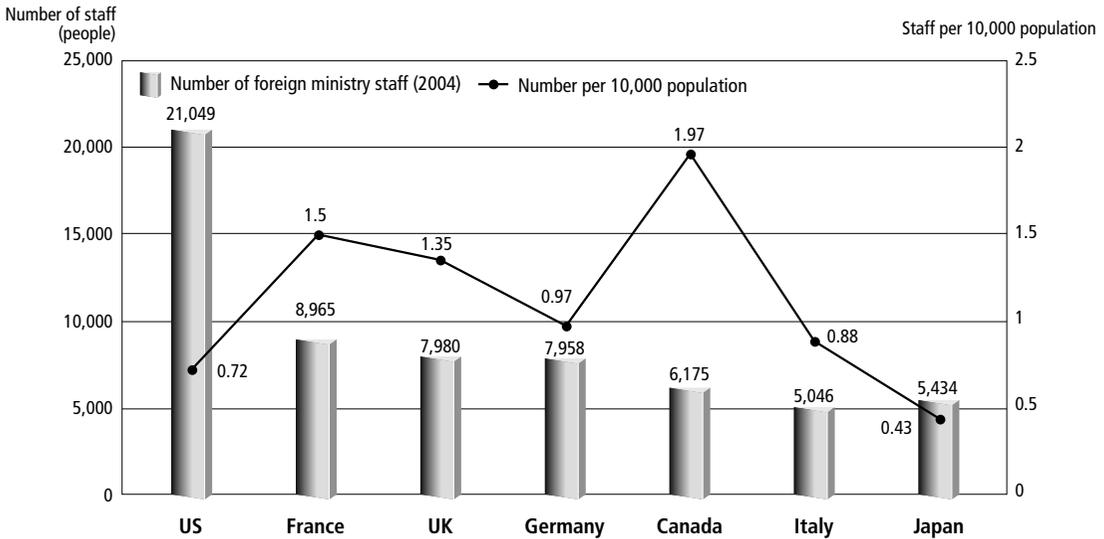
1. Strengthening policy-formulating capabilities	5.3
2. Smarter intelligence	5.7
3. Active utilization of ODA (FY2005 MOFA budget: 488.1 billion yen)	
4. Active promotion of international cultural exchange	250.9
5. Enhancing organizational support	164.6

Note: Items do not always add up to the total due to rounding.

FY2005 MOFA Budget



Number of Staff in the Foreign Ministries of Major Countries



Note: For each country the number of staff is derived from the results of surveys conducted in 2004 (the figure for Japan is as of the end of FY2005). Population figures are from *The State of World Population 2003*, UN Population Fund.

(b) Strengthening Intelligence Collection and Analysis Capabilities

As evidenced by the international issues of recent years such as international terrorism and the situation related to North Korea and Iraq, the international community has become ever more unsettled and unpredictable. In order for Japan to carry out active and strategic diplomacy while swiftly responding to various issues faced by the international community, insightful analysis based on broad-ranging intelligence collection has become crucial.

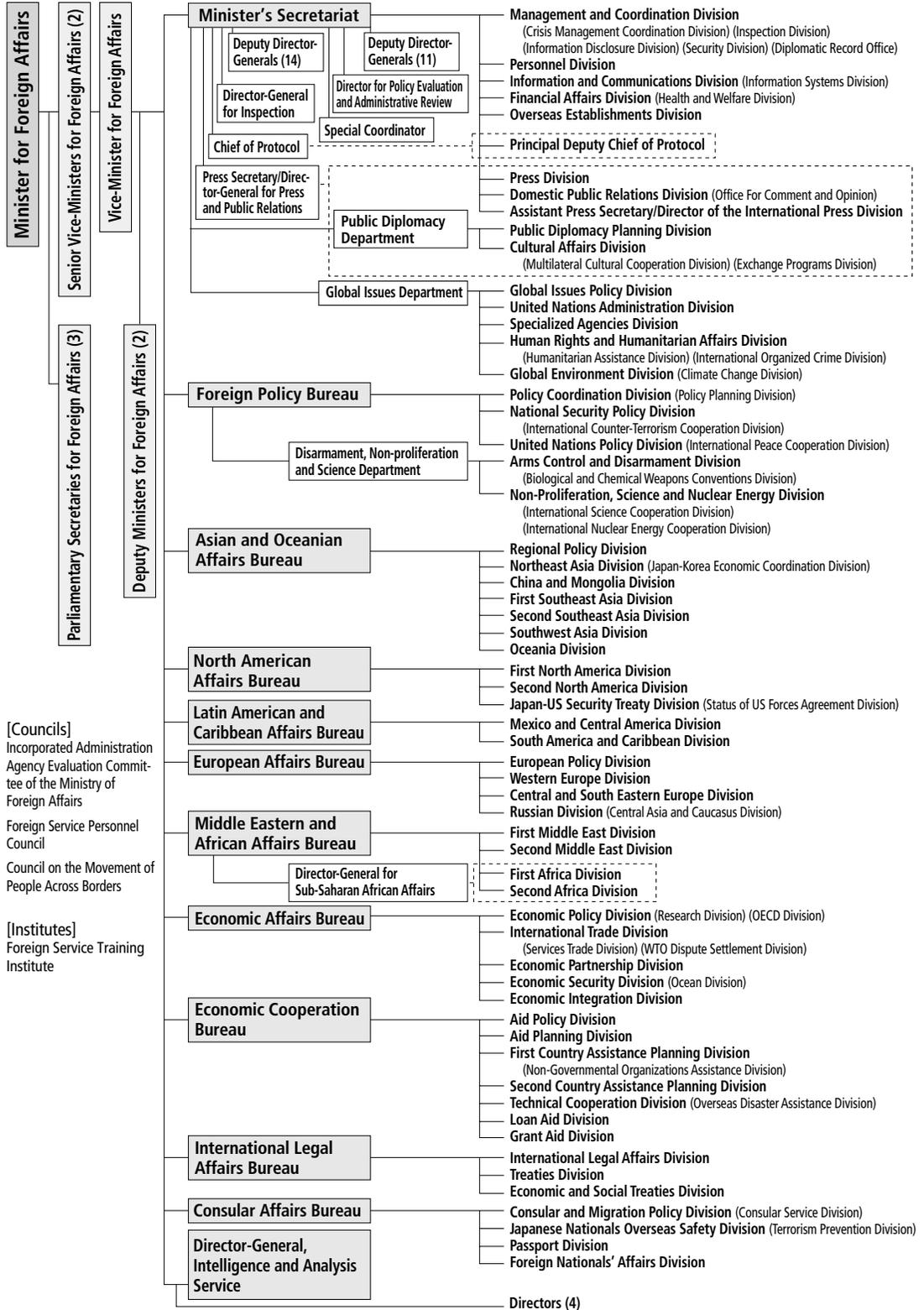
To this end, MOFA has been utilizing its network of overseas establishments to collect intelligence in a broad range of fields and to strengthen its external overseas intelligence collection and analysis capacities, including the reorganization of the related bureau of MOFA headquarters. Furthermore, recognizing that the enhancement of Japan's intelligence collection and analysis capabilities is an urgent issue, in April under Foreign Minister Machimura's initiative, the Committee on Strengthening External Intelligence Capability was established, whose members were comprised of experts possessing expertise about external intelligence. Last September, the Committee submitted a report¹ to Foreign Minister Machimura, in which it gave recommendations on the importance of developing the basic foundation for

strengthening MOFA's external intelligence capabilities, notably by: (1) enhancing intelligence collection capabilities through the strengthening of the information collection mechanism at overseas establishments as well as enhancing the use of satellite information; (2) enhancing information analysis capacity by making use of private research institutions and experts as well as formulating detailed directions on intelligence activities; and (3) strengthening the fundamentals of intelligence activities through the enhancement of education and training as well as information protection measures.

Taking these recommendations into consideration, MOFA has been making vigorous efforts to strengthen its external intelligence capability, including amplifying human resources for intelligence collection at overseas establishments, further utilizing the expertise of the private-sector, making more effective use of open source intelligence and developing related infrastructure. In addition, since strengthening MOFA's external intelligence capability is a mid- to long-term challenge that requires steady advancements from a broader standpoint, it is essential to take further measures for improving the expertise of intelligence analysis, enhancing the systemic and institutional education and training mechanism, and further fortifying the protection of measures.

1. http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/press/release/17/pdfs/rls_0913a.pdf (Japanese only)

Organization Chart of 2005



(c) Advancing the Adoption of ICT

With regard to advancing the adoption of ICT, MOFA established a local area network (LAN)² in FY1995 that mutually connects its headquarters with overseas establishments as a means of developing its ICT infrastructure. The ministry has been expanding this network system, especially in overseas establishments, while ensuring information security, and it ultimately intends to build a network connecting all overseas establishments that require the network.

As part of the government's drive to realize electronic government, MOFA has created a system that allows members of the public to submit applications and notifications electronically. Specifically, an electronic bidding system enabling bids to be submitted and opened using the Internet, and system operations including those allowing for a range of applications, notifications, and other documents to be submitted online have been continued. In some regions, passport applications may now be submitted online. The optimization of operations and systems, including MOFA information network and internal management operations (system using host computer), is also being promoted so as to reform operations using ICT.

MOFA has been promoting the comprehensive and systematic adoption of ICT in these and other services that it administers. It has also been making efforts to strengthen its information-processing capacity, streamline office procedures, and improve administrative services for the public.

(d) Promotion of Information Disclosure

Since the Law Concerning Access to Information Held by Administrative Organs (Information Disclosure Law) entered into force in April 2001, MOFA has received 6,284 requests for information disclosure, and decisions have been made on 5,499 cases as of the end of 2005. (Among these decisions, 628 cases [11.4%] were those in which information could not be disclosed at all, and 789 cases [14.3%] were those in which relevant documents did not exist). In order to fulfill its accountability to the public, MOFA sincerely deals with information disclo-

sure requests while paying due attention to matters to be protected for reasons of national security, exemptions to maintain trust with other countries, interests affecting diplomatic negotiations, and the need for individual privacy. Among the documents disclosed under the law, MOFA also exhibits those deemed to have historical value at the Diplomatic Record Office.

Furthermore, since 1976, MOFA has been voluntarily releasing to the public postwar diplomatic records that in principle are more than 30 years old after careful examination. These are available for public viewing at the Diplomatic Record Office. MOFA intends to further expand this system of voluntarily releasing documents en masse by category. Some 11,700 documents have been released under this system as of the end of 2005.

(e) Implementation of Policy Evaluation

In order to ensure the public accountability of MOFA's activities, policy evaluations have been undertaken in accordance with the Government Policy Evaluation Act (GPEA). The implementation of policy evaluation is useful in enhancing future policy formulation and in the execution of diplomacy that more effectively enhances Japan's national interests. MOFA is making improvements to the evaluations, while taking the handling of government-wide policy evaluations and the specific nature of MOFA's activities into consideration.

The policy evaluations of policies implemented in FY2004 were released to the public in August 2005. In order to analyze the extent of progress that was made toward achieving the policy aims, MOFA has strived to improve various aspects of the evaluation report, including establishing an "evaluation indicator" (measure for evaluation) to grasp the effectiveness of each policy, ascertaining the direction headed by the policies of the next fiscal year and beyond, and drawing on third-party opinions. The evaluation report and related information are available on the homepage of MOFA.³ Through implementation of policy evaluations and improving the evaluation methods, MOFA is making efforts toward the implementation of effective and efficient diplomacy within a limited budget and staffing.

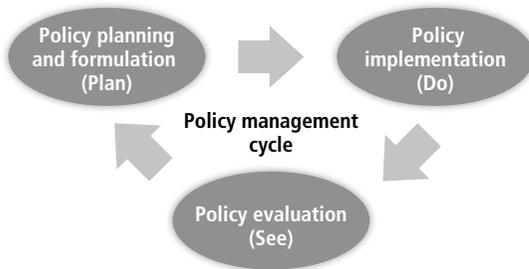
2. Also known as an in-house information and communications network, LAN connects computers in limited areas, be it an office or building, to facilitate the exchange of data. The system enables various functions like e-mail and file sharing.

3. <http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/annai/shocho/hyouka/index.html> (Japanese only)

Policy Evaluation System

[Objectives of Policy Evaluation System]

- Fulfill responsibility to provide explanation about administration to the people
- Realize efficient and high quality people-oriented administration
- Realize outcome-oriented administration from the viewpoint of the people



Fiscal 2005 Ministry of Foreign Affairs Policy Evaluation Report (policy evaluation of policies implemented in FY2004) carried out ex-post evaluation of 58 policies concerning countries and regions as well as sectors. 256 programs were evaluated on their roles as methods for achieving the policies' aims. The report also reveals the direction of the policies, including the future priority areas of each policy.