

## Section 3

# Diplomacy with the Support of the Public

### 1 Proactive Communications to the Public

#### (1) Overview

Public understanding and support are indispensable for the smooth implementation of Japan's foreign policy. As such, providing prompt and clear explanations on the policy details and on the role of the government is crucial. Accordingly, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is making efforts in timely and effective public relations, using various forms of media, lectures, publications and others.

#### (2) Providing Information through Domestic Media

MOFA has committed itself to promptly and accurately providing information through various media, such as newspapers, television and the Internet, in order to gain the understanding and support of Japanese nationals for Japan's foreign policy. To provide information effectively, regular press conferences are conducted by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Press Secretary, while extraordinary press conferences are held as necessary. Press conferences by the Foreign Minister are open to various media including Internet media, and the records and videos of the press conferences are posted on MOFA's website.

During foreign visits by the Prime Minister or the Foreign Minister, MOFA provides information



Extraordinary Press Conference by Foreign Minister Motegi (August 6, London, UK)

#### Dissemination of Information through Press Conferences

Minister for Foreign Affairs	112 times
Press Secretary	40 times
Total	152 times

\*From January 1 to December 31, 2020

#### Dissemination of Information through Documents

Statements by the Minister for Foreign Affairs	13 times
Statements by the Press Secretary	43 times
Press releases by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1,072 times
Total	1,128 times

\*From January 1 to December 31, 2020

from visiting countries/regions via multiple means, including the Internet, so that people can promptly follow and understand the details and the outcomes of the visits. MOFA also regularly releases statements by the Minister for Foreign Affairs or

Press Secretary on individual international issues, expressing the position of the Government of Japan. Similarly, MOFA frequently provides press releases on its daily diplomatic activities. Additionally, the Minister and State Ministers for Foreign Affairs explain the Government's foreign policies directly to the public through appearances on various media and interviews.

### (3) Information Provision through the Internet

MOFA's website (in Japanese and English) is a

way to promptly provide information on the diplomatic activities of the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister as well as on Japan's foreign policy including territory/sovereignty, recognition of history and security along with the latest international relations and other basic relevant information.

Furthermore, MOFA's website in the Japanese language provides a variety of contents for Japanese nationals across a wide range of levels, including the "Anything Report from Around the World" and "MOFA for Kids." In particular, "MOFA for Kids" publishes contents such as



MOFA's official website  
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/index.html>



MOFA's official twitter account  
[https://twitter.com/MofaJapan\\_en](https://twitter.com/MofaJapan_en)



MOFA's official facebook account  
<https://www.facebook.com/Mofa.Japan.en>



MOFA for Kids  
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/kids/index.html>  
 (Japanese language website only)

MOFA's official website



MOFA's official facebook account



MOFA's official twitter account



MOFA for Kids



videos and quizzes that use unique characters to explain MOFA's activities in an easy-to-understand way, and Q&A corners explaining vocabularies and international issues that are covered frequently in the news and newspapers.

In addition to these, MOFA provides a variety of information through various social media platforms. As face-to-face activities were significantly constrained due to the impact of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in 2020, efforts were made to provide information in new ways through the Internet, such as online video live streaming of the regular press conferences by the Foreign Minister.

#### (4) Dialogue with Japanese Nationals

With the notion of "Public Relations through Dialogue," MOFA provides the people of Japan with opportunities to directly talk to the Foreign Minister, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and MOFA officials.

At the "Dialogue with Students," a MOFA seminar for students held in February, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Omi Asako gave the opening address, and also observed group debates by the participating students and commented on their reports on the debate outcomes. Furthermore, at a gathering following the seminar, she exchanged views with a large number of the participating students.

Various programs had to be cancelled or postponed due to the spread of COVID-19, among them "Visits by elementary, junior and senior-high school students to MOFA" as well as "Lectures on the International Situations," "Diplomatic Talks" and "Talks for High School," in which MOFA sends its officials to venues such as international exchange organizations, universities and high schools throughout Japan, and "Children's Kasumigaseki Tour Day," which parents and children take part in together. However, from September "Talks for High School," "Diplomatic Talks" and "Lectures on the International



Lectures on the International Situations  
(November 26, Fukushima City Board of Education)



One of the Talks for High School  
(October 22, Shizuoka Prefectural Yaizu Chuo High School)



One of the Diplomatic Talks (December 7, Ferris University)



Periodical journal "Diplomacy"

## Online Domestic Public Relations Initiatives under the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Pandemic

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) provides opportunities for people in a wide age range to learn about Japan's foreign policy and global issues, through various public relations programs including sending MOFA officials to high schools and universities to give lectures, such as the "Talks for High School" and "Diplomatic Talks" programs.

Due to the spread of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), programs that we had been engaged in, such as the sending of officials to conduct talks on site and visits by students to MOFA, have been suspended for the time being. In place of these activities, online lectures and talks have been conducted since autumn 2020 as a new initiative that meets the needs of the COVID-19 era.

### 1. Online lectures that connect students to the MOFA Headquarters (Tokyo)

The first online "Talks for High School" was held in September at Hachinohe Kita High School, an Aomori prefectural high school. On the day of the talk, a MOFA official presented the talk from the Headquarters in Tokyo, using many materials such as photographs and figures to make the contents easy to understand even in an online talk, and staying mindful of speaking more slowly and clearly than usual to make it easier to hear and understand. Other creative efforts such as introducing quizzes in the middle of the talk were also made to prevent the talk from becoming monotonous and tedious.



"Talks for High School" at Hachinohe Kita High School

At the school, each student prepared cards in three colors beforehand, and used them to answer the quiz questions. Such unique ideas and creative efforts by the school also helped to facilitate a lively two-way exchange in spite of the online format.

### 2. Online lectures that connect students to diplomatic missions overseas

More than half of MOFA's officials serve as diplomats at the Embassies, Consulates and Permanent Missions of Japan in 195 countries around the world. The opportunity to hear directly from a diplomat who works overseas is probably one of the appeals of MOFA's domestic public relations initiatives. In fact, there have been requests to incorporate topics related to the overseas work experience of MOFA's officials into the "Talks for High School" and "Diplomatic Talks" programs.

However, using the traditional method of sending speakers to the site of the talk would mean bringing a diplomat working overseas back to Japan, then dispatching him or her to each school. This is, of course, impossible. Hence, this has always involved sending an official working at the MOFA Headquarters in Tokyo to talk about their past experience of working overseas.

In this respect, an online talk creates the opportunity to hear a timely and immersive talk from an official who is currently serving as a diplomat on the global stage. The online domestic public relations initiative can be described as a measure that can fully demonstrate MOFA's strengths.

Since October, MOFA's Domestic Public Relations Division has been conducting lectures and talks led by officials working at diplomatic missions overseas. MOFA's officials based in not only countries that are relatively close to Japan such as Indonesia and Mongolia, but also other parts of the world including Africa, the Middle East, Central and South America, and Europe, such as Rwanda and Brazil, have also served as speakers in these initiatives.

Going forward, there are also plans to launch an initiative of virtual tours of MOFA.

Even under the COVID-19 pandemic, MOFA will continue to implement domestic public relations initiatives that are equally, or more, enriching and effective than before.

Situations” were switched to an online format and conducted sequentially (at the “Diplomatic Talks” and “Talks for High School,” the advantages offered by the online format have been capitalized on to include lectures by MOFA staff working at embassies and consulates-general overseas) (See the Column on page 354). Through these programs, MOFA is working to promote better understanding of foreign policy and international affairs among young people, who will bear the future of Japan on their shoulders.

MOFA also introduces Japan’s ODA policies and specific measures to the public through various symposia, lectures and “ODA Delivery Lectures” in which MOFA officials take part (33 lectures in 2019).

Additionally, MOFA publishes the periodical journal “Diplomacy,” widely sharing information on discussions taking place in various areas and at various levels concerning diplomacy and international affairs relevant to Japan. In 2020 the journal took up various diplomatic challenges as themes, including the transformation of the international order by COVID-19 and the course of the U.S. presidential election, and featured a large number of essays and other articles from renowned experts both inside and outside Japan.

Moreover, MOFA also produced various pamphlets in order to promote understanding on the organizational structure and foreign policies of MOFA in an understandable manner. In addition to the above, MOFA accepts individual public opinions and impressions through various channels, including its website. Comments and opinions from the public are accordingly shared within MOFA and used as a reference in policy making and planning.

### **(5) Promotion of the Declassification of Diplomatic Records and Access to Information**

To further enhance the public understanding of and confidence in Japan’s foreign policy, MOFA is actively engaging itself in the smooth transfer

of records and their declassification. In addition, MOFA has been engaged in efforts to facilitate greater convenience in the public use of diplomatic documents.

MOFA preserves more than 120,000 historical materials, including 40,000 prewar historical documents in its diplomatic archives and has declassified its postwar diplomatic records since 1976 as a voluntary initiative. The Rules on the Declassification of Diplomatic Records, which were established in May 2010, stipulate: (1) the declassification of diplomatic documents created more than 30 years ago in principle and (2) the establishment of the “Committee for the Promotion of the Declassification of the Diplomatic Records” which is chaired by the State Minister for Foreign Affairs or the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs as well as attended by external experts, to further promote the declassification of diplomatic records and improve its transparency. The number of files which have been transferred to the Diplomatic Archives and made public since then reached approximately 35,000 by the end of 2020.

Furthermore, MOFA discloses information pursuant to the Act on Access to Information Held by Administrative Organs, while giving considerations to national security, the relationship of mutual trust with other countries, the impact on diplomatic negotiations and the protection of personal information. In 2020, MOFA received 781 requests for disclosure, and documents totaling 42,914 pages were disclosed.

## **2 Strengthening the Foreign Policy Implementation Structure**

The security environment surrounding Japan has become even more severe, and changes in the power balance of the international community accelerate and become more complex. Amid such a situation, and also amid the spread of COVID-19, MOFA must enhance its foreign policy implementation structure while looking ahead to the

## Column

Executive Chefs for Ambassadors/Consuls-General of Japan:  
At the Forefront of Diplomacy

Executive Chefs for ambassadors/consuls-general of Japan are licensed cooks or persons with a considerable experience working as chefs, who have been recognized by the Minister for Foreign Affairs to engage in official catering work at official residences and other venues for the head of a diplomatic mission overseas (ambassador/consul-general). Diplomatic missions overseas are the center for diplomatic activities such as negotiations with governments, information gathering, and the development of personal networks. One of the most effective means of diplomacy is to create opportunities for meals at the official residence of the ambassador/consul-general, with guests such as influential politicians, businessmen and government officials from the country of assignment, as well as the diplomatic corps from various countries. For this reason, the head of the diplomatic mission is usually accompanied by the Executive Chef for the ambassador/consul-general, an exclusively appointed chef whose aim is to provide high-quality meals.

### Unfamiliar ingredients and Japanese cuisine: Activities during the COVID-19 pandemic

#### Shingu Takeo, Executive Chef for the Consul-General of Japan in Rio de Janeiro

After serving as the Executive Chef for the Consul-General of Japan in Milano, I started working as the Executive Chef of Mr. Otsuru, Consul-General in Rio de Janeiro, from November 2019. Before working as an Executive Chef, I visited 13 countries around the world and actively tried out various ingredients from all parts of the world. As I discovered new ingredients, I aspired to become an Executive Chef and I wanted to convey the wonderful qualities of Japanese cuisine by using local ingredients.

To serve up delicious Japanese cuisine, it is important to ensure that the ingredients are fresh. In this hot country where it is possible to swim in the sea even in winter, I was worried that I might not be able to obtain seafood that can be used to make sashimi and sushi. However, fresh seafood is surprisingly available in abundance. Furthermore, Japanese immigrants came to Brazil in 1908, and they have since created the world's largest Nikkei (Japanese immigrants and their descendants) community of about 2 million people here. Through their efforts, many Japanese vegetables and fruits are now produced in Brazil. Hence, it is possible to buy vegetables such as cucumbers and Japanese white radish at supermarkets and open-air markets, and the Japanese names of some ingredients have even been introduced into Portuguese, the official language of Brazil (for example, shiitake mushrooms (*shitake*), shimeji mushrooms (*shimeji*), Chinese leeks (*nirá*), and persimmon (*caqui*)).

By contrast, I incorporate unique Brazilian ingredients into my Japanese cuisine. For example, the plant known as *jambu* has a flower that is numbing like the Japanese pepper, so it can be boiled or sprinkled over spicy dish of "mapo tofu." Its leaf is delicious when boiled in soy sauce and served as *tsukudani*. *Cará* is an ingredient similar to yam, and it is very useful as a binding agent. Fish from the trout family in the Amazon region are fatty and go well with rice when served with grated Japanese white radish, soy sauce, and lemon. *Açaí* and *acerola* are well known even in Japan, but the local *açaí* tastes completely different from the *açaí* available in Japan. Freshly picked *açaí* has a



At the reception for celebrating the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor



Steamed dish (Seafood *chawanmushi*)



Publishing videos on Japanese cuisine on Instagram

raw, grassy smell and a mushy texture. However, adding a little sugar gives it a refreshing taste and makes it surprisingly delicious.

There are three dishes on my menu that I would definitely like guests to enjoy. The first is the roasted or grilled dish. For this, I serve up beef that has been cooked at a low temperature for two hours, with a passionfruit sauce. For the steamed dish, I serve up seafood and bamboo shoots in Japanese steamed egg custard (*chawanmushi*), covered in a prawn-based sauce stewed for two days. For the fried dish, I present fresh prawn tempura with powdered green tea (*matcha*) and salt. These are three dishes that I always serve guests attending a meal for the first time, and I am glad that they have been well received by all the guests.

Unfortunately, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a period from April 2020 when we could not host any meals. During this period, I published videos through the Consul-General's official Instagram account, introducing recipes for Japanese cuisine made with local ingredients that can also be prepared at home by the general public in Brazil. The recipe video for tempura was especially popular. Viewers were also interested to find out that the word tempura, a representative dish in Japanese cuisine, comes from the Portuguese word *tempero* (meaning "seasoning"). Since around August 2020, we have been able to host meals again for small groups with adequate measures against COVID-19 in place.

As there are still many ingredients in Brazil that I do not know about, I will continue to learn diligently, in order to incorporate such ingredients into the making of delicious Japanese cuisine.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs accepts applications at any time from candidates who wish to serve in diplomacy as Executive Chefs for ambassadors/consuls-general of Japan. If you are interested, please inquire through the following website or the QR code.  
[International Hospitality and Conference Service Association.

<http://www.ihcsa.or.jp/zaigaikoukan/cook-1/>]



You can also read more about the activities of Executive Chefs for ambassadors/consuls-general of Japan through the "MOFA Japan Chef" social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter).

Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/MofaJapanChef>

Twitter:  
[https://twitter.com/mofa\\_japan\\_chef](https://twitter.com/mofa_japan_chef)



(only in the Japanese language)

post-COVID-19 world, in order to pursue flexible diplomacy and promote diplomacy that ensures the safety and security of Japanese nationals. To that end, MOFA is strengthening both the quantity and quality of its diplomatic missions overseas, and reinforcing the organizational and personnel structures at its headquarters.

Diplomatic missions overseas, such as embassies and consulates-general, not only represent Japan and promote diplomatic agenda, but also play a key role in areas such as information-gathering and strategic communication at the frontline of diplomacy. At the same time, overseas missions also carry out operations directly related to enhancing the interests of Japanese nationals, such as protecting their lives and safety, providing support for Japanese companies, promoting investment and tourism, and securing energy and other resources.

In January 2021, Japan established a new embassy in Haiti and a new consulate-general in Cebu in the Philippines. As a result, the number of diplomatic missions overseas as of FY2020 is 229 (153 embassies, 66 consulates general and 10 permanent missions).

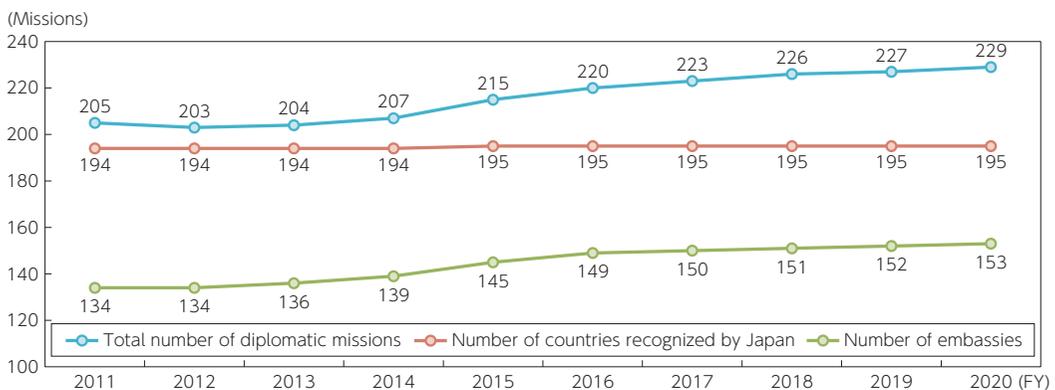
While Haiti has the largest population in the Caribbean Community, it is also the poorest country in Latin America and the Caribbean, and interest from the international community over the country remains high amidst its frequently-occurring natural disasters. Haiti is also traditionally

one of the friendliest countries to Japan that has supported many of Japan's positions in the international arena. Cebu is the second-largest metropolitan area in the Philippines after Manila. In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the number of Japanese companies and travelers, such as tourists and language students in Cebu and the Visayas region at large. By establishing the embassy in Haiti and consulate-general in Cebu, Japan will not only build a higher level of bilateral relations with the both countries, it will also strengthen its capacity to protect Japanese nationals, support Japanese companies and cooperate in the international arena.

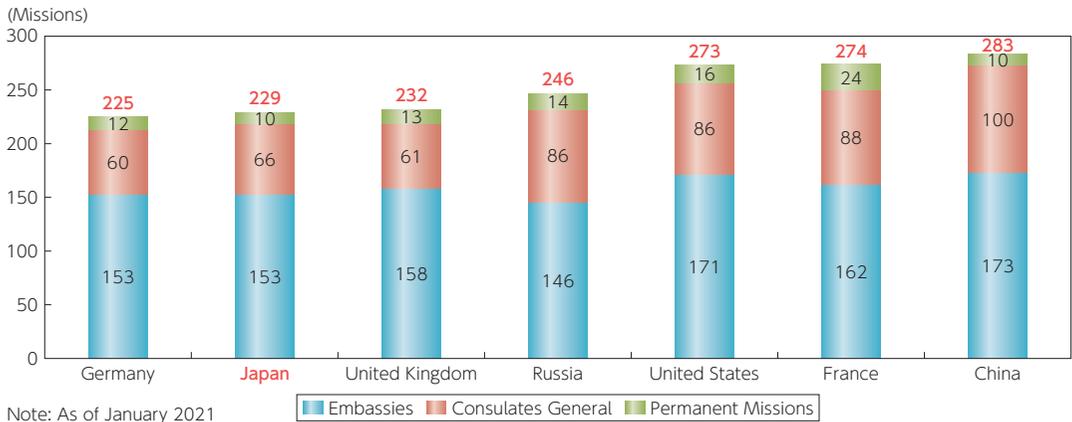
In FY2021, Japan will establish a new consulate-general in Da Nang in Viet Nam. Da Nang is achieving remarkable economic growth, and the numbers of Japanese companies in operation and Japanese nationals living there are both increasing. Additionally, Da Nang occupies an important position on the security front facing the South China Sea. Since it is situated at the starting point of the East-West Economic Corridor, Da Nang is recognized as one of important strategic locations toward promoting "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP). It is essential for Japan to deepen its relations with the Da Nang region in a multi-layered manner by establishing a basis for information gathering on security and economic affairs in the area.

In addition to establishing more diplomatic missions overseas, it is important to secure and

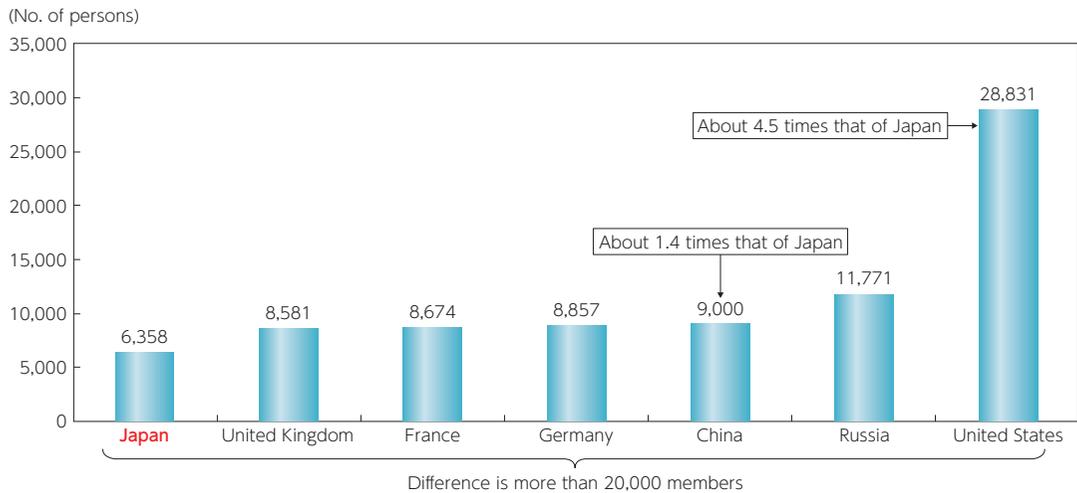
### Changes in the Number of Diplomatic Missions



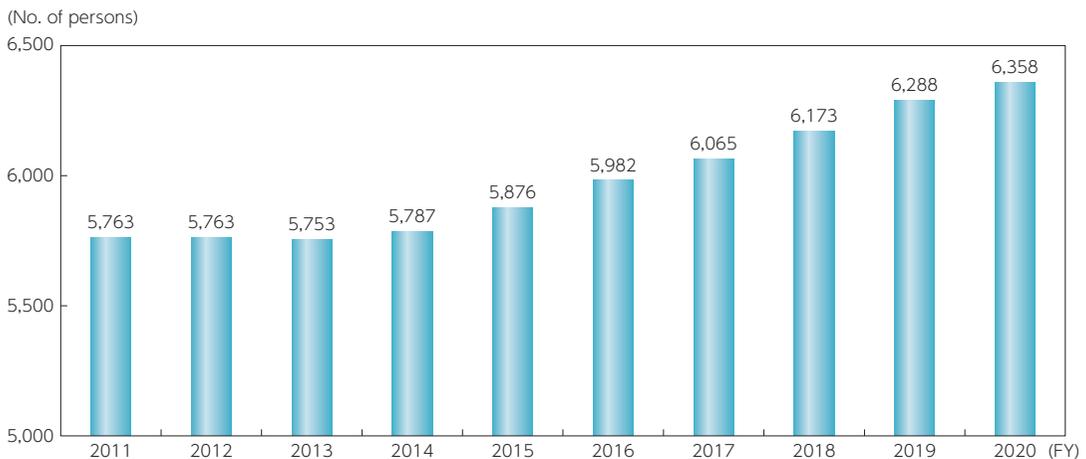
### Comparison of the Number of Diplomatic Missions of Japan with Major Countries



### Comparison of the Number of Staff Members at Ministries of Foreign Affairs in Major Countries



### Number of Staff Members at MOFA



increase the number of staff members to support diplomacy at the MOFA headquarters and diplomatic missions overseas. In the context of the Government's policy to reduce the overall personnel expenses due to the current severe budget situation, the number of staff members at MOFA was increased to 6,358 (6,288 in 2019) in order to advance Japan's "Proactive Contribution to Peace" policy, implement protection and safety measures for Japanese nationals abroad, strengthen information-gathering and analysis capabilities, further vitalize the Japanese economy including the promotion of infrastructure exports, advance strategic communications, and address bilateral relations and regional situations. The number of staff members, however, remains insufficient in comparison with other major countries. MOFA continues its efforts to build a structure that is commensurate with Japan's national power and diplomatic policy. In the meantime, based on the belief that enhancing the foreign policy implementation structure remains essential in FY2021, MOFA will increase its workforce by 72 staff.

Furthermore, MOFA appropriated a budget of 712.0 billion yen in the budget for FY2020 (an increase of 18.6 billion yen from FY2019) in order to realize FOIP and fortify the structure for strengthening the international order based on the rule of law. As for MOFA's FY2020 supplementary budgets, it appropriated a budget of 102.8 billion yen in the first supplementary budget, 2.1 billion yen in the second supplementary budget, and 134.9 billion yen in the third supplementary budget. The funding appropriated in the first supplementary budget was chiefly for supporting the halting and prevention of the spread of COVID-19 in developing countries in Asia, Oceania, the Middle East, Africa, Central and South America and other regions in order to mitigate the impact of COVID-19, and for supporting Japanese companies overseas. Similarly, in the third supplementary budget, MOFA appropriated funding for halting the global spread of COVID-19 and supporting people being affected by the impact of that.

MOFA's FY2021 initial government budget proposal appropriated 709.7 billion yen (of which a digital-related budget of 13.8 billion yen is appropriated under the Cabinet Secretariat budget) based on the following priorities: (1) overcoming COVID-19, which poses a threat to human security, while also moving forward with initiatives that look ahead to the post-COVID-19 world; (2) promoting "diplomacy with a sense of caring" in order to preserve the safety of Japan and its nationals; and (3) promoting "diplomacy with robustness" in order to further advance collaboration and cooperation with the international community. Within that, in order to bolster support for developing countries in the healthcare and medical fields, the budget for providing assistance bilaterally and through international organizations has been enhanced. Additionally, partly based on experiences under the spread of COVID-19, the budget for evacuating Japanese nationals in emergency situations, the budget for charter flights for the Foreign Minister and related budgets have been enhanced and appropriated as budgets deemed necessary for bolstering the protection of Japanese nationals overseas, including in responding to emergency situations, and for the continuous implementation of diplomatic and consular duties. In addition, MOFA also appropriated funding for hosting conferences and meetings to strengthen cooperation with allies and like-minded countries, creating new rules to be effective in space and cyberspace, and other matters.

In order to promote Japan's national interests, Japan will continue to proceed strategically to develop the foreign policy implementation structure and enhance it further, while making efforts to streamline operations.

### 3 Role of Experts in Diplomacy

In shaping the future international order in the drastically changing world, it is becoming more apparent that free discussions on foreign policies among experts from the private sector, apart from the official view of each country, have an impact

on the international public opinion as well as policy making of the governments.

Some examples may include: the World Economic Forum (Davos Forum), which has a major influence on the trade policies of each country; the Shangri-La Dialogue, which provides prominent experts and ministers of the world with an opportunity to discuss Asian security issues; the Munich Security Conference, which is a forum for a broad-ranging discussion of regional and global security issues, not limited to Europe alone; and the Manama Dialogue, which deals with the security issues in the Middle East. In major countries, there is an ever-increasing importance of developing think tanks and human resources capable of participating in such discussions, as well as making use of experts such as university professors.

In order to strengthen Japan's diplomacy in the mid- to long-term, the expansion of Japan's intellectual base in the areas of foreign policy and security, and promotion of diplomacy involving a wide range of public views are inevitable. With this view, MOFA provides subsidies to support Japanese think tanks' activities in those areas in order to strengthen their abilities on collection,

analysis and dissemination of information as well as on making policy proposals. In addition, MOFA launched a new subsidy scheme in FY2017 that aims at supporting research and information dissemination of Japanese think tank in the areas of territory, sovereignty and history. Under the scheme, the Japan Institute of International Affairs (JIIA)<sup>1</sup> conducts such activities as collection, organization and public release of materials found in Japan and overseas as well as convention of open symposiums in Japan and in other countries. As a part of the outcome, JIIA released a video at the National Museum of Territory and Sovereignty that enables the audience to experience the view of an albatross flying over the Senkaku Islands and learn about the history and the nature of the Islands. Furthermore, some articles such as on aeronautical charts created by the U.S. government that referred to Takeshima as the Japanese territory were released. It is expected that the scheme will support Japanese think tank in accumulating historical records and knowledge pertaining to Japan's territory, sovereignty and history, and enhancing their information dissemination domestically and abroad.

<sup>1</sup> The relevant section of the Japan Institute of International Affairs' website can be found here: <https://www.jiia-jic.jp/en/>

