

Section 2

Leading Discussions at International Conferences

1 G7 and G20

Japan actively participates in G7 and G20 Summits, which are attended by the world's major nations, and makes efforts to maintain and strengthen the international order.

(1) G7

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S., the G7 Presidency of the year, hosted the G7 Leaders' Video Conference on March 16. It was the first video conference among G7 leaders. At the meeting, the G7 leaders agreed to use all policy tools in order to contain the impact of COVID-19 on the global economy, and to coordinate on efforts such as the rapid development of COVID-19 treatments and vaccines, and released the G7 Leaders' Statement. Prime Minister Abe stated his intention to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 in their complete form as a symbol of overcoming COVID-19, and other leaders expressed their support.

At the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting held via video conference on March 25, the Ministers affirmed their coordination in response to COVID-19 and also had lively discussions on regional affairs including North Korea, China and Iran.

At the G7 Leaders' Video Conference on April 16, the G7 leaders agreed on matters such as the importance of developing vaccines and medicines



G7 Leaders' Video Conference (April 16, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

and of supporting developing countries. Prime Minister Abe spoke particularly on the following points: developing and distributing medicines; supporting countries with vulnerable medical and healthcare systems; international sharing support and information concerning the crisis; strengthening infectious disease prevention systems worldwide, and; building economies resilient to crises.

(2) G20

On March 26, Saudi Arabia, the G20 Presidency of the year, hosted the G20 Leaders' Video Conference. The G20 leaders adopted the Leaders' Statement, which clearly expressed their determination to coordinate on public health and financial measures, and minimize disruptions to trade and the global supply chain. As one of the lead speakers, Prime Minister Abe emphasized the importance of accelerating the development

of medicines and called for the G20 to implement bold and large-scale economic and fiscal policies, which received support from the other leaders. The Leaders' Statement stated that the G20 leaders commended Japan's determination to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 in their complete form as a symbol of human resilience.

At the G20 Foreign Ministers' Extraordinary Virtual Meeting held on September 3, the Ministers shared knowledge and experience in dealing with COVID-19 and discussed possible ways of international cooperation for resuming cross-border travel. During the G20 Riyadh Summit, held via video conference on November 21 and 22, the G20 leaders held discussions on the agendas, "Overcoming the Pandemic and Restoring Growth and Jobs," and "Building an Inclusive, Sustainable, and Resilient future." After the Summit, the G20 Riyadh Leaders' Declaration was released as a summary of the discussions. Prime Minister Suga took the lead in the discussion, remarking that the G20 should deliver a clear message that the G20 members will lead the international community in (1) responding to COVID-19, (2) recovering the global economy, (3) resuming cross-border travel, and (4) shaping the post-COVID-19 international order. On the subject of health, the leaders affirmed the importance of contributing to international frameworks for ensuring equitable access to vaccines, therapeutics and diagnostics, and the importance of Universal Health Coverage (UHC). With regard to trade, the leaders agreed on the unprecedented importance of a multilateral trading system, the political support for WTO reforms, as well as the necessity of strengthening supply chain sustainability and resiliency. The leaders also spoke on digitalization, affirming that digital technology would play a key role in the response to COVID-19, and acknowledged the importance of Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT). The leaders also agreed to explore concrete ways to facilitate



G20 Riyadh Summit (November 22, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

the movement of people. With regard to the climate change, conserving the global environment, and sustainable using of resources and energy, the G20 leaders referred to the international efforts including the Paris Agreement. In addition, the leaders affirmed their intention to proceed with the implementation of the "G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment" and to contribute to achieving the SDGs.

Prime Minister Suga emphasized Japan's determination to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 as a symbol of overcoming COVID-19. As a result, the Leaders' Statement included a sentence to commend Japan's determination to host the Games in 2021 as a symbol of humanity's resilience and global unity in overcoming COVID-19.

2 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)

APEC is a framework of economic cooperation in which 21 economies (countries and regions)¹ in the Asia-Pacific region participate. The Asia-Pacific region is the "world's growth center," accounting for about 40% of the world's population, about 50% of the world's trade volume, and about 60% of the world's total GDP. APEC, in order to liberalize and facilitate trade and investment in the region, conducts activities such as deepening

¹ Members of APEC are referred to as 'member economies' or 'members' or 'economies.'

regional economic integration, and enhancing economic and technical cooperation. The Asia-Pacific region, which thrives by liberalizing trade and investment and strengthening connectivity in accordance with international rules, is the core of the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” that Japan has been promoting. Japan’s active involvement in and promotion of cooperation with APEC are of great significance to the effort to support our own economic growth and the overseas expansion of Japanese companies.

At APEC 2020, chaired by Malaysia, discussions were held at a variety of meetings throughout the year (all meetings beginning in March were held virtually). The discussions revolved around an overarching theme — “Optimizing Human Potential Towards a Resilient Future of Shared Prosperity. Pivot. Prioritise. Progress.” — as well as three priority areas; (1) improving the narrative of trade and investment, (2) inclusive economic participation through digital economies and technologies, and (3) driving innovative sustainability.

The 27th APEC Economic Leaders’ Meeting held on November 20 as APEC’s first ever virtual meeting, highlighted the presence of APEC in the Asia-Pacific region, adopting the Leaders’ Declaration for the first time in three years, as well as the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040, which charts a future course for APEC replacing the Bogor Goals.²

APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040 seeks to achieve an “open, dynamic, resilient and peaceful Asia-Pacific community by 2040, for the prosperity of all our people and future generations,” through the economic drivers of trade and investment, innovation and digitalization, and strong, balanced, secure, sustainable and inclusive growth.

At the Leaders’ Meeting, Prime Minister Suga gave a keynote address on economic growth in the COVID-19 years and post-COVID-19 era, emphasizing the importance of realizing digitization and a decarbonized society, promoting free trade and strengthening connectivity, and achieving inclusive economic growth. Specifically, Prime Minister Suga highlighted the establishment of the government agency in charge of digital transformation and the acceleration of the virtuous cycle of environment and growth toward achieving carbon neutrality by 2050. He also explained Japan’s intention to promote WTO reform, further advance regional economic integration toward achieving the Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP), strengthen connectivity by leading efforts to make the supply chain more resilient while distributing and deploying quality infrastructure, and ramp up efforts based on the concept of human security. New Zealand will serve as the host of APEC in 2021.

² A set of targeted goals for developed economies and developing economies to achieve free and open trade and investment no later than 2010 and 2020 respectively. Adopted at the 1994 APEC Economic Leaders’ Meeting.

Results of the 27th APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting



Prime Minister Suga speaking at the APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting (November 20, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

(1) Main points of the leaders' declaration¹

	Main points of the leaders' declaration
COVID-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue working together to use all available policy tools to support an inclusive, effective and sustained response to COVID-19 ● Recognize the importance of the development and contribution of digital technologies towards <u>universal health coverage</u>
APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● See (2) below
Trade and investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Welcome the significant progress made under the Bogor Goals, and recognize more needs to be done in fostering an enabling environment for trade and investment in the Asia-Pacific region. ● Recognize the importance of a <u>free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable trade and investment environment</u>
Multilateral trading system and WTO reform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take note of the call of the APEC Business Advisory Council (ABAC) for APEC to continue supporting the <u>multilateral trading system</u> ● Continue to support the on-going work at the WTO, including through <u>its necessary reform</u> aimed to improve its functioning
Free Trade Area of the Asia Pacific (FTAAP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Further advance the <u>economic integration in the region</u>, in a manner that is market-driven
Supply chain resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cooperate to facilitate the movement of essential goods and services, as well as the essential movement of people in a safe manner, identifying and resolving unnecessary barriers to trade and strengthening the <u>resilience of our supply chains</u>
Quality infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Underscore the importance of improving regional connectivity through <u>quality infrastructure</u> development and investment
Digital economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acknowledge the importance of cooperation in facilitating the <u>flow of data</u> and strengthening <u>consumer and business trust in digital transactions</u>
Sustainability and human security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Foster comprehensive quality growth and advancement of work to this effect, including on the <u>human security agenda</u> ● Work to ensure <u>food security</u> ● Enhance <u>energy resilience</u> and energy security

(2) Main points of the APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040²

To achieve “*an open, dynamic, resilient and peaceful Asia-Pacific community by 2040, for the prosperity of all our people and future generations*” by pursuing the following three economic drivers;

Trade and investment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Acknowledge the importance of, and will continue to work together to deliver, a <u>free, open, fair, non-discriminatory, transparent and predictable trade and investment environment</u> ● Reaffirm our support for agreed upon rules of the WTO in delivering a <u>well-functioning multilateral trading system</u> ● Further advance the <u>Bogor Goals</u> and <u>economic integration in the region</u> in a manner that is <u>market-driven</u>, including through the work on the <u>Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) agenda</u>
Innovation and digitalization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Foster an enabling environment that is market-driven and supported by digital economy and innovation, and pursue structural reforms and sound economic policies ● Strengthen <u>digital infrastructure</u> as well as cooperate on facilitating the <u>flow of data</u> and strengthening <u>consumer and business trust in digital transactions</u>
Strong, balanced, secure, sustainable and inclusive growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Foster quality growth that brings palpable benefits to all, including MSMEs and women to ensure that the Asia Pacific region is resilient to shocks ● Intensify human resource development and comprehensively address <u>all environmental challenges</u>, including climate change

1 For the agreed language, please refer to https://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2020/2020_aelm

2 For the agreed language, please refer to https://www.apec.org/Meeting-Papers/Leaders-Declarations/2020/2020_aelm/Annex-A