

# CHAPTER 2

## Regional Diplomacy

### 1. Asia and the Pacific

Ensuring the stability and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific region that surrounds Japan is critical for the security and prosperity of Japan and the strengthening of relations with other countries in the region is required.

Asia has overcome the Asian Economic Crisis of 1997 and is now riding a wave of globalization to enjoy steady and continuous economic growth. This has resulted in such as the positive changes towards further development of the region deepening of intraregional interdependence and the creation of a sense of community through the permeation of shared lifestyles, which have given rise to increasingly intense discussions regarding the creation of an East Asian community. However, at the same time, there are issues that must be overcome in forging a stable and prosperous Asia, including issues that directly affect the security of Japan, such as the situation on the Korean Peninsula and across the Taiwan Strait, as well as challenging issues shared by the entire region such as terrorism, piracy, climate change and energy and pandemic influenza and other infectious diseases.

Furthermore, in Asia, structural changes unprecedented anywhere around the globe are underway, as China and India, accounting for one-fifth and one-sixth of the world's population respectively, are simultaneously rising to the forefront in such fields as politics, security, and economy. A major topic for Japanese diplomacy is thus how the potential of these two countries can be elicited constructively in ways that contribute to the stability and sustainable growth of both Asia and the world.

The fundamental objective of Japan's diplomacy in Asia and the Pacific is to lead the region to become one which shares fundamental values, characterized by long-term stability and predictability and grounded in mutual understanding and cooperation. In keeping

with this objective, Japan is implementing the following three fundamental principles in its diplomacy towards the Asia-Pacific region.

The first of these is that, in order to establish stable international relations, Japan will aim at "synergy" between the policies of the strengthening of the Japan-US alliance and the promotion of diplomacy vis-à-vis Asia. Japan intends to continue to ensure deterrence against any movement that might destabilize the region by firmly maintaining the Japan-US security arrangements, which are critical for the security of the region, while proactively promoting diplomacy vis-à-vis Asia by strengthening its relations with neighboring countries, notably China and the Republic of Korea (ROK).

The second is that Japan will elicit the region's potential to the greatest possible extent in dealing with common regional issues by taking a multilayered approach. This approach will include not only bilateral diplomacy but also the promotion of East Asian regional cooperation, such as through the East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN+3, Japan-ASEAN, and Japan-China-ROK cooperative frameworks, and of cooperation that broadly incorporates countries outside the region, such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM). In addition, within these efforts, Japan will promote the consolidation of fundamental values.

The third is that Japan squarely faces the facts of its history with humility, that in the past it has caused tremendous damage and suffering to the people in Asian nations. With feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology always engraved in mind, Japan has consistently made efforts for the past 60 years as a "peaceful nation" underpinned by its solid democracy and market economy. As a forerunner, Japan will continue to afford various kinds of cooperation, including

efforts for the consolidation of peace, reinforcement of governance, and development of economic rules

while supporting the development of an Asia grounded in common values.

### (a) The Korean Peninsula

The Korean Peninsula, being adjacent to Japan, is one of the most important geographical areas for Japan.

The ROK is Japan's closest neighbor geographically and is an important neighbor with whom Japan enjoys extremely close relations in various areas, including politics, economics, and culture. The ROK is an ally of the United States as is Japan, and it also shares with Japan fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, and basic human rights. The further strengthening of future-oriented, friendly and cooperative relations is critical for the stability and prosperity of not only Japan and the ROK but also the northeast Asian region as a whole.

The year 2007 witnessed developments in multilayered and close intergovernmental dialogues spanning a broad range of fields, including the Japan-ROK Summit Meeting in Singapore in November and six Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers Meetings, as well as in exchanges at the private-sector level. The ROK held a presidential election on December 19, in which Mr. Lee Myung-bak of the Grand National Party (Hannara) was elected. Prime Minister Yasuo Fukuda attended President Lee's inauguration ceremony on February 25, 2008, after which a Summit Meeting was held between the two leaders. They shared the view on the importance of bringing bilateral ties into a "new era" marked by even closer cooperation between Japan and the ROK.

As for North Korea, the basic policy is to aim to normalize Japan-North Korea relations through comprehensive resolution of the outstanding issues of concern including the abduction, nuclear and missile issues and the settlement of the unfortunate past between the two parties, in accordance with Japan-

DPRK Pyongyang declaration. Under this policy, the government of Japan has been making its utmost diplomatic efforts to achieve progress in both the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and Japan-North Korea bilateral relations including the abduction issue.

There was a certain degree of progress in the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, such as the implementation of the "Initial Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement", agreed in February 2007 at the Six-Party Talks, and the adoption of the "Second-Phase Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement" in October. However, North Korea did not take within the established timeframe the denuclearization actions that it had promised to implement before December 31, 2007. Japan intends to continue to make concerted efforts with the United States and other relevant countries to ensure the implementation of the "Second-Phase Actions for the Implementation of the Joint Statement" and moreover make progress towards the full implementation of the 2005 Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks.

In Japan-North Korea bilateral relations, the Working Group for the Normalization of Japan-DPRK Relationship convened twice in 2007, but there was no concrete progress regarding the outstanding issues of concern, including the abduction issue. While utilizing the Six-Party Talks and other diplomatic opportunities, cooperating and collaborating closely with other relevant countries to conduct sincere bilateral discussions with North Korea and also to demand North Korea concrete actions towards the resolution of the outstanding issues, including the abduction issue.

### (b) China and Mongolia

The interdependence between Japan and China is growing deeper, with economic relations and people-to-people exchanges becoming increasingly close. Within this context, the Japan-China bilateral relationship has become among the most important bilateral relationships for both countries. In 2007 there were frequent high-level exchanges of views, including reciprocal visits by the leaders and the foreign ministers,

such as the Japan-China High-Level Economic Dialogue, Summit Meetings and Foreign Ministers' Meetings taking advantage of various types of international meetings. These were held with a view to creating a "mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests" that would expand those common interests as the two countries take their solemn responsibility and contribute jointly to

Asia and the world. These diplomatic efforts resulted in tangible advancement over a wide range of areas, including a strengthening of mutual cooperation in energy conservation and the environment, promotion of mutual understanding through exchanges in the security field and youth exchanges, and contributions to regional and international society, notably to issues surrounding North Korea and reform of the United Nations Security Council. Japan and China have agreed to work towards as early a resolution as possible regarding the issue of resource development in the East China Sea through repeated discussions with a view to conducting joint development. With regard to Chinese domestic affairs, the 17th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) was convened in October and the next Chinese leadership was appointed.

### (c) Southeast Asia

ASEAN, aiming at the establishment of an ASEAN Community by 2015, adopted the ASEAN Charter in November 2007. Japan has the longest history of any country as a partner of ASEAN, and will continue to support ASEAN's efforts towards ASEAN integration. In the meanwhile, Japan has developed relations with ASEAN in the economic arena, through such as the conclusion of negotiations for the ASEAN-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement. Japan is also strengthening its relations with individual member states of ASEAN in various areas, including the politics, economy, and culture. Japan has also actively supported peacebuilding in Southeast Asia, dispatching a development expert to the International Monitoring Team in Mindanao, the Philippines and civilian police officers to the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT).

In 2007, Japan welcomed visiting dignitaries Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong of Singapore, Prime Minister Surayut Chulanont of Thailand, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines, Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi of Malaysia, Prime Minister Bouasone Bouphavanh of Lao PDR, President Nguyen Minh Triet of Viet Nam, Prime Minister Samdech Hun Sen of Cambodia, and Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah of Brunei Darussalam. Prime Minister Abe also made an official visit to Indonesia

In the year 2008, Japan and China will commemorate the 30th anniversary of the conclusion of the Treaty of Peace and Friendship and also observe the Japan-China Youth Friendship Exchange Year. It is also the year in which the 29th Olympic Games (the Beijing Olympics) will be held. Japan and China will further develop their bilateral relations by building up dialogues and exchanges at a full range of levels and making efforts to settle outstanding issues. They also intend to continue to contribute jointly to the peace, stability, and prosperity of the world, with a view to creating a "mutually beneficial relationship based on common strategic interests."

In 2007, Japan and Mongolia celebrated the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, and various events were held to commemorate the "Year of Japan in Mongolia."

and Malaysia, and Prime Minister Fukuda visited Singapore to attend the East Asia Summit (EAS). Japan and the member states of ASEAN have reinforced their relations through these active exchanges of visits by their leaders.

As for the relations with Mekong region countries, the Japan-CLV (Cambodia, Lao PDR, and Viet Nam) Summit was held as an associated meeting at the ASEAN Summit in November, and Foreign Ministers' Meetings of the CLV and Japan were convened twice. In January 2008, the first Japan-Mekong Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in Tokyo.

As for EPAs with ASEAN member states, negotiations have started on the Japan-Viet Nam EPA; the Japan-Brunei EPA and Japan-Indonesia EPA have been signed; the Protocol Amending the agreement between Japan-Singapore for a New-Age Economic Partnership and the Japan-Thailand EPA have entered into force; and the Japan-Philippines EPA is currently under consideration in the Philippine Senate.

On the cultural front, 2007 marked the 120th Anniversary of Japan-Thailand Diplomatic Relations, and various commemorative exchanges were held. In addition, Japan worked to strengthen its public relations, having reached to concur with Singapore in opening "Japan Creative Center" in that country.

## (d) South Asia

The countries of South Asia, notably India, the world's largest democracy, maintained high rates of economic growth in 2007 and have had an increasingly strong presence in the international community. The percentage of intraregional trade stands at a low 5.3% (2006 figure). However, there has been movement towards closer regional ties, focused on economic relations, with the Agreement on South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA) entering into force in January 2006, followed by the Fourteenth South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) Summit in April 2007 confirming the importance of strengthening regional connectivity.

There was notable movement in the areas of democratization and peacebuilding in the South Asian region in 2007. In Bangladesh, although general elections scheduled for January were postponed, preparations have been underway under the caretaker government for holding the elections by the end of 2008. In Pakistan, although state of Emergency was declared in November, aroused fears of an interruption in the consolidation of democracy, subsequently President Pervez Musharraf resigned his position as chief of army staff, started his second presidential term as a civilian and lifted the State of Emergency on December 15. General elections, which had been originally scheduled for January 2008 and postponed in the aftermath of the assassination of former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, were held on February 18, 2008. In Nepal, an interim cabinet including Maoist ministers has been taking charge in the government since April 2007. Agreement was reached to hold the election for the constitutional assembly on April 10, 2008, after two election postponements. Bhutan held

its National Council (upper house) elections on December 31 as the country's first-ever nationwide election. The process towards a parliamentary democracy is moving forward, with elections for the National Assembly (lower house) and the formulation of a constitution scheduled for 2008. In Sri Lanka, armed conflicts and terrorist incidents have been ongoing since the Sri Lankan government recaptured the country's eastern region from the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), and the peace process conducted through political dialogues has stalled, with the government withdrawing from the ceasefire agreement in January 2008.

Japan's relations with South Asia have been strengthened through active political and cultural exchanges. Japan participated for the first time in the Fourteenth SAARC Summit as an observer nation, and Foreign Minister Taro Aso announcing Japan's cooperation in the areas of democratization and peace building, the promotion of regional cooperation, and the promotion of people-to-people exchanges. In addition to the visit of Prime Minister Abe to India in August, Japan-India relations enjoyed active exchanges of high-level visits including cabinet ministers. High-level visits in 2007 also included the visit of Minister of Defense Yuriko Koike to Pakistan (August) and the visit of President of Sri Lanka Mahinda Rajapaksa to Japan (December), among others. Moreover, the year 2007 marked not only Japan-India Exchange Year but also the 35th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Bangladesh and the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and the Maldives, with commemorative events held.

## (e) The Pacific

Japan, Australia, and New Zealand share fundamental values and have come to work in a concerted manner towards the peace and stability of both the region and international society.

In particular, 2007 was a year in which the security relationship between Japan and Australia developed rapidly, with the issuance of the Japan-Australia Joint Declaration on Security Cooperation in March, the holding of the Japan-Australia Joint Foreign and Defense Ministerial Consultations (2+2 Meeting) for the first time in June, and the approval of the Action Plan based on the Joint Declaration at the Japan-

Australia Summit Meeting in September. In this way relations between Japan and Australia have moved beyond trade and investment to a stage that can be properly called a "comprehensive strategic relationship" that includes the fields of politics and security.

Japan's location in the Pacific Ocean is something it holds in common with the Pacific island states, and these countries serve as an important source of marine resources. Japan has been building up the cooperation with these countries through the Japan-Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Summit Meeting (Pacific Islands Summit), working jointly with the island

nations to address the political and economic challenges facing them.

### (f) Intra- and Inter-regional Cooperation

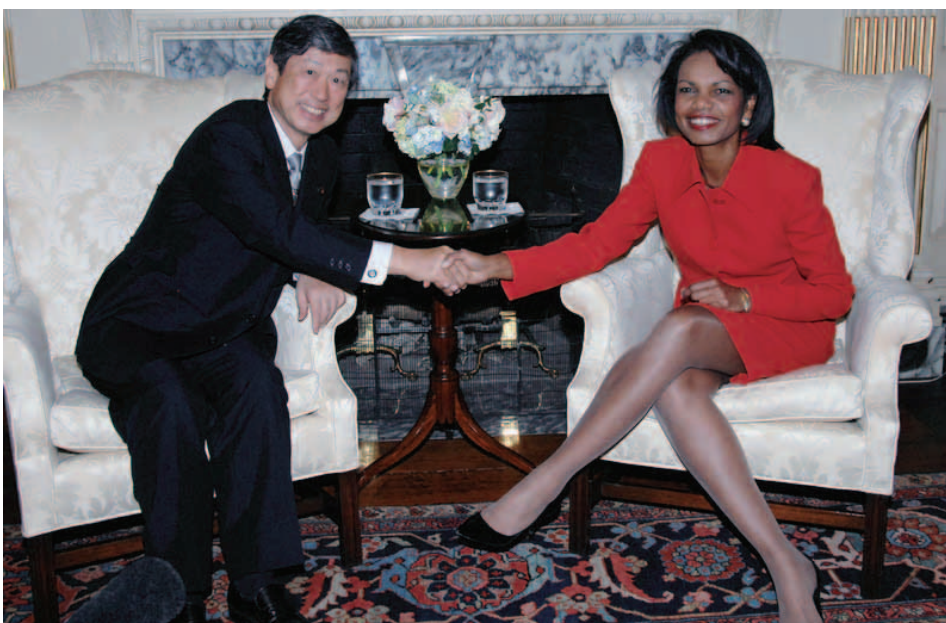
Cooperation advanced in each of the various existing regional cooperation frameworks in East Asia during 2007, with particularly significant developments emerging in efforts to address energy, climate change and other environmental issues. First, the Cebu Declaration on East Asian Energy Security was issued at the Second EAS in January, followed by the adoption of the Sydney APEC Leaders' Declaration on Climate Change, Energy Security and Clean Development at the APEC Summit in Sydney in September and the Singapore Declaration on Climate Change, Energy and the Environment at the Third EAS in November, with the leaders sharing the view on the setting up of voluntary energy efficiency goals. In addition, the Second Joint Statement on East Asia

Cooperation was issued at the ASEAN+3 Summit Meeting, setting forth broad directions for East Asia cooperation over the next decade. At the Summit Meeting among Japan, China, and the ROK, formulation of an Action Plan for the further promotion of trilateral cooperation as well as holding of a trilateral Summit Meeting separately from the ASEAN associated meetings in one of the three countries were decided. Under the ASEM framework, five countries and one organization formally became new ASEM partners. Interfaith dialogues were continued, as were dialogues to promote cooperation related to, among others, climate change and energy, counter-terrorism, and small and medium enterprises.

## 2. North America

The United States and Japan are allies and the Japan-US alliance is the linchpin of Japanese diplomacy. Japan and the US cooperate to work on a broad range of political, economic, and security issues based on their common fundamental values and interests. There are still unpredictable and uncertain elements in East Asia today, and the Japan-US alliance, with the Japan-US security arrangements at its core, plays an indispensable role in both the peace and security in Japan and stability and development in the

Asia-Pacific region. Furthermore, both countries are engaged in not only bilateral issues but also issues facing the international community, in cooperation with countries around the world, taking advantage of various opportunities at a number of levels. Under the Abe administration, Japan and the United States cooperated closely on the issues facing Asia and the world, based on the concept of the "Japan-U.S. alliance for Asia and the world." Also, under the Fukuda administration inaugurated in September, the



*Minister for Foreign Affairs Koumura meeting with US Secretary of State Rice (September 27, Washington, D.C., USA)*

two countries are engaged in close policy coordination under a consistent principle of further strengthening the Japan-US alliance, with a visit to the United States as Prime Minister Fukuda's first official trip overseas.

Japan and Canada cooperate closely in politics, economics, security, and culture, since these two countries share fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, and the market economy as partners of Asia, and also as members of the G8. Through the

Japan-Canada Summit Telephone Call in November and other diplomatic venues, the countries have decided to cooperate to develop their amicable bilateral relationship further, leading up to the 80th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-Canada diplomatic relations in 2008. In October, a report on the joint study on further promoting Japan-Canada trade and investment was completed, resulting in a strengthening of the bilateral economic relationship.

### 3. Latin America and the Caribbean

#### (a) Overview of the Political and Economic Situation

##### (1) The Political and Economic Situation

In the series of presidential elections that were held in Latin America and the Caribbean region in recent years, new administrations have been founded under democratic processes. They are addressing the region's historical challenges of reducing poverty and alleviating the income gaps in society as major public policy issues.

Latin America and the Caribbean region have, with a population of 560 million, a regional GDP of 2.9 trillion US dollars (approximately 2.8 times that of ASEAN10), and economic growth for 2007 forecast to reach 5.6%. The region is gaining economic presence in the world and also becoming the focus of an increasing amount of attention as an area supplying natural resources and energy.

Regarding regional integration, the Southern Common Market (MERCOSUR), the Central American Integration System (SICA), and the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), have strengthened steadily their integration, while new movement forward has been seen in the establishment of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), the

promotion by the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) on the initiative of Venezuela, and the foundation of the Bank of the South.

Furthermore, there was proactive movement to strengthen partnerships with countries, outside the region, such as through steps to conclude a bilateral Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the United States.

##### (2) A Growing Presence in International Society

Brazil and Mexico have been serving as leaders of developing countries in fora such as the United Nations and the World Trade Organization (WTO). At the same time, some small- and medium-sized countries have been undertaking notable activities, such as Costa Rica in promoting limitations on illegal transfers of small arms and Uruguay for its record of involvement in UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) activities. Moreover, countries of Latin America and the Caribbean region have great interest in the issues Japan is particularly actively engaged in, namely reform of the United Nations Security Council, human security, nuclear non-proliferation, and the environment and climate change.

#### (b) Japan's Diplomacy towards Latin America and the Caribbean

Japan identifies the Latin American and Caribbean countries as partners that "share common benefits," as they are consolidating their democracy and market economies and thus achieving stable development. Japan intends to intensify its relations with the countries in the region, taking advantage of the mutual confidence traditionally built up by the grace of over 1.5 million Japanese descendants in the region as well as approximately 360 thousand people from Latin America and the Caribbean residing in Japan, in addi-

tion to historical exchanges of visits, trade and investment, and Japan's assistance to the region by means of Official Development Assistance. Japan pursues its diplomacy based on the three pillars of (i) strengthening economic relations; (ii) contributing to the stable development of the region; and (iii) cooperating in the international arena. Foreign Minister Aso delivered a policy speech on Japan's diplomacy towards Latin America and the Caribbean in July and visited Mexico and Brazil in August.

## 4. Europe

Sharing fundamental values such as democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, Japan and Europe are strategic partners with a leading role in fostering the stability and prosperity of international society. It remains important for Japan to advance cooperation and collaboration while further strengthening bilateral relationships with the countries of Europe, notably the United Kingdom and France, which are permanent members of the UN Security Council as well as member countries of the G8, and Germany and Italy, which are members of the G8. Moreover, in fulfilling the leading role in the international community, it is now more important than ever that Japan promote political dialogues and cooperation with the European Union (EU) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO): The EU continues to increase its presence on the world stage in terms of political, security and economic matters. And the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has played an indispensable role in promoting the peace and stability in places beyond the border of the Euro-Atlantic region since the end of the Cold War. Furthermore, Japan has been enhancing its dialogues and cooperation with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the Baltic states, grounded in its good relations with these countries in order to support their efforts to achieve political stability and economic prosperity. It is of a growing significance for Japan and the countries of Europe to advance the close relationships on a broad range of aspects and to work together for promoting political, economic, and cultural exchanges.

In January, Prime Minister Abe visited the United

Kingdom, Germany, Belgium, and France, holding meetings with the heads of state and the president of the European Commission. He also paid the first ever visit by a Japanese Prime Minister to NATO Headquarters. In the meantime, Foreign Minister Aso visited Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia, having meetings with the heads of state and foreign ministers of those countries in January.

Further impetus was given to the reinforcement of relations with Europe in May, when Foreign Minister Aso attended the Japan-EU Troika Foreign Ministers' Meeting, the V4 plus Japan Foreign Ministers Meeting, and the Foreign Ministers' Meeting of ASEM, after which he visited Spain. In June, Prime Minister Abe visited Germany to participate in the G8 Summit 2007 Heiligendamm. At the Summit, he talked with the heads of state of the G8 member countries and the President of the European Commission, reaffirming their cooperation in the area of climate change and other important fields. Japan also strengthened its dialogue with the regional cooperation organization comprised of Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, and Moldova (GUAM) by means of holding a foreign ministerial-level meeting with them in June.

Many European dignitaries also visited Japan in 2007, including Prime Minister Romano Prodi of Italy (April), Chancellor Angela Merkel of Germany (August), and NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer (December). These meetings with various European countries and institutions throughout 2007 sent a clear message that both Japan and Europe are intent on mutually reinforcing their cooperative relationship.



*Prime Minister Abe (left) with Federal Chancellor of Germany Merkel (middle) and President of the European Commission Barroso (right) at the joint press conference of the 16th Japan-EU Summit (June 5, Berlin, Germany; photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office, Cabinet Secretariat)*

## 5. Russia, Central Asia, and the Caucasus

With strong emerging economy owing to soaring oil prices and other circumstances, Russia restored confidence, consequently rising nationalism and resurging as a great power. In December, President Putin upon the overwhelming victory at the lower house of the Federal Assembly elections of the ruling party United Russia in the State Duma which envisaged Putin as the head of the candidate list, designated his close aide, Dmitry Medvedev, First Deputy Chairman of the Government as his preferred successor, while announcing his intention to assume the office of Chairman of the Government for retaining his influence.

In Japan-Russia relations, political dialogues have been held frequently at various levels, such as summit and foreign minister levels, while cooperation is advancing across a broad range of fields based on the Japan-Russia Action Plan, including steady development of economic relations between the two countries. In addition to making efforts to elevate Japan-

Russia relations to a higher level, Japan has been engaged in intensive negotiations with the Russian government with the strong intention to resolve the issue of the Northern Territories, the most outstanding issue in Japan-Russia relations.

International interests toward the countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus has been growing, taking account on their abundant energy resources as well as their geopolitical position at the center of Eurasia. Japan has taken the standpoint of proactive commitment to the region, as demonstrated both domestically and internationally through Prime Minister Koizumi's visit to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan in August 2006. Japan has also worked to further strengthen its relations with the countries of the region by steadily promoting cooperation through the "Central Asia plus Japan" Dialogue, inviting various heads of state of the region to Japan and sending senior officials of the Government of Japan to the region.

## 6. The Middle East and North Africa

Ensuring peace and stability in the Middle East region is an issue that directly affects the peace and prosperity of the international community as a whole and is also vitally important for the energy security of Japan, which imports approximately 90% of its demand for crude oil from the region. However, the Middle East region faces numerous issues that threatens its stability, including the Middle East peace process, situations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Iran's nuclear development.

Against this backdrop, Japan is proactively engaged in Middle East diplomacy, pursuing the dual goals of ensuring peace and stability in the Middle East in cooperation with the international community, and of securing Japan's energy security.

In 2007, Prime Minister Abe visited five countries in the Middle East from late April to early May, namely Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Kuwait, Qatar, and Egypt. During his visits he exchanged views with the heads of state of each country concerning the strengthening of bilateral relations, the ensuring of energy security, and coop-

eration to address various issues facing international community, including peace and stability in the Middle East.

Foreign Minister Aso attended the International Ministerial Conference of the Neighboring Countries of Iraq, held in Egypt in May, and enunciated Japan's active efforts to address the situation in Iraq. Japan was also proactively engaged in the Middle East Peace Process, with Minister Aso visiting Jordan, Israel, and the Palestinian territories in August and Japan hosting the second ministerial-level meeting of the Four-Party Consultative Unit for the Concept of the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity," a Japanese initiative, locally during his visit.

Furthermore, Japan is promoting various programs fostering dialogue with the countries of the Middle East, with the aim of promoting understanding of Japan's policies towards the region in each country while deepening mutual understanding. In November, the fifth Japan Arab Dialogue Forum and the Japan-Arab Conference were held in Alexandria, Egypt.



## 7. Africa

### (a) Africa in 2007

In Africa, there was progress toward peace and stability in 2007. Concrete examples of this include that in March the Wagadougou Agreement was reached in Côte d'Ivoire; the transition process toward civilian rule was completed in Mauritania; in July the dispatch to Darfur, western Sudan, of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) was decided; and in August and September, the first presidential election since the withdrawal of UN peacekeeping operations was held peacefully in Sierra Leone. However, many challenges remained, such as escalating tensions between Ethiopia and Eritrea, the delay in the deployment of the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMI-SOM), ongoing instability in the Sudan, and the deterioration of the situation in the eastern region of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Africa is experiencing a favorable economic situa-

tion as a whole. Encouraging signs for economic development include dramatic economic growth in countries rich in natural resources such as oil and minerals and a high rate of economic growth in many other countries. Despite this, countries lacking stability in their internal affairs continue to have a low rate of economic growth, resulting in gaps appearing around the continent. Moreover, such overall growth trends do not necessarily lead to the alleviation of poverty or development, and in fact prospects for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) appear bleak.

Support to Africa has become an important policy issue in the international community. In particular, there has been a marked appearance of emerging donors such as China and India, making the establishment of cooperative relations with these emerging donors a new issue requiring careful consideration.

### (b) Japan's Diplomacy towards Africa

Japan is undertaking proactive diplomacy towards Africa, with the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) process, one of the largest policy fora on African development in the world, at the cornerstone of its engagement. Japan's African diplomacy seeks to achieve the three goals of (i) making proper contributions as a responsible member of the international community to the resolution of global issues that are concentrated in Africa; (ii) strengthening the foundations for Japan's diplomacy through enhanced relations with the countries of Africa, which comprise approximately 30% of the member states of the United Nations; and (iii) reinforcing Japan's economic relationship with Africa, which is blessed with resources and expected to become a large market for Japan in the future.

In particular, African development issues are expected to be addressed in 2008, with the convening of the fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) as well as the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit in Japan. Japan is expected to play a leading role by orchestrat-

ing the diplomatic efforts of the G8 countries regarding these issues. Japan is currently advancing its preparations for the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit through discussions among the Africa Personal Representatives (APR) of the G8 heads of state as well as through preparations for the Africa Partnership Forum (APF).



Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Onodera (left) shaking hands with Mr. Konare (right), the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, at the high-level meeting on Darfur (September 21, New York, USA)