

# DIPLOMATIC BLUEBOOK

# 2022



Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

# **Diplomatic Bluebook 2022**

Japanese Diplomacy and  
International Situation in 2021

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

# Preface to the Diplomatic Bluebook 2022

The international community is currently undergoing an era-defining change. The world is entering an era of the U.S.-China competition and competition among nations, and changes in the balance of power are accelerating and increasing its complexities. Universal values, such as freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and the international order, which had underpinned the peace and prosperity of the international community to date, are under severe challenges. In particular, Russia's aggression against Ukraine is an outright challenge to the existing international order and imposed a great impact across the world. This aggression is a unilateral attempt to change the status quo by force and is an outrageous act that shakes the very foundation of the international order. It is a clear violation of international law and totally unacceptable. Japan strongly condemns these actions.

Based on the world's trust in Japan that has been fostered through the efforts of the preceding generations, I am mounting an effort to open a new frontier of Japanese diplomacy with a balanced and stable posture and a high level of responsiveness, underpinned by three determinations; to fully defend universal values, to fully safeguard the peace and stability of Japan, and to contribute to humanity by leading the international community.

Domestic affairs and diplomacy are connected. Only with the support of the people, we as a nation can advance strong diplomacy. Thus, it is imperative that the government toss the ball back and forth attentively with the people and steadily deepen our communication. The Diplomatic Bluebook serves as one of the essential tools to that end.

The Diplomatic Bluebook 2022 primarily presents an overview of the international situation and Japan's diplomatic activities in 2021. The opening pages feature our ongoing fight against the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in 2021, based on the firm recognition that "No one is safe until everyone is safe." It details the major changes the international community faces and Japan's increasingly severe and complex security environment. It then describes Japan's efforts over the past year on major diplomatic issues, such as strengthening of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)," diplomacy with neighboring countries including China and the Republic of Korea, response to outstanding issues of concern regarding North Korea, promotion of regional diplomacy, expansion of a free and fair economic order including economic security, and global issues including COVID-19, climate change, disarmament and non-proliferation. Furthermore, for the sake of deeper understanding of readers, "Special Features" cover a number of specific initiatives in depth such as diplomatic activities conducted on the occasion of the tenth year since the Great East Japan Earthquake. To make diplomacy more accessible to readers, "Columns" feature the stories of Japanese people who are actively working overseas.

Through this Diplomatic Bluebook, we intend to present to readers widely at home and abroad how Japan exercises leadership in the international community and contributes to global peace and prosperity. It is my sincere hope that this Diplomatic Bluebook will contribute to deepening the people's understanding of Japan's diplomacy.

Minister for Foreign Affairs

**HAYASHI Yoshimasa**



In principle, Diplomatic Bluebook 2022 describes an overview of the international affairs and Japan's diplomatic activities between January 1 and December 31 of 2021; however, some important events that occurred until early 2022 are also included.

This book consists of the opening special feature, Chapters 1 to 4, and some reference materials. Following on from the previous year's edition, the opening special feature describes the responses to the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) that continued to pose significant challenges around the world in 2021. Chapters 1 to 4 offer concise overviews of Japan's diplomatic activities throughout 2021, and also include special features explaining specific foreign policy themes in an easy-to-understand manner and column articles contributed by people with global experiences.

This year's and past years' Diplomatic Bluebooks are available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA). Summaries of Diplomatic Bluebook 2022 in French and Spanish are also due to be available on the website by autumn 2022.

For more details with respect to Chapter 3, Section 1, "4 Disarmament and Non-proliferation and the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy," and Section 2, "Japan's International Cooperation," please refer to MOFA's publications, *Japan's Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Policy*, and *White Paper on Development Cooperation - Japan's International Cooperation*. They are also available on the MOFA website.

Please note that the titles of persons and names of countries appearing in this book are those as of the events. Website links and QR codes in this book are those as of publication and may be changed or deleted later. The contents and views expressed in contributions from individuals and organizations do not reflect the position of MOFA. The maps in this book are simplified and may not necessarily be drawn to scale or reflect other details precisely.

Previous Diplomatic Bluebooks:

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/other/bluebook/index.html>



*Japan's Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Policy*

(only in the Japanese language):

[https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/gun\\_hakusho/index.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/gun_hakusho/index.html)



*White Paper on Development Cooperation - Japan's International Cooperation:*

[https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page\\_000017.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/oda/page_000017.html)







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# Opening Special Feature

The Fight Against the Novel  
Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19)  
in 2021



# NO ONE IS SAFE UNTIL EVERYONE IS SAFE

## The Fight Against the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) in 2021



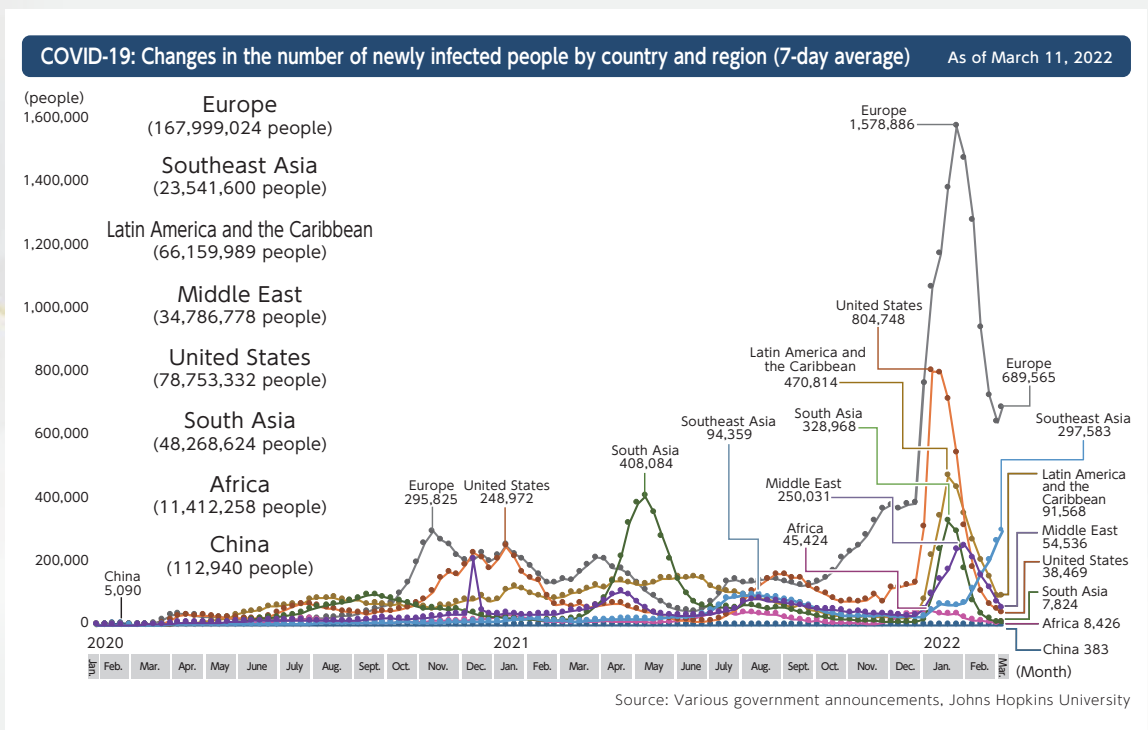
In 2021, Japan and the world continued to be severely affected by the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). In the middle of this unprecedented crisis, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) has continued to work for the protection of Japanese nationals exposed to the crisis overseas. In addition, under the principle of “leave no one behind,” MOFA has been working on strengthening its support for ensuring equitable access to vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics including in developing countries, and bolstering preparedness and response for future pandemics with efforts to achieve universal health coverage (UHC). This Opening Special Feature reflects on the fight against COVID-19, which has entered its second year.

### 1 Situation of COVID-19 Infections in 2021

In 2021, COVID-19 infections continued to spread throughout the world due to the emergence of highly infectious variants, although there were periods and regions in which the number of infections showed a decreasing trend with the progress of vaccinations. Infections of the Delta variant began to increase in India in early April, and the number of new cases per day reached approximately 400,000 in May. Subsequently, while the resurgence of infections was seen even in the United States and Europe, where vaccination rates were relatively high, the emergence of the Omicron variant, of which the first case was reported to the World Health Organization (WHO) from South Africa on November 24, led to a sharp increase in the number of newly infected cases in Europe, North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, Asia, and other regions from December onward.

Due to this situation, various countries and regions continue to face challenges in handling the issues, such as the promotion of booster (third-dose) vaccinations and struggling to balance infection prevention measures with socioeconomic activities.

Japan is no exception to this, and infections repeatedly rose and fell throughout 2021. Accordingly, priority measures to prevent the spread of disease and emergency measures were applied in many municipalities where there were notable spreads of infections and impacts on the medical and healthcare systems (state of emergency measures were applied in the Tokyo metropolitan area from January 8 to March 21 and from April 25 to September 30). Infections spread rapidly from July to August particularly due to the Delta variant replacing other variants, and 25,975 new cases per day were recorded in Japan on



August 20. Following this, the number of new cases decreased rapidly. However, in January 2022, the number of cases surged nationwide at an unprecedented pace due to the global outbreak of the Omicron variant in December. Priority measures to prevent the spread of disease were applied in 34 prefectures throughout Japan. Subsequently, the number of new cases per day has been gradually

decreasing since February, and the priority measures to prevent the spread of disease were lifted nationwide on March 21.

As of March 11, the cumulative number of COVID-19 cases worldwide was approximately 450.97 million (5.61 million in Japan), and the cumulative number of deaths exceeded 6.01 million (approximately 25,700 in Japan).

## 2 Initiatives of the Government of Japan, Including MOFA

### 1. Vaccination and Repatriation Support for Japanese Nationals Residing Overseas

As COVID-19 Vaccination proceeded in various countries, the Government of Japan made it possible for Japanese nationals residing overseas who have concerns about local vaccination for various reasons to receive vaccinations in Japan.

In July 2021, it became possible for employees of Japanese companies and organizations residing overseas to get vaccinated at workplace vaccination sites in Japan.

In addition, in August, the Government of Japan began a program to provide the opportunity for Japanese nationals residing overseas to be

vaccinated at Haneda and Narita airports.

In light of the increasing use of vaccination certificates around the world and the increasing number of situations in which such certificates are required, such as when traveling or using facilities in countries and regions of stay, this program provides the opportunity for users to receive a vaccination certificate at the venue after their second dose. This system was maintained for the purpose of making Japanese nationals residing overseas smoothly engage in economic and social activities in their countries and regions of residence.

A total of approximately 35,000 doses were administered and approximately 18,000 vaccination certificates were issued (as of the end of February 2022).

Furthermore, MOFA provided repatriation support for Japanese nationals overseas, taking into consideration the domestic situations, including the infection conditions and security situations in each country.

The Embassy and Consulates-general of Japan in India recommended that Japanese nationals residing in India return to Japan temporarily in response to the rapid increase in the number of people infected with the Delta variant in India in May. They also responded by providing information

on testing organizations where PCR tests could be taken, and establishing a PCR test site exclusively for Japanese nationals in order to enable smooth departure from the country by Japanese nationals who wished to leave.

In addition, the Embassy of Japan in Indonesia supported the repatriation of Japanese nationals residing there by operating special flights by Japanese airlines as there was an increase in the number of Japanese nationals who wished to return to Japan due to the rapid spread of COVID-19 during July and August. A total of nine special flights were operated by Japanese airlines, enabling approximately 1,000 Japanese nationals to return to Japan.

## COLUMN

### India: Solidarity Between Japanese Diplomatic Missions and the Japanese Community

The key to overcoming the crisis in India, the first country to be affected by the Delta variant, was the solidarity fostered amidst the spread of COVID-19 between the Japanese Embassy and Consulates-general (diplomatic missions), and the Japanese community.

COVID-19 infections in India surged due to the Delta variant in May 2021. There were more than 400,000 new cases per day, hospital beds across the country were filled, and images of patients fighting for oxygen cylinders were broadcast in the media. Immediately after the outbreak of COVID-19, not only international but also domestic flights were suspended, and there was an urgent need to secure return routes for approximately 10,000 Japanese nationals residing in India. Amidst this situation, the Embassy of Japan in India worked together with Japanese airlines to operate special flights. The Embassy also obtained approval from the Government of India and dispatched personnel across province boundaries to support passage through India to enable Japanese nationals to successively travel to the airport in Delhi by land routes from other regions. Japanese airlines also took various infection control measures and continued to operate special flights. We are very grateful for the response of these Japanese airlines.

Based on the cooperation with the Japanese community cultivated through these efforts, the Embassy and Consulates-General established a system for sharing information on the infection conditions with Japanese medical service companies, and provided information on the medical care system in India (such as the situation of empty hospital beds) to Japanese nationals residing in India on a regular basis.

In addition, due to the insufficiencies of PCR test organizations in India, the Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry in India started a PCR test program for Japanese nationals who were unable to receive testing when returning to Japan, and the Embassy provided support for this program. Furthermore, in order to prevent serious illness among Japanese nationals, the Embassy and Consulates-General worked to monitor the infection conditions of Japanese nationals in real time, and Embassy medical officers cooperated with hospitals and Japanese medical service companies to treat Japanese nationals who were hospitalized.

All of these efforts were made possible through cooperation between the Japanese community and the diplomatic missions.



PCR test site (Photo: Japan Chamber of Commerce and Industry in India)



## 2. Support to Developing Countries

The global spread of COVID-19 threatens the lives, livelihoods, and dignity of people in developing countries with weak health and medical systems, and has become a human security crisis. In addition, the stagnation of global economic activities resulting from COVID-19 has also been a major blow to developing countries with vulnerable economic foundations. Providing support to

developing countries in crisis is an issue that the international community as a whole should unite to address. Japan is providing support to developing countries by providing vaccines, strengthening health and medical systems, and maintaining, revitalizing, and increasing the resilience of economic activities.

### Efforts to Ensure Equitable Access to Vaccines

“No one is safe until everyone is safe” (G7 Foreign and Development Ministers’ Equitable Access and Collaboration Statement (May 5, 2021, London))

Even if COVID-19 is contained in certain countries or regions, if it is still raging in other countries or regions, there is a risk of resurgence in the countries or regions where it should have been contained, coupled with outbreaks of variants. Therefore, in order to contain COVID-19, it is important to promote equitable access to and distribution of vaccines and other tools throughout the world, and international cooperation and collaboration are needed for this purpose.

In order to ensure equitable access to safe, effective, and quality-assured vaccines throughout the world, Japan has made various contributions to the COVAX Facility<sup>(Note 1)</sup> since its establishment, including cooperation for designing its mechanism, financial contributions, and vaccine donations.

In June 2021, Japan co-hosted the COVAX AMC Summit (Advance Market Commitment Summit) with Gavi<sup>(Note 2)</sup> in a virtual format. As a result of Prime Minister Suga’s call for further solidarity and commitments from the international community in the fight against COVID-19, many additional financial contributions from governments and the private sector were announced, and the COVAX Facility secured \$9.6 billion, far exceeding its fundraising target (\$8.3 billion) needed to secure

1.8 billion doses of vaccines (enough to vaccinate 30% of the population of developing economies) by the end of 2021. At the Summit, Japan announced an additional contribution of \$800 million to the COVAX Facility, which together with its previously disbursed contribution of \$200 million brought its total financial contribution to \$1 billion. Japan also announced that it would provide around 30 million doses of vaccines manufactured in Japan to various countries and regions including through the COVAX Facility. Furthermore, in September, Japan announced at the United Nations General Assembly that it would increase the total number of vaccines it would donate from 30 million doses to 60 million doses. As of the end of February 2022, Japan had provided a total of 42 million doses of AstraZeneca vaccines manufactured in Japan to 26 countries and regions, including in Asia, the Middle East, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa.

In order to ensure equitable supply of vaccines, it is important not only to have international cooperation for procurement and distribution, but also to make comprehensive efforts within each country, including for transportation. As part of its “Last One Mile Support” cooperation to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to people more reliably and quickly, Japan is providing support for the improvement of equipment necessary for cold chains including refrigerators for keeping vaccines cool and transport vehicles, training of human

**(Note 1)** COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX Facility): A comprehensive financing and supply coordination mechanism to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines, including in developing countries, that is led by Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, and operated in cooperation with the WHO, UNICEF, and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI). The system enables supply of COVID-19 vaccines swiftly at an affordable price, leveraging economies of scale through guaranteeing purchase and market demand for vaccines.

**(Note 2)** Gavi (the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation): A public-private partnership that supports immunizations in developing countries. It is also known as “Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance.”  
<https://www.gavi.org/our-alliance/about>



## Donation of vaccines to date

### Bilateral Donation

(Note) Indicating approximate number of doses. The unit is "10,000 doses." Provision date refers to the date of departure from Japan. (As of February 25, 2022)

Recipient country/region	Total doses	Shipment date
Taiwan	420	June 4 – October 27, 2021
Viet Nam	735	June 16, 2021 – January 26, 2022
Indonesia	688	July 7, 2021 – January 19, 2022
Malaysia	100	July 1, 2021
Philippines	308	July 8 – October 30, 2021
Thailand	204	July 9 – October 15, 2021
Brunei	10	September 24, 2021

### Donation through the COVAX Facility (included planned provision)

(Note) Indicating approximate number of doses. The unit is 10,000 doses. Provision date refers to the date of departure from Japan. (As of February 25, 2022)

Recipient country/region		Total doses	Shipment date
Southeast Asia	Cambodia	132	July 23 – December 18, 2021
	Laos	94	August 3 – December 21, 2021
	Timor-Leste	17	August 11, 2021
Southwest Asia	Bangladesh	455	July 23 – December 20, 2021
	Nepal	161	August 5-21, 2021
	Sri Lanka	146	July 31 – August 7, 2021
	Maldives	11	August 21, 2021
Central Asia	Tajikistan	50	February 19, 2022
Pacific Island countries	Solomon Islands	6	August 24, 2021
	Fiji	6	August 20, 2021
	Tonga	5	August 21, 2021 – February 12, 2022
	Kiribati	6	August 18, 2021
	Samoa	11	August 17, 2021
Latin America and the Caribbean	Nicaragua	50	December 22, 2021
Middle East	Iran	361	July 22, 2021 – January 13, 2022
	Syria	15	December 24, 2021
Africa	Egypt	70	December 25-27, 2021
	Malawi	28	February 24, 2022
	Nigeria	86	February 22, 2022
	Cameroon	7	Doses are being shipped sequentially as soon as they are ready.



resources including for maintaining equipment, and strengthening vaccine administration capacity in Asia and Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Africa.

Cooperation to ensure equitable access to vaccines is also deepening in major international frameworks.

The Carbis Bay G7 Summit Communiqué, adopted at the G7 Summit in June, included a commitment by the G7 to directly provide at least 870 million vaccine doses through 2022, with the aim of delivering at least half by the end of 2021 primarily channeled through COVAX toward those in greatest need. In addition, at the G20 Summit in November, it was also committed that each

country, including Japan, would take measures to encourage progress toward the coverage target of vaccinating 70% of the population in all countries by mid-2022.

Furthermore, at the Second Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Summit Meeting in September, it was confirmed that Japan, Australia, India, and the U.S. are playing a major role in ensuring equitable access to safe, effective, and quality-assured vaccines in the Indo-Pacific region through dose-sharing of vaccines and financing. The countries concurred that they will continue to work together in response to COVID-19, including expansion of vaccine production and supply to the Indo-Pacific region.



COVAX AMC Summit (June)

## Support for Strengthening Sustainable Health and Medical Systems of Developing Countries

Japan has offered grant aid to provide health and medical equipment such as X-ray equipment, ventilators, and PCR test equipment in order to strengthen sustainable health and medical systems of developing countries.

In addition, the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is working to strengthen the response capabilities of medical personnel and enhance medical facilities such as intensive care units (ICUs) in order to strengthen the treatment systems for critically ill COVID-19 patients in developing countries. In 2021, JICA started a technical cooperation project utilizing a remote ICU system in 10 countries, including Indonesia, Senegal, and

Mexico. It connects doctors and nurses engaged in intensive care with Japanese intensive care specialists and nurses via a communication system to provide training and technical advice on intensive care. The project also advances the improvement of facilities, such as temporary ICUs, and equipment.

Furthermore, in Southeast Asia, Japan is implementing such measures as training for public health officials in ASEAN countries so that the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases, which is planned to be established with Japan's cooperation, will function as the region's hub for combating infectious diseases.

## Vaccine Dose-Donations by Japan

### - Expressions of Gratitude from around the World

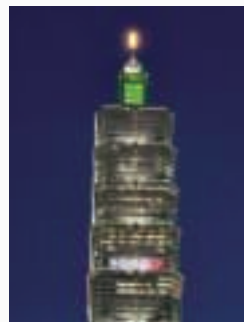
Equitable access to safe, effective, and quality-assured vaccines in all countries and regions is important for the global containment of COVID-19. Based on this belief, Japan provided a total of approximately 42 million vaccine doses to 26 countries and regions including Southeast Asia, Southwest Asia, Oceania, Latin America and the Caribbean, the Middle East, and Africa including through COVAX from June 2021 through the end of February 2022. In each country and region where vaccines from Japan were delivered, the arrival of vaccines and the handover ceremony were widely reported by the local media, including local TV and newspapers, and many voices of gratitude were received through social media and elsewhere.

For example, in Sri Lanka, the arrival of the vaccines from Japan at the airport and the handover ceremony held with the attendance of President Rajapaksa were covered as top stories in the major local media. In addition, many Sri Lankans expressed their gratitude through social media, including messages such as "I am very grateful for the support from the people of Japan during this difficult time," and "Our two countries have built a wonderful relationship, and I want to contribute to a bright future for both countries."

To Taiwan, Japan has provided six batches of vaccines for a total of 4.2 million doses. On the arrival of each batch of vaccines from Japan, a message showing gratitude for Japan's support and friendship such as "Taiwan-Japan bond" and "Taiwan-Japan friendship" was projected on Taipei 101, the landmark tower of Taiwan.

Japan's support does not stop with the provision of vaccines. By the end of December 2021, Japan had implemented "Last One Mile Support," including the development of a cold chain system to deliver vaccines to vaccination sites and the strengthening of vaccine administration capacity, in 59 countries and regions.

For example, in Cambodia, in addition to the provision of vaccines, Japan provided vaccine storage refrigerators to healthcare centers through the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), and implemented training on cold chain equipment and vaccine inventory management for officials of the Government of Cambodia and municipalities. Many expressions of gratitude have been received from essential workers in Cambodia for this comprehensive support to strengthen vaccine administration capacity.



Message projected on Taipei 101 (July; Photo: Taipei 101)



Foreign Minister Gunawardena, Minister of Health Wanniarachchi and Japanese Ambassador to Sri Lanka Sugiyama welcome the arrival of vaccines from Japan (July 31, at the airport in Sri Lanka)



Handover ceremony held at the Presidential Secretariat of Sri Lanka (August 2)



Live broadcast of the handover ceremony by Cambodian state-run television (Japanese Ambassador to Cambodia Mikami and Prime Minister Hun Sen, July 23; Photo: Cambodia's state-run TVK)

## Support for Maintaining, Revitalizing, and Increasing the Resilience of Economic Activities in Developing Countries

Japan is supporting the revival of economic activities in developing countries with weak economic foundations through the provision of bilateral loans and implementation of international initiatives to defer debt payments in order to help these countries maintain, revitalize, and increase the resilience of their economic activities.

Japan established the COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan of up to 700 billion Japanese yen over a two-year period from April 2020 to March 2022. Japan promptly provides financing needed for strengthening health systems and maintaining and revitalizing economies to developing countries. This yen loan is provided under favorable conditions for developing countries, such as a low interest rate (0.01%) and untied<sup>(Note 3)</sup> procurement conditions. The loan was provided to countries such as Papua New Guinea, Honduras, and Jordan in 2021, contributing to the maintenance and revitalization of economic activities in developing countries affected by the pandemic.

Especially in developing countries with the most vulnerable fiscal conditions, the decline in foreign direct investment and tourism, and trade transactions has caused a deterioration in the macro-economic environment and increased the debt repayment burden in many countries. In light of these circumstances, the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, and the Paris Club, a group of major creditor countries, agreed to the Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI) in April 2020. Public debt service dues falling between May

1 and December 31, 2020, in low-income countries were deferred. In October of the same year, there was an agreement on an extension of the applied period of the DSSI from January 1, 2021, to the end of June in the same year. Furthermore, in April 2021, it was agreed to make a final extension from July 1, 2021, until the end of December of the same year. Based on these agreements, Japan steadily implemented payment deferment measures to the target countries in 2021 while maintaining a high level of transparency.

In November 2020, the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors and the Paris Club endorsed the “Common Framework for Debt Treatments beyond the DSSI,” recognizing that debt treatments beyond the DSSI may be required, as appropriate, depending on each country’s circumstances, given the scale of the COVID-19 crisis, the significant debt vulnerabilities, and deteriorating economic outlook in many low-income countries. The Common Framework sets out that all official bilateral creditors will participate in debt treatments and implement them under common terms, and that private creditors’ treatment will be at least as favorable as that provided by official creditors. Going forward, it is necessary to ensure that all creditors fully implement debt treatments in line with the “Common Framework.” As of the end of March 2022, three countries (Chad, Ethiopia, and Zambia) have applied for debt treatments under the “Common Framework” and discussions are proceeding, including with bilateral creditor countries that are not members of the Paris Club.

## Strengthening Preparedness and Response to Future Pandemics

In order to strengthen preparedness and response to future pandemics similar to the global spread of COVID-19, it is important to strengthen global health architecture, including WHO reform, and to robustly promote efforts to achieve universal health coverage (UHC), with closer collaboration between health and financial authorities of various

countries.

At the G7 Cornwall Summit in June, the G7 Carbis Bay Health Declaration was issued, declaring the G7’s commitment to take action to strengthen collective defenses to better prevent, detect, respond to, and recover from, future pandemics through effective multilateral action and a strengthened

**(Note 3)** Untied refers to aid in which the supplier of goods and services is determined through international competitive bidding. On the other hand, tied refers to aid in which the supplier is limited to donors or other conditions are attached.

global health system.

In addition, at the G20 Rome Summit in October, the G20 Joint Finance-Health Task Force was launched with the aim of enhancing dialogue and global cooperation on issues relating to pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response (PPR), developing coordination arrangements between Finance and Health Ministries, and encouraging effective stewardship of resources for pandemic PPR.

Japan also contributes to discussions on strengthening the global health architecture at the WHO. In December, at its special session, the World Health Assembly unanimously decided to establish an intergovernmental negotiating body (INB) to draft and negotiate an international instrument on pandemic prevention, preparedness and response. The INB will begin the process to develop an international instrument at the WHO. At the

same time, Japan will contribute to discussions on strengthening compliance with and implementation of the International Health Regulations (IHR).

Furthermore, the Government of Japan hosted the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 in December 2021 and issued the Tokyo Compact on Global Nutrition for Growth, based on the principle that “Nutrition is fundamental for the health and well-being of individuals.” At the Summit, active discussions were conducted with various stakeholders in the international community to strengthen immunity through improved nutrition, to prepare for future infectious disease outbreaks, and to achieve UHC.

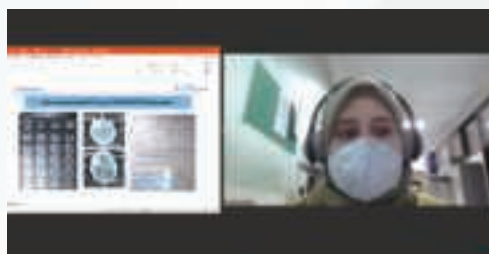
Japan will contribute to building a global health architecture that will contribute to health security by strengthening PPR against future public health crises, including pandemics, based on Japan’s experience and knowledge.



Vaccines from Australia being transported by refrigerated trucks provided to Timor-Leste by Japan (Photo: Medical and Pharmaceutical Supply Agency (SAMES))



Vaccines being transported by vehicles and vaccine carriers provided to Timor-Leste by Japan (Photo: JICA)



An Indonesian doctor receiving remote training from Japanese doctors (Photo: JICA)



A vaccine carrier provided to Timor-Leste (Photo: JICA)



### 3 Diplomacy During the COVID-19 Epidemic

In 2021, the global spread of COVID-19 continued to impose significant restrictions on the diplomatic activities of countries, including Japan.

Even under these circumstances, Japan actively held summit and foreign ministers' meetings via video conferences and telephone calls. In 2021, Prime Minister Suga held over 40 video conferences/telephone calls, Prime Minister Kishida held more than 20, Foreign Minister Motegi held more than 60, and Foreign Minister Hayashi held more than 20. On the other hand, it goes without saying that in-person diplomacy is important to strengthen relationships of trust with the leaders and foreign ministers of various countries, and high-level overseas visits were conducted after taking thorough measures to prevent infection, taking into account the infection conditions in and outside Japan at the time. Prime Minister Suga visited the U.S. in April, the UK in June (for the G7 Summit), and the U.S. in September (for the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Summit). Prime Minister Kishida visited the UK in November to attend the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26). There were even more overseas visits at the foreign minister level. Foreign Minister Motegi visited a total of 27 countries, beginning with his visits to Latin America and the

Caribbean as well as Africa in January, and his visit to the U.S. to attend the UN General Assembly in September. Foreign Minister Hayashi also visited the UK in December to attend the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting.

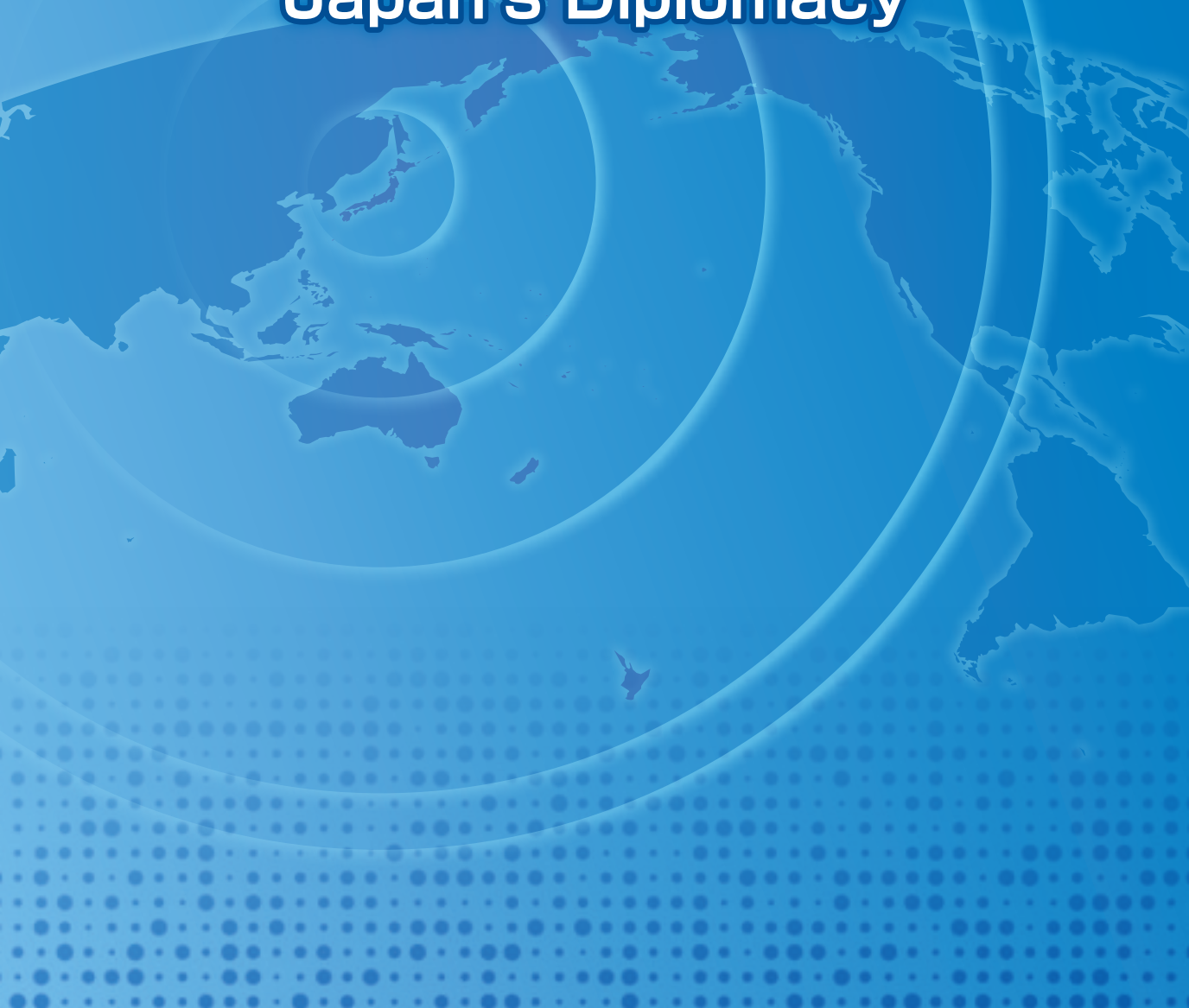
Many international meetings were also held in online or hybrid (combination of in-person and online) formats. Japan held the 14th United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (commonly known as "Congress") in Kyoto in March (see Chapter 3, Section 1, 3 (7) (B) on page 214), which had been postponed from 2020. The Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021, which had also been postponed, was held in Tokyo in a hybrid format (see the Special Feature on page 271).

The Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 ("the Tokyo 2020 Games"), which had also been postponed by one year, were held from July to September with thorough infection prevention measures being taken. They brought excitement to many people and symbolized global unity as humanity faced great challenges (see the Special Feature on page 327). In addition, on the occasion of the Tokyo 2020 Games, in-person summit meetings and foreign ministers' meetings were held with dignitaries from various countries and organizations visiting Japan. It was a valuable opportunity amidst restrictions on in-person diplomatic activities<sup>(Note 4)</sup>.

**(Note 4)** On the occasion of the Tokyo 2020 Games, 18 summit-level dignitaries from 14 countries and two international organizations, as well as sports ministers and other minister-level dignitaries from 92 countries and regions visited Japan. Prime Minister Suga held 14 meetings and Foreign Minister Motegi held six meetings.

# Chapter 1

## Overview of the International Situation and Outlook for Japan's Diplomacy





# Overview of the International Situation and Outlook for Japan's Diplomacy

In order for Japan to ensure its national interests in the political, security and economic domains, as well as to maintain and develop a desirable international order that is based on universal values such as freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, it is necessary to grasp changes and trends of the international situation, and strategically develop diplomacy by adapting to those changes.

Below is a broad overview of the international situation surrounding Japan and the outlook for its diplomacy.

## 1 Overview of the International Situation

The international community is currently undergoing an era-defining change. Under the free, open, and stable international order, China and other emerging and developing countries are building up power and increasing their presence, benefiting from globalization. As a result, the world is entering into an era of competition between the United States and China as well as competition among nations, shifting from the era in which the U.S. exerted its leadership together with the advanced democratic countries to support the stability and prosperity of the international community through its overwhelming political, economic, and military power.

Furthermore, Russia launched aggression against Ukraine in February 2022. A state

demands another state to change the latter's policy and regime based on the former's own unique view of the world and history, and the instant the former sees that these demands would not be met, it invades the latter's land by the use of force, inflicts damage that has led to a serious humanitarian crisis causing the deaths of many civilians, and attempts to change border lines and to expand its own sphere of influence - this is an outrageous act that shakes the very foundation of the international order that human beings have built up over the past century, including the prohibition of the use of force, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, and it is completely unacceptable. The aggression against Ukraine not only fundamentally overturns the structure of security in Europe, but also threatens the post-Cold War world order and could be called a major turning point in history.

At the same time, addressing global issues such as climate change, the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), disarmament and non-proliferation, as well as rebuilding the COVID-19 affected economic order, continue to be urgent issues for the international community. While there is a growing importance for international cooperation and coordination more than ever, an intensifying struggle for leadership among nations in these fields can also be seen.

## (1) Developments Concerning the Existing International Order

### A Military Buildup Without Transparency and Unilateral Attempts to Change the Status Quo

The basic principles of international relations, including the rule of law, which have underpinned the peace and stability of the international community, are increasingly being challenged. In particular, the security environment surrounding Japan is becoming more testing and uncertain at a remarkably faster speed, as Japan is surrounded by countries with strong military capabilities, and further reinforcement of military capabilities and acceleration of military activities are becoming more prominent.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a serious violation of international law prohibiting the use of force, and is an outrageous act that shakes the very foundation of the international order, not only in Europe but also in Asia. Under the Putin administration, Russia has made a series of moves to undermine the territorial integrity of its neighboring countries in order to reclaim the sphere of influence it lost after the Cold War, and this has raised serious concerns in the regions surrounding Russia.

China continues to increase its defense budget, and is strengthening and modernizing its military power extensively and rapidly. It also aims to secure superiority in new domains, such as outer space, cyberspace, and the electromagnetic spectrum. Based on its own assertions that are inconsistent with the existing international order, China continues its unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force at sea and in the airspace in areas such as the East and South China Seas, expanding and intensifying its military activities. This gives rise to strong concerns over the security of the region and the international community, including Japan.

In addition, North Korea has not carried out the dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, in accordance

with a series of relevant United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions. In 2021, North Korea launched missiles four times using ballistic missile technology in violation of relevant UNSC resolutions. Since the beginning of 2022, North Korea has repeatedly launched ballistic missiles with extremely high frequency and in new ways. It launched ballistic missiles six times in succession in January. On February 27 and March 5, North Korea launched intercontinental ballistic missile-class (ICBM-class) ballistic missiles, although not at their maximum range. Furthermore, on March 24, it launched an alleged new ICBM-class ballistic missile, which is estimated to have fallen within Japan's exclusive economic zone (EEZ) about 150 kilometers off Japan's mainland. North Korea's series of actions, including the launch of ballistic missiles that have further aggravated the situation, threaten the peace and security of Japan, the region, and the international community, and are absolutely unacceptable.

### B Expansion of the Scope of National Security

The full-scale transition to a digital society has expanded the scope of national security from the traditional military-centric focus to encompass economic and emerging technological fields. These are becoming increasingly important as they expand to involve non-state actors as well.

Firstly, the protection and promotion of critical and emerging technologies are having a significant impact on national security. Technological innovations such as the fifth-generation mobile communications system (5G), artificial intelligence (AI), the Internet of Things (IoT), and quantum technology are not only bringing about substantive changes in society and daily life, but are also directly linked to national competitiveness, as well as to moves to strengthen military power as dual-use technologies for both military and civilian applications.

Secondly, with the expansion and sophistication of global supply chains, there is an increasing risk of coercion through leveraging economic

dependency. Arbitrary trade restriction measures are a risk to fair exports and imports, and from the perspective of economic security, it is becoming increasingly important to ensure the stable supply of commodities that are critical to the survival of citizens and their livelihoods and economic activities. Countries are taking economic security measures to ensure strategic autonomy and strategic indispensability, while keeping in mind the maintenance and expansion of free and fair economic zones and consistency with existing international laws. There is also a trend toward expanding cooperation among like-minded countries to increase the resilience of supply chains.

Thirdly, new threats have emerged, such as malicious activities and attacks in cyberspace, as well as the disruption and manipulation of public opinion by spreading disinformation. In particular, the influence of disinformation through social media and other means on elections is recognized as a serious threat to democracy. Measures are being put in place in democratic societies, out of a sense of crisis that daily exposure to disinformation can impede proper decision-making by the public, not only against direct intervention in elections.

Fourthly, international terrorism remains a great threat. The widening disparity and poverty caused by the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic and the social divisions brought about by racial and ethnic issues have been increasing the risk of the spread of terrorism and violent extremism. In addition, terrorists are taking advantage of the increasing dependence on the internet and social media to spread extremism and acquire funding for terrorism.

### **C** Challenges to Universal Values

Universal values such as freedom, democracy, and human rights, which have provided the foundation for the prosperity and stability of the current international community, are also facing challenges. Amid the growing problems of inequality and poverty accompanying globalization, the

rapid progress of digitalization, while contributing greatly to improving convenience in daily life, has also resulted in accelerating such negative aspects of globalization. At the same time, it has also caused the division of public opinion along the ideological lines by exposing people to biased information without them realizing it.

### **D** Trends in Addressing Global Issues

The international community shares the seriousness of climate change and other global challenges, and efforts are underway to resolve them through multilateral cooperation. Climate change is an area that will be the focus of the international community's political and economic resources for a long time to come, and could become the core of innovation and economic growth. Because of this, there is also accelerated competition among major countries for leadership in the formation of international norms and standards and in the development of investment environments. At the 26th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), held from October 31, 2021, the Paris Rulebook for the implementation of the Paris Agreement was finalized after two weeks of intense negotiations.

In regard to the response to COVID-19, international cooperation for equitable access to vaccines is advancing, including through vaccine supply by the COVAX Facility to low-income countries and others, which has reached one billion doses in January 2022. At the same time, in the response to COVID-19, the political voice and influence of each country in the international community are increasingly dependent on their response to urgent global issues such as a pandemic.

## **(2) Socioeconomic Changes and Diplomacy**

### **A** Domestic Social Conditions and Diplomacy

As mentioned above, globalization, which has supported world prosperity and served as a backdrop for the rise of emerging economies, has also brought about negative realities such as widening

disparities and poverty within various countries. The dissatisfaction of citizens who feel that they have not sufficiently benefited from globalization has aggravated divisions within countries, creating a dichotomy between two sides that is also triggered by ideology. In addition, the prolonged COVID-19 pandemic has further strengthened inward-looking trends stemming from the anti-globalization movement. While the benefits of digitalization have made people's lives more convenient and society's values more diversified, it is also said that people's confirmation bias<sup>1</sup> has increased amidst information overload, and tolerance in society has decreased. These domestic social conditions are having a greater impact than ever on the process of foreign policy formation and the formation of consensus on policy.

New domestic economic policies have been announced one after another in various countries in an effort to recover from COVID-19 and to overcome domestic divisions. In the U.S., the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act was passed in November, and the "Build Back Better" Act, a social security and climate change-related spending bill, continues to be coordinated in Congress (as of March 2022). In addition, the EU also began operating its "NextGenerationEU" (recovery fund), an economic recovery plan following COVID-19, from January. Attention is focused on how these new policies will affect the social conditions and foreign policies of each country.

## **B** Rebuilding the Economic Order

The global economy, which has been severely damaged by COVID-19, has shown signs of recovery, turning from negative growth of 3.1% in 2020 to a positive growth estimate of 5.9% in 2021 (both announced by the International Monetary Fund (IMF)). However, the situation of the global economy continues to be unpredictable, as there

are still uncertain factors such as concerns over the emergence of new COVID-19 variants, and there is also widespread unevenness in recovery across countries and regions.

The supply chain vulnerabilities that have emerged due to the impacts of COVID-19 are not only the main cause for delaying economic recovery, but are also contributing to unilateral trade restriction measures by countries that prioritize securing essential goods domestically.

While the emergence of new growth markets that drive the growth of the global economy, such as the digital sector and the climate change countermeasures sector, is promising for the global economy, it also reveals challenges that must be addressed. In the digital sector, to harness the full potential of the digital economy, there is an urgent need to establish international rules to realize "Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT)" and to take cyber security measures for risk management. In addition, as countries are proceeding with policy changes to make the transition to a decarbonized society into a new economic opportunity, issues such as the stable securing of necessary energy and mineral resources are also becoming apparent.

## **2** Outlook for Japan's Diplomacy

As the international community faces era-defining changes and challenges, Japan must advance diplomacy toward realizing its own goals while cooperating with various countries and regions.

Japan has consistently followed the path of a peace-loving nation since the end of World War II, contributing to the peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and the international community. In addition to providing development cooperation to developing countries based on the principle of human security, Japan has addressed global issues, including the achievement of the

<sup>1</sup> Confirmation bias: Refers to the tendency, when testing a hypothesis, to have a bias for selecting information that supports the hypothesis from among many pieces of information and to devalue or ignore information that does not support the hypothesis. (Source: imidas)

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by leading international rule-making and supporting capacity building in developing countries. Japan has also contributed to disarmament, non-proliferation, and international peacebuilding efforts. The “trust” that Japan has earned from the rest of the world through these efforts is the basis supporting Japan's diplomacy today.

Russia's recent aggression against Ukraine threatens the very foundation of the international order that the international community has built up over a long period of hard work and much sacrifice. Depending on how the situation unfolds, the world and Japan may face the greatest crisis of the post-war era. Unilateral changes of the status quo by force, such as this one, must not be tolerated in any region. The choices and actions of the international community, including Japan, will determine the future course of the international order.

The Kishida Cabinet, in its Basic Policy, states that on the basis of this “trust,” Japan will promote diplomacy and security with: the determination to fully defend universal values such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law; the determination to fully defend Japan's territory, territorial waters and airspace, and lives and assets of its citizens; and the determination to contribute to humanity and lead the international community by addressing global issues such as nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation, and climate change. With these “three determinations,” Japan will open up a new frontier of its diplomacy with a balanced and stable posture and with a high level of responsiveness in the increasingly severe and complex international situation. Japan will strengthen its solidarity with partners who share universal values and lead the international community's efforts to oppose unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force.

### **(1) Responding to the Increasingly Severe Security Environment**

The Japan-U.S. Alliance is the cornerstone of Japan's diplomacy and security, and plays a

significant role in regional and international peace and prosperity. As the security environment surrounding Japan is becoming increasingly severe and uncertain, the Japan-U.S. Alliance is more important than ever.

From the Biden administration's inauguration in January 2021 through the end of February 2022, Japan and the U.S. have continued to coordinate policies frequently at a high level, holding eight summit meetings (including three telephone calls and one teleconference meeting), 15 foreign ministers' meetings (including nine telephone calls), and two “2+2” meetings (including one online meeting). The Japan-U.S. Alliance is stronger than ever. While further strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, Japan will closely cooperate and collaborate on issues such as ensuring peace and security for Japan, realizing a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)”, and responding to COVID-19 and climate change based on the strong relationships of trust between the two countries.

Against this backdrop, in regard to the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan, including the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma to Henoko, Japan and the U.S. will continue to closely coordinate in order to mitigate the impact on local communities including Okinawa, while maintaining the deterrence of the U.S. Forces in Japan.

In addition, in order to respond to the severe security environment surrounding Japan, it is also necessary to fundamentally reinforce Japan's own defense capabilities. It is thus important to revise the National Security Strategy, the National Defense Program Guidelines, and the Medium Term Defense Program.

### **(2) Promoting the Vision of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)”**

The Indo-Pacific region is not only the core of the world's vitality which supports more than half of the world's population, but is also a region which has seen complex power dynamics

of countries and has experienced drastic shifts in the regional power balance. It is essential to ensure peace and prosperity in the entire region and beyond, through establishing a free and open order based on the rule of law.

From this perspective, Japan has been strategically promoting efforts to realize FOIP based on the rule of law, in cooperation with like-minded countries. This vision is now shared by the U.S., Australia, India, ASEAN, the EU and European countries, and is gaining broad support in the international community, with various consultations and cooperation under way. The significance and importance of this vision are further increasing in the transition to the post-COVID-19 era. Japan will seize opportunities for various bilateral and multilateral dialogues, including the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) dialogue, to further promote initiatives toward realizing the vision.

### **(3) Relations with Neighboring Countries and Others**

In order to ensure peace and prosperity for Japan, it is important to build stable relations with neighboring countries.

#### **(China)**

There are various issues of concern between Japan and China, as they are neighboring countries. Any unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the East China Sea, including the waters surrounding the Senkaku Islands, are absolutely unacceptable, and Japan will continue to take a calm and resolute approach to the situation.

At the same time, Japan-China relations are important not only for the two countries but also for the peace and prosperity of the region and the international community. Japan will firmly maintain and assert its position and strongly request that China take responsible actions, while at the same time cooperate on matters of common interest. It is important that both China and Japan make efforts to build such constructive and stable relations.

#### **(Republic of Korea)**

The Republic of Korea (ROK) is an important neighboring country, and Japan-ROK and Japan-U.S.-ROK coordination, including in dealing with North Korea, are indispensable for the stability of the region. Japan-ROK relations are in an extremely difficult situation due to the issues of former civilian workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs) and comfort women among others. However, the situation should not be left as it is. To abide by promises made between two countries is the foundation of bilateral relations. Based on Japan's principled positions, the Government of Japan will continue to strongly urge the ROK to take appropriate actions to restore sound Japan-ROK relations. Takeshima is an inherent territory of Japan both in light of historical facts and based on international law. Japan will deal with the issue in a resolute manner based on this consistent position.

#### **(Russia)**

Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022 constitutes a challenge to the fundamental principles of the international community that unilateral change of the status quo by force is unacceptable, and threatens the post-Cold War world order. Japan will unite with the international community, including the G7, to demand that Russia withdraw its troops and cease all acts in violation of international law. Japan will also make clear that Russia's series of actions come at a high price through the implementation of sanctions in cooperation with various countries.

The greatest concern between Japan and Russia is the Northern Territories issue. It is yet to be resolved even after more than 75 years have passed since the end of World War II. There is no change to Japan's position on the Northern Territories issue and to its intention to meet the wishes of the elderly former residents of the islands. However, under the current circumstances of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, now is not a moment Japan can talk about the prospects for negotiations on a peace treaty.



Japan strongly urges Russia to take the condemnation of the international community seriously, withdraw its troops immediately, and comply with international law.

#### **(Addressing Outstanding Issues of Concern Regarding North Korea)**

In regard to Japan-North Korea relations, the Government of Japan has been seeking to normalize its relations with North Korea through comprehensively resolving outstanding issues of concern, such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues, as well as settlement of the unfortunate past in accordance with the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration. Japan will continue to fully implement relevant UNSC resolutions and aim for the complete denuclearization of North Korea, coordinating closely with the U.S. and the ROK, and cooperating with the international community.

Abductions by North Korea is a critical issue concerning the sovereignty of Japan and the lives and safety of Japanese citizens, and at the same time, it is a universal issue of the international community as a violation of basic human rights. Japan has positioned the resolution of the abductions issue as the most important issue and will continue to make utmost efforts to realize the return of all abductees at the earliest possible date while working closely with relevant countries, including the U.S.

#### **(4) Regional Diplomacy Issues**

For the stability and prosperity of the entire region, it is important for Japan to strengthen relations with ASEAN, which is located at the center of the Indo-Pacific region and is the key to the realization of FOIP. In 2023, which marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, Japan will promote concrete cooperation that contributes to the realization of FOIP and the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), which share fundamental principles, in order to elevate the ASEAN-Japan relations to a new level. In regard to the situation in Myanmar,

Japan will work toward breaking the deadlock in collaboration with the international community.

In regard to Southwest Asian countries, 2022 marks the Japan-Southwest Asia Exchange Year. In this milestone year, Japan will further deepen exchanges with the countries in the region, which are important partners in realizing FOIP, through mutual dignitaries visits and various public and private sector events.

International relations in the Middle East have greatly changed in recent years, and peace and stability in the region have become increasingly important for the peace and prosperity of the international community. Furthermore, as Japan depends on the region for about 90% of its crude oil imports, it is extremely important to work toward the stability of the Middle East region, which is a major source of energy supply for the world, and to ensure the safety of navigation. Japan will continue to contribute through various diplomatic efforts to ease tensions and stabilize the situation in the Middle East, utilizing its strong alliance relations with the U.S. as well as its traditionally friendly relations with various Middle Eastern countries. In regard to the situation in Afghanistan, Japan will continue its efforts for the stabilization of Afghanistan and neighboring countries by extending humanitarian assistance and engaging with the Taliban, in close cooperation with relevant countries.

While Africa has made remarkable growth in recent years, it has also been facing many challenges. Japan has been contributing to African development for many years through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), which has a history of over a quarter of a century. As COVID-19 has had tremendous socio-economic impacts in Africa, international cooperation is more important than ever. Through the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) to be held in 2022, Japan will strongly support African-led development and will set out a pathway for African development looking ahead to the post-COVID-19 era.

Latin American and Caribbean countries, which share universal values and have a strong presence in the international arena, are important partners of Japan. Japan will cooperate with these countries to maintain and strengthen the free and open international order. Japan will also work to extensively fortify relations, taking into account their economic importance, including their abundant mineral and food resources, while cooperating with the Nikkei (Japanese immigrants and their descendants) community.

Moreover, as 2022 marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations with Central Asian and Caucasus countries, which aim for free, open, and sustainable development, Japan will further strengthen relations with these countries as a partner for maintaining and reinforcing the rules-based international order.

#### **(5) Expansion of the Free and Fair Economic Order**

As COVID-19 continues to cause stagnation and uncertainty in the global economy, the global economy faces challenges in domains that cut across economics and security, including the further expansion of protectionism, as well as the emergence of innovative civilian technologies that could be converted to military use, and the increase in moves to leverage economic dependency from the perspective of achieving a country's own strategic interests. Against this backdrop, Japan, as a standard-bearer for free trade, continues to lead international efforts to expand the free and fair economic order. At the same time, in a manner that complements such efforts, the Government of Japan as a whole is working on various issues of economic security. In accordance with international law, Japan will actively contribute to strengthening cooperation with its ally and like-minded countries and forming norms to address new challenges.

Japan has been working to maintain and strengthen the rules-based multilateral trading system in response to protectionist trends around

the world. In regard to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP), it has become even more important to maintain its high standards as China, Taiwan, and Ecuador submitted formal accession requests following the United Kingdom. In addition, Japan will work to ensure full implementation of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement, which entered into force in January 2022. Furthermore, Japan will lead reform efforts at the WTO, the cornerstone of the multilateral trading system, and strengthen initiatives in APEC and the OECD.

Japan will also continue to work actively to secure stable supplies of energy and mineral resources and to support the overseas expansion of Japanese companies. In regard to import restrictions on Japanese food products, many countries and regions have moved to ease or eliminate restrictions, and the U.S. completely lifted restrictions in September. The Government of Japan as a whole will work as one to achieve the full elimination of import restrictions in countries and regions around the world as soon as possible. The Government will also continue its strong efforts toward the success of the Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

In the post-COVID-19 era, the realization of "Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT)" is crucial for harnessing the increasingly important digital sector. Japan will continue to play a central role in international rule-making, including WTO e-commerce negotiations, in cooperation with relevant countries and organizations such as the OECD. In addition, amidst the growing threats in cyberspace, Japan will work to promote effective measures against cybercrime and reinforcement of the rule of law in cyberspace.

In regard to outer space, in cooperation with the U.S. and like-minded countries, Japan will promote international rule-making and cooperation to ensure sustainable and stable use of outer space.

## **(6) Addressing Global issues**

No one country alone can address global issues, such as global health, the environment and climate change, disarmament and non-proliferation, human rights, peacebuilding, marine plastic litter, conserving biodiversity, refugees and displaced persons, counter-terrorism, and gender equality, and the international community needs to mount a united response. Japan will continue to advance international contributions under the concept of human security in order to ensure that freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law are respected as universal values in the international community, to take good care of socially vulnerable people, and to realize a society where individuals can make the most use of their potential. Japan will also accelerate initiatives for achieving the SDGs and realizing FOIP. As part of this, Japan promotes implementing the “G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment.”

### **(Global Health)**

Health is an essential factor to embody the concept of human security, which aims at protecting individuals and unleashing their potential. Japan has been promoting universal health coverage (UHC) with the principle of “leaving no one’s health behind.” In December, Japan hosted the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 and succeeded in indicating a direction for the international community to improve nutrition. Toward ending the COVID-19 pandemic, Japan will continue to work to help ensure equitable access to vaccines, diagnostics, and therapeutics, including in developing countries, while also working to strengthen international preparedness and response to future pandemics and helping achieve more resilient, more equitable, and more sustainable UHC.

### **(Climate Change)**

Addressing climate change is increasingly important as an engine for recovering from the COVID-19 crisis and for creating a new era of

growth. Prime Minister Kishida attended COP26, which was held in the UK from October 31, and called on all parties to take ambitious measures against climate change by setting the period until 2030 as the “critical decade.” Based on the outcomes of the COP26 negotiations, Japan will continue to strongly promote efforts to achieve net-zero by 2050 and lead the international community toward the realization of a decarbonized society through the steadfast implementation of the Paris Agreement.

### **(Disarmament and Non-Proliferation)**

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings in war, Japan has the responsibility to lead the international efforts to realize a world without nuclear weapons. Japan continues to pursue bridge building between countries with different views, and carries out realistic and practical measures, while taking into account Japan’s security. Japan places importance on maintaining and strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Japan will make active contributions to international discussions to achieve a meaningful outcome at the 10th NPT Review Conference. Furthermore, Japan puts effort into non-proliferation policies, including through maintaining and strengthening international non-proliferation regimes and rules, appropriately implementing non-proliferation measures in Japan, as well as closely coordinating with other countries and providing capacity building assistance.

### **(Human Rights)**

There is growing international concern about the human rights situations in various parts of the world. The protection and promotion of human rights provide the foundation for peace and stability in the international community. The protection of human rights, as a universal value, is a basic responsibility of all countries, regardless of

the methods of achieving this goal or political systems. Japan has been firmly speaking out against serious human rights violations, and at the same time, has urged countries that are making efforts to address them through dialogue and cooperation. While leveraging its own contributions, Japan will promote its unique human rights diplomacy based on the current international situation.

#### (Strengthening Cooperation with the UN and International Organizations / UN Security Council Reform)

Japan has played a key role in maintaining international peace and security, making contributions through UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) and serving as a non-permanent member of the UNSC 11 times, the most among the UN Member States. Now, after over 75 years since the establishment of the UN, it is an urgent issue to make the UN body, including the UNSC, more efficient and effective, and suitable for the 21st century. Japan will make efforts to start concrete negotiations in order to realize UNSC reform. In particular, Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022 clearly shows that the UNSC cannot adequately fulfill the functions expected by the international community today. In addition, Japan is seeking to be elected in the UNSC non-permanent membership election in 2022.

Furthermore, Japan has been making policy contributions, assessed and voluntary financial contributions, as well as personnel contributions in a broad sense for the UN and other international organizations to tackle a variety of issues. Japan will make efforts to encourage the employment of more Japanese staff and their appointment to executive posts at international organizations.

#### (7) Strengthening of Comprehensive Diplomatic Capacity

In order to conduct diplomacy with a balanced and stable posture with a high level of responsiveness in the key foreign policy areas described above, it is also important to shore up foreign policy implementation structure, including staffing, financial bases, and the promotion of digital transformation (DX). In addition, as the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic persists, Japan will also continue to make every possible effort to ensure the implementation of border measures and the safety of Japanese nationals overseas. At the same time, in order to obtain the international community's understanding on and support for Japan's policies, initiatives and positions, Japan will vigorously implement strategic communications, strive to expand the circle of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan and to strengthen cooperation with the Nikkei community.

# Chapter 2

## Japan's Foreign Policy by Region

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## Section 1

# Promotion of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)”

## 1 Overview

The Indo-Pacific region, which stretches from the Asia-Pacific across the Indian Ocean to the Middle East and Africa, is the core of the world's vitality and supports more than half of the world's population. At the same time, the region is home to several countries with strong military capabilities, and there have been some acts that undermine the stable order based on the rule of law. The region also faces a variety of threats, such as piracy, terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, natural disasters and illegal fishing. It is essential to ensure peace and prosperity in the entire region and beyond, through establishing a free and open order based on the rule of law.

Japan has long emphasized the importance of taking a holistic view of the Indian and Pacific Oceans, as seen in the “Confluence of the Two Seas” speech regarding the Indian and Pacific Oceans delivered by Prime Minister Abe to the Indian Parliament in 2007. In August 2016, this concept was brought to fruition as the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” vision, which Prime Minister Abe announced to the world in his keynote speech at the 6th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD VI) in Kenya. In his speech, Prime Minister Abe stated that the key to stability and prosperity of the international community is the dynamism created by combining “Two Continents”—rapidly-growing Asia and

potential-filled Africa—and “Two Oceans”—free and open Pacific and Indian Oceans—and that Japan would work to realize prosperity in Asia and Africa.

Japan has strategically promoted efforts to realize FOIP in cooperation with like-minded countries from 2016 to the present. As a result, the vision of FOIP first proposed by Japan is now shared by the U.S., Australia, India, ASEAN, EU and other European countries, and has gained broad support in the international community. Various consultations and cooperation are also under way. Various policy documents on the Indo-Pacific have been released, such as the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) adopted at the ASEAN Summit in June 2019, the Council Conclusions on an EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific released by the EU in April 2021 and the Joint Communication on the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific presented by the EU in September 2021. The vision is becoming increasingly important to the post-COVID-19 world, and Japan will continue to pursue wider coordination for its realization.

## 2 Japan's Efforts and Cooperation toward FOIP

To contribute to regional peace and prosperity as an Indo-Pacific nation, Japan has cooperated with like-minded countries and strategically



implemented measures for the realization of FOIP, including by using ODA. Specifically, Japan has taken measures, including: (1) promoting policy on maritime order and sharing insights on maritime law with the international community; (2) rule-making to expand a free and fair economic area; (3) enhancing connectivity across the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean; (4) enhancing governance through capacity building; and (5) ensuring maritime security and marine safety.

As for (1), Japan has provided assistance to Southeast Asian countries and Pacific Island countries, including capacity building in maritime law enforcement and trainings on the law of the sea.

As for (2), while economic globalization continues, amid the prolonged novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, global protectionist trends have become even more pronounced. Under these circumstances, the Japan-UK Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (Japan-UK CEPA) entered into force in January 2021, following the TPP11 Agreement, the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (Japan-EU EPA), and the Japan-U.S. Trade Agreement. Japan leads the creation of economic and trade rules for maintaining and strengthening a free and open international economic order, as also shown in the entry into force of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement for those signatory states that have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval, including Japan, in January 2022.

As for (3), Japan has implemented projects that help strengthen the connectivity of the Southern Economic Corridor, known as “Mekong’s main artery” that connects Ho Chi Minh City, Phnom Penh and Bangkok to the Indian Ocean, and of the East-West Economic Corridor, which connects Da Nang, Viet Nam to Laos and the inland areas of Thailand to the Indian Ocean via Myanmar.

As for (4), in order to support self-sustained and sustainable growth, Japan provides assistance to countries mainly in Asia and Africa, including macroeconomic trainings by country and dispatch

of macroeconomic advisors for capacity building in fiscal policy and public debt management.

As for (5), in order to establish a free and open international order, Japan actively extends capacity building assistance on maritime law enforcement to the Philippines, Viet Nam and other countries located along Japan’s sea lanes, including provision of patrol vessels, coastal monitoring radars and other equipment, as well as human resource development through the dispatch of experts and trainings.

### 3 Collaboration and Cooperation with Other Countries

In 2021, Japan remained actively engaged in diplomatic activities for the realization of FOIP, even as the global spread of COVID-19 continued to limit in-person diplomatic activities.

#### (1) U.S. (See Section 3)

In October, Prime Minister Kishida held a summit telephone call with President Biden. The two leaders shared the view to work closely together toward the peace and stability of the region and beyond through realizing FOIP. In November, during his visit to the UK to attend the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), Prime Minister Kishida held informal talks with President Biden, during which the two leaders confirmed that Japan and the U.S. would continue to work closely together toward realizing FOIP. In the same month, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a foreign ministers’ telephone call with Secretary of State Antony Blinken, and the two ministers affirmed to work closely in realizing FOIP. In December, Foreign Minister Hayashi, who visited the UK to attend the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers’ Meeting, held an in-person foreign ministers’ meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. Foreign Minister Hayashi welcomed the U.S. commitment to the Indo-Pacific region, including President Biden’s attendance at the East

Asia Summit (EAS) and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Economic Leaders' Meeting, as well as Secretary Blinken's visit to Southeast Asia. The two ministers also confirmed that Japan and the U.S. would continue to further deepen cooperation with ASEAN countries and coordination with like-minded countries, such as Australia and India, toward the realization of FOIP.

### (2) ASEAN (See Section 2, 7)

Japan and ASEAN released the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific in November 2020, confirming that the AOIP and FOIP promoted by Japan share fundamental principles. At the ASEAN-Japan Summit in October 2021, Prime Minister Kishida expressed Japan's intention to vigorously advance efforts to achieve FOIP in cooperation with ASEAN. In addition, Japan issued a Progress Report on its cooperation for a total of 73 AOIP projects, which include 49 projects announced at the 2020 Summit and 24 additional projects. Furthermore, at the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting in December, which ASEAN Foreign Ministers were invited to and attended for the first time, Foreign Minister Hayashi explained Japan's cooperation for the AOIP and called on other G7 Foreign Ministers to advance substantial cooperation in line with the AOIP while supporting ASEAN centrality. Under the Joint Statement of the ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on the AOIP, Japan and ASEAN will continue to deepen cooperation that contributes to the realization of FOIP by steadily carrying out concrete cooperation projects in line with the four priority areas of the AOIP, namely maritime cooperation, connectivity, SDGs, and economic and other possible areas of cooperation.

### (3) Australia (See Section 2, 6)

During the leaders' video teleconference meeting held in October between Prime Minister Kishida immediately after taking office and Prime Minister Scott Morrison, the two leaders confirmed

that they would further strengthen the Japan-Australia "Special Strategic Partnership" and continue to work together toward the realization of FOIP. In January 2022, the two leaders signed the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement, and at their leaders' video teleconference meeting, shared the view that Japan and Australia, as "Special Strategic Partners," would further strengthen the bilateral relationship and embody their commitment toward the realization of FOIP. At the Japan-Australia Foreign Ministers' Meeting which Foreign Minister Hayashi held with Foreign Minister Payne in December 2021, the two ministers confirmed that Japan and Australia would work together to elevate their "Special Strategic Partnership" to a higher level, as well as unite and collaborate toward the realization of FOIP.

### (4) India (See Section 2, 5)

In September, during his visit to Washington, D.C., Prime Minister Suga held an in-person summit meeting with Prime Minister Modi. The two leaders shared the view on the importance of maritime security toward the realization of FOIP, and affirmed that they would work closely to strengthen the connectivity in the region and to form an international order based on the rule of law. In October, during Prime Minister Kishida's first telephone call with Prime Minister Modi after taking office, the two leaders affirmed to work closely toward the realization of FOIP not only through bilateral cooperation but also through quadrilateral cooperation involving Australia and the U.S. In November, during the first Japan-India Foreign Ministers' telephone call since Foreign Minister Hayashi took office, he and External Affairs Minister Jaishankar shared the view to further develop the "Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership" and cooperate toward the realization of FOIP, and confirmed that they would continue to work together.



**(5) Japan-Australia-India-U.S.****(See the Special Feature on page 31)**

The four countries of Japan, Australia, India and the U.S. have the shared goal of strengthening a rules-based free and open international order. In order to make tangible progress with FOIP, the Quad shares the view on further implementing practical cooperation in various areas, including quality infrastructure and maritime security, and on the importance of expanding cooperation to more countries to realize this vision. The Quad also fully supports the AOIP and welcomes the proactive efforts by European and other countries toward FOIP. Based on this recognition, in February, following the inauguration of the Biden administration in the U.S., a Japan-Australia-India-U.S. foreign ministers’ telephone call was held, during which the Quad shared the view on continuing to further deepen engagement and cooperation with ASEAN, the Pacific Island countries, Europe and other countries to realize FOIP. In March, the first Japan-Australia-India-U.S. leaders’ video conference was held at the call of the U.S., during which the leaders shared the view to cooperate with a range of partners to realize FOIP at the summit level as well. In addition, in September, the first in-person Quad Leaders’ Summit was held in the U.S., during which the leaders shared the view to advance cooperation in areas such as vaccines, critical and emerging technologies, climate change, infrastructure, outer space, and cyber space. The leaders also concurred to hold the summit and foreign ministers’ meetings every year and to broaden coordination and build up concrete cooperation with a range of partners for the realization of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

**(6) Europe****A The EU (See Section 5, 2-(1) and the Special Feature on page 142)**

In January, Foreign Minister Motegi attended, in a virtual format, a meeting of the EU Foreign Affairs Council for the first time by a Japanese

foreign minister, where he explained about FOIP to the EU and foreign ministers of EU member states. In April, the EU released the Council Conclusions on an EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, and in September, the Joint Communication on the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, which is a detailed follow-up of the April document. Foreign Minister Motegi issued a statement in September, welcoming the EU’s display of strong will to engage in the Indo-Pacific. At the Japan-EU Summit in May, Prime Minister Suga exchanged views with European Council President Michel and European Commission President von der Leyen regarding Japan-EU cooperation toward realizing FOIP. Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with European Council President Michel in November and one with European Commission President von der Leyen in December, during which they concurred to further advance Japan-EU cooperation in the region. Foreign Minister Motegi and High Representative Josep Borrell reaffirmed this vision during their telephone call in December.

**B The UK (See Section 5, 2-(2))**

In March, the UK published the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, announcing it would enhance its engagement in the Indo-Pacific region. The UK’s commitment to the region was evident in September in the port call in Japan by the UK Carrier Strike Group (CSG21) led by the aircraft carrier “Queen Elizabeth,” along with the holding of complex joint exercises. In addition, Japan-UK security and defense cooperation has deepened significantly in recent years, with negotiations on the Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement commencing in October. In November, Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with Prime Minister Johnson. The two leaders affirmed that they would continue to work together to raise the Japan-UK relationship, which is stronger than ever, to a new stage and robustly advance FOIP. In December, the Japanese and UK foreign ministers confirmed

that they would further deepen their cooperation toward peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific.

### **C France (See Section 5, 2-(3))**

France has deepened its engagement in the Indo-Pacific, playing a leading role in the establishment of the EU's Indo-Pacific strategy. Japan and France have further strengthened their security and defense cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, which has included the first bilateral exercise in Japan between their ground forces during the port call by the training fleet "Jeanne d'Arc" in Japan in May. In July, Prime Minister Suga held a meeting and luncheon meeting with President Macron, who was visiting Japan to attend the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. The two leaders confirmed their intention to promote bilateral cooperation in the Indo-Pacific. In November, Prime Minister Kishida held his first telephone call with President Macron. The two leaders welcomed the significant strengthening of the bilateral security and defense cooperation, and shared the view to work closely together. In addition, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Le Drian held a telephone call in November and an in-person meeting in December, and shared the view that they would further strengthen Japan-France coordination in the Indo-Pacific.

### **D Germany (See Section 5, 2-(4))**

In September 2020, the German cabinet adopted the "Policy Guidelines for the Indo-Pacific Region," which emphasizes the importance of the principles of freedom of navigation, rule of law and connectivity in the Indo-Pacific. In December 2021, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a meeting with Foreign Minister Baerbock. The two ministers welcomed the significant deepening of bilateral security cooperation, including the holding of the first-ever Japan-Germany Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") and the port call in Japan by the German frigate "Bayern," and concurred to strengthen the bilateral coordination including cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

### **E The Netherlands (See Section 5, Other European Regions on page 136)**

In June, Foreign Minister Motegi held a meeting with Foreign Minister and Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation Minister Kaag. Foreign Minister Motegi stated he was encouraged by the Netherlands' increased involvement in the Indo-Pacific, such as the release of its own "Indo-Pacific Guidelines." The two ministers shared the view to strengthen cooperation to realize FOIP.

## Progress in Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Cooperation

Under the vision of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP),” Japan is engaged in various forms of cooperation with countries that share this way of thinking, in order to realize peace and prosperity for the region. As a part of these efforts, Japan, Australia, India, and the U.S., which are regional partners that share the same fundamental values, engage in a wide range of discussions and advance practical cooperation toward the realization of a free and open Indo-Pacific.

To date, the four countries have held a total of eight senior official-level consultations and four foreign ministers’ meetings since November 2017. In March 2021, the Quad Leaders’ Video Conference was held for the first time, and in September of the same year, the four leaders gathered together to have the first in-person Leaders’ Meeting. In February 2022, the Fourth Quad Foreign Ministers’ Meeting was convened, marking significant progress in cooperation between the four countries.

Japan, Australia, India, and the U.S. have so far advanced practical cooperation in various areas toward the realization of a free and open Indo-Pacific. These include quality infrastructure, maritime security, counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and humanitarian assistance and disaster relief. The four leaders concurred to launch working groups on vaccine, critical and emerging technologies, and climate change at the Leaders’ Video Conference held in March 2021. Furthermore, at the Leaders’ Meeting held in September of the same year, they confirmed the progress of cooperation in these areas, and concurred to launch working groups on infrastructure, space, and cyberspace, as well as to strengthen cooperation in the areas of clean energy and people-to-people exchanges.

One of the examples of practical cooperation between the four countries is the vaccine support they have provided to the Indo-Pacific region. At the Leaders’ Meeting in September 2021, the four leaders affirmed that Japan, Australia, India, and the U.S. play a major role to ensure equitable access to safe, effective, and quality-assured vaccine through vaccine supply and financing, and also concurred that they would continue to work together on the response to COVID-19, which is a pressing issue confronting the international community, including expansion of vaccine production and its supply to the Indo-Pacific region.

The four countries are committed to continued efforts to broadening coordination with a range of partners and building up concrete cooperation for the realization of a free and open Indo-Pacific. To date, the four countries have reaffirmed its strong support for the “ASEAN Outlook on Indo-Pacific (AOIP),” which is ASEAN’s proactive efforts, as well as ASEAN’s unity and centrality. The four countries also welcome the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

After Prime Minister Kishida assumed office, he promptly held telephone meetings with the leaders of the U.S., Australia, and India, and affirmed that Japan would further advance cooperation in the four countries. Going forward, the four countries have concurred to hold the Leaders’ Meetings and Foreign Ministers’ Meetings every year, and to continue working closely with other countries to further advance cooperation across a wide range of practical areas while strongly promoting a free and open Indo-Pacific.



Photograph taken during the Fourth Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Foreign Ministers’ Meeting (February 2022, Melbourne)



Photograph taken before the Second Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Leaders’ Meeting (September, Washington D.C. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

## Section 2

# Asia and Oceania

### 1 Overview

#### (General overview)

The Asia-Oceania region includes not only the second and third largest economies in the world, China and Japan, but also numerous emerging countries with remarkable growth. It is a dynamic region where diverse cultures and races intermingle and influence each other. This region, with an abundance of human resources, drives the world economy and has been increasing its presence. Of the world population of 7.9 billion, approximately 2.3 billion people live in the signatory States of the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement.<sup>1</sup> This represents about 29% of the world's population.<sup>2</sup> Their combined nominal gross domestic product (GDP) has increased by more than 130% over the last 10 years, and accounts for about 30% of the world total.<sup>3</sup> In addition, their total imports and exports are 9.8698 trillion US dollars (2020), which is comparable to the EU's imports and exports of 10.4448 trillion US dollars.<sup>4</sup> There are close economic ties among these nations, and they have a high degree of interdependence. Further economic growth is expected, and this strong growth

within the region will also help to bring renewed affluence and vitality to Japan.

Meanwhile, the security environment in the Asia-Oceania region is becoming increasingly severe as seen in the following developments: the nuclear and missile development by North Korea; the strengthening and modernization of military forces in a manner that lacks transparency and attempts to change the status quo in the region by force that goes against the rule of law and openness; and tension within the region growing over the maritime issues. Other factors hindering the stable growth of the region include economic and financial systems still under development, environmental pollution, unstable demand and supply of food and resources, frequent natural disasters, and aging population.

Against this backdrop, Japan has been actively engaging in diplomacy including at the leaders' and foreign ministers' levels. In 2021, continuing on from 2020, due to the impacts of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), visits to other countries were severely restricted, but, even under such circumstances, the prime minister and foreign minister of Japan, in addition to face-to-face diplomacy, actively held telephone

<sup>1</sup> RCEP Agreement signatory States: the 10 ASEAN member states (Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao Republic, Malaysia, the Union of Myanmar, Philippines, the Republic of Singapore, the Kingdom of Thailand, and Viet Nam), Australia, China, Japan, the ROK and New Zealand, for a total of 15 countries

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Population Fund, "Annual Report 2021"

<sup>3</sup> World Bank (WB)

<sup>4</sup> International Monetary Fund (IMF)

calls and teleconferences to maintain and develop good relations with neighboring countries. Prime Minister Suga held bilateral telephone calls with ASEAN countries and Australia, etc., and in March he attended the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Leaders' Video Conference, the first such meeting at the leader level. In July, the Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) was held via teleconference, and, together with this, Prime Minister Suga held bilateral leaders' meetings with Pacific Island countries via teleconferences. Additionally, when he attended the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Summit Meeting held in the U.S. in September, Prime Minister Suga met with Australian Prime Minister Morrison and Indian Prime Minister Modi. Since assuming the office of Prime Minister in October, Prime Minister Kishida has had telephone calls with Australia, China, the Republic of Korea (ROK), India, and many other Asian and Oceanian countries. In addition, Prime Minister Kishida attended ASEAN-related Summit Meetings that were held via teleconference at the end of October. Through these three forums (ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting, ASEAN Plus Three (JAPAN-China-ROK) Meeting, and East Asia Summit (EAS) (all held on October 27)), Prime Minister Kishida confirmed that respecting ASEAN centrality and unity, Japan had been advancing concrete cooperation in line with the priority areas of maritime cooperation, connectivity, SDGs and economy, with the November 2020 "Joint Statement of the 23<sup>rd</sup> ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)"<sup>5</sup> as a guideline. Prime Minister Kishida also sent strong messages about the situations in North Korea, the East China Sea and South China Sea, and Myanmar. Furthermore,



Japan-Australia Summit Meeting (September 24, Washington D.C.; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



Escort and salute by honor guard upon the arrival in Japan of Prime Minister Chinh of Viet Nam (November 24, Prime Minister's Office; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with Prime Minister Chinh of Viet Nam upon his visit to Japan in November, and the two leaders issued a joint statement. Foreign Minister Motegi took the opportunity to attend the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in the UK in May, participated in the Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and met with Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs Payne, ROK Minister of Foreign Affairs Chung Eui-yong, and Indian External Affairs Minister Jaishankar. In August, Foreign Minister Motegi actively contributed to the discussions at ASEAN-related Foreign

<sup>5</sup> Adopted at the ASEAN Summit Meeting in June 2019. It is based on the principles of strengthening ASEAN Centrality in the Indo-Pacific region, as well as openness, transparency, inclusivity, a rules-based framework, good governance, respect for sovereignty, non-intervention, complementarity with existing cooperation frameworks, equality, mutual respect, mutual trust, mutual benefit, and respect for international law, such as the UN Charter, the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea and other relevant UN treaties and conventions. Based on this, it promotes cooperation in the areas of maritime cooperation, connectivity, the SDGs, and economic and other possible areas.

Minister's Meetings, at the Friends of the Mekong<sup>6</sup> Ministerial Meeting, and at the Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting, which were held via teleconference. In September, Foreign Minister Motegi visited the U.S. to attend the United Nations General Assembly and participated in the Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting. After the inauguration of the new Cabinet in November, Foreign Minister Hayashi actively met with and exchanged opinions with Australia, China, India and Mongolia. Foreign Minister Hayashi held bilateral telephone calls with ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Cambodia, Singapore, Thailand, Philippines, Brunei, Malaysia and Laos), and in November had a face-to-face meeting with Foreign Minister Son of Viet Nam. In December, when he visited the UK to attend the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a meeting with Australian Foreign Minister Payne.

Japan is strengthening various cooperation in the Asia-Oceania region and will continue to make meaningful use of various cooperative frameworks.

#### **(Japan-U.S. Alliance and Indo-Pacific region)**

The Japan-U.S. Security Alliance, with the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements as its core, is the foundation of peace, security, and prosperity, not only for Japan but also for the Indo-Pacific region. In the midst of an increasingly severe regional security environment, the Japan-U.S. Alliance is more important than ever. Since the inauguration of President Biden in January 2021 and until the end of February 2022, 8 Summit Meetings and 15 Foreign Ministers' Meetings have been held, including telephone calls. The two countries have been working closely at multiple levels, including at the summit level and at the foreign minister level, to address the various issues of the Indo-Pacific region, including those related to North Korea.

Furthermore, Japan and the U.S., are deepening their cooperation in achieving a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)," even amidst the spread of COVID-19. In March, just two months after the inauguration of the Biden administration, Secretary of State Blinken and Secretary of Defense Austin visited Japan as the first overseas trip by Biden administration secretaries, and the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (Japan-U.S. "2+2") was held with Foreign Minister Motegi and Defense Minister Kishi. The four Ministers reaffirmed that the Japan-U.S. Alliance remains the cornerstone of peace, security, and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region, and renewed the unwavering commitment of both countries to the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Additionally, Prime Minister Suga visited the U.S. in April and held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with U.S. President Biden, and they issued a joint statement confirming that Japan and the U.S. will strengthen their unity and cooperation while partnering with like-minded countries such as Australia, India, and ASEAN countries toward the realization of a FOIP. In October, Prime Minister Kishida, on the day after assuming the office of Prime Minister, held a Japan-U.S. Summit telephone call with President Biden, and the two leaders agreed to further peace and stability in the region and in the international community through realizing a FOIP. Furthermore, in November, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken, and the two Ministers confirmed that Japan and the U.S. will work closely in realizing a FOIP. In January 2022, a Japan-U.S. "2+2" was held via teleconference for the first time, with Foreign Minister Hayashi and Defense Minister Kishi participating from the Japanese side and Secretary of State Blinken and Defense Secretary Austin participating from the U.S. side. The Ministers had frank and important discussions on how to evolve the

<sup>6</sup> Friends of Mekong: Formerly "Friends of the Lower Mekong (FLM)"

A U.S.-led framework aimed at promoting coordination and cooperation among development partners engaged in cooperation with the Mekong. Then-Foreign Minister Kishida from Japan attended the Ministerial Meeting that was held in Myanmar in 2014.



Japan-U.S. Alliance and on effectively addressing current and future challenges, and confirmed the commitment to a FOIP. In January, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting with President Biden. The two leaders shared their intention to coordinate closely under the strong Japan-U.S. Alliance and to deepen cooperation with like-minded countries such as Australia, India, ASEAN, and Europe, toward realizing a FOIP.

#### **(Japan's measures on the comfort women issue)**

(See 3(2)A(C) regarding the comfort women issue between Japan and the ROK.)

The Government of Japan has sincerely dealt with the issues of reparations, property and claims pertaining to the World War II, including the comfort women issue, under the San Francisco Peace Treaty, which the Government of Japan concluded with 45 countries, including the U.S., the UK and France, and through other bilateral treaties, agreements and instruments. These issues including those of claims of individuals have already been legally settled with the parties to these treaties, agreements and instruments.

On this basis, the Government of Japan has actively taken measures to recover the honor of former comfort women and to provide remedies for them. In 1995, the Asian Women's Fund (AWF) was established with the cooperation of the people and the Government of Japan for the purpose of carrying out atonement and remedy projects for former comfort women. The Government of Japan provided a total of 4.8 billion Japanese yen. In addition, approximately 600 million Japanese yen was donated to the AWF by the people of Japan. The Government of Japan extended maximum cooperation to the AWF, which implemented medical and welfare support projects and provided "atonement money," to offer realistic relief to former comfort women. As part of the AWF's projects, "atonement money" (2 million Japanese yen per person), which was funded by donations from Japanese people, was provided to 285

former comfort women (211 in the Philippines, 61 in the ROK, 13 in Taiwan). Moreover, the AWF provided funds in those countries/areas for medical and welfare support funded with contributions by the Government of Japan (3 million Japanese yen per person in the ROK and Taiwan, 1.2 million Japanese yen per person in the Philippines) (for a total of 5 million Japanese yen per person in the ROK and Taiwan, 3.2 million Japanese yen per person in the Philippines). Furthermore, using funds contributed by the Government of Japan, the AWF extended support for projects to promote social welfare services for elderly people in Indonesia as well as projects to help improve the living conditions of former comfort women in the Netherlands.

When the "atonement money" as well as the medical and welfare support were provided to individual former comfort women, then-Prime Ministers (namely, Prime Ministers Hashimoto Ryutaro, Obuchi Keizo, Mori Yoshiro and Koizumi Junichiro) sent signed letters expressing their apology and remorse directly to each former comfort woman.

As stated in the Statement by the Prime Minister issued in 2015, Japan will engrave in its heart the past, when the dignity and honor of many women were severely injured during wars in the 20th century. Japan will lead the world in making the 21st century an era in which women's human rights are not infringed upon.

Despite such sincere efforts by the Government of Japan, there are claims that can hardly be regarded to be based on historical facts, such as allegations of "forceful taking away" of comfort women and "sex slaves" as well as the figures such as "200,000 persons" or "several hundred thousands" for the total number of comfort women.

The Government of Japan's position regarding these claims is as follows:

#### **"Forceful taking away"**

"Forceful taking away" of comfort women by the Japanese military and government authorities



could not be confirmed in any of the documents that the Government of Japan was able to identify.

### “Sex slaves”

The expression of “sex slaves” contradicts the facts and should not be used. This point was confirmed with the ROK on the occasion of the Japan-ROK Agreement in December 2015 and the expression “sex slaves” is not used in the agreement.

### Figures such as “200,000 persons” for the total number of comfort women

The figure “200,000 persons” lacks concrete evidence. As stated in the report of the Government study’s result of August 4, 1993, it is virtually impossible to determine the total number of comfort women as no documents have been found which either indicate the total number or give sufficient ground to establish an estimate.

The Government of Japan has been making efforts to provide clear explanations regarding its sincere efforts and official position in international fora. Specifically, at the United Nations (UN), the Government of Japan has explained its position on a number of occasions such as during the consideration of the Seventh and Eighth Periodic Reports by the Government of Japan on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in February 2016, and the Ninth Periodic Report on the Implementation of the CEDAW in September 2021.

Installations of comfort woman statues<sup>7</sup> have been observed not only in the ROK but also in the U.S., Canada, Australia, China, Germany, the Philippines, Hong Kong and Taiwan. Such moves are extremely regrettable and incompatible with the position of the Government of Japan. In February 2017, the Government of Japan submitted its amicus curiae brief to the U.S. Supreme Court for the trial concerning a comfort woman

statue installed in Glendale in the suburbs of Los Angeles, U.S. The Government of Japan will continue reaching out to various people involved in this issue to explain its position.

The below Ministry of Foreign Affairs website details Japan’s Efforts on the Issue of Comfort Women.

[https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/page22e\\_000883.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/page22e_000883.html)



## 2 China / Mongolia, etc.

### (1) China

#### A Situation in China

##### (A) Domestic Affairs

The fourth session of the 13th National People’s Congress (NPC) held in March adopted the “14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035” and made the decision to change the election system in Hong Kong. On July 1, the celebration of the 100th Anniversary of the Founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC) was held, and Xi Jinping, General Secretary of CPC Central Committee, declared that China had realized the first centenary goal of building a “moderately prosperous society” in all respects.

From November 8 to 12, the sixth plenary session of the 19th CPC Central Committee was held, and the “Resolution of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China on the Major Achievements and Historical Experience of the Party over the Past Century” was adopted. Also, it was decided that the 20th CPC National Congress would be held in Beijing in the second half of 2022. This was the third time that the CPC has adopted a resolution on historical issues, following 1945 and 1981.

<sup>7</sup> For the sake of practical convenience, they are referred to as “comfort woman statues.” However, the use of this term is not a reflection of the recognition that these statues correctly embody the reality of those women at that time.

The international community continues to express high interest in China's human rights situation, including in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR). Continuing on from 2020, joint statements expressing grave concerns about the human rights situation in the XUAR were read out in June at the UN Human Rights Council and in October at the Third Committee of the UN General Assembly, and Japan participated in both statements as the only participating country from Asia (see the "Japan's Human Rights Diplomacy Initiatives" Special Feature in section 2.(2) on page 247.) Prime Minister Kishida raised the issues of the situation in Hong Kong and of the human rights situation in the XUAR during the Japan-China Summit telephone call in October 2021, and Foreign Minister Hayashi also expressed serious concerns to State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi during the Japan-China Foreign Ministers' telephone call in November.

The Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 were held from February to March 2022. In December 2021, prior to the opening of the Games, the U.S. announced that it would not send diplomatic or official delegations because of the human rights violations in China. Australia, the UK, Canada, and other nations expressed similar positions. Japanese Olympic Committee President Yamashita Yasuhiro and Tokyo 2020 Organising Committee President Hashimoto Seiko attended the Olympic Games, and Japanese Paralympic Committee President Mori Kazuyuki attended the Paralympic Games. No governmental delegation was dispatched.

In Hong Kong, following the decision by the NPC to change the election system, on March 30, the NPC Standing Committee adopted the

amendments to the Hong Kong Basic Law to change the election system for the Chief Executive and for the Legislative Council, and delayed until December 19 the 7th Legislative Council election that was scheduled for September under the amended Basic Law. The G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement in March,<sup>8</sup> the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting Communiqué in May,<sup>9</sup> the G7 Cornwall Summit Communiqué in June,<sup>10</sup> and the Meeting of G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement in December<sup>11</sup> each expressed grave concern about the change of the election system, and a joint statement read in June at the UN Human Rights Council expressed deep concerns about the situation in Hong Kong, and Japan also participated in the statement. With regard to the decision by the NPC and the NPC Standing Committee and with regard to the holding of Legislative Council elections, Japan released a statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Press Secretary that called for the relevant elections in Hong Kong to be held in a fair manner that are open to candidates representing a wide range of political opinions, and expressed grave concerns.

## (B) Economy

The full year real GDP growth rate for 2021 was 8.1% year on year, achieving the target value for 2021 of 6% or more.

Real GDP in the first half of 2021 increased by 12.7% compared to the same period in the previous year and the economic recovery progressed significantly, a rebound from 2020, when the economy was affected by the spread of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). In the second half of 2021, however, economic growth slowed compared to the first half of 2021, as the economy

**8** G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement on Hong Kong electoral changes:  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press1e\\_000180.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press1e_000180.html)

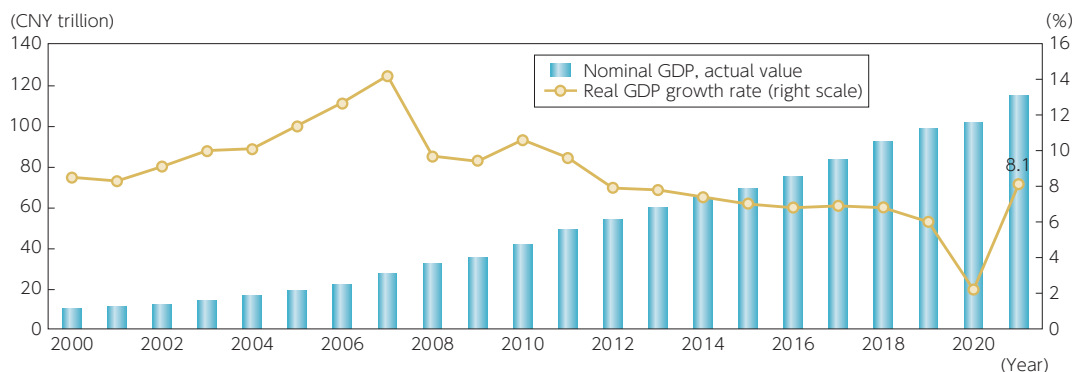
**9** G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting Communiqué:  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/pc/page6e\\_000238.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/fp/pc/page6e_000238.html)

**10** G7 Carbis Bay Summit Communiqué:  
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/100200009.pdf>

**11** G7 Foreign Ministers' Statement on Hong Kong Legislative Council elections:  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press3e\\_000293.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press3e_000293.html)



## China's GDP



Source: National Bureau of Statistics of China

faced downward pressure on growth due to rising prices for coal and other raw materials, semiconductor shortages, flooding in some regions, and the “zero-COVID” policy, as well as restrictions on electricity supplies and real estate market turmoil in various parts of China.

At the 13th NPC held in March, the major objectives and missions of the 13th Five-Year Plan (2016-2020) were said to have been successfully achieved, and the “14th Five-Year Plan (2021-2025) for National Economic and Social Development and the Long-Range Objectives Through the Year 2035” was adopted and subsequently announced. The 14th Five-Year Plan emphasized “independence” and “self-reliance” in science and technology, the implementation of a strategy to be a manufacturing powerhouse, the promotion of domestic and international “dual circulation” policies, and strengthening economic security. Economic growth rate targets were not presented, and it was instead stated that targets would be set according to the actual situation in each fiscal year. Long-term goals for the period through 2035 include raising GDP per capita to the level of “moderately developed countries” and substantial progress in “common prosperity for all.”

As for foreign economic policy, it was stated that China will continue to open up to the outside world. In September, China formally requested its accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive

Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) Agreement, and, in November, the 4th China International Import Expo was held. Additionally, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement entered into force among 10 signatory States, including Japan and China, on January 1, 2022.

The Central Economic Work Conference held in December indicated that 2021 was a milestone year in the history of the party and the nation in which the first centenary goal (building a moderately prosperous society in all respects by 2021, which is the 100th anniversary of the formation of the CPC) was realized, a new start was made toward the second centenary goal (building China into a great modern socialist country in all respects by 2049, which is the 100th anniversary of the founding of the nation), and that a good start had been made for the 14th Five-Year Plan. On the other hand, it was indicated that China is facing the “triple pressures” of shrinking demand, supply shocks and weakening expectations. The priority economic policy missions set for 2022 were (1) stable and effective macro policy, (2) micro policy that continuously stimulates the vitality of market participants (companies), (3) structural policy focused on facilitating the circulation of the national economy, (4) steady promotion of science and technology policy, (5) reforms and opening-up policy to invigorate the driving forces of development, (6) regional policy that

strengthens balance and cooperation for development, and (7) social policy that protects the bottom line of civilian life. In addition to this, it was also pointed out that China's development faces many new theoretical and practical problems, and that accurate recognition and understanding are necessary. Strategic goals for achieving "common prosperity for all," strengthening the management and supervision of capital, and environmental policies were also mentioned.

In order to manage the party and administration stably, it is necessary to ensure constant economic growth while handling all domestic and external issues, and it is worth paying attention to the trends of China's future economic and financial policies.

### (C) Response to COVID-19

COVID-19 spread from China to the rest of the world, and in China, starting with "important instructions" by President Xi Jinping on January 20, 2020 and under the top-down leadership of the Central Committee of the CPC, strict infection control measures were taken, such as an approximately two-and-a-half-month lockdown of Wuhan City in Hubei Province, the source of COVID-19, and all cities in Hubei Province. During the initial spread of COVID-19, China fully implemented measures to "prevent domestic spread and prevent external spread (preventing domestic spread within China and preventing external spread to foreign countries)," but, with infections gradually being controlled, the policy was changed to "prevent external import and prevent internal rebounds (preventing the importation of infections from foreign countries and preventing a domestic rebound of infections)," and strict border control measures have been consistently implemented even after domestic community outbreaks of COVID-19 had subsided.

As part of its COVID-19 control measures, China vigorously promoted domestic vaccine development and production, and began the sequential vaccination of all citizens. At a press

conference held by the health authorities on December 29, 2021, it was announced that the domestic vaccination rate had reached 89%.

Since the latter half of 2021, against the backdrop of the spread of the Delta variant, there were scattered cases of localized community outbreaks that spread to other regions, but the authorities have been able to control the spread of COVID-19 in a relatively short period of time by promptly identifying the infection sources and close contacts based on diagnostic reports from medical institutions and the travel history of the infected individuals, and by taking strict measures such as restricting movement in infected areas, mass PCR testing of residents, and mass quarantines. In a December press conference, the health authorities explained that China's best choice at this stage is focusing on promptly controlling community outbreaks and giving maximum consideration to the balance between socio-economic development and controlling infectious diseases.

### (D) Foreign Policy

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, visits to foreign countries by Chinese dignitaries since Xi Jinping's visit to Myanmar in January 2020 have been limited to those made by Yang Jiechi, a member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee, and by State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. Additionally, in the lead up to the opening of the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games Beijing 2022 in February 2022, the diplomatic activities of dignitaries from various countries who visited China in 2021 were all carried out in regional cities other than Beijing. President Xi Jinping developed "head of state diplomacy" through telephone calls and teleconferences seeking stable relations with the U.S., Russia, and Europe, good-neighborliness and friendship with neighboring countries, and mutually beneficial cooperation with developing countries. In this context, China has been engaging in dialogue with the U.S. and European countries, which have various levels of tensions with China.

Since the end of 2019 and amidst the spread of COVID-19 from China to the rest of the world, China strongly promoted the development and production of domestically produced vaccines, and, in June 2021, advocated for the “Initiative for Belt and Road Partnership on COVID-19 Vaccines Cooperation” to promote the spread of Chinese vaccines in the international arena. China also promoted vaccine support through the COVAX Facility, and, at the International Forum on COVID-19 Vaccine Cooperation hosted by China and held on August 5, President Xi Jinping announced that China would aim to provide 2 billion doses of COVID-19 vaccines to the world in the year 2021 and had decided to provide 100 million US dollars to the COVAX Facility.

Following 2020, while severe confrontations between the U.S. and China were seen in a variety of fields, dialogue was maintained at the same time. In his first diplomatic speech since taking office, President Biden described China as “our most serious competitor,” and in the “Interim National Security Strategic Guidelines” that were released in March, he positioned China as “the only competitor to mount a sustained challenge to a stable and open international system.” In its statement after the U.S.-China Summit telephone call in February, President Xi Jinping stated that “When China and the U.S. work together, they can accomplish a great deal for the good of both countries and the world at large; confrontation between the two countries, however, will definitely be disastrous for both countries and the world” and that “the U.S. side should respect China’s core interests and act prudently.”

The U.S. continued to strengthen import/export restrictions and investment restrictions on China based on security and human rights concerns. In October, the Biden administration announced its trade policy on China, which included ensuring the implementation of the so-called “Phase One

Agreement”<sup>12</sup> signed by both countries under the Trump administration in January 2020, and correcting China’s unfair trade practices. On human rights, in January, Secretary of State Pompeo announced that the Government of the U.S. had determined that the Chinese authorities had “committed genocide” against the Uyghurs and others. Furthermore, because of the human rights situation in the XUAR, the U.S. banned the import of cotton, tomatoes, and solar panel-related products, etc. from the XUAR. In December, the U.S. enacted the “Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act,” which establishes a rebuttable presumption that considers products including those produced in the XUAR to be prohibited from importation into the U.S. In addition, the U.S. announced an asset freeze and a ban on travel to the U.S. for senior Chinese government officials, citing violations of Hong Kong’s autonomy and human rights abuses in the XUAR, and, in response to this, China took equivalent countermeasures based on the “Anti-Foreign Sanctions Law,” which was enacted in June.

On the other hand, dialogue channels, including between leaders, were maintained between the U.S. and China. Telephone calls between President Biden and President Xi Jinping were held in February and September, and a teleconference was held in November. During the three-and-a-half-hour teleconference, the two countries discussed the complex nature of U.S.-China relations, the importance of both countries managing competition responsibly, areas where both countries’ interests align, and areas where both countries’ interests, values, and perspectives diverge. After the meeting, the U.S. side announced that President Biden stated the need for “guardrails to ensure that competition does not veer into conflict and to keep lines of communication open.” In addition to exchanges between leaders, in Alaska in March, there was a meeting with National

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<sup>12</sup> China has promised to expand imports of U.S. products and to protect intellectual property rights. In addition, both the U.S. and China have agreed to postpone or reduce some additional tariff measures (although the majority of the tariff measures will remain unchanged).

Security Advisor Sullivan and Secretary of State Blinken from the U.S. and with Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee Yang Jiechi and State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi from China, and in July, Deputy Secretary of State Sherman visited China. In October, following a meeting by National Security Advisor Sullivan and Member of the Political Bureau of the CPC Central Committee Yang Jiechi in Zurich, Switzerland, Secretary of State Blinken and State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi met in Rome.

Additionally, in areas such as climate change, the Biden administration's Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry visited China in April, and met with Chinese Special Envoy for Climate Change Xie Zhenhua, where the U.S. and China issued a joint statement on responding to the climate crisis. Special Envoy Kerry visited China again in September to discuss with the Chinese side how to respond to climate change. On November 10, during the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) in Glasgow, UK, the U.S. and China, via the U.S.-China Joint Glasgow Declaration on Enhancing Climate Action in the 2020s, announced that they are committed to addressing the climate crisis during the critical decade of the 2020s through accelerating their respective actions and through cooperation in multilateral processes, including in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The Joint Declaration also mentioned strengthening cooperation in their efforts to reduce methane, one of the major greenhouse gases.

Establishing stable relations between the U.S. and China is a matter that concerns not only Japan, but also the international community as a whole. Japan will continue to monitor future developments.

### (E) Military Affairs and Security

At the 19th CPC National Congress (2017),

President Xi Jinping stated that China would transform its armed forces into a world-class military by the middle of this century. Additionally, the communique from the fifth plenary session of the 19th CPC Central Committee, published in October 2020, set the new goal of “securing the realization of the centennial goal by 2027, the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Chinese People’s Liberation Army (PLA).”

China has been increasing its defense expenditures about 42-fold over the past 30 years, but the breakdown of the budget and the intention behind the increase have not been disclosed sufficiently. Under such circumstances, China, under its “Military-Civil Fusion,” is extensively and rapidly enhancing and modernizing its military power centered on its nuclear and missile capabilities and naval and air forces, is placing importance on ensuring its superiority in new domains of outer space, cyberspace, the electromagnetic spectrum, AI, and unmanned systems, and is promoting the modernization of its military through “mechanization, informatization and intelligentization.” China’s opaque expansion of military capability, unilateral actions to change the status quo in the East China Sea and South China Sea, coupled with the expansion and increased vigor of its military activities, are strong security concerns in the region, including Japan, and in the international community. In 2021, the following movements such as navigation were confirmed: presumed Chinese-registered submarines navigating in the contiguous zone, joint patrols by Chinese and Russian naval vessels going around Japan, and Chinese naval observation ships south of Yakushima.

China has also been demonstrating a proactive stance in continuing to take an active part in United Nations PKOs as well as providing various kinds of humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, etc.

In recent years, China has grown to have a great influence on the international community, not only politically and economically, but also militarily. To dispel any fears of China, there is a



pressing need for China to increase transparency regarding its national defense policies and military power. While cooperating with other countries, Japan intends to further promote mutual trust in Japan-China relations through dialogue and people-to-people exchanges, including the Japan-China Security Dialogue, and through communication between the Japanese and Chinese defense authorities via the Maritime and Aerial Communication Mechanism. Japan also intends to strongly urge China to improve its transparency to dispel the concerns of the international community, including Japan's concerns.

## **B Japan-China Relations**

### **(A) Bilateral Relations: General**

There are various issues of concern between Japan and China as neighboring countries. The situation surrounding the Senkaku Islands, unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the East China Sea and in the South China Sea, and China's expanded and intensified military activities around Japan are of strong security concern to the region, including to Japan, and to the international community. In addition, China has become the world's second largest economy, and the impact of those actions is increasing on the international community in a variety of ways. In accordance with the rules of the international community, it is important for China to fulfill its responsibilities as a great power and to meet the expectations of the international community. At the same time, the relations with neighboring China is one of Japan's most important bilateral relations, and the two countries have close economic relations, as well as people-to-people and cultural exchanges. Japan will firmly maintain and assert its position and strongly request that China take responsible actions, while at the same time cooperate on matters of common interest. It is important that both China and Japan make efforts to build such constructive and stable relations.

Continuing on from the previous year, in 2021, high-level communication, including between

leaders, was continuously conducted, such as through telephone calls. Japan and China exchanged opinions on a wide range of topics, from bilateral relations to regional and international affairs, including on a variety of issues between the two countries.

On April 5, the fifth Japan-China Foreign Ministers' telephone call was held between Foreign Minister Motegi and State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. The two Ministers confirmed the importance of contributing to the regional and international community as responsible major powers, and expressed their expectations for advancing exchanges and dialogues in a wide variety of fields toward the 50th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China in 2022. In addition, Foreign Minister Motegi conveyed his serious concerns regarding intrusions into Japan's territorial sea surrounding the Senkaku Islands by Chinese Coast Guard vessels, China's Coast Guard Law, the situation in the South China Sea, the situation surrounding Hong Kong, and the human rights situation in the XUAR, and strongly requested that China take concrete actions. Foreign Minister Motegi also strongly reiterated his call for the prompt removal of import restrictions on Japanese food products.

Prime Minister Kishida assumed the office of Prime Minister on October 4, and, on October 8, he held a Japan-China Summit telephone call. Prime Minister Kishida expressed his candid views on various concerns between the two countries and stated that the Japanese side will continue holding dialogues with the Chinese side, including on these issues, and the two leaders shared their intention to cooperate on common issues. Additionally, Prime Minister Kishida stated that the two countries must take the opportunity of 2022, which marks the 50th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China relations, to establish constructive and stable relations based on the view above. President Xi Jinping expressed his consent to this view as well as his willingness to

further develop Japan-China relations. Both leaders concurred to push forward the economic and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries. Furthermore, Prime Minister Kishida raised the issue concerning North Korea, including the abductions issue, and the two leaders confirmed that Japan and China will continue to cooperate with each other.

Shortly after Foreign Minister Hayashi assumed the office of Foreign Minister in November, he held a Japan-China Foreign Ministers' telephone call with State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi on November 18. Touching upon the fact that 2022 marks the 50th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China relations, Foreign Minister Hayashi expressed his intention to work together with State Councilor Wang Yi to realize the shared vision agreed upon during the Japan-China Summit telephone call held on October 8, including the establishment of constructive and stable relations, to which State Councilor Wang Yi expressed his consent. Additionally, Foreign Minister Hayashi expressed serious concerns regarding the situation surrounding the Senkaku Islands, as well as situations such as those in the East China Sea, the South China Sea, Hong Kong, and the XUAR, and also stated the importance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. Furthermore, Foreign Minister Hayashi strongly called for the prompt removal of import restrictions on Japanese food products. Foreign Minister Hayashi also stated his intention to hold dialogues and consultations, including on the aforementioned issues. Both Ministers affirmed that they will promote dialogue and practical cooperation, in an appropriate manner, in relation to Japan-China economic relations, and agreed to take the opportunity of 2022, the 50th anniversary of the normalization of Japan-China relations, to push forward the economic and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries. The two Ministers exchanged views on international affairs, including the issue of climate change and North Korea. Regarding the response to North

Korea, Foreign Minister Hayashi requested understanding and support toward the early resolution of the abductions issue and the two Ministers confirmed that they will continue to coordinate closely.

In addition to the above, exchanges of views between the Japanese and Chinese diplomatic authorities continued even amidst COVID-19, including the Japan-China International Development Cooperation Policy Consultation in June, the teleconference between Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau Director-General Funakoshi and Director-General of the Department of Asian Affairs of the Foreign Ministry Liu Jinsong in August, and the Japan-China Economic Partnership Consultation (Vice-Ministerial meeting) in November. In February and December, the Japan-China High-Level Consultation on Maritime Affairs was held to candidly exchange views on a variety of issues related to the East China Sea and other areas.

Additionally, Japan-China consultations between non-diplomatic authorities also continued, such as the Japan-China Defense Ministers' Video Teleconference between Defense Minister Kishi and State Councilor and Defense Minister Wei Fenghe on December 27.

On February 21, 2022, a member of the Japanese Embassy in China was temporarily detained by the Chinese authorities against the person's will in Beijing. This case is a clear violation of the Vienna Convention on diplomatic relations and is inadmissible and completely unacceptable, and, as such, Japan is lodging a severe protest with China, and strongly requesting an apology and measures to prevent a recurrence.

## (B) Japan-China Economic Relations

Economic relations between Japan and China, including trade and investment, are very close. The global spread of COVID-19 has had a major impact on Japan-China economic relations since 2020, and travel between Japan and China continues to be significantly restricted. However,

even under such circumstances, economic activities between Japan and China in 2021 showed a greater recovery than in the previous year, and the total trade between Japan and China (excluding Hong Kong) amounted to about 350.0 billion US dollars in 2021 (14.8% increase year on year), and China has been the largest trading partner for Japan for 15 consecutive years. Moreover, according to Chinese statistics, Japan's direct investment in China was about 3.374 billion US dollars (9.3% decrease year on year, as estimated from officially published information on investment) in 2020. Figures for 2021 have yet to be announced as of March 2022. Japan ranks third in terms of the amount of direct investment to China (Singapore ranks first, the ROK second, the Netherlands fourth, and the U.S. fifth).

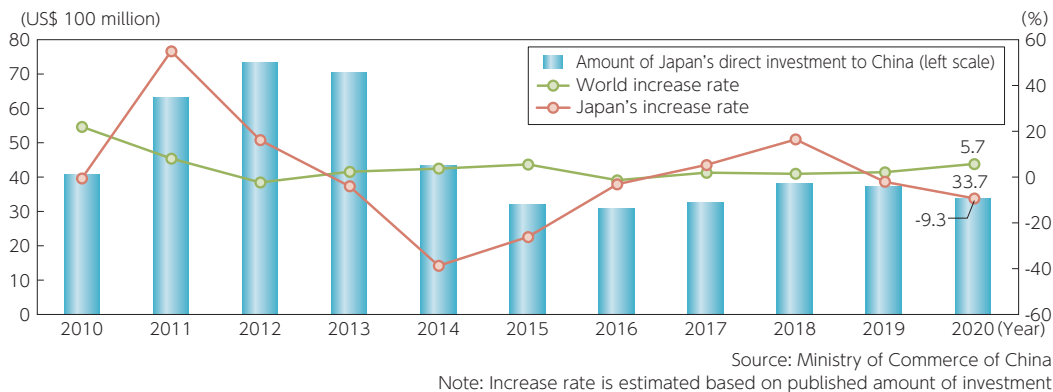
Economic dialogue between Japan and China continued, even as visits, including at high levels, were restricted due to the spread of COVID-19.

At the Japan-China Summit telephone call held in October, both leaders concurred to push forward economic and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries. At the Japan-China Foreign Ministers' telephone call held in November, both Ministers affirmed that they will promote dialogue and practical cooperation, in an appropriate manner, in relation to Japan-China economic relations. The 15th Japan-China Economic Partnership Consultation (Vice-Ministerial meeting) was held in November via teleconference, following on from the previous year, and the two sides had wide-ranging exchanges of views on issues and future cooperation between Japan and China, such as the current state of both countries' economies, the business environment, agricultural trade, intellectual property, the environment and energy saving, and medicine and healthcare, as well as on issues and cooperation in the international arena,

### Japan's Value of Trade with China



### Japan's direct investment to China



including climate change, development finance and debt issues, and the WTO. Japan once again brought up the issue of legitimate business interests of Japanese companies and of ensuring fair and competitive conditions, and strongly called for the prompt removal of import restrictions on Japanese food products. Additionally, both Japan and China confirmed that, in relation to Japan-China economic relations, they will continue to promote dialogue and practical cooperation, in an appropriate manner, based on these discussions, and agreed to support economic and people-to-people exchanges between the two countries on the occasion of the 50th anniversary in 2022 of the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China.

Additionally, as a private-sector level economic exchange, the Seventh Japan-China Business Leader and Former High-Level Government Official Dialogue (Japan-China CEO Summit) was held online in December.

### (C) Promotion of Mutual Understanding Between Japanese and Chinese People

#### (Current situation of people-to-people exchanges between Japan and China)

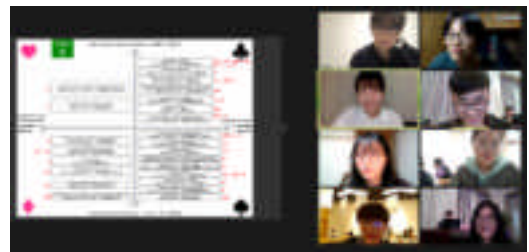
A “Business Track (measures with short-term business travelers in mind)” and “Residence Track (measures to enable cross-border travel by long-term residents)” with China began to operate in phases from November 30, 2020, but on January 14, 2021, the Government of Japan suspended operations with all eligible countries and regions, and, since then, new entries by foreign nationals have not been permitted under either track. The Government of Japan applied strengthened border measures against new COVID-19 variants from November 30, 2021, but, although these measures were subsequently partially relaxed on March 1, 2022, mutual travel has not yet fully resumed.

The number of visitors to Japan from China continued to sharply fall from 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19, to approximately 42,000 in 2021 (as of the end of March 2022, provisional value

from the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO)), and is still at a low level, down 99.6% from 2019 (approximately 9.59 million, finalized value for 2019), when a record high was marked.

#### (Japan-China youth exchanges, etc.)

In 2021, as in 2020, even though face-to-face exchange projects could not be implemented due to cross-border travel restrictions caused by COVID-19, youth exchanges between Japan and China continued through these efforts to explore new ways of conducting youth exchanges. This was achieved via online exchanges such as the “JENESYS” friendship ties programs, for the purpose of promoting mutual understanding and understanding of Japan between students and researchers from both countries.



On the theme of “My Ideal Way of Working,” 40 Japanese and Chinese university students participated in the “JENESYS2020” 2nd Japan-China University Student Online Exchange (October 28).

### (D) Specific Pending Issues

#### (Situation Surrounding the East China Sea)

In the East China Sea, China Coast Guard vessels continue to intrude into the Japanese territorial sea around the Senkaku Islands. The Chinese military has also been rapidly expanding and increasing its activities in quality and quantity at sea and in the airspace over the East China Sea.

The Senkaku Islands are indisputably an inherent territory of Japan in light of historical facts and based upon international law. Indeed, the Senkaku Islands are under the valid control of Japan. Thus, there exists no issue of territorial sovereignty to be resolved concerning the Senkaku Islands. From 1895, when the Senkaku Islands were incorporated into Japanese territory

by lawful means under international law, until the 1970s, when the islands became the focus of attention after it was suggested that there might be oil reserves in the East China Sea, China had not raised any objections to Japan's sovereignty over the Senkaku Islands. Moreover, China has never explained why it had not expressed objections until then. Subsequently, in 2008, Chinese government vessels first intruded into Japanese territorial sea surrounding the Senkaku Islands.<sup>13</sup>

During 2021, 34 incidents were recorded in which China Coast Guard vessels intruded into the Japanese territorial sea surrounding the Senkaku Islands (the numbers were 24 in 2020 and 32 in 2019). Since May 2020, China Coast Guard vessels have intruded into the Japanese territorial sea of the Senkaku Islands, there have been incidents in which the China Coast Guard vessels attempted to approach Japanese fishing boats, and these incidents have continued to occur. In October 2020, the intrusion into Japan's territorial sea lasted for more than 57 hours, which is the longest amount of time to date. The number of days in 2021 in which Chinese Coast Guard vessels navigated in the contiguous zone around the Senkaku Islands was 332 days, and the situation is becoming more severe, as from February to July 2021 the number of days in which Chinese Coast Guard vessels consecutively navigated in the contiguous zone surrounding the Senkaku Islands reaching a record high of 157 days. The activities of the China Coast Guard vessels, which make their own assertions in Japan's territorial sea around the Senkaku Islands, are in violation of international law to begin with, and, in response to such unilateral attempts by China to change the status quo, the Government of Japan has repeatedly lodged strong protests and requested the withdrawal of Chinese vessels through diplomatic routes. With the determination to defend

Japan's territory as well as territorial sea and airspace, Japan will continue to take a calm and resolute approach to the situation.

Additionally, in June 2020, the "Law of the People's Republic of China on the People's Armed Police Force," which regulates the authority and duties of the People's Armed Police Force, was amended and "protection of interests at sea and law enforcement" was stipulated as a duty of the People's Armed Police Force. The Government of China is proceeding with the development of legal systems for securing maritime rights and protecting interests, such as by enacting, in February 2021, the "Coast Guard Law of the People's Republic of China," which stipulated enforcement of the Maritime Rights and Interests Protection Act as a duty of the China Coast Guard. In particular, the China Coast Guard Law contains provisions that have problems from the viewpoint of consistency with international law, such as ambiguities in the maritime areas where it can be applied and in the authority to use weapons. Japan believes that the China Coast Guard Law should not undermine the legitimate interests of relevant countries, including Japan, and is conveying these serious concerns to China. Japan will continue to pay close attention to trends related to legislation in China.

Moreover, Chinese naval vessels and aircraft have also been accelerating their activities in the sea and airspace around Japan. In 2021, Japan confirmed movements such as navigation of presumed Chinese submarines in the eastern contiguous zone around Amami Oshima, joint maritime cruises by Chinese and Russian naval vessels around Japan, joint flights by China and Russia from the East China Sea to the Sea of Japan, and navigation in Japan's territorial sea by Chinese naval observation ships south of Yakushima. Furthermore, aircraft activities also continue to be active, and the number of times

**13** Ministry of Foreign Affairs website detailing the position of the Government of Japan on the Senkaku Islands: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/senkaku/index.html>





Chinese maritime structures confirmed to have been built near the geographical equidistant line between Japan and China (Photo: Ministry of Defense)  
For details, see [https://www.mofa.go.jp/a\\_o/c\\_m1/page3e\\_000356.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/c_m1/page3e_000356.html).



the Air Self-Defense Force had to scramble jets in response to Chinese military aircraft since autumn 2012 has remained high. In response to these recent activities by the Chinese military, Japan has been raising the issues through diplomatic routes.

In addition, China has been continuing its unilateral activities to develop natural resources while the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the continental shelf between Japan and China in the East China Sea remain pending delimitation. The Government of Japan has confirmed 12 new structures built between June 2013 and May 2016, making it a total of 16 structures including those confirmed before then, on the Chinese side of the geographical equidistance line. Such unilateral development activities are extremely regrettable, and every time such moves by China are detected, Japan has strongly requested China to cease its unilateral development and to immediately resume negotiations on the implementation of the “2008 Agreement” regarding the cooperation between Japan and China on the development of natural resources in the East China Sea. At the summit meeting between Prime Minister Abe and President Xi Jinping in June 2019, the two leaders shared the view of promoting and implementing the “2008 Agreement” regarding resource development in order to achieve the goal of making the East China Sea a “Sea of Peace, Cooperation and Friendship.”

In recent years numerous activities by China to carry out surveys in the waters around Japan, including the East China Sea, without obtaining Japan’s approval, have also continued, and each time this happens Japan raises objections with the Chinese side through diplomatic routes.

In order to deal with these concerns appropriately, both Japan and China have been promoting dialogue and exchanges between the authorities concerned. The Maritime and Aerial Communication Mechanism was concluded during the visit to Japan by Premier Li Keqiang in May 2018, and in June 2018 the defense authorities of Japan and China began operation of the Mechanism, which is highly significant for promoting mutual understanding between both countries and avoiding and preventing accidental collisions. Japan and China intend to continue moving forward with their coordination toward the early establishment of a “hotline between the defense authorities of Japan and China,” which is in the final stages of coordination. Furthermore, the Japan-China Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) Agreement was signed during Prime Minister Abe’s visit to China in October 2018, which creates a legal framework regarding Japan-China cooperation for the maritime search and rescue field, and is expected to enable smoother and more efficient search and rescue activities.

As Japan has stated on repeated occasions,



including at Japan-China Summit Meetings, true improvement in Japan-China relations cannot be achieved without stability in the East China Sea. It is highly meaningful from the perspective of building trust and bolstering cooperation for diplomats from both countries to directly and frankly exchange opinions, such as at the Japan-China High-Level Consultation on Maritime Affairs or other discussions between related authorities of both countries. The Government of Japan will assert Japan's position on individual issues through steady dialogue and continued bolstering of communication.

#### **(Yamato Bank)**

Numerous illegal operations by Chinese fishing vessels have been conducted in the waters around the Yamato Bank in the Sea of Japan. Japan has expressed concerns and has strongly and repeatedly urged China to take effective steps, including strengthening measures such as providing guidance to those engaged in fishing. At the Japan-China Foreign Ministers' telephone call in April, Foreign Minister Motegi also made strong requests to State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

#### **(Japanese Food Import Restrictions Issue)**

Regarding the import restrictions placed on food and agricultural products from Japan by the Government of China, in addition to continuing discussions on the "Japan-China Agricultural and Fishery Products Trade Cooperation Mechanism," whose launch was agreed to between the Japanese and Chinese Foreign Ministers in November 2020, Japan has taken every opportunity to strongly urge China to remove the restrictions as soon as possible, including at the April 2021 Japan-China Foreign Ministers' telephone call between Foreign Minister Motegi and State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi and at the November 2021 Japan-China Foreign Ministers' telephone call between Foreign Minister Hayashi and State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi.

#### **(Cases of Detainment of Japanese Nationals)**

In regard to cases of detainment of Japanese nationals, the Government of Japan has urged early release of Japanese detainees on various occasions between Japan and China, including summit and Foreign Ministers' meetings, and, so far, five Japanese nationals have been released before prosecution and three Japanese nationals have returned to Japan after serving their sentences. In December, one Japanese national was newly detained by Chinese authorities in Shanghai. The Government of Japan has been strongly requesting, at all levels and at every occasion, that the Government of China provide early releases, transparency in law enforcement and judicial processes, and proper safeguards for the rights of Japanese nationals, as well as ensuring impartial justice and humane treatment. Additionally, from the perspective of protecting Japanese nationals, the Government of Japan is providing as much support as possible, including consular visits and contact with family members.

#### **(Abandoned Chemical Weapons Issue)**

The Government of Japan, in accordance with the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), has been working on the destruction of chemical weapons abandoned by Japan in China. In 2021, amidst the impacts of COVID-19, Japan carried out projects such as the destruction of chemical weapons in Haerbaling District in Dunhua, Jilin Province and the transport of abandoned chemical weapons shells in various parts of China (as of December, approximately 58,000 abandoned chemical weapons have been destroyed).

### **(2) Taiwan**

#### **A Domestic Affairs and Economy**

In May, community outbreaks of COVID-19 temporarily spread in Taiwan, and public criticism of the Tsai Ing-wen administration intensified against the background of vaccine shortage problems. However, in addition to vaccine support from Japan, the U.S and other countries since

June, Taiwan itself established a system to secure sufficient vaccines, and, as a result of successful measures such as strict border measures and restrictions on gatherings and eating out, since November, the number of people infected with COVID-19 was suppressed to essentially zero.

In September, the opposition Kuomintang held a party chairmanship election, in which incumbent Chiang Chi-chen was defeated and Eric Chu Li-luan became the new party Chairman. In December, a public referendum was held on four proposals, including a “ban on the importation of pork that uses the ractopamine growth-promoting agent,” with the ruling Democratic Progressive Party calling for the rejection of all proposals and the opposition Kuomintang calling for the approval of all proposals. Each proposal had more votes against than for, and all four proposals were rejected.

Taiwan’s economy in 2021 continued to be relatively strong, particularly in the first half of the year against a backdrop of high overseas demand for electronics products and telecommunications, etc., and annual real GDP growth was forecast at plus 5.88%. In September, Taiwan formally requested its accession to the CPTPP Agreement.

## **B Cross-strait Relations and External Relations**

On October 9, at the Meeting Marking the 110th Anniversary of the Revolution of 1911, President Xi Jinping, while announcing a policy of aiming for peaceful cross-straits reunification, stressed that China’s willingness and ability to defend its sovereignty and territory should not be underestimated and that external interference would not be tolerated. On the other hand, on October 10, President Tsai Ing-wen emphasized that she would do her utmost to “maintain the status quo” of cross-strait relations, including self-defense efforts.

In recent years, China has rapidly strengthened its military capabilities, and the overall military balance between China and Taiwan has tilted in favor of China. China has been stepping up its military activities around Taiwan. For example,

according to an announcement by the Taiwan Ministry of National Defense, during the four-day period from October 1 to 4, a total of 149 Chinese military aircraft entered the air defense identification zone set by Taiwan. In particular, the total of 56 aircraft on October 4 was the highest number since Taiwanese authorities began continuously announcing trends in Chinese military aircraft in September 2020.

Amidst these circumstances and starting with the mention of Taiwan at the Japan-U.S. “2+2” in March 2021, there has been consensus on the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and on encouraging the peaceful resolution of cross-strait issues, including at the 2021 Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting (April), the Meeting of G7 Foreign and Development Ministers (May), the 27th Japan-EU Summit (May), the Japan-Australia “2+2” (June), and the G7 Summit (June), as well as at the 2022 Japan-Australia Leaders Video Teleconference Meeting (January), the Japan-U.S. “2+2” (January), the Japan-France “2+2” (January), the Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting (January), and in the Joint Statement on the U.S.-Japan-Republic of Korea Trilateral Ministerial Meeting (February). In October, the European Parliament adopted a report on EU-Taiwan political relations and cooperation, and there have been moves to strengthen relations between Europe and Taiwan, such as Taiwanese Foreign Minister Jaushieh Joseph Wu and a Taiwan trade and investment delegation visiting Europe, including the Slovak Republic and the Czech Republic, and a European Parliament delegation visiting Taiwan as an official delegation for the first time in November.

Meanwhile, in November, the Government of China announced that it would impose sanctions, such as a ban on entry into China, on Taiwan’s Premier of the Executive Yuan, President of the Legislative Yuan, and Foreign Minister as “stubbornly pro-Taiwan independence” elements. When the Taiwanese Representative Office opened in Lithuania in November, China

downgraded its diplomatic relations with Lithuania to the level of Chargé d'Affaires. In December, Nicaragua announced that it had severed diplomatic relations with Taiwan, and a delegation visiting China signed a joint communiqué on the restoration of diplomatic relations with China. As a result, there are a total of 14 countries who have diplomatic relations with Taiwan (eight countries have severed diplomatic relations with Taiwan since the inauguration of the Tsai administration in 2016).

Taiwan was an observer at the World Health Organization (WHO) General Assembly from 2009 to 2016, but has not been able to participate since 2017. Japan has consistently asserted that there should be no geographical gap in responding to international health issues. Particularly for infectious diseases such as COVID-19 that have an enormous impact on the entire world, Japan considers it important that information and knowledge are widely shared in a free, transparent, and prompt manner from countries and regions around the world, including from regions such as Taiwan that have taken effective measures against COVID-19 and achieved results. From this perspective, Japan has consistently supported Taiwan's participation as an observer to the WHO General Assembly.

### **C Japan-Taiwan Relations**

For Japan, Taiwan is an extremely crucial partner and an important friend, with which it shares fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, basic human rights and the rule of law, and enjoys close economic relations and people-to-people exchanges. The relations between Japan and Taiwan are maintained on the basis of working relations at the non-governmental level in accordance with the 1972 Joint Communiqué between Japan and China. The sentiments of Japanese and Taiwanese citizens toward each other are generally favorable. In a survey conducted in February 2019 by the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association, 70% of Taiwanese respondents said

they “felt close to Japan” or “relatively felt close to Japan,” and, according to a survey by the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in Japan (conducted in November 2021), 75% of Japanese people responded that they “felt close to Taiwan” or “relatively felt close to Taiwan.”

In June, Japan, as its first overseas vaccine donations, provided 1.24 million vaccine doses to Taiwan (a cumulative total of 4.2 million doses had been provided by September), and from the Taiwanese side, President Tsai Ing-wen, Vice President Lai Ching-te, and Premier of the Executive Yuan Su Tseng-chang repeatedly expressed their gratitude to Japan (see the boxed column in the Opening Special Feature on page 8). In September 2021, Taiwan donated medical equipment, such as pulse oximeters and oxygen concentrators, to Japan.

Taiwan imposed import restrictions on Japanese food products after the Great East Japan Earthquake, but on February 21, 2022, it was announced that the import restrictions on agricultural and marine products and foods produced and processed in Fukushima, Gunma, Tochigi, Ibaraki, and Chiba prefectures would be eased. Japan will continue to persistently urge Taiwan to lift the remaining import restrictions as soon as possible based on scientific evidence.

### **(3) Mongolia**

#### **A Domestic Affairs**

In January, the Khurelsukh Cabinet resigned to take responsibility for inadequacies by authorities on site in dealing with COVID-19. In response to this, Chief Cabinet Secretary L. Oyun-Erdene was appointed as the new Prime Minister, and a new Cabinet was inaugurated. Prime Minister L. Oyun-Erdene began his administration announcing that he would basically continue and follow the path laid out by the previous administration.

In June, the first presidential election (direct election) after the 2020 constitutional amendment was held, and former Prime Minister U. Khurelsukh, who was nominated by the ruling

Mongolian People's Party, won an overwhelming victory with nearly 70% of the vote, and was inaugurated as President (six-year term, no re-election). This was the first time in 12 years that a President was elected from the Mongolian People's Party.

As for COVID-19, the number of new cases per day rapidly increased since March, reaching a record high of 3,963 people in September, but has gradually been declining since then. Continuing on from the previous administration, the Oyun-Erdene Cabinet implemented large-scale emergency economic measures. Vaccinations for citizens began in February, and, as of December, 92% of the total population had completed their second round of vaccinations, with booster vaccinations also starting. When the Government of Mongolia procured the Pfizer vaccine in May, the Government of Japan supported the procurement and supply of 2.35 million doses of the Pfizer vaccine through UNICEF.

Meanwhile, due to a gradual recovery in economic activity amidst COVID-19 and an increase in exports of coal and copper, etc., the government's economic statistics for 2021 recorded a 22.1% increase year on year in exports and a 29.2% increase year on year in imports. In the December statistics, tax revenues decreased by 8.5% and industrial production increased by 44.6%.

## **B Japan-Mongolia Relations**

Even amidst the continuing travel restrictions between Japan and Mongolia due to COVID-19, 2021 was a year of steady dialogues and cooperation for Japan and Mongolia to strengthen their "Strategic Partnership" as important regional partners that share universal values.

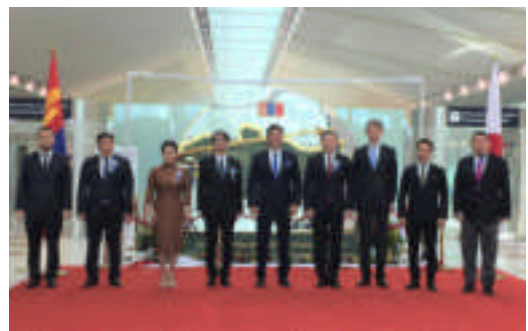
In July, Chinggis Khaan International Airport was opened. The airport was constructed through yen loans from the Government of Japan and is operated by an airport operating company that was established by a coalition of Japanese companies (Mitsubishi Corporation, Narita International

Airport Corporation, Japan Airport Terminal Co., Ltd., and JALUX Inc.) and a Mongolian state-owned enterprise. The opening ceremony was attended by President U. Khurelsukh, Minister of Road and Transport Development L. Haltar, and Minister for Foreign Affairs B. Battsetseg, and others, with a congratulatory message from Prime Minister Suga. The airport is a new symbol of cooperation between Japan and Mongolia.

Additionally, in July, Prime Minister L. Oyun-Erdene visited Japan in his first trip overseas since assuming office, and a summit meeting with Prime Minister Suga was held. The two leaders shared the idea to designate 2022, the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Mongolia, as a "Year for Promotion of Youth Exchange" and to deepen cooperation in a variety of fields toward the 50th anniversary. Additionally, the two leaders shared the view to further promote cooperation toward the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" and cooperation and partnership in a variety



Japan-Mongolia Summit Meeting (July 22, Tokyo)



Opening ceremony at Chinggis Khaan International Airport (July 4, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia)

of regional and international arenas. During his visit to Japan, Prime Minister L. Oyun-Erdene attended the opening ceremony of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020.

In December, a Foreign Ministers' Video Teleconference Meeting was held between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Minister for Foreign Affairs B. Battsetseg. In the teleconference meeting, the two Ministers shared the view to make 2022, the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Mongolia, a year for overcoming COVID-19 and restoring citizen exchanges, and to build the foundation and ties for the next 50 years, looking back on the past 50 years.

### **3 Korean Peninsula**

#### **(1) North Korea (including the abductions issue)**

The Government of Japan has been taking various initiatives to realize its basic policy of seeking to normalize its relations with North Korea through comprehensively resolving outstanding issues of concern, such as the abductions, nuclear and missile issues, and settling the unfortunate past in accordance with the Japan-DPRK Pyongyang Declaration of September 2002. In 2021, North Korea launched ballistic missiles three times, including the one which fell within Japan's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and in September, North Korea announced that it had launched the hypersonic missile "Hwasong-8" using ballistic missile technologies and that it also launched "new long-range cruise missiles." Since the beginning of 2022, North Korea has repeatedly launched ballistic missiles with an unprecedented frequency and in new ways, and on February 27 and March 5, North Korea launched intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) although not at their maximum range. Furthermore, on

March 24, North Korea launched an alleged new-ICBM, which is estimated to have fallen within Japan's EEZ about 150 kilometers off Japan's mainland. North Korea's series of actions, including such launches of ballistic missiles that further aggravate this situation, threaten the peace and security of Japan, the region, and the international community, and are totally unacceptable. Japan will continue to fully implement relevant UN Security Council resolutions and aim for the denuclearization of North Korea, coordinating closely with the U.S. and the ROK while cooperating with the international community. With regard to the abductions issue, Japan continues to call on North Korea to implement the May 2014 Japan-North Korea agreement (the agreement in Stockholm)<sup>14</sup> and will continue to make utmost efforts to realize the return home of all abductees at the earliest possible date, while coordinating closely with relevant countries including the U.S.

#### **A North Korea Nuclear and Missile Issues**

##### **(A) Recent Trends in North Korea Nuclear and Missile Issues**

North Korea has not carried out the dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, in accordance with a series of relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

The 8th Congress of the Workers Party of Korea (WPK) was held from January 5 to 12, 2021. It was reported that Chairman of the State Affairs Commission Kim Jong Un, in addition to stating that defense capability must be constantly strengthened as long as the danger of a war of aggression continues, also referred to nuclear weapons that are smaller and lighter, that have multiple warheads, and to the development and possession of nuclear submarines, hypersonic weapons, and military reconnaissance satellites. Additionally, "Self-Defense-2021"

<sup>14</sup> In May 2014, Japan-North Korea Intergovernmental Consultations were held in Stockholm, Sweden. North Korea promised to conduct a comprehensive and full-scale investigation on all Japanese nationals, including abductees.

Defense Development Exhibition that opened in Pyongyang on October 11, 2021 featured a variety of weapons and combat technology equipment that was said to have been developed and produced during the last five years. It was also reported that the exhibition displayed possible new ICBMs and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs) that appeared at the military parade for the 75th anniversary of the founding of the WPK in October 2020 and at the military parade for the 8th Congress of the WPK in January 2021.

North Korea launched ballistic missiles called “new tactical guided missile” by North Korea on March 25, 2021, and then it announced that it had launched “new long-range cruise missiles” on September 11 and 12. Then, North Korea launched short-range ballistic missiles as a training exercise by the “Railway Mobile Missile Regiment” on September 15, the hypersonic missile “Hwasong-8” using ballistic missile technologies on September 28, and another ballistic missile called “new submarine-launched ballistic missile” on October 19. Some of these missiles have the characteristic of flying on irregular trajectories, and the short-range ballistic missiles on September 15 fell in Japan’s EEZ.

Since the beginning of 2022, North Korea has repeatedly launched missiles with an unprecedented frequency and in new ways. On January 5 and 11, North Korea launched ballistic missiles called “hypersonic missiles” and it was reported that Chairman Kim was present at the launch on January 11. In addition, North Korea launched ballistic missiles as “a firing drill for checking and judging the proficiency in the action procedures of the railway-borne missile regiment of North Phyongan Province” on January 14, and on January 17 and 27 it successively launched ballistic missiles called “tactical guided missiles” by North Korea. On January 25, it also announced that it had launched “long-range cruise missiles.” On January 30, North Korea launched what appeared to be an intermediate-range ballistic missile (IRBM) “Hwasong-12”, and then on

February 27 and March 5 it launched an ICBM for what they claimed as an important test for developing a “reconnaissance satellite.” Although these were not at the maximum range of ICBMs (both missiles had a flight range of approximately 300 kilometers), it is possible that the launches were conducted for the purpose of verifying some functions before launching them at their maximum range.

Furthermore, approximately one week after the launch on March 16 in which the ballistic missile was assumed to have not flown successfully, on March 24 North Korea launched an alleged new ICBM. It was estimated that this missile had a flight distance of approximately 1,100 kilometers, a maximum altitude that exceeded 6,000 kilometers, and that it fell into Japan’s EEZ, approximately 150 kilometers west of the Oshima Peninsula in Hokkaido. At the time of the launch, North Korea referred to the missile as “Hwasong-17,” and it was reported that Chairman Kim, who directly supervised the entire launch test process, stated that the weapon system for the missile of this launch “will creditably perform its mission and duty as a powerful nuclear war deterrent” and that North Korea “will possess formidable military and technical capabilities and keep themselves fully ready for long-standing confrontation with the U.S. imperialists.”

Prior to this, on January 19, “the orientation for countermeasures against the U.S. for the future” was discussed under Chairman Kim at the 6th Political Bureau Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of WPK, and it was reported that the meeting assessed that “the hostile policy and military threat by the U.S. have reached a danger line that cannot be overlooked any more” and “gave an instruction to a sector concerned to promptly examine the issue of restarting all temporarily-suspended activities.”

As for North Korea’s nuclear activities, the IAEA Director General’s report in August 2021 pointed out that there were new signs that North Korea’s nuclear facilities were in operation.



**(B) Initiatives by Japan and Cooperation with the International Community**

The repeated launches of ballistic missiles and others by North Korea are serious challenges not only to Japan, but also to the international community, and are completely unacceptable. It is crucial that the international community makes concerted efforts to fully implement the UN Security Council resolutions for the dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner by North Korea. Japan has confirmed these points at meetings with the leaders and foreign ministers of various countries.

Recognizing that coordination among Japan, the U.S., and the ROK is essential for regional peace and stability beyond issues related to North Korea, Japan, the U.S., and the ROK have been enhancing coordination at multiple levels through holding summit meetings, foreign ministers' meetings, vice foreign ministerial meetings, and the heads of delegation meetings of the Six-Party Talks. On May 5, 2021, the Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in the UK (London) on the occasion of the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and the three Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to the complete denuclearization of North Korea, agreed to call on North Korea to comply with its obligations under UN Security Council resolutions, and agreed that Japan, the U.S., and the ROK would closely work together on policies toward North Korea. In addition, on September 22, a Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in the U.S. (New York) on the occasion of the UN General Assembly, where the three Ministers agreed to further advance collaboration between Japan, the U.S., and the ROK toward the complete denuclearization of North Korea, exchanged views on regional situations and global issues, and agreed to further deepen coordination and cooperation among Japan, the U.S., and the ROK. On February 12, 2022, a Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in the U.S. (Honolulu) and the

three Ministers shared serious concerns about North Korea's repeated launches of ballistic missiles and aligned their recognition on future measures. The three Ministers also exchanged views on regional situations which included the discussions on China and situation around Ukraine, and efforts to realize a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific." In addition, they discussed global issues such as global health and climate change. They concurred that Japan, the U.S., and the ROK would further deepen their collaboration and cooperation. After the meeting, a Joint Statement on the Japan-U.S.-ROK Trilateral Ministerial Meeting was released.

As part of the Japan Coast Guard's patrolling activities and the Self-Defense Forces' monitoring and surveillance activities, Japan has also been conducting information gathering on the activities of vessels suspected to be violating the UN Security Council resolutions. When the Government of Japan finds activities strongly suspected to be violating the UN Security Council resolutions, including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean vessels, measures have been taken such as notification to the UN Security Council 1718 Sanctions Committee and other bodies, sharing of information with related countries, and releasing of information to the public. Aircraft of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and France, in addition to U.S. aircraft, have used U.S. military facilities and areas in Japan to engage in monitoring and surveillance activities against illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers. Furthermore, monitoring and surveillance activities were conducted in waters surrounding Japan, including the East China Sea, by naval vessels such as multiple vessels of the U.S. Navy, the French Navy frigates FS PRAIRIAL and FS SURCOUF and amphibious assault ship FS TONNERRE, the Royal Australian Navy frigates HMAS BALLARAT and HMAS WARRAMUNGA, the Royal Canadian Navy frigate WINNIPEG, the UK Royal Navy frigate RICHMOND, and the German Navy frigate BAYERN. From the perspective of further deepening the multinational cooperation, Japan considers

it significant that concerned countries are sharing information and coordinating efforts to ensure that UN Security Council resolutions are implemented fully and effectively.

## **B The Abductions Issue and Japan-North Korea Relations**

### **(A) Basic Position on the Abductions Issue**

To date, the Government of Japan has identified 12 separate incidents, involving a total of 17 Japanese abductees, 12 of whom have not yet returned home. North Korea claims that 8 of these 12 abductees have died and that it is unable to confirm that the other 4 ever entered its territory, but as no convincing explanation of this claim has been provided, Japan continues to work toward the resolution of this issue on the assumption that all of the abductees whose whereabouts are unknown are still alive. As well as being a critical issue concerning the sovereignty of Japan and the lives and safety of Japanese citizens, abductions by North Korea constitutes a universal issue among the international community as a violation of basic human rights. Additionally, despite the families of the victims having reached an advanced age, the Association of Families of Victims Kidnapped by North Korea continues to work toward the resolution of this problem with a determination to “never give up,” under its new representative. Based on the basic recognition that the normalization of its relations with North Korea is impossible without resolving the abductions issue, Japan has positioned its resolution as the most important issue. Accordingly, Japan has strongly urged North Korea to provide a full account of all the abduction cases, to hand over the perpetrators to Japan, and to ensure the safety of all abductees and their immediate return to Japan, irrespective of whether the abductees are officially identified. In January 2022, Prime Minister Kishida gave a policy speech where he stated that “The abductions issue is one of the highest priority issues of the Kishida administration. Working in cooperation with other countries,

I will do everything in my power to realize the return of all the abductees to Japan at the earliest possible date, making use of every possible opportunity. I am determined to meet with Chairman Kim myself face to face, without any conditions.”

### **(B) Initiatives by Japan**

Following the nuclear test by North Korea in January 2016 and the launch of the ballistic missile in the following month, which North Korea purported to be a “satellite,” Japan announced its autonomous measures against North Korea in February 2016. In response, North Korea unilaterally announced that it would completely stop the investigations on all Japanese abductees and dissolve the Special Investigation Committee. Japan lodged a serious protest against North Korea, conveyed its intention of not abandoning the agreement in Stockholm, and strongly demanded that North Korea implement the agreement and return all the abductees home at the earliest possible date.

### **(C) Japan-North Korea Relations**

During the reception of the PyeongChang Olympic Winter Games Opening Ceremony hosted by President Moon Jae-in on February 9, 2018, Prime Minister Abe brought up the abductions, nuclear and missile issues and conveyed Japan’s basic position to Kim Yong Nam, President of the Presidium of the Supreme People’s Assembly of North Korea. Prime Minister Abe strongly urged North Korea to resolve the abductions issue, especially the return of all abductees to Japan. In September, Foreign Minister Kono held a meeting with the North Korean Minister of Foreign Affairs Ri Yong Ho at the UN headquarters. In September 2021, Prime Minister Suga addressed the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, declaring that “Establishing a constructive relationship between Japan and North Korea will not only serve the interests of both sides but also contribute to regional peace and stability.”

**(D) Cooperation with the International Community**

In order to resolve the abductions issue, it is essential for Japan not only to proactively urge North Korea, but also to gain understanding and support from other countries regarding the importance of resolving the abductions issue. Japan has taken all possible diplomatic opportunities to raise the abductions issue, including at summit meetings, foreign ministers' meetings and international conferences such as the G7 Summit, the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Summit Meeting, the Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Summit, the Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting, ASEAN-related Summit Meetings, and UN meetings. With regard to the U.S., President Trump raised the abductions issue with Chairman Kim at the U.S.-North Korea Summit in June 2018, at the request of Prime Minister Abe. At the second U.S.-North Korea Summit in February 2019, President Trump raised the abductions issue with Chairman Kim at the tête-à-tête meeting, which was held first on the first day, and clearly stated Prime Minister Abe's views regarding the abductions issue. In addition, at the small group dinner that followed, President Trump again raised the abductions issue, and a serious discussion was held between the leaders. When President Trump visited Japan in May 2019, he met with the families of the abductees as he had done during his previous visit in November 2017, listened attentively to the emotional pleas by the family members, and encouraged them. Additionally, during the Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting in January 2022, Prime Minister Kishida asked for continued understanding and cooperation toward the immediate resolution of the abductions issue, to which President Biden offered his renewed support. With regard to China, at the Japan-China Summit Meeting in June 2019, President Xi Jinping stated that he had conveyed Japan's position on Japan-North Korea relations and Prime Minister Abe's views to Chairman Kim during the China-North Korea Summit held in the same month. Prime Minister Abe also gained the strong support of President Xi

for the improvement of Japan-North Korea relations, including the abductions issue. During the Japan-China Summit telephone call in October 2021, Prime Minister Kishida raised to President Xi the issue of North Korea, including the abductions issue, and they confirmed that Japan and China would continue to cooperate with each other. The ROK has also raised the abductions issue with North Korea at multiple opportunities, including the Inter-Korean Summit in April 2018. At the Japan-ROK Summit Meeting in December 2019, President Moon Jae-in of the ROK expressed his understanding for Japan's position regarding the importance of the abductions issue and stated that the ROK had repeatedly raised the abductions issue with North Korea. During the October 2021 Japan-ROK Summit telephone call, Prime Minister Kishida asked for continued support and cooperation on the abductions issue. In response, President Moon Jae-in expressed his support for Japan's position on the abductions issue, and the two leaders once again agreed on the importance of Japan-ROK and Japan-U.S.-ROK cooperation. At the United Nations Human Rights Council in March and at the UN General Assembly in December, the EU submitted the Joint Statement on DPRK Human Rights, which was co-sponsored by Japan, and it was adopted without a vote. Furthermore, in December, an informal UN Security Council consultation on the human rights situation in North Korea was held, and afterwards, like-minded countries, including Japan, issued a joint statement urging the resolution of the abductions issue, particularly the immediate return of the abductees. Japan will continue to closely coordinate and cooperate with relevant countries, including the U.S., toward the immediate resolution of the abductions issue.

**C North Korea's External Relations, etc.****(A) U.S.-North Korea Relations**

From 2018 to 2019, the U.S. and North Korea held two summit meetings as well as a meeting between President Trump and Chairman

Kim in Panmunjom, and in October 2019 U.S.-North Korea working-level talks were convened in Stockholm (Sweden). However, in 2020 and 2021 no concrete progress was made in dialogues between the U.S. and North Korea.

President Biden completed the North Korea policy review in April 2021. Through the review, the U.S. has made it clear that its goal remains the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and that it is stepping up its efforts to ensure the security of its allies, including Japan. At a joint press conference after the U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting on May 21, President Biden said that “if he made any commitment, then I would meet with him.” The U.S. has also stated on various occasions that the U.S. has no hostile intentions toward North Korea and that it is prepared to meet with North Korea without any preconditions.

On the other hand, it was reported that Chairman Kim said in his speech at the 5th Session of the 14th Supreme People’s Assembly in September that “the U.S. remain utterly unchanged in posing military threats and pursuing hostile policy toward the DPRK, and the U.S. is touting “diplomatic engagement” and “dialogue without preconditions” but it is no more than a petty trick for deceiving the international community and hiding its hostile acts.”

In January 2022, in response to a series of provocations by North Korea which included the launch of ballistic missiles, the U.S. additionally designated one group and seven individuals as subjects of its own sanctions (asset freeze) for their involvement in the development and spread of weapons of mass destruction.

Additionally, in January at the 6th Political Bureau Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of WPK that was held under Chairman Kim, “the orientation for countermeasures against responding to the U.S.” was discussed, and it was reported that the meeting assessed that “the hostile policy and military threat by the U.S. have reached a danger line that cannot be overlooked any more”

and “gave an instruction to a sector concerned to promptly examine the issue of restarting all temporarily-suspended activities.”

## (B) Inter-Korean Relations

In 2018 there were great strides in inter-Korean relations, with three inter-Korean Summit Meetings, but, continuing on from 2019 and 2020, there were no positive developments in inter-Korean relations in 2021. In a summary report on activities conducted at the 8th Congress of the WPK in January, it was reported that Chairman Kim stated that “inter-Korean relations have been brought back to the time before the publication of the Panmunjom Declaration (signed at the Inter-Korean Summit Meeting in April 2018),” while also adding that, “Depending on the south Korean authorities’ attitude, the north-south relations may return to a new starting point of peace and prosperity in the near future.” President Moon Jae-in, at a New Year’s press conference six days after the Congress of the WPK was held, stated that “A summit meeting (between the leaders of North Korea and the ROK) is possible anytime, anywhere, as long as it is beneficial to the development of inter-Korean relations,” and showed a positive attitude toward inter-Korean cooperation, including humanitarian cooperation. On July 27, the ROK Government and North Korea each announced that, as a result of exchanges through letters of friendship between the leaders of the two Koreas since April, they had agreed to restore the inter-Korean communication line and that communication had resumed. The inter-Korean communication line was then restored on July 27, but from August 10 the North Korean side ceased responding. In his speech at the UN General Assembly in September, President Moon Jae-in noted that 2021 will mark the 30th anniversary of the simultaneous admission of both Koreas to the United Nations, and stated that “Today, I once again urge the community of nations to mobilize its strengths for the end-of-war declaration on the Korean Peninsula and propose that three parties

of the two Koreas and the US, or four parties of the two Koreas, the US, and China come together and declare that the War on the Korean Peninsula is over.” In response to this, Chairman Kim reportedly said in his policy speech before the Supreme People’s Assembly on September 30 that “It is the invariable demand repeatedly explained by us to ensure the respect for each other and withdraw the partial view, unfair and double-dealing attitude, and hostile viewpoint and policies towards the other side before declaring the termination of war.” In the same speech, Chairman Kim expressed his intention to restore the inter-Korean communication line, which had been disrupted since August, and the inter-Korean communication line was restored on October 4. Furthermore, in his commemorative speech given on October 11 at Defense Development Exhibition “Self-Defense-2021,” it was reported that Chairman Kim said “If South Korea does not find fault with us in a stubborn manner and, if it does not pick a quarrel even with our exercise of national sovereignty, I assure that no tension will be caused on the Korean Peninsula” and that “Our arch-enemy is the war itself, not south Korea, the U.S., or any other specific state or forces.”

#### **(C) China-North Korea and Russia-North Korea Relations**

Since 2020, due to the spread of COVID-19, there was no travel by dignitaries between China and North Korea or between Russia and North Korea as before, but, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Communist Party of China (CPC) in July and of the 60th anniversary of the signing of the China-DPRK Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, Chairman Kim and President Xi Jinping exchanged congratulatory messages.

Trade between China and North Korea, which accounts for approximately 90% of North Korea’s entire external trade excluding inter-Korean trade, had also significantly reduced due to traffic restrictions following the global spread of COVID-19,

however, on January 17, 2022, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China said that, through friendly consultations between China and North Korea, the cross-border rail freight between Dandong, China and Sinuiju, North Korea had resumed.

#### **(D) Other Issues**

In 2021, a total of 18 drifting or wrecked wooden vessels presumed to be from North Korea were discovered (77 in 2020). The Government of Japan continues its effort to gather and analyze information, with great interest on relevant developments. In September 2020, a vessel that appeared to be an official North Korean vessel in Japan’s Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) in the west of the Yamatotai bank in the Sea of Japan was confirmed, and when this incident occurred the Ministry of Foreign Affairs conveyed Japan’s position to North Korea. Japan will continue to deal appropriately with these issues in close coordination among relevant ministries and agencies.

### **D Domestic Political Affairs and Economy**

#### **(A) Political Affairs**

The 8th Congress of the WPK, which is the highest decision-making institution in the WPK, was held for eight days from January 5 to 12, 2021. It was the first time in approximately five years since the 7th Congress of the WPK that was held in May 2016. It was reported that, while emphasizing “people-first politics,” at the Congress of the WPK Chairman Kim gave an activity summary of achievements/reflections on the past five years and of future issues and mentioned the continuation of nuclear and missile development, external relations such as U.S.-North Korea relations, and inter-Korean relations. Personnel affairs such as the appointment of Chairman Kim to the post of “General Secretary of the WPK” were announced along with amendments to the Rules of the WPK, which include articulating to hold a Congress of the WPK once every five years. Afterwards, bearing in mind the implementation of the decisions

of the 8th Congress of the WPK, Chairman Kim continued his proactive activities, such as holding a Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee of WPK, Short Course for Chief Secretaries of City and County Party Committees, and a Conference of Cell Secretaries of the WPK.

In September, the 5th Session of the 14th Supreme People's Assembly was convened, and it was reported that Chairman Kim gave a policy speech for the first time since 2019, mentioning economic development, strengthening "national" defense capabilities, U.S.-North Korea relations, and inter-Korean relations. It was also reported that personnel matters for the State Affairs Commission were carried out, such as Kim Yo Jong's election as a member of the State Affairs Commission.

In December, the 4th Plenary Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the WPK was held for five days, and it was reported that Chairman Kim, while describing 2021 as a "year of great victory" despite "severe trials," also mentioned the economy, emergency anti-epidemic projects, and the strengthening of "national" defense capabilities as challenges for 2022.

### (B) Economy

China accounts for the largest trade amount in North Korea's foreign trade, but since 2020 the scale of China-North Korea trade has plummeted due to the impact of traffic restrictions following the global spread of COVID-19. It was reported that at the 8th Congress of the WPK in January 2021, Chairman Kim stated that the goals listed in the "the five-year strategy for the national economic development" presented at the 7th Congress of the WPK were unable to be achieved due to sanctions, natural disasters and the global health crisis, and it was reported that the new "five-year plan for the national economic development" (2021-2025) centered around self-reliance and self-sufficiency was presented. Regarding the situation in North Korea, it was reported that Chairman Kim mentioned the "decision to wage another more

difficult Arduous March" (April, Conference of Cell Secretaries of the WPK), and also described it as "the unprecedented difficulties" (October, a lecture to commemorate the 76th founding anniversary of the WPK).

The 4th Plenary Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the WPK was held from December 27 to 31, 2021, and it was reported that Chairman Kim stated that the economic sector, which is the main front of socialist construction, should concentrate all its efforts on putting the "country's" economy on the growth orbit and providing the stabilized and improved living to the people by reenergizing the production as one of the tasks for 2022. Against this backdrop, on January 17, 2022, a spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China said that, through friendly consultations between China and North Korea, the cross-border rail freight between Dandong, China and Sinuiju, North Korea had resumed.

### (C) Response to COVID-19

North Korea has strengthened its epidemic prevention measures following the worldwide spread of COVID-19 since 2020. At the 8th Congress of the WPK in January 2021, it was reported that Chairman Kim stated that "anti-epidemic basis for coping with whatever world health crisis should be created," and that he continued to emphasize the need to thoroughly implement and strengthen measures to prevent the spread of infection. At the 7th National Conference of War Veterans on July 27, it was reported that Chairman Kim said, "the difficulties and obstacles caused by the world health crisis and the protracted blockade are no less harsh for us than those in the wartime situation." Furthermore, at the Third Enlarged Meeting of the Political Bureau of the 8th Central Committee of the WPK on September 2, it was reported that Chairman Kim stated that "The dangerous situation of the worldwide pandemic which keeps spiraling out of control demands tighter nationwide epidemic prevention," emphasizing that "All the Party organizations and officials



should re-examine the state anti-epidemic system and the work in this field, and conduct an intense political offensive to strain and awaken the epidemic prevention front once again.” The 4th Plenary Meeting of the 8th Central Committee of the WPK was held from December 27 to 31, 2021, and it was reported that, for one of the tasks for 2022, Chairman Kim stated that “the emergency epidemic prevention work should be made a top priority in the state work and it is the most important work to be powerfully conducted with no allowance given to slight slackness, pores and drawback.” As of February 2022, North Korea claims that no COVID-19 infections within North Korea have occurred.

### **E Other Issues**

Defectors who have fled North Korea have to be kept in hiding to avoid being cracked down by the authorities in the countries where they are staying or to avoid being forcibly repatriated to North Korea. The Government of Japan is addressing the protection of and support for these North Korean defectors, in line with the purpose of the North Korean Human Rights Violation Act, taking into account a comprehensive range of factors, including humanitarian considerations, the safety of those concerned, and relations with the countries in which these defectors reside. Relevant ministries and agencies in Japan are closely working together to promote measures aimed at helping the settlement of defectors accepted by Japan.

## **(2) Republic of Korea (ROK)**

### **A Japan-ROK Relations**

#### **(A) Bilateral Relations**

The Republic of Korea (ROK) is an important neighboring country. The two countries have built a close, friendly and cooperative relationship based on the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea, the Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea, and

other relevant agreements that the two countries concluded when they normalized their relationship in 1965. In spite of the above, in 2021, situations unacceptable to Japan have continued, including the issue of former civilian workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs), the issue of comfort women, and the Takeshima dispute.

Under these circumstances, at the Japan-ROK Summit telephone call held on the occasion of the inauguration of Prime Minister Kishida in October, Prime Minister Kishida told President Moon Jae-in that Japan-ROK relations remain in an extremely difficult situation due to issues such as the issue of former CWKs and the issue of comfort women, and strongly urged the ROK to take appropriate actions based on Japan's principled positions on these issues. Prime Minister Kishida also stated that, under the harsh security environment in the region, it is essential to further deepen Japan-ROK and Japan-U.S.-ROK cooperation, such as in dealing with North Korea, and asked for continued support and cooperation on the abductions issue.

Additionally, amidst the travel of dignitaries between Japan and the ROK being severely restricted due to the impacts of COVID-19, communication through the diplomatic channels continued, including a total of three Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meetings (including telephone calls), two consultations between Vice Ministers of Japan and ROK, and Japan-ROK Director-General-level consultations on multiple occasions.

#### **(B) The Issue of Former Civilian Workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs)**

The Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea, which is the core of the normalization of their relationship in 1965, stipulates that Japan shall supply to the ROK 300 million US dollars in grants and extend loans up to 200 million US dollars (Article I). In addition, the Agreement stipulates that the “problem concerning property, rights and interests of the two Contracting Parties

and their nationals (including juridical persons) and concerning claims between the Contracting Parties and their nationals [abridged] is settled completely and finally” and that “no contention shall be made” with respect to such claims (Article II).

However, on October 30 and November 29, 2018, the Supreme Court of the ROK gave final judgments ordering Japanese companies to pay compensation for damages to ROK nationals who were said to have worked for the companies during the World War II.

These Supreme Court judgments and related judicial procedures clearly violate Article II of the Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea and inflict unjustifiable damages and costs on the Japanese companies. Above all, the judgments completely overthrow the legal foundation of the friendly and cooperative relationship that Japan and the ROK have developed since the normalization of diplomatic relations. Such judgments are extremely regrettable and totally unacceptable.

In January 2019, the Government of Japan requested a diplomatic consultation with the Government of the ROK pursuant to Article III-1 in order to settle this issue in accordance with the dispute settlement procedures under the Agreement. However, the Government of the ROK failed to respond to the request. Additionally, the Government of Japan gave notice to the Government of the ROK in May 2019 that it would refer the dispute to arbitration in accordance with Article III-2 of the Agreement, but, although requested to comply with this, the Government of the ROK did not fulfill its obligations regarding the arbitration procedure stipulated in the Agreement, and, as a result, the arbitration board could not be constituted <sup>15</sup>.

In the meantime, based on the plaintiffs’ petitions, the ROK courts have steadily advanced the

procedures for seizing and liquidating the assets of the Japanese companies, including September 27 and December 30, 2021 orders to sell the assets of Japanese corporations (special liquidation orders). The Government of Japan has repeatedly emphasized to the Government of the ROK that if the seized assets of Japanese companies were to be liquidated, it would lead to a serious situation for Japan-ROK relations and must be avoided, and renewed its call for the ROK to urgently provide a solution that is acceptable to Japan, including remedying the status of its breaches of international law.

The Government of Japan will continue to maintain communication through the diplomatic channel between Japan and the ROK, and will continue to strongly urge the ROK to take appropriate actions based on Japan’s principled positions on issues between the two countries, including the issue of CWKs.

The below Ministry of Foreign Affairs website details Japan’s Efforts on the Issue of CWKs.  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/a\\_o/na/kr/page4e\\_000947.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/page4e_000947.html)



### (C) The Issue of Comfort Women

Japan has sincerely dealt with the issue of comfort women as it has been a major diplomatic issue in Japan-ROK relations since the 1990s. The issue concerning property and claims between Japan and the ROK was settled “completely and finally” in 1965 through the Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea. However, from the perspective of facilitating feasible remedies for the former comfort women, the people and the Government of Japan cooperated to establish the Asian Women’s Fund in 1995, through which they carried out medical and welfare projects

<sup>15</sup> See References on the Issue of Former Civilian Workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs)

and provided “atonement money” to each former comfort woman in Asian and other countries, including the ROK. In addition, successive Prime Ministers have sent letters expressing their “apology and remorse” to former comfort women. The Government of Japan has made every effort as mentioned above.

Furthermore, as a result of great diplomatic efforts, the Governments of Japan and the ROK confirmed that the issue of comfort women was “resolved finally and irreversibly” with the agreement reached at the Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in December 2015. Directly after this Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers’ Meeting, the Japanese and ROK leaders also confirmed that they would take responsibility as leaders to implement this agreement and that they would deal with various issues based on the spirit of this agreement, and that the Government of the ROK committed to the agreement. This agreement was welcomed by the international community, including then UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the U.S. Government. In accordance with the agreement, in August 2016, the Government of Japan contributed 1 billion Japanese yen to “the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation” established by the Government of the ROK. As of December 31, 2021, the fund provided financial support to 35 out of 47 former comfort women who were alive at the time of the agreement, and to the bereaved families of 64 out of 199 former comfort women who were deceased at the time. The agreement has been received positively by many former comfort women.

However, in December 2016, a comfort woman statue<sup>16</sup> was installed on the sidewalk facing the Consulate-General of Japan in Busan by a civic group in the ROK. Later, the Moon Jae-in administration was newly inaugurated in May 2017. Based on the results of the assessment made by the Taskforce to Review the Agreement on

Comfort Women Issue under the direct supervision of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the ROK, Foreign Minister Kang Kyung-wha announced the position of the Government of the ROK on January 9, 2018, as follows: i) it will not ask for a renegotiation with Japan; and ii) the 2015 agreement, which fails to properly reflect the wishes of the victims, does not constitute a true resolution of the issue. In July 2018, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family of the ROK announced that it would arrange a reserve budget to “appropriate the full amount” of the 1 billion Japanese yen contributed by the Government of Japan and contribute this amount to “the Gender Equality Fund.” In November 2018, the Ministry of Gender Equality and Family announced that it would proceed with its dissolution of “the Reconciliation and Healing Foundation” and has since moved ahead with the dissolution procedures. While the Government of the ROK, including President Moon Jae-in, repeatedly stated in public that it “will not abandon the agreement” and “will not ask for a renegotiation with Japan,” the moves to dissolve the Foundation are totally unacceptable for Japan in light of the 2015 Japan-ROK Agreement. Additionally, Japan has been objecting to the ROK having mentioned this issue at the United Nations Human Rights Council in recent years, even though the Japan-ROK Agreement confirms that the Government of Japan and the Government of the ROK refrains from accusing or criticizing each other regarding the comfort women issue in the international community, including at the United Nations.

Moreover, on January 8, 2021, in the lawsuit filed by former comfort women and others against the Government of Japan, the Seoul Central District Court of the Republic of Korea rendered a judgment which ordered the Government of Japan, inter alia, to pay compensation to the plaintiffs, denying the application of the principle of State immunity under international law. On January 23,

<sup>16</sup> For the sake of practical convenience, they are referred to as “comfort woman statues.” However, the use of this term is not a reflection of the recognition that these statues correctly embody the reality of those women at that time.

2021, this judgment was confirmed.<sup>17</sup> On April 21, in a similar lawsuit filed by former comfort women and others, the Seoul Central District Court dismissed the case, taking into account the principle of State immunity under international law, but on May 6, the plaintiffs appealed against the court's decision. Japan has repeatedly expressed its position that this lawsuit must be dismissed because it is not acceptable for the Government of Japan to be subject to the jurisdiction of the ROK in accordance with this principle of State immunity in international law. As mentioned above, the issue concerning property and claims between Japan and the ROK, including the issue of comfort women, was "settled completely and finally," with the Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea of 1965. Furthermore, it was confirmed that the issue of comfort women was "resolved finally and irreversibly" with the agreement between Japan and the ROK in 2015. Therefore, the judgment is extremely regrettable and absolutely unacceptable, as it is clearly contrary to international law and agreements between the two countries. Japan once again strongly urges the ROK to immediately take appropriate measures to remedy the status of its breaches of international law on its own responsibility as a country.

The Japan-ROK agreement in 2015 is an agreement between two countries, and abiding by promises made between two countries is the foundation of bilateral relations. The ROK has a responsibility to steadily implement the agreement not only to Japan but also to the international community.

As stated above, the Government of Japan has implemented all measures it committed to under the Japan-ROK agreement. The Government of the ROK itself also acknowledges that this agreement is an official agreement between the two governments and the international community is closely following the ROK's implementation of the agreement. The Government of Japan will continue to strongly urge the ROK to steadily implement the Japan-ROK Agreement (see page 35 for the handling of the comfort women issue in the international community).

The below Ministry of Foreign Affairs website details Japan's Efforts on the Issue of Comfort Women.

[https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/page22e\\_000883.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/page22e_000883.html)



#### (D) Takeshima Dispute

Regarding the dispute between Japan and the ROK concerning the territorial sovereignty over Takeshima, Takeshima is indisputably an inherent territory of Japan both in light of historical facts and based on international law. The ROK has continued its illegal occupation of Takeshima with no legal basis in international law, including stationing permanent security personnel. Japan has been keeping the world informed about Japan's position on the issue through various media,<sup>18</sup> and has repeatedly lodged strong protests against the ROK over matters such as landing on the island by South Koreans including members of the ROK's National Assembly, and the ROK's military exercises and marine

<sup>17</sup> See References on the Issue of Comfort Women

<sup>18</sup> In February 2008, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs published a pamphlet entitled "Takeshima: 10 points to understand the Takeshima Dispute." Currently, it is available on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website in 11 languages: Japanese, English, Korean, French, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Arabic, Russian, Chinese and Italian. Furthermore, since October 2013, videos and flyers about Takeshima have been available on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' website, and they are currently available in the above 11 languages. In addition, Japan has taken initiatives such as distributing a smartphone app that aims to increase awareness of the Takeshima issue. Further details are available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/region/asia-paci/takeshima/index.html>



researches.<sup>19</sup> In particular, in 2021, the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the ROK began to release real-time images of Takeshima on its website, members of the National Assembly of the ROK and the Commissioner General of the Korean National Police Agency landed on Takeshima, and military exercises and maritime surveys were also conducted on the island or its vicinity. The Government of Japan considers these activities unacceptable in view of Japan's position and lodged strong protests.

For a peaceful settlement of the Takeshima dispute, Japan proposed to the ROK that the issue be referred to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) in 1954, 1962 and 2012. However, the ROK rejected the proposal in all instances. Japan is determined to continue to engage in appropriate diplomatic efforts to settle the Takeshima dispute in a peaceful manner in accordance with international law.

#### **(E) Update of Licensing Policies and Procedures on Exports of Controlled Items to the ROK**

On September 11, 2019, the Government of the ROK requested bilateral consultations with Japan under the World Trade Organization (WTO) dispute settlement procedures, claiming the update by the Government of Japan of the operation of measures related to Japan's export to the ROK of three items for semiconductors (fluorinated polyimide, resist and hydrogen fluoride), and the system for requiring individual export licenses,<sup>20</sup> is in breach of the WTO Agreements. The Government of the ROK announced on November 22, 2019, that it suspended the effect of the notification of termination of the Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government

of the Republic of Korea on the Protection of Classified Military Information (GSOMIA), and in doing so said that it would also suspend its WTO dispute settlement procedures while the Japan-ROK Export Control Policy Dialogue would be held as normal. Subsequently Export Control Policy Dialogues were held in December 2019 and March 2020. Despite the fact that the export control authorities of Japan and the ROK shared the view to resolve the issue through dialogue and communication, the Government of the ROK resumed WTO dispute settlement procedures on June 18, 2020, and the WTO Dispute Settlement Body decided to establish a panel on July 29, 2020.

#### **(F) Exchanges and Travel**

In 2018, the number of people making visits between the two countries was approximately 10.49 million people, but since March 2020, travel between Japan and the ROK significantly decreased due to the strengthening of border measures related to COVID-19, and in 2021, only approximately 30,000 people made trips between the two countries. Under such circumstances and with regard to phased measures toward resuming cross-border travel from October 8, 2020, the "Business Track" and "Residence Track" travel programs were started with the ROK, but, due to the spread of COVID-19 variants in Japan and overseas, the operation of these two tracks was suspended after January 14, 2021. Following this, since November 8, 2021 the restrictions on post-entry activities for vaccinated individuals and new entry restrictions for foreign nationals were relaxed under certain conditions, and, although new entry into Japan from the ROK resumed for

<sup>19</sup> In August 2021, the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the ROK began to release real-time images of Takeshima on its website. Also, in August, Representative Hong Suk-joon of the People Power Party landed on Takeshima and Commissioner General Kim Chang-ryong of the Korean National Police Agency did so in November. Furthermore, the ROK armed forces conducted military training related to Takeshima in June and December 2021. The Government of Japan immediately conveyed to the Government of the ROK that such an act was unacceptable and extremely regrettable in light of Japan's position on sovereignty over Takeshima, and strongly protested against the act.

<sup>20</sup> The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry announced the following updates on July 1, 2019: (1) the amendment of the Export Trade Control Order of the ROK (Note: The ROK was excluded from "Group A." A revised Cabinet ordinance entered into force on August 28 to effect this change) and (2) switching from bulk licenses to individual export licenses for Fluorinated polyimide, Resist and Hydrogen fluoride.

business persons and foreign students, the measures were suspended after November 30 due to the tightening of cross-border measures against the Omicron variant.

The Governments of Japan and the ROK share the view that, notwithstanding the challenging situation of the bilateral relations, exchanges between Japan and the ROK are important. In Japan, K-POP and related content is widely accepted, mainly among younger generations, and, particularly amidst the impacts of COVID-19 when citizens were asked to refrain from going out, Korean dramas and movies became widely popular amongst people of all ages. For the second consecutive year during the COVID-19 pandemic, the major Japan-ROK grassroots exchange program “Japan-Korea Exchange Festival” (Nikkan Koryu Omatsuri) was held online in both Tokyo and Seoul. The Government of Japan continues to work on promoting mutual understanding primarily between young people and building a friendly and cooperative relationship for the future through Japan’s Friendship Ties Programs (JENESYS 2021), and all exchange programs in 2021 were conducted online.

### (G) Other Issues

The Governments of Japan and the ROK concluded Agreement between the Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Korea on the Protection of Classified Military Information (GSOMIA) in November 2016 in order to strengthen cooperation and coordination

between the two countries in the field of security and contribute to regional peace and stability. Afterwards, the agreement was automatically extended in 2017 and 2018. However, the Government of the ROK announced on August 22, 2019, its decision to terminate the GSOMIA in connection with Japan’s update of licensing policies and procedures on exports (see (E) ) and notified the termination on the following day, August 23. Following this and after exchanges between Japan and the ROK, on November 22, the Government of the ROK announced that it would suspend the effect of the notification of termination of August 23. In view of the current regional security environment, the Government of Japan still considers it important for the Agreement to continue operating in a stable manner.

Sea of Japan is the only internationally established name for the sea area concerned, and the UN and governments of major countries such as the U.S. adopt Sea of Japan as the official name. Objections to this name, however, were first raised by the ROK and North Korea in 1992. Since then, the ROK and North Korea have been objecting to the name at the United Nations Group of Experts on Geographical Names (UNGEGN),<sup>21</sup> the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and other international conferences. These assertions however are groundless, and Japan has firmly refuted these assertions each time they arise.<sup>22</sup>

Furthermore, Japan has strongly requested the Government of the ROK through its diplomatic

<sup>21</sup> A UN conference where experts on place names and geospatial information from each country discuss, from a technical point of view, the definitions of terms related to place names and the notion methods for place names. In 2017, the UN Conferences on the Standardization of Geographical Name, which had been held every five years, and the UN Group of Experts on Geographical Names, which had been held every two years, were integrated into the United Nations Group of Experts on Place Names (UNGEGN).

<sup>22</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs website detailing the issue of the name of the “Sea of Japan”: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/maritime/japan/index.html>





channels to return cultural properties that were stolen and are currently in the ROK<sup>23</sup> to Japan as soon as possible, and Japan will continue to call on the ROK to take appropriate actions.

Other than these issues, Japan has provided supports and taken measures as much as possible from a humanitarian perspective in a wide range of fields, including responses for ethnic Koreans in Sakhalin,<sup>24</sup> addressing the issue of atomic bomb survivors living in the ROK,<sup>25</sup> and helping Hansen's disease patients admitted to sanitariums in the ROK.<sup>26</sup>

### **B Japan-ROK Economic Relations**

The total value of trade between the two countries amounted to approximately 9.30 trillion Japanese yen in 2021. Japan is the ROK's third largest trading partner, and the ROK is Japan's fourth largest trading partner. The ROK's trade deficit with Japan increased by approximately 16.9% from a year earlier, reaching approximately 2.25 trillion Japanese yen (Trade Statistics of Japan, Ministry of Finance). Japanese direct investment in the ROK totaled approximately 1.21 billion US dollars (up 52.8% from the previous year) (figures published by the ROK Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy), making Japan the ROK's sixth largest source of foreign direct investment.

In November 2020, 15 countries, including Japan and the ROK, signed the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement, which is also the first Economic Partnership Agreement

(EPA) between Japan and the ROK. On December 3, 2021, the ROK deposited the ratification of the agreement with the depositary, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, and for the ROK the agreement entered into force on February 1, 2022.

Under WTO dispute settlement procedures, in November 2020 a panel found that the ROK's measures in "Korea - Sunset Review of Anti-Dumping Duties on Stainless Steel Bars" were in violation of the WTO Agreements and recommended that the measures be remedied, but in January 2021 the ROK filed a complaint with the WTO Appellate Body. Furthermore, in "Korea - Measures Affecting Trade in Commercial Vessels," bilateral consultations were requested in November 2018 and held in December 2018 (Subsequently, another round of consultations was requested to cover new support measures in the ROK, and they were held in March 2020.).

As for import restrictions on Japanese food products by the Government of the ROK, Japan is taking various opportunities to urge the ROK to remove the restrictions as soon as possible.

### **C Situation in the ROK**

#### **(A) Domestic Affairs**

President Moon Jae-in, continuing from 2020, focused on the domestic policy response to COVID-19, including emphasizing the path toward recovery, inclusiveness, and a leap forward in his special speech on May 10, 2021 marking the start of his fifth year in office. In April a portion of

<sup>23</sup> After being stolen in Tsushima City, Nagasaki Prefecture in 2012 and shipped to the ROK, the "Kanzeon Bosatsu Statue" was collected and stored by the Government of the ROK. A Korean temple asserting ownership of the statue has filed a claim with the Daejeon District Court seeking to have the Government of the ROK hand over the statue, and in January 2017 the court issued a verdict of the first hearing to the plaintiff's side (the Korean temple). In response to this, the Government of the ROK appealed, and the matter is currently pending at the Daejeon High Court. The "Kanzeon Bosatsu Statue" is still being held by the Government of the ROK and has not been returned to Japan (as of the end of January 2022).

<sup>24</sup> For various reasons, before the end of World War II, people from the Korean Peninsula traveled to what was then known as Minami Karafuto (South Sakhalin) and were compelled to remain there for a long time after the war ended under the de facto rule of the Soviet Union, without being given the opportunity to return to the ROK. The Government of Japan is providing such people with support, such as to enable them to return home temporarily and to visit Sakhalin.

<sup>25</sup> This is the issue of provision of support to those who were exposed to the atomic bombs while living in Hiroshima or Nagasaki during World War II and subsequently went to live overseas. To date, Japan has provided support in the form of the Atomic Bomb Victim Health Handbook and allowances based on the Atomic Bombs Survivors' Assistance Act.

<sup>26</sup> In February 2006, the "Act on Payment of Compensation to Inmates of Hansen's Disease Sanatorium" was amended, and former residents of Hansen's disease sanatoriums outside of Japan, which were established by Japan before the end of World War II, were made eligible for compensation, similar to former residents of domestic sanatoriums. Additionally, in November 2019, the "Act on Payment of Compensation to Families of Former Patients of Hansen's Disease" was enacted, and the families of former inmates were also made eligible for compensation.

the Cabinet was reshuffled, including the appointment of Kim Boo-kyum, the former Minister of the Interior and Safety, as Prime Minister.

On April 7, mayoral special elections were held for the vacant mayoral offices of Seoul and Busan, two of the ROK's major cities, both of which were won by candidates from the largest opposition party, the People's Power Party. Prior to the special elections, soaring housing prices had become a social problem, particularly in large metropolitan areas such as Seoul. The victory of the opposition candidates is believed to have been due in part to a deterioration in public opinion toward the ruling party as a result of a real estate speculation scandal that involved employees at the Korea Land and Housing Corporation (LH).

In anticipation of the next presidential election, preliminary elections of each political party were held in the latter half of 2021 in the ROK. On October 10, the ruling Democratic Party elected Lee Jae-myung, then Governor of Gyeonggi province, as the party's presidential candidate. On November 5 the People's Power Party, the largest opposition party, elected former prosecutor general Yoon Seok-young as its presidential candidate. In opposition to the Moon administration's policies of prosecutorial reform, former prosecutor general Yoon resigned as prosecutor general on March 4 and joined the People's Power Party, the largest opposition party, on July 30. Voting for the presidential election was held on March 9, 2022, and former prosecutor general Yoon was elected. Preparations were made for the transition from the Moon administration, and former prosecutor Yoon is scheduled to assume the office of President on May 10, 2022 as the 20th President of the ROK.

Former President Roh Tae-woo passed away on October 26, 2021, and former President Chun Doo-hwan passed away on November 23, 2021.

## (B) Foreign Policy

As vaccinations against COVID-19 began in earnest around the world in early 2021, the

Government of the ROK actively engaged in so-called "vaccine diplomacy." With vaccine swap agreements signed with the UK, Israel, and Romania, the Government of the ROK sought to use these as an opportunity to strengthen bilateral relations.

In parallel with these diplomatic initiatives that look toward the "post-COVID-19 era," relations with North Korea continued to be the most important issue for the Moon Jae-in administration. In an address to the UN General Assembly in September, President Moon Jae-in actively called for dialogue with North Korea, including a proposal for a "declaration to ending the War on the Korean Peninsula," but no progress was made in inter-Korean relations (see Inter-Korean relations in section C(B)).

As for relations with the U.S., President Moon Jae-in visited the U.S. in May, and held the first U.S.-ROK Summit Meeting with President Biden. At the summit meeting, the two leaders agreed to reaffirm their shared commitment to the complete denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and to end the U.S.-ROK "Missile Guidelines," and they also agreed to establish the KORUS Global Vaccine Partnership to combat COVID-19. Additionally, U.S.-ROK Combined Command Post Training was conducted in March and August on a reduced scale due to the impacts of COVID-19. In 2021, following on from 2019 and 2020, the U.S. and ROK held two rounds of discussions for the 11th Special Measures Agreement (SMA) regarding the cost of stationing U.S. forces in the ROK after 2020, and in March 2021 the two countries agreed to a multi-year agreement with an effective period of six years (from 2020 to 2025).

With regard to relations with China, in April Foreign Minister Chung Eui-yong visited China for the first time since taking office and held a meeting at China-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting with State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi. In September, State Councilor and Foreign Minister Wang Yi visited the ROK and a Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held again. At both meetings, the

two countries reaffirmed their commitment to realizing the denuclearization of North Korea, and also agreed to promote the realization of Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting (2+2). However, President Xi Jinping's visit to the ROK, which both China and the ROK had coordinated, did not take place in 2021.

### (C) Economy

In 2021, the GDP growth rate in Korea was 4.0% due to strong exports and private consumption, turning positive from the previous year when it fell to negative 0.9% due to impacts from the spread of COVID-19. The total amount of exports increased by 25.8% year on year to approximately 644.5 billion US dollars, while the total amount of imports increased by 31.5% year on year to approximately 615.0 billion US dollars, resulting in a trade surplus of approximately 29.5 billion US dollars (figures published by the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy).

As for domestic economic policies, the Moon Jae-in administration inaugurated in May 2017 has stressed the importance of "income-led growth" and "an employment-centered economy" revolving around people, and has significantly increased the minimum wage for two consecutive years since 2018. However, amidst such sharp rises drawing increased criticisms for causing job losses, in August 2021 the administration announced that the minimum wage in 2022 would be 9,160 won (up 5.1% year on year).

In recent years, the ROK has had a rapidly declining birthrate and aging population. In 2021, the total fertility rate was a record low of 0.81 children per woman, making the declining birthrate issue all the more serious.

The Moon Jae-in administration has implemented policies to curb real estate investment, but due to excessive demand associated with speculative home purchases by owners of multiple homes, condominium prices in Seoul have risen by approximately 70% in the four years since the administration was inaugurated. Real estate

prices continue to rise, and addressing this has become one of the most important issues for the administration.

In May, the Government of the ROK launched the "K-Semiconductor Strategy," which includes a variety of tax supports, tax credits, and human resource development, as a strategy aimed at building a stable domestic supply chain amidst the ongoing worldwide semiconductor supply shortages. Furthermore, in July the "K-Battery Development Strategy" was announced as a strategy to lead the global market amidst the remarkable growth of the battery industry in the ROK.

## 4 Southeast Asia

### (1) Indonesia

As a major country in the Southeast Asia region with the fourth largest population in the world (at approximately 270 million people), Indonesia plays a leading role in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). In addition, it has been showing initiative for various challenges facing the international community as a G20 member.

President Joko's second administration, which started in October 2019, is a stable administration where the ruling party occupies approximately 82% of the seats in the People's Consultative Assembly. This administration is working on (1) infrastructure development, (2) human resources development, (3) investment promotion, (4) bureaucratic reforms, and (5) appropriate execution of the state budget as its priorities. Indonesia's economic growth rate, which had consistently been maintained at around 5% in recent years, recorded negative growth in 2020 due to the impacts of COVID-19. As a strategic partner, Japan is actively promoting cooperation in infrastructure development and human resources development, which are priorities of the second Joko administration, and, in order to take measures against COVID-19 and strengthen Indonesia's health and medical systems, Japan is also providing assistance such as medical



Second Japan-Indonesia Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2") (March 30, Tokyo)



Signing of the Japan-Indonesia Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology (March 30, Tokyo)

equipment and approximately 6.88 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines (as of February 2022).

While international travel was restricted by the global spread of COVID-19, in 2021 Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-Indonesia Summit telephone call (November) with President Joko, Foreign Minister Motegi met with Foreign Minister Retno four times (February, March, April, and June), and Foreign Minister Hayashi had a telephone call (December) with Foreign Minister Retno. At these meetings, Japan and Indonesia closely exchanged opinions on strengthening bilateral relations as well as on cooperation between the two countries on a variety of issues in the region and in the international community. Furthermore, Foreign Minister Motegi had face-to-face Japan-Indonesia Foreign Ministers' Meetings in March, June, and September to exchange views on bilateral relations as well as on regional affairs such as maritime issues and the situation in Myanmar.

Japan and Indonesia are also deepening their security cooperation, and in March Foreign Minister Motegi and Defense Minister Kishi held the Second Japan-Indonesia Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2") in Tokyo with Foreign Minister Retno and Defense Minister Prabowo. On the occasion of this meeting, Foreign Minister Motegi and Defense Minister Prabowo signed the Agreement concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology, which had been negotiated since 2015, and concurred to further deepen the bilateral security cooperation with the Agreement serving as its basis. The four Ministers also concurred that Japan and Indonesia will promote cooperation in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and surrounding areas as well as other maritime cooperation.

## (2) Cambodia

Cambodia is located at a strategic point along the Southern Economic Corridor, and is a key country in strengthening connectivity and narrowing the development gap in the region. Cambodia had been averaging approximately 7% growth for the past 20 years, but GDP in 2020 was negative 3.1% due to the impacts of COVID-19. Japan has been cooperating with Cambodia by providing approximately 1.32 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines (as of February 2022).

Japan has cooperated on the peace process in Cambodia, through such actions as the deployment of full-scale PKO in 1992, which was the first time for Japan to do so, and on the subsequent



Japan-Cambodia Leaders' Video Conference (December 1, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

reconstruction and development after the achievement of peace. Bilateral relations were elevated to a “Strategic Partnership” in 2013. In November 2021 Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Prak Sokhonn held a telephone call, and in December Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Hun Sen held telephone calls to exchange opinions on bilateral relations and regional affairs. As Cambodia is presiding over the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2022, both sides have agreed to cooperate for the success of the conference.

Regarding domestic affairs, the ruling Cambodian People's Party monopolized all seats in the 2018 National Assembly elections as the largest opposition, the Cambodia National Rescue Party, was dissolved in 2017. Following this, the Cambodian government announced measures to improve the democratic environment, such as promoting domestic dialogue and expediting judicial proceedings. As part of its efforts to boost Cambodia's democratic development, Japan has been supporting legal reform and implementing projects to promote dialogue between the government and civil society.

In the Khmer Rouge Tribunal, which Japan has been supporting for many years, the final hearing for the appeal in case 2-02 (former head of state as defendant) was held in August, and it is highly likely that the tribunal will be completed with a verdict scheduled for 2022.

### (3) Singapore

Singapore is the most economically advanced country within ASEAN. Based on its omnidirectional foreign policy, the country maintains friendly relations with major countries including the U.S. and China.

In Singapore, the People's Action Party (PAP), led by Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, holds more than 90% of the seats from the 2020 general elections, and, with the basis of a stable political situation, is working to balance the economy and measures to combat COVID-19, including through promoting digitalization.



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Kokuba meeting with Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Communications and Information Sim (August 11, Singapore)

Although COVID-19 has reduced the opportunities for high level officials to travel between Japan and Singapore, in 2021 telephone calls were held between Prime Minister Suga and Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong in May, between Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Lee in November, and between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Balakrishnan in December, exchanging opinions on bilateral cooperation for a variety of regional issues. In terms of face-to-face meetings, the 15th Japan-Singapore Vice Minister-Level Policy Meeting was held in Tokyo in April to exchange opinions on bilateral relations and regional affairs. In August, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Kokuba Konosuke visited Singapore and exchanged opinions with Senior Minister of State, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Communications and Information SIM Ann, on cooperation in measures to combat COVID-19 and in economic and security fields such as cooperation to realize a green society, digital cooperation, infrastructure cooperation in third-party countries, and maintaining and strengthening a multilateral free trade system. The two countries have worked together to provide developing countries with technical assistance through the “Japan-Singapore Partnership Program for the 21st



Century (JSP21),” which was signed in 1997. To date they have provided training approximately 400 courses with roughly 7,000 participants from ASEAN countries and other regions.

The Japan Creative Centre (JCC), which was opened in Singapore in 2009 as a platform to promote Japanese culture, distributed a variety of information and held events while taking measures against COVID-19 infections.

#### (4) Thailand

Thailand is one of the original member states of ASEAN, which was born of the “Bangkok Declaration” in 1967. It is located in the center of the Mekong region and is a geopolitically important country.

The establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Thailand dates back to the “Declaration of Amity and Commerce between Japan and Siam (Declaration of Amity)” in 1887. The current bilateral relations is a “Strategic Partnership” in which both countries cooperate not only bilaterally, but also in the region and the international community. In addition, as a result of many years of official development assistance and investment by private companies from Japan, Thailand has become a major production center for Japanese companies, including the automobile industry, and today Thailand is an indispensable part of the Japanese economy as a part of the global supply chain, with close to 6,000 Japanese companies operating in Thailand and more than 80,000 Japanese nationals living in Thailand.

Due to restrictions on travel following the spread of COVID-19, no in-person visits by dignitaries were conducted in 2021. Despite that, telephone calls were held between Prime Minister Suga and Prime Minister Prayut in April, between Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Prayut in November, between Foreign Minister Motegi and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Don in March and August, and between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs



Fifth Meeting of the Japan-Thailand High Level Joint Commission (August 11)

Don in November. Furthermore, in August the Fifth Meeting of the Japan-Thailand High Level Joint Commission was held online as a place to exchange opinions for promoting cooperation in the economic fields of both countries. Foreign Minister Motegi and Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Don served as co-chairs, the relevant ministries and agencies from both countries participated, and high-level exchanges continued.

On the domestic front of Thailand, against a background of economic and social disparities and the deterioration of the economic situation due to the spread of COVID-19, protests against the government and the monarchy have become active, especially among young people, and the unstable situation is continuing. Japan has been cooperating with Thailand to help stabilize its economy and society during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as by providing approximately 2.04 million doses of vaccines to Thailand (as of February 2022).

#### (5) Timor-Leste

Timor-Leste, the first country that achieved independence in the 21st century (in 2002), is strategically important in the Indo-Pacific region, and is situated in a critical sea lane between Australia and Indonesia. The country has realized peace and stability with the support of the international community and has been building the nation based on democracy. As its economy is highly dependent on natural resources such as petroleum and natural gas, the country has been



working to diversify its industry as a matter of the highest national priority. On the diplomatic side, Timor-Leste continues to work on coordination with ASEAN countries toward joining ASEAN, which is the most important diplomatic issue for Timor-Leste.

Japan has continued to support Timor-Leste since even before its independence, and maintained good relations with the country. In 2021 Japan provided food to areas affected by floods and COVID-19, and supported the training of young administrative officers. Additionally, Japan and Timor-Leste signed an exchange of notes on the development plan for Presidente Nicolau Lobato International Airport. In response to the spread of COVID-19, Japan has provided approximately 170,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines (as of February 2022) and is also providing support such as provision of medical equipment.

## **(6) The Philippines**

The Philippines had consistently maintained a high growth rate of 6% or more since 2012, but in 2020 a negative growth rate of 9.6% year on year was recorded due to the impact of restrictions on domestic economic activities that were introduced upon the spread of COVID-19. However, the growth rate bounced back to positive 5.6% in 2021, year on year. President Duterte maintained high public confidence in his COVID-19 control measures, and continued to exercise strong leadership in response to priority issues such as anti-corruption, public safety and counter-terrorism. As for the Mindanao Peace Process, which experienced delay in the decommissioning and disarmament work with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) due to COVID-19, the Bangsamoro Organic Law was amended, and the efforts to conceive an autonomous government is continuing toward 2025.

Japan and the Philippines celebrated the 65th anniversary of the normalization of diplomatic relations and the 10th anniversary of the “Strategic Partnership” in 2021. While no dignity visits

took place during the year due to the impacts of COVID-19, Summit telephone calls by Prime Minister Suga and Prime Minister Kishida with President Duterte, in May and in December were held respectively, alongside Foreign Ministers’ telephone calls by Foreign Minister Motegi and Foreign Minister Hayashi with Secretary of Foreign Affairs Locsin, in April and in December, to further strengthen Japan-Philippines relations which are in a “golden age.” They discussed bilateral relations and regional issues, and concurred on strengthening cooperation in the Sulu-Celebes Seas and their surrounding areas.

On the security cooperation front, the 4th Japan-Philippines Maritime Dialogue was held in October, to promote cooperation and exchange views on better maritime security, while deliberations are underway toward the launch of a Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting (“2+2”). Meanwhile, on the economic cooperation front, the 11th Meeting of the Japan-Philippines High Level Joint Committee on Infrastructure Development and Economic Cooperation was held, to affirm that Japan’s commitment of one trillion yen in public and private finances in five years from 2017 was fulfilled ahead of schedule, as well as to announce that Japan’s commitment to assisting the formulation of the Subic Bay Regional Development Master Plan was accomplished. Overall, Japan continues to render strong support to the Philippines’ “Build, Build, Build” infrastructure development program. In addition, as part of the response to COVID-19, Japan extended assistance to the Philippines to facilitate the vaccination system and to provide approximately 3.08 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines (as of February 2022).

## **(7) Brunei**

Its abundance in natural resources has enabled Brunei to realize a high economic standard and generous social welfare. As such, the country enjoys political and economic stability. Although it is a constitutional monarchy and has a Legislative

Council, the Sultan concurrently serves as the Prime Minister, Minister of Finance and Economy, Minister of Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and therefore holds an impressively strong authority. Located in the center of Southeast Asia, the country is one of the claimant countries in the South China Sea and has adopted a balanced diplomacy built on the pillar of promoting ASEAN unity and centrality.

Although Brunei's economic growth is expected to remain positive in 2021, supported by rising oil prices and oil refining operations via a joint oil refining venture with China, the Government of Brunei is aiming for economic diversification to avoid overreliance on energy resources.

As for relations with Japan, diplomatic relations were established in 1984, and the two countries have developed excellent bilateral relations in various areas. In addition, the two countries enjoy a close relationship between the imperial and royal families, and in 2019 His Majesty Sultan Haji Hassanal Bolkiah attended the Ceremony of the Enthronement of His Majesty the Emperor. Brunei is an important country for the stable supply of energy resources to Japan. Around 70% of Brunei's liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports are bound for Japan, and LNG from Brunei makes up around 5% of the total LNG import to Japan. Brunei served as the ASEAN Chairmanship in 2021, and against the backdrop of COVID-19, Japan worked closely with Brunei, holding seven Japan-Brunei Foreign Ministers' telephone calls and one face-to-face Japan-Brunei Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs Erywan, who also serves as the ASEAN special envoy, and the two Ministers exchanged opinions on bilateral cooperation, important regional issues, and the situation in Myanmar in particular. Additionally, as support for measures against COVID-19, Japan provided approximately 100,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines (as of February 2022), and also provided 50,000 medical N95 masks through the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF) stockpiling project that is funded by Japan.

## (8) Viet Nam

Located next to sea lanes in the South China Sea and sharing a long border with China, Viet Nam is a geopolitically important country. Given that the country embraces the third largest population in Southeast Asia, and is experiencing a surge in the number of people in middle-income brackets, Viet Nam is a promising market. The country is currently striving to achieve stable economic growth through the stabilization of the macroeconomy including control of inflation, the promotion of foreign investment by the development of infrastructure and the improvement of the investment environment. Viet Nam served as the ASEAN Chairman in 2020 and as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council from 2020 to 2021, expanding its role in the international community.

Japan and Viet Nam have been advancing cooperation in a variety of areas under the Extensive Strategic Partnership for Peace and Prosperity in Asia. High-level exchanges between the two countries were actively conducted even amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, and between March and September 2021, there were a total of six telephone calls between the two countries' leaders, legislative presidents, and foreign ministers. In November, Prime Minister Chinh visited Japan as the Kishida administration's first visit from a foreign head of state as a Guest on an official working visit. At the Japan-Viet Nam Summit Meeting, the two leaders confirmed (1) Additional donations of COVID-19 vaccines (7.35 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines have already been provided as of the end of February 2022) and cooperation in COVID-19 measures such as public-private collaboration in cooperative vaccine development, (2) Cooperation for post-COVID-19 economic revitalization, such as the DX Initiative between Japan and Viet Nam, the Supply Chain Diversification Initiative, and improving the environment around Vietnamese technical intern trainees, (3) Cooperation on common issues of the international community, such as climate change,



Japan-Viet Nam Summit Meeting (November 24, Tokyo)

(4) Cooperation in the fields of cyber security and hygiene, and in security fields such as improving maritime security capabilities, and (5) Strengthen cooperation toward 2023, the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Viet Nam. Viet Nam has essentially been a country with great affinity toward Japan. The number of Vietnamese visiting Japan grew from about 40,000 in 2011 to over 490,000 in 2019. The number of Vietnamese living in Japan rose from about 40,000 in 2011 to about 430,000 at the end of December 2021, the second largest group of foreign residents after China.

### (9) Malaysia

Comprised of the Peninsular Malaysia of the Malay Peninsula and East Malaysia of Borneo, Malaysia is a geopolitically important country facing the South China Sea and the Strait of Malacca that is situated in a crucial spot in the Indian Ocean and Pacific Ocean. In addition, it is a federal state comprised of 13 states and three federal territories, and also a multiethnic state comprised of Bumiputra (Malay including indigenous peoples) (69%), Chinese (23%) and Indian people (7%), among others.

Prime Minister Ismail Sabri, who took office in August 2021, is focusing on measures to combat COVID-19 and on economic recovery while stabilizing domestic politics.

Japan has been promoting cooperation, including in the security and economic fields, based on the “Strategic Partnership,” and, in 2021, Japan provided Malaysia with approximately one million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, cold chain equipment for vaccines, and medical equipment. Although the number of high level officials’ visits between the two countries decreased compared to previous years due to the impacts of COVID-19, there were telephone calls between Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Ismail Sabri in December, as well as between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Saifuddin in December, and, they exchanged opinions on cooperation between the two countries on regional and international issues, in addition to strengthening bilateral relations.

In the field of human resources development, through the Look East Policy, which serves as a foundation for the good bilateral relationship between Japan and Malaysia and was begun by Prime Minister Mahathir in 1982, more than 26,000 Malaysian people have studied or have been trained in Japan so far. The policy is celebrating its 40th anniversary in 2022, so further exchanges between the two countries are expected (see the Column on page 75). The two countries have been cooperating in making the Malaysia Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIIT), which was opened in September 2011, a base for Japanese-style engineering education in ASEAN countries. In addition, discussions are being held to establish a branch school of the University of Tsukuba in Malaysia, and, if realized, it will be the first overseas branch school to be established by a Japanese university. On the economic front, roughly 1,500 Japanese companies have been operating in Malaysia, which demonstrates a continued close relationship between the two countries.

## The 40th anniversary of the Look East Policy

2022 marks the 40th anniversary of Malaysia's Look East Policy.

The Look East Policy was proposed by then-Prime Minister Mahathir and began in 1982. Believing that the Japanese work ethic, enthusiasm for learning and working, morals, and management skills were the driving force behind Japan's development, he advocated for learning these from Japan in order to develop Malaysian economy and society.

Under the Look East Policy, a large number of students have been dispatched to Japanese universities and technical colleges. In addition, Japanese private companies, local governments and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) have accepted trainees and helped them to acquire industrial technologies and management skills.

The Look East Policy is mainly funded by the Government of Malaysia, but Japanese yen loans enabled the programs to continue when Malaysian public finances faced difficulties caused by the Asian Financial Crisis in the late 1990s.

The policy has continued through successive administrations in Malaysia, and has sent more than 26,000 students and trainees to Japan under this policy. The human resources nurtured by the Look East Policy have not only supported the development of industry and society in Malaysia, but also played an important role as a bridge between Japan and Malaysia. Developing people, who have familiarity and affinity with Japan over many years under this policy is likely to be one reason that Malaysia is now clearly one of the friendliest countries to Japan.

More than half of the Under-Secretary level officials of Malaysian government ministries and agencies have experienced studying or training in Japan including those under the Look East Policy (as of December 2021). Many of those who are succeeding in the business community have either studied or been trained in Japan. The people with Japanese skills and a good knowledge of Japanese work ethics have been encouraging Japanese companies to start business in Malaysia, and thus further producing those who are well-versed in Japan through training programs implemented by each company. Such process is a virtuous cycle of human resource development.

The spirit of the Look East Policy, that is, the development of the economy and society through human resource development, is still meaningful. On the other hand, the Look East Policy has been evolving through adapting to the issues and needs that are changing in response to the changes in society. Japan has not only welcomed students and trainees from Malaysia under the Look East Policy, but also provided assistance for human resource development in Malaysia. The Government of Japan has expanded support from the area of

job training such as assistance for the Centre for Instructor and Advanced Skill Training (CIAST) in the 1980s, to the field of higher education including assistance to establish the Malaysia-Japan International Institute of Technology (MJIIT) in the 2010s as well as to the opening of the University of Tsukuba's branch campus in Malaysia - the first ever branch of a Japanese university abroad.

Through many commemorative events planned in 2022, the Government of Japan will reinforce ties with the various stakeholders and organizations that have contributed to nurturing cooperation between Malaysia and Japan over the past 40 years, which Japan hopes will lead to developing the long-lasting friendship and cooperative partnership between both countries.



Logo of the 40th anniversary of the Look East Policy



Graduation ceremony at the University of Malaya for students at the Special Preparatory Program to enter Japanese universities under the Look East Policy (February 2020)

**(10) Myanmar**

A general election was held in Myanmar in November 2020, and the National League for Democracy (NLD) won an overwhelming victory. However, after the general election, the Myanmar Armed Forces asserted that there was election fraud, such as duplication of voter list information. The Government of Myanmar did not accept these claims, and before dawn on February 1, 2021, the Myanmar Armed Forces detained NLD leaders, including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi. On the same day, the acting president declared state of emergency and delegated full authority to Senior General Min Aung Hlaing. The people opposed the Myanmar Armed Forces' coup d'état, and the Civil Disobedience Movement (CDM) spread nationwide. Demonstrations of tens of thousands of people were held on consecutive days in addition to boycotts by officials at public institutions. In response, the Myanmar Armed Forces and the Myanmar Police Force suppressed the protestors by shooting at them.

Japan has grave concerns about the situation in Myanmar. In addition to the statement issued by the Foreign Minister on the day of the coup d'état, Japan has urged the Myanmar Armed Forces to immediately cease the violence against civilians, to release detainees including State Counsellor Aung San Suu Kyi, and to swiftly restore the democratic political system. Additionally, at the Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting in August, Foreign Minister Motegi strongly urged Myanmar to release the detained persons and to swiftly restore Myanmar's democratic political system. Based on the belief that it is important to support ASEAN's efforts to overcome the situation in Myanmar and to achieve concrete results from the "Five-Point Consensus" agreed at the ASEAN Leaders' Meeting held in April, Japan is working closely with ASEAN to realize the dispatch of ASEAN's Special Envoy as well as dialogue with all parties concerned, including pro-democracy forces.

In the international arena, the coup d'état and

violence were condemned by the G7 in two G7 Foreign Ministers' Statements, and the G7's position on Myanmar was also clarified in the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting Communiqué and in the Carbis Bay G7 Summit Communiqué. At the UN, Japan has been cooperating with the international community participating in consensus (unanimous adoption by all members of the Council) on Human Rights Council resolutions (in February, March, and July) on the situation in Myanmar, participating as a co-sponsor of the resolution in February, voting in favor of the UN General Assembly resolution on Myanmar in June after participating as a co-sponsor, and co-sponsoring a resolution in November at the United Nations General Assembly Third Committee. Furthermore, in March Japan condemned the violence by the Myanmar Armed Forces in a Joint Statement of Chiefs of Defense.

Since February 1, Japan has been actively providing humanitarian assistance through international organizations to directly benefit the people of Myanmar, including 9 million US dollars via the ICRC and WFP for internally displaced persons from Rakhine State and 2.09 million US dollars via UNICEF for cold chain support in March, 4 million US dollars in May via WFP for food aid, and 5.8 million US dollars in July via the UNHCR, WFP, and UNICEF for emergency grant aid, for a total of 20.89 million US dollars in aid provided to Myanmar citizens who are in need due to the coup d'état. In addition, Japan is also providing support for COVID-19-related measures, such as the provision of oxygen concentrators. Japan will take necessary measures while closely monitoring the situation.

**(11) Laos**

Laos is a land locked country bordering all of the countries in the Mekong region, and therefore is a key country for Mekong connectivity. In domestic affairs in 2021, the 11th Congress of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party (LPRP) was convened in January, and Prime Minister Thongloun

was elected as General Secretary of the party. In February the 9th National Assembly election was held, and, at the first session of the National Assembly at the end of March, Prime Minister and General Secretary Thongloun was appointed as President and General Secretary, Vice President Phankham was appointed as the Prime Minister, and the new structure of the Party and government for the next five years was solidified. On the economic front, in August the National Assembly approved a new national agenda on economic and financial issues in addition to the existing five-year national socioeconomic development plan, and specific numerical targets, including a return to economic growth of 4%, were also set. In November, the UN General Assembly approved Laos' graduation from Least Developed Country (LDC) status, and Laos is expected to fully transition out of LDC status after a five-year transition period.

In April a Japan-Laos Summit telephone call was held, followed by the announcement of the "Action Plan for Advancement of Strategic Partnership between the Lao PDR and Japan," which will serve as a guideline for cooperation over the next five years. As part of the COVID-19-related cooperation under the plan, Japan has so far provided approximately 940,000 doses of COVID-19 vaccines (as of February 2022). In addition, Japan has provided a variety of support in line with local needs, such as providing freezers for vaccine storage as part of its "Last One Mile Support" and providing oxygen concentrators and other medical equipment as emergency grant aid. In terms of cultural exchange, progress was made in the strategic partnership between both countries even during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the online Laos Festival that was held in September. In January 2022, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a telephone call with Foreign Minister Saluemxay, and the two foreign Ministers confirmed the expansion and deepening of the relationship between the countries through the implementation of the "Action Plan for Advancement of

Strategic Partnership between the Lao PDR and Japan."

## 5 South Asia

### (1) India

Geopolitically, India is an extremely important country as it is positioned at the center of sea lanes in the Indian Ocean that connect Asia and Africa. Additionally, India is the third largest economy in Asia, with the world's second largest population and a huge middle-income group. In recent years, India has been implementing a variety of economic initiatives, including "Make in India," and has been realizing steady economic growth. Although India's economy has substantially contracted due to the spread of COVID-19, it is aiming for an economic recovery through the promotion of its manufacturing industry with the new "Self-reliant India" campaign, and real GDP is recovering to pre-COVID-19 levels. In diplomatic relations, the "Act East" policy has been laid down in implementing active diplomacy to promote concrete cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region, thereby enabling India to gain more influence in the international arena as a global power.

Japan and India are the two largest democratic countries in Asia, sharing common fundamental values, such as democracy and the rule of law, as well as strategic interests, and under the "Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership," have broadly deepened cooperation in their economies, security, people-to-people exchanges, etc.



Japan-India Summit Meeting  
(September 23, U.S.; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



The Japan-India relationship is blessed with the greatest potential for development of any bilateral relationship in the world, and its importance is increasing as the uncertainty of the existing international order increases. Additionally, India is an important partner in realizing a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP),” and multilateral cooperation, such as between Japan, Australia, India and the U.S., is progressing. The deepening of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between Japan, which faces the Pacific Ocean, and India, which is located in the center of the Indian Ocean, will greatly contribute to the peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region. India is also an indispensable player in building the economic order in the Indo-Pacific region, and in that sense, it is expected that India will return to the RCEP Agreement in the future.

In 2021, amidst the response to COVID-19, Japan and India continuously had high-level exchanges of views, including Japan-India Summit meetings and telephone calls. At the Meeting of G7 Foreign and Development Ministers held in the UK in May, a Japan-India Foreign Ministers’ Video Teleconference Meeting was held, and in September, Prime Minister Suga and Prime Minister Modi held a face-to-face Japan-India Summit Meeting during Prime Minister Suga’s visit to the U.S. to attend the Second Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Summit Meeting. At the October summit telephone call held immediately after Prime Minister Kishida assumed the office of Prime Minister and at the November Foreign Ministers’ telephone call held immediately after Foreign Minister Hayashi assumed the office of Foreign Minister, the leaders confirmed that Japan and India, as well as Japan, Australia, India and the U.S., would work closely toward the realization of a FOIP. They also looked ahead to 2022, the 70th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and India, and agreed to raise the “Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership” to an even higher level. In July, with Prime Minister Modi in attendance, a

launch ceremony was held for the “International Cooperation and Convention Center in Varanasi,” which was constructed via grant aid from Japan, and Prime Minister Suga sent a video message in which he expressed the hope that it would become a symbol of the friendship between Japan and India. Moreover, numerous working-level discussions between Japan and India have been realized. In January, there was a joint committee established based on the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement, in February, there were disarmament and non-proliferation talks, in September, there was a Maritime Dialogue and a Joint Committee Meeting on High-Speed Rail Project, and in November, there was a Space Dialogue teleconference.

Additionally, in response to the serious spread of COVID-19 in India since April, Japan cooperated in strengthening India’s health and medical systems by providing ventilators and oxygen concentrators to India.

## **(2) Pakistan**

Pakistan is situated in a strategic location connecting Asia and the Middle East. Thus, its political stability and economic development are essential for the stability and growth of the region. Pakistan is also one of the most important countries in the context of international counter-terrorism measures. Furthermore, the country embraces a population of more than 200 million, and approximately 65% of the total population is under 30 years old, thus making its economic potential high. In foreign relations, the India-Pakistan relationship has remained tense since August 2019 when the Government of India decided to revoke Article 370 of the Constitution, which recognized the special status of Jammu and Kashmir. Under the “All Weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership,” the relationship with China has been enhanced in a wide range of fields toward the construction of an economic corridor between China and Pakistan (CPEC), which is an important constituent element of China’s “Belt and

Road” initiative. Regarding the relationship with the U.S., U.S. forces withdrew from Afghanistan in August, and, as U.S.-Pakistan relations had been centered around Afghanistan-related responses, it is worth paying attention to see how the relationship develops. Pakistan places great importance on its relationship with Afghanistan because Afghanistan’s stability is directly linked to Pakistan’s stability, and, even after the change in the situation in Afghanistan in August, Pakistan has been actively pursuing diplomacy, including relations with the Taliban, such as by hosting the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in December. On the economic front, Pakistan’s growth rate had fallen due to the impacts of COVID-19 but is now on a recovery trend. The Khan administration has faced a serious shortage of foreign currency reserves since its inauguration in 2018, and has been working on the implementation of IMF programs.

With regard to relations with Japan, in addition to Foreign Minister Motegi holding a Japan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers’ Meeting with Foreign Minister Qureshi on the occasion of the UN General Assembly in September, discussions have been held at the working level to maintain and strengthen bilateral relations, such as a High-Level Economic Policy Dialogue that was held in March and a Security Dialogue that was held in June in the teleconference format. When the situation in Afghanistan deteriorated, Japan received cooperation from Pakistan for the safe departure from Afghanistan of Japanese nationals and local embassy and JICA staff.

Additionally, Japan has provided grant aid to Pakistan in the fields of health, water hygiene, and disaster prevention, etc., and has also provided cold chain development support and debt relief measures as support in the fight against COVID-19.

### (3) Bangladesh

Bangladesh, in which Muslims account for

around 90% of the population, is a democratic country located in the Bay of Bengal and is geopolitically very important as an intersection between India and ASEAN. In terms of diplomacy, with the deterioration in peace and order in Rakhine State of Myanmar since August 2017, more than 700,000 displaced persons have flooded into Bangladesh, but their return has not yet been realized. There are concerns that their prolonged displacement will put a growing burden on the host community and that local peace and order will deteriorate. On the economic front, Bangladesh maintained positive growth despite being impacted by COVID-19, and, in FY2020, achieved an economic growth rate of 3.51%. With a population of around 165 million people, Bangladesh has a production base with abundant low cost and high-quality labor, and the high potential of its market from considerable infrastructure demand is continuing to attract attention. The number of Japanese affiliated companies developing business in the country has increased from 61 in 2005 to 329 in 2020. However, the securing of a stable supply of electric power as well as infrastructure improvement remain as challenges for foreign companies investing in the country.

As for relations with Japan, after the Third Japan-Bangladesh Foreign Secretary Level consultation held online in February, in June, Foreign Minister Motegi and Foreign Minister Abdul Momen held a Japan-Bangladesh Foreign Ministers’ telephone call, and, in addition to confirming cooperation for bringing COVID-19 to a close and for further strengthening diplomatic relations toward the 50th anniversary in 2022 of the establishment of diplomatic relations, the Ministers had a close discussion on how to deal with the problem of the displaced persons from Rakhine State in Myanmar.

Additionally, Japan provided an emergency support loan of 40 billion Japanese yen to support Bangladesh’s response to COVID-19 and also provided approximately 4.55 million doses of Japanese-made AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines via the COVAX Facility by the end of 2021, for

which Bangladesh expressed its gratitude. In this way, Japan is continuing its efforts to strengthen bilateral relations with Bangladesh, which has been friendly toward Japan.

#### **(4) Sri Lanka**

Sri Lanka is situated in a strategic location on the sea lanes in the Indian Ocean. The country is traditionally one of the friendliest countries to Japan and its geopolitical and economic importance is note-worthy. With regard to domestic politics, after President Gotabaya Rajapaksa was elected in the November 2019 presidential election, in the general election which was postponed to August 2020 due to the impact of COVID-19, the ruling Sri Lanka Podujana Peramuna party led by Prime Minister Mahinda Rajapaksa won with 145 seats, greatly exceeding a majority (113 seats) in parliament. On the economic front, after the end of the conflict, the economy of Sri Lanka was growing at an annual rate of 7% and maintained steady annual growth of over 3% in recent years. In 2020, the economy was depressed due to the impacts of COVID-19, but it has been on a recovery trend, with positive growth of 4.3% in the first quarter of 2021 and positive growth of 12.3% in the second quarter. Further growth is expected based on the recovery from negative growth in 2020 and on the country's geopolitical importance and access to the Indian market. As for relations with Japan, bilateral relations are being maintained and strengthened, such as through the 2nd Japan Sri Lanka Senior Official Level Policy Dialogue in February and the teleconference meeting between Defense Minister Kishi Nobuo and President Rajapaksa (concurrently serving as Defense Minister).

In terms of support for measures against COVID-19 and in response to requests by Sri Lanka, by the end of 2021, Japan has provided 1.46 million doses of Japanese-made AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines via the COVAX Facility and has provided cold chain development support, for which Sri Lanka expressed its gratitude.

#### **(5) Nepal**

Nepal has geopolitical importance as an inland state in South Asia between the great powers of China and India. In domestic affairs, Sher Bahadur Deuba, the President of the Nepali Congress Party, was appointed as Prime Minister in July and a new government was inaugurated. On the economic front, the new administration is prioritizing the reconstruction of industries impacted by COVID-19 and the development of infrastructure to improve the investment environment. For many years, Japan has been a major donor to Nepal and the two countries have traditionally built friendly relations through a variety of exchanges including between the imperial family and the former royal family, and through mountaineering.

Nepal has been impacted by the spread of COVID-19, and by the end of 2021, Japan has provided Nepal with 1.61 million doses of Japanese-made AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines via the COVAX Facility and has also provided cold chain development support.

In April, Japan also exchanged notes regarding grant aid to provide health and medical equipment (for MRIs and CTs, etc.) that contributes to preventing underlying diseases from worsening, and has additionally been providing debt relief through the Debt Service Suspension Initiative and supporting Nepal through international organizations to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Nepal has expressed its gratitude for such support from Japan. In December, the International Conference on Nepal's Reconstruction 2021 was held in Kathmandu, and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda Taro sent a video message on Japan's reconstruction assistance in Nepal after the April 2015 earthquake.

#### **(6) Bhutan**

Bhutan sets Gross National Happiness (GNH) as a guideline of the administration and is working on the priority issues of reducing poverty, improving the quality of healthcare and education, gender equality, the preservation of the environment,

culture and traditions, stabilization of the macroeconomy, etc., under the 12th Five-Year Plan (from July 2018 until June 2023). Since the outbreak of COVID-19, Bhutan has introduced strict border control measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Bhutan has traditionally been friendly toward Japan, and there is a rich history of exchanges between the Japanese Imperial and Bhutanese Royal families. Amid concerns about the impact of COVID-19, Japan provided Bhutan with support for the development of a cold chain for vaccines.

### (7) The Maldives

Situated in a strategically important location in the Indian Ocean, the Maldives is an important partner to Japan in achieving a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific.” Economic growth in the Maldives is mainly led by fishing and tourism, which account for about 30% of GDP, and the country’s per-capita GDP has reached the highest level in South Asia. However, the economy in 2020 sharply fell due to the spread of COVID-19, primarily from the shock to the tourism industry, but in 2021, the economy turned to positive growth. In domestic affairs, the Solih administration was launched in November 2018. In the parliamentary election held in April 2019, the ruling Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP) captured two-thirds of the seats in parliament, thus solidifying the political footing of the administration of President Ibrahim Mohamed Solih. Since his inauguration, President Solih has been promoting a foreign policy of strengthening cooperation with every country that hopes to build mutually beneficial relations, and of advancing cooperation with other countries in the region including India.

Regarding relations with Japan, in June, Foreign Minister Motegi and Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid held a Japan-Maldives Foreign Ministers’ telephone call and, when Foreign Minister Shahid visited Japan in August as the President of the 76th session of the United Nations General Assembly, he paid a courtesy call to Prime

Minister Suga and had a meeting with Foreign Minister Motegi. Additionally, in response to the spread of COVID-19 within the Maldives, Japan has provided approximately 110,000 doses of Japanese-made AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccines via the COVAX Facility by the end of 2021 and has provided cold chain development support, for which the Maldives expressed gratitude. In these ways, such efforts are continuing to strengthen bilateral relations.

## 6 Oceania

### (1) Australia

#### A Brief Summary and Overview

In the Foreign Policy White Paper issued by the Australian Government in November 2017, it was announced that as the guidelines for foreign policy of the next 10 years, Australia will, among others, promote an open, inclusive and prosperous Indo-Pacific region, oppose protectionism, promote and protect international rules, while also strengthening cooperation with partners including Japan. This foreign policy has continued to be upheld even after Prime Minister Scott Morrison replaced Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull in August 2018.

With the region facing a variety of issues, the “Special Strategic Partnership” between Japan and Australia, which share fundamental values and strategic interests, is more important than ever. The two countries’ strategic visions toward maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order based on the rule of law in the Indo-Pacific region are aligned in wide-ranging areas. With the Prime Ministers’ annual mutual visits and close coordination between the Foreign Ministers serving as the basis, the two countries have been further deepening multi-layered cooperation and collaboration in all areas toward stability and prosperity of the international community. Furthermore, multilateral coordination and partnerships such as the Japan-U.S.-Australia, and Japan-U.S.-Australia-India relations are being steadily strengthened.

The two countries are promoting free trade, including the TPP11 Agreement and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement. Australia is the fifth largest trading partner for Japan, and Japan is the third largest trading partner for Australia. The two countries are further developing mutually complementary economic relations based on the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), which marks the seventh anniversary of its effectuation, the TPP11 Agreement that entered into force at the end of 2018, and the RCEP Agreement that entered into force in January 2022.

At the June Japan-Australia Summit Meeting between Prime Minister Suga and Prime Minister Morrison, the two leaders affirmed their intention to steadily enhance security cooperation between their countries, and to raise bilateral relations to a higher level. The two leaders also welcomed the announcement of the “Japan-Australia Partnership on Decarbonisation through Technology” including supporting energy transitions in Asia and other regions, and affirmed the importance of enhancing bilateral economic relations together in the public and private sectors. Immediately after Prime Minister Kishida assumed the office of Prime Minister, at the October Japan-Australia Leaders Video Teleconference Meeting, the two leaders confirmed that they would further strengthen the Japan-Australia “Special Strategic Partnership” and continue to work together toward the realization of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).” Regarding bilateral relations, the two leaders affirmed that they would further (1) deepen the cooperation in security and defense and economy areas, (2) strengthen cooperation with allies and like-minded countries, including through Japan-Australia-India-U.S. cooperation, in order to contribute to the peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific, and (3) cooperate on global issues including climate change.

At the Japan-Australia Leaders Video Teleconference Meeting in January 2022, the two leaders welcomed the signing of the



Japan-Australia Leaders Video Teleconference Meeting  
(January 6, 2022, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement (RAA). Prime Minister Kishida showed his recognition that security and defense cooperation between Japan and Australia continue to be a model case for Japan to strengthen security and defense cooperation with other countries. The two leaders exchanged opinions on security and defense cooperation, regional affairs, working together with allies and like-minded countries, disarmament/non-proliferation, and the economy, and they shared the view that Japan and Australia will further strengthen bilateral relations and embody their commitment toward the realization of a FOIP.

Between foreign ministers, in May, Foreign Minister Motegi held a Japan-Australia Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs Payne. Minister Motegi shared the view that the range of cooperation between Japan and Australia has been steadily expanding, as shown by the development of security and defense cooperation, as well as cooperation on clean energy including hydrogen in the economic field. The two Ministers confirmed that they will continue to develop bilateral relations. Additionally, at the Japan-Australia Foreign Ministers' Video Teleconference Meeting in November and at the Meeting of G7 Foreign and Development Ministers in December, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Minister for Foreign Affairs Payne agreed to elevate the “Special Strategic Partnership” between Japan and Australia to a

higher level and to work through close communication toward the realization of a FOIP.

### **B Cooperation in the Security Field**

To ensure peace and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region, Japan and Australia have continued to steadily strengthen and expand cooperation in the field of security.

In June, the Ninth Japan-Australia Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations (“2+2”) were held. The Ministers shared their strategic recognition considering regional security challenges, and confirmed the importance of elevating security and defence cooperation between Japan and Australia to a new level so as to contribute to the peace, stability and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific and beyond, thereby realizing a FOIP. In January 2022, the Japan-Australia RAA was signed at the Japan-Australia Leaders Video Teleconference Meeting. The Agreement establishes the procedures and the status of the forces of either Japan or Australia when they visit the other country to engage in cooperative activities, and will facilitate the implementation of cooperative activities between the forces of the two countries, will further promote security and defense cooperation between the two countries, and will enable both Japan and Australia to further contribute to the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region. The Australia-Japan Leaders’ Meeting Joint Statement issued at the meeting states that cooperation between Japan and Australia in the field of economic security will also be strengthened. In addition, both Japan and Australia are U.S. allies, and will work to further strengthen Japan-U.S.-Australia cooperation.

### **C Economic Relations**

As shown by Japan and Australia spearheading the TPP11 Agreement, which entered into force in December 2018, the two countries are working closely and demonstrating leadership in promoting the regional free trade order, including the RCEP Agreement. Mainly industrial products such

as automobiles are being exported from Japan to Australia, while mainly energy resources such as coal and natural gas, and agricultural products such as beef are being imported into Japan from Australia, in mutually complementary economic relations that have been developed steadily over the years. In recent years new cooperation efforts have been progressing, such as hydrogen-related efforts. Since the spread of COVID-19, with the movement of goods, funds and people between Japan and Australia stagnating, the two countries are discussing ways to develop economic relations in a way that is compatible with measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

### **D Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges**

There exists a foundation for affinity toward Japan in Australia cultivated over many years, as shown by the fact that approximately 400,000 people in Australia learn the Japanese language (the fourth largest group in the world), and that there are over 100 sister city relations. Until travel restrictions were enforced due to the spread of COVID-19, a variety of initiatives had been implemented in order to strengthen the foundation of Japan-Australia relations, including the promotion of mutual understanding through JENESYS, an exchange program to promote understanding of Japan that includes young people, and the “New Colombo Plan” as well as the Young Political Leaders Exchange. Both Japan and Australia will continue to work on the appropriate and steady operation of the Japan-Australia Working Holiday Program.

### **E Cooperation in the International Community**

In order to make an active contribution to peace and stability in the international community, the two countries have been strengthening cooperation in wide-ranging areas. In particular, cooperation has been deepened in addressing various issues facing the Indo-Pacific region such as maritime security and nuclear and missile development by North Korea. Australia



deployed the Royal Australian Navy frigate HMAS BALLARAT in mid-May and the frigate HMAS WARRAMUNGA in late October to undertake monitoring and surveillance activities in the adjacent ocean areas around Japan. By doing so, for the fifth and sixth times since 2018, Australia has engaged in monitoring and surveillance activities against illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean flagged vessels, which are prohibited by UN Security Council resolutions. In addition, from early to late March and from mid-August to mid-September, Australia engaged in monitoring and surveillance activities for the eighth and ninth time since 2018 by aircraft, using Kadena Air Base.

## **(2) New Zealand**

### **A Brief Summary**

Japan and New Zealand share fundamental values, such as democracy and a market economy. The two countries have been maintaining good relations over the years. In recent years, under the “Strategic Cooperative Partnership,” the two countries have been strengthening bilateral cooperation in areas including the economy, security and defense cooperation and people-to-people exchanges, as well as cooperative relations on issues facing the region and the international community. In the general election in October 2020, the ruling Labour Party, led by Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern, signed a cooperation agreement (non-Cabinet participation cooperation agreement) with the Greens, and a new administration was inaugurated.

### **B High-Level Discussions**

Amidst the global spread of COVID-19, Japan and New Zealand have been closely exchanging opinions on COVID-19 responses, Japan-New Zealand cooperation in Pacific Island countries, and the regional situation. At the 41st Japan-New Zealand Foreign Ministry Consultations in September, the two sides discussed various matters such as cooperation in the COVID-19 response

and bilateral relations including strengthening security cooperation as well as global cooperation around the Indo-Pacific region. The two countries reaffirmed that they will cooperate more closely in support of a FOIP.

### **C Economic Relations**

The two countries enjoy complementary economic relations and have closely cooperated on the steady implementation of the TPP11 Agreement, which entered into force in December 2018, and the promotion of free trade structures including the RCEP Agreement and WTO reforms. In 2021, private companies in both countries began full-scale hydrogen production projects that use renewable energy. Furthermore, in the fields of food and agriculture, the “New Zealand Hokkaido Dairy Collaboration Project” designed to improve the profitability of dairy farming in Japan has been implemented since 2014, and the “New Zealand Hokkaido Sheep Collaboration Project” was additionally launched in 2018 with the aim of vitalizing the sheep industry in Hokkaido.

### **D Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges**

People-to-people exchanges between Japan and New Zealand, such as for youths, take place through exchange programs like JENESYS, and a cumulative total of 1,100 people had participated by 2019. By 2021, more than 3,300 people have also participated in the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program, which invites foreign youth (on average approximately 100 people annually), and active exchanges are continuing. Additionally, the 44 sister city relations that have been cultivated between Japan and New Zealand over many years are fertile ground for people-to-people exchanges, and networking between sister cities is making progress with the aim of promoting mutual understanding among youth. During the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, New Zealand sent its largest-ever delegation, of more than 210 Olympic athletes, to Japan, and they interacted with local Japanese governments.

## **E Cooperation in the International Community**

The two countries are cooperating closely for the peace and stability of the international community, including the UN. In particular, against illicit maritime activities, including ship-to-ship transfers with North Korean-flagged vessels, which are prohibited by UN Security Council resolutions, between late April and late May and in November, New Zealand engaged in monitoring and surveillance activities for the fourth and fifth times since 2018 by aircraft, using Kadena Air Base. Furthermore, Japan and New Zealand have collaborated in regional cooperation frameworks such as the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum, Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) and the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM). They are also cooperating over economic development in the Pacific Island region. Through these efforts, the two countries are playing a proactive role for the regional stability and development.

## **(3) Pacific Island Countries**

### **A Brief Summary and Overview**

Pacific Island countries and Japan are bound by the Pacific Ocean, have deep historical ties, and are important partners in such areas as cooperation in the international arena and the supply of fishery and mineral resources. They are becoming increasingly important as a cornerstone of a FOIP, as they are located at the heart of the Pacific Ocean. As one of Japan's important policies in diplomacy with Pacific Island countries, Japan has been holding the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) once every three years since 1997. In June 2021, the seventh meeting of the Interagency Committee for the Promotion of Cooperation with Pacific Island Countries, which is comprised of relevant governmental ministries and agencies, was held under the leadership of Special Advisor to the Prime Minister Kihara Minoru and Special Advisor to the Prime Minister Izumi Hiroto. In addition to discussing specific measures for strengthening

policies toward Pacific Island countries, it was confirmed that, in preparation for PALM9, further discussions would be held in order for relevant ministries and agencies to continue to cooperate and to promote "All Japan" efforts. Afterwards, at PALM9 in July, Prime Minister Suga held bilateral leaders' video teleconference meetings with the leaders of 13 island countries. Amidst the continuing impacts of COVID-19, Japan has utilized a variety of opportunities to further strengthen relations with Pacific Island countries, including through the provision of vaccines and cold chain development.

Additionally, in response to the volcanic eruption in Tonga and the tsunami in January 2022, Japan Disaster Relief teams (Self-Defense Forces) promptly provided emergency relief supplies, and Japan provided emergency grant aid.

### **B Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM)**

In July 2021, PALM9 was held via video conference with Prime Minister Suga and Prime Minister Natano of Tuvalu as co-chairs, and the leaders and representatives of 19 countries and regions participated, including Japan, 14 Pacific Island countries, Australia, New Zealand, New Caledonia, and French Polynesia. PALM9 discussions centered on the five priority areas for the next three years: (1) COVID-19 Response and Recovery, (2) Sustainable Oceans based on the Rule of Law, (3) Climate Change and Disaster Resilience, (4) Strengthening Foundation for Sustainable and Resilient Economic Development, and (5) People-to-People Exchanges and Human Resource Development. "The Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) Leaders Declaration" and annexed documents "Factsheet – Japan's support since the 8th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM8)" and "Joint Action Plan for Strengthening Pacific Bonds and for Mutual Prosperity" were adopted as an outcome of the discussions (see the Special Feature on page 86).

## The Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9)

On July 2, the Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) was held via video-conference. The Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) is a leaders' summit held once every three years since 1997 with the aim of facilitating candid exchanges of views at the summit level on various challenges faced by the Pacific Islands region, in order to contribute to the stability and prosperity of the region. At the same time, it aims to strengthen the partnership between Japan and the Pacific Islands region.

To date, eight PALM meetings have been convened. PALM9 was chaired jointly by Prime Minister Suga and Prime Minister Kauea Natano of Tuvalu, and attended by the leaders of 19 countries and regions: Japan, 14 Pacific Island countries (Tuvalu, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu), as well as Australia, New Zealand, New Caledonia, and French Polynesia.

At PALM9, Prime Minister Suga announced Japan's Pacific Bond (KIZUNA) Policy, which aims to further strengthen Japan's cooperation with the Pacific Island countries through an "All Japan" approach, toward the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)." He also announced Japan's intention to engage in people-to-people exchanges and human resource development for more than 5,500 people, alongside steady development cooperation over the next three years. At PALM9, discussions were held on the following priority areas for the next three years: (1) COVID-19 Response and Recovery, (2) Sustainable Oceans based on the Rule of Law, (3) Climate Change and Disaster Resilience, (4) Strengthening Foundation for Sustainable and Resilient Economic Development, and (5) People-to-People Exchanges and Human Resource Development. In particular, with regard to COVID-19 measures, Prime Minister Suga stated that Japan will provide support to the Pacific Island countries in areas such as the development of cold chain equipment, as well as supply vaccines through the COVAX Facility. The Pacific Island countries greatly appreciated the role that PALM has played so far, and expressed their appreciation toward the realization of Japan's commitments set out in PALM8 and its new commitments for the next three years in the five priority areas.

Furthermore, Prime Minister Suga stated that the PALM process was continuously evolving, and that the leaders were able to have concrete, action-oriented discussions at PALM9. In response, the PALM leaders welcomed the further strengthening of the PALM process and shared the view that Japan and the Pacific Island countries would continue to work closely together.

The outcome of the discussions was the adoption of "The Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) Leaders Declaration," and its annexed documents, "Joint Action Plan for Strengthening Pacific Bonds and for Mutual Prosperity" and "Factsheet – Japan's support since the 8th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM8)." The Joint Action Plan summarized concrete actions in the five priority areas to be jointly taken by Japan and the Pacific Island countries over the next three years, under "the Pacific Bond (KIZUNA) Policy."



The Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) (July 2. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

### C Meetings with Dignitaries

At the bilateral leaders' video teleconference meetings held with the leaders of 13 island countries at PALM9, Prime Minister Suga stated that he would like to continue working to realize a FOIP, and also expressed his intention to continue supporting each country in terms of fighting COVID-19, infrastructure development, and improving disaster response capabilities. In response to this, each country expressed its gratitude, including for Japan's support so far, and confirmed that they would promote cooperation in various fields.

In September, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakanishi Satoshi held a meeting with Republic of Palau Ambassador Matsutaro, and both sides expressed their gratitude to each other for their efforts to develop the relations between Japan and Palau.

### D Cultural and People-to-People Exchanges

At PALM9, "People-to-People Exchanges and Human Resource Development" were positioned as one of the five priority areas, and Japan announced that it would actively engage in human exchanges and human resource development for more than 5,500 people at various levels and in various fields over the next three years. As part of those efforts, Japan will promote people-to-people exchanges among university students through JENESYS. Furthermore, from FY2016 Japan commenced the Pacific Leaders' Educational Assistance for Development of State (Pacific-LEADS) for young government administrators of Pacific Island countries. Currently renamed the SDGs Global Leader Program, the program accepts young government officials and private human resources from Pacific Island countries to universities and graduate schools in Japan.

## 7 Regional and Inter-Regional Cooperation

In the Indo-Pacific region, the world's growth center, it is important to ensure peace and

prosperity for the entire region, and by extension for the world, by realizing a free and open order based on the rule of law. From this perspective, Japan strategically advances initiatives toward realizing a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" through various regional cooperative frameworks, including cooperation with like-minded countries such as Australia, India, ASEAN countries, and Europe, Japan-ASEAN, Japan-Mekong cooperation, ASEAN Plus Three (Japan, China and the Republic of Korea (ROK)), East Asia Summit (EAS), ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), while maintaining the Japan-U.S. Alliance as the cornerstone of its foreign policy. In particular, the "ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP)," which was adopted by ASEAN in 2019, shares fundamental principles with FOIP, such as the rule of law, freedom and openness. While respecting the centrality and unity of ASEAN, Japan will further expand the support of the international community for AOIP, and intends to implement concrete ASEAN-Japan cooperation that contributes to the principles of AOIP, and, as an "Indo-Pacific State," contribute to the stability and prosperity of the entire Indo-Pacific region.

### (1) The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)

Located in the center of the vast Indo-Pacific, ASEAN is key to the realization of a FOIP. At the ASEAN-related Summit Meetings held in November 2015, it was declared that the three councils of the "ASEAN Political-Security Community Council," the "ASEAN Economic Community Council" and the "ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community Council" would be established within 2015 (2015 Kuala Lumpur Declaration on the Establishment of the ASEAN Community). Also, "ASEAN2025: Forging Ahead Together" was adopted as a guiding policy for the ASEAN Community for the 10 years from 2016 to 2025. In June 2019, the AOIP was adopted.

In East Asia where ASEAN plays an important role as a center of regional cooperation,

multi-layered regional cooperation, such as ASEAN Plus Three (Japan, China and the ROK), EAS and ARF, is operating with ASEAN at its center, and cooperative relationships in a wide range of areas including politics, security and the economy have been established.

On the economic front, ASEAN has concluded the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA) as well as other EPAs and FTAs with various countries including Japan, China, the ROK and India, thereby expanding the ASEAN centered free trade zone. In November 2020, the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement was signed by 15 countries, including Japan and 10 ASEAN countries, and it entered into force on January 1, 2022. While working closely with participating countries to ensure the full implementation of the RCEP Agreement, Japan will continue to play a leading role for the future participation of India in the Agreement, as India declined signing.

## **(2) Issue of the South China Sea**

The issue with regard to the South China Sea is directly related to the peace and stability of the region and is a legitimate concern of the international community. As a stakeholder that makes use of the South China Sea, the issue is also an important matter of interest for Japan, which depends on sea transport for most of its resources and energy.

China has continued and strengthened its actions to unilaterally change the status quo and increase regional tensions against the rule of law and openness, such as with further militarization of disputed features (see Chapter 3, Section 1, 3 (4)). Furthermore, China has not changed its position of not accepting the Arbitral Tribunal's award<sup>27</sup> to the Philippines and China, and has continued to assert maritime claims that are inconsistent with

the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

The international community, including Japan, has expressed serious concerns about China's unilateral attempts to change the status quo and render them *faits accomplis*. Japan also strongly opposes unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion and from the standpoint that the three principles of the rule of law at sea should be consistently adhered (see Chapter 3, Section 1, 6 (2)), has also consistently emphasized the importance of all the concerned parties related to the South China Sea to work toward peaceful settlement of disputes based on international law, in particular UNCLOS. Additionally, Japan has pointed out that China's assertions regarding baselines in the South China Sea are not based on relevant provisions of UNCLOS and that it is important to protect the freedom of navigation and overflight, including in the sea and airspace surrounding and above maritime features found to be low-tide elevations that do not have territorial sea and territorial airspace of their own according to the award of the Arbitral Tribunal. Japan has also pointed out that the basis of the "historical rights" claimed by China is not clear under international law, and the Arbitral Tribunal ruled that the "historical rights" based on the "nine-dash line" claimed by China were found to be contrary to UNCLOS and were clearly denied. In July 2021, which marked five years since the Arbitral Tribunal's award as to the disputes between the Philippines and China, Foreign Minister Motegi issued a statement reiterating Japan's position on the importance of the rule of law and on the principle of peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law.

In 2018, negotiations on the Code of Conduct (COC) in the South China Sea commenced

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<sup>27</sup> In January 2013, the Government of the Philippines instituted arbitral proceedings under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) as to the disputes between the Philippines and China regarding the South China Sea. The Arbitral Tribunal organized by these proceedings rendered the final award on July 12, 2016. Japan issued a statement by the Foreign Minister on the same day, stating, "As the Tribunal's award is final and legally binding on the parties to the dispute under the provisions of UNCLOS, the parties to this case are required to comply with the award. Japan strongly hopes that the parties' compliance with the award will eventually lead to the peaceful settlement of disputes in the South China Sea."

between China and ASEAN. Japan considers that the COC should be effective, substantive, consistent with UNCLOS and respect the legitimate rights and interests of all stakeholders who use the South China Sea, and has advocated for the importance of such efforts leading to demilitarization of the area and to the realization of a peaceful, open South China Sea.

### (3) Japan-ASEAN Relations

ASEAN is key to the realization of a FOIP, and realizing a more stable and prosperous ASEAN is absolutely essential to the stability and prosperity of the region as a whole. Based on this recognition, Japan is actively supporting ASEAN's efforts in accordance with "ASEAN Community Vision 2025" for further integration even after the establishment of the ASEAN Community, while steadily implementing the "Vision Statement on ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation" and the "Joint Statement of the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit" that were both adopted at the ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit Meeting held in Tokyo in 2013. Based on the "Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific" that was adopted in November 2020 at the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting, Japan is embodying cooperation with ASEAN in line with the AOIP's priority areas of maritime cooperation, connectivity, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and economic and other possible areas of cooperation. The Statement was the first joint statement on AOIP adopted by ASEAN with external partners, and has been followed by similar joint statements between ASEAN and other dialogue partners.

In 2021, Japan demonstrated that it was strongly promoting efforts toward the realization of both FOIP and AOIP, including the ASEAN-Japan Foreign Ministers Meeting in August and the 24th ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting in October, under the chairmanship of Brunei. Furthermore, 2023 is the 50th Year of ASEAN-Japan Friendship and Cooperation, and Japan has expressed its



The 24th ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting (teleconference)  
(October 27, Prime Minister's Office; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

intention to hold a Commemorative Summit Meeting in Japan and to raise ASEAN-Japan relations to a new stage, and it was welcomed by the ASEAN side.

At the 24th ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting, Prime Minister Kishida introduced Japan's assistance to ASEAN to counter COVID-19 as follows: (1) Provision of more than 16 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines, a cumulative total of approximately 32 billion Japanese yen worth of grant aid which included development of cold chain system, etc., under "Last One Mile Support" and approximately 195 billion Japanese yen worth of financial assistance in near-interest-free yen loans, and (2) Japan intends to fully support the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases (ACPHEED), which was declared to be officially established at the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting in 2020.

As for ASEAN-Japan cooperation, he expressed Japan's strong and consistent support for ASEAN centrality and unity, and stated that Japan has been advancing concrete cooperation in line with the AOIP priority areas based on the ASEAN-Japan Joint Statement on AOIP Cooperation, and introduced the Progress Report on a total of 73 projects which included 49 cooperation projects announced at the 2020 Summit as well as 24 additional projects.

Regarding climate change, the "ASEAN-Japan Climate Change Action Agenda 2.0" was published, and it was announced that Japan would



promote cooperation with ASEAN countries toward the realization of carbon neutrality. In addition, Prime Minister Kishida said that Japan will provide comprehensive support to ASEAN countries through the formulation of roadmaps for energy transition, technical cooperation, and human resource development, including those under the Asia Energy Transition Initiative (AETI).

In terms of post-COVID-19 cooperation, he indicated his intention to enhance cooperation in a wide range of areas, which will contribute to achieving the SDGs, including climate change, clean energy, healthcare such as universal health coverage (UHC) and disaster prevention, as well as areas including digital transformation, quality infrastructure investment, and supply chain resilience.

ASEAN countries expressed their high evaluation and appreciation for Japan's leadership to counter COVID-19, and they expressed their high evaluations of and strong hope for Japan's continued close cooperation on the AOIP.

For regional and international affairs, with regard to North Korea, Prime Minister Kishida asked for continued understanding and cooperation of each country toward the immediate resolution of the abductions issue, and ASEAN countries expressed their support. He also clarified Japan's position on the South China Sea issue and on the situation in Myanmar.

#### **(4) Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting** **(Participating Countries: Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand, Viet Nam and Japan)**

The Mekong region (Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Thailand and Viet Nam) is the core of the Indo-Pacific and is Japan's Strategic Partner with strong economic growth and potential. Peace and prosperity in the Mekong region are extremely important to Asia as a whole, including Japan, since it contributes to narrowing the development gap in the region and promoting regional integration within ASEAN. Japan has been holding the Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting every year since

2009 in order to steadily implement Mekong-Japan cooperation. The Mekong-Japan Summit Meeting was postponed in 2021 due to circumstances such as COVID-19, but there has been no change in Japan's position of emphasizing cooperation with the Mekong region, and Japan continues to maintain its steadfast commitment to the region. Japan will continue to contribute to the prosperity and development of the region as a reliable partner for Mekong region countries.

#### **(5) ASEAN Plus Three** **(Participating Countries: 10 ASEAN countries and Japan, China and the ROK)**

The Asian financial crisis in 1997 prompted the launch of ASEAN Plus Three, in the form of adding the three countries of Japan, China and the ROK to ASEAN. ASEAN Plus Three has been developed with a focus on areas such as finance and food security. It currently covers cooperation in 24 fields, including finance, agriculture and food, education, culture, tourism, public health, energy and the environment. Under the "ASEAN Plus Three Cooperation Work Plan (2018-2022)" adopted in August 2017, the ASEAN Plus Three countries have been making further progress on cooperation in various fields.

At the ASEAN Plus Three Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in August and at the 24th ASEAN Plus Three Summit Meeting held in October, Foreign Minister Motegi and Prime Minister Kishida each spoke about Japan's support to ASEAN for measures against COVID-19 as well as ASEAN Plus Three cooperation, and then emphasized the importance of promoting cooperation in line with the principles and priority areas of the AOIP that shares fundamental principles with FOIP.

In terms of COVID-19 support, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan would provide (1) full support for ACPHEED, (2) full support to further promote medical support and for the provision of safe, effective and quality-assured vaccines, and (3) near interest-free financial assistance in yen loans to ASEAN countries as economic



The 22nd ASEAN Plus Three Foreign Ministers' Meeting (tele-conference) (August 3, Tokyo)

revitalization support. Prime Minister Kishida also spoke about expanded investment in quality infrastructure through the “Initiative on Overseas Loan and Investment for ASEAN,” and about further expansion of the “ASEAN-Japan Economic Resilience Action Plan.”

Regarding ASEAN Plus Three cooperation, Prime Minister Kishida expressed Japan's intention to (1) support further utilization of the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve (APTERR) to respond to COVID-19, (2) work towards the full implementation of the RCEP Agreement and promote the materialization of Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT), (3) cooperate to stabilize the international crude oil market, and (4) welcomed the entry into force of the amended Chiang Mai Initiative Multilateralisation (CMIM) Agreement. In response, the ASEAN side expressed its gratitude for the support from Japan, China, and the ROK for ASEAN's response to COVID-19. Several countries expressed their expectations for the operationalization of regional medical reserves and for further cooperation in vaccine development, production and procurement. They emphasized the importance of enhancing regional cooperation, including the early entry into force of the RCEP Agreement, to achieve a sustainable recovery from COVID-19.

For regional and international affairs, with regard to North Korea, Prime Minister Kishida asked for continued understanding and cooperation of each country toward the immediate

resolution of the abductions issue. He also clarified Japan's position on the situation in Myanmar.

#### **(6) East Asia Summit (EAS) (Participating Countries: 10 ASEAN countries and Japan, China, the ROK, Australia, New Zealand, India, the U.S. and Russia)**

Launched in 2005, the EAS is the premier forum of the region, which aims to facilitate candid dialogue among leaders on issues of importance to the region and the international community, and to promote leaders-led cooperation in politics, security and the economy. Moreover, many democratic nations take part in the EAS, and it is expected that the EAS will contribute to the sharing of fundamental values in the region, including democracy and the rule of law, as well as to strengthening international rules and norms concerning trade and investment.

At the EAS Foreign Ministers' Meeting teleconference held in August, Foreign Minister Motegi clarified Japan's position on the issue concerning North Korea, including the abductions issue, on the situation in the East China Sea and in the South China Sea, on the situation in Hong Kong, and on the human rights situation in the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region (XUAR).

At the 16th EAS held in October, Prime Minister Kishida reiterated that Japan highly values and fully supports the AOIP, and called on each country to support the AOIP. He also explained that Japan and ASEAN are steadily promoting concrete cooperation that contributes to the principles of the AOIP.

Regarding regional and international affairs, Prime Minister Kishida expressed serious concerns over and strongly opposed to continued activities that violate Japan's sovereignty in the East China Sea, as well as activities that are raising tensions and actions that are against the rule of law taken in the South China Sea. He stated that the COC on the South China Sea should be in line with UNCLOS and should respect the legitimate rights and interests of all stakeholders using the



The 16th East Asia Summit (EAS) (teleconference) (October 27, Prime Minister's Office; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

South China Sea. He also stated the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and expressed his strong opposition to any economic coercion. Other countries expressed concern about the issue of the South China Sea, and also commented on the importance of freedom of navigation and flight over the South China Sea, and on the importance of the peaceful resolution of disputes in line with international law, including UNCLOS.

Prime Minister Kishida expressed serious concerns about the situation in Hong Kong and the human rights situation in the XUAR, and other countries also expressed concerns.

On North Korea, Prime Minister Kishida stated that North Korea also launched ballistic missiles in October and that the peace and security of the region and international community is under threat. He also stated that the full implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions, including “ship-to-ship transfer” measures, is essential to achieve the complete, verifiable and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges of North Korea. In addition, he asked for the continued understanding and cooperation of all countries toward the immediate resolution of the abductions issue. The participating countries also made remarks on the importance of denuclearization in the Korean Peninsula and the full implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions.

As for the situation in Myanmar, Prime Minister Kishida stressed again the position of the Government of Japan, that it strongly urges the stop of violence, the release of those who are detained and the restoration of Myanmar's democratic political system. He also urged Myanmar to constructively respond in order to enable the visit of Brunei Minister of Foreign Affairs II and ASEAN Special Envoy Dato Erywan to Myanmar as soon as possible. In addition, he mentioned that, to turn around the situation, Japan intends to deal with the issue by upholding engagement as a key principle, to continue to fully support ASEAN's efforts and to actively provide humanitarian assistance. The participating countries also mentioned the importance of cooperating for the swift implementation of the “Five-Point Consensus,” including the visit of ASEAN Special Envoy Erywan, and humanitarian assistance to the people of Myanmar.

### (7) Japan-China-ROK Trilateral Cooperation

Trilateral cooperation among Japan, China and the ROK continues to be vital from the perspective of promoting exchanges and mutual understanding among the three countries that enjoy geographical proximity and share deep historical ties. Furthermore, as economies that play a major role in the world economy and serve as the force driving prosperity of the East Asian region, trilateral cooperation among Japan, China and the ROK is one of the areas of cooperation that has huge potential in efforts to tackle various issues in the international community.

In order to promote practical cooperation in a variety of fields, working-level discussions were held, including the Japan-China-ROK Consultative Meeting on Consumer Politics in November and the Japan-China-ROK Consumer Policy Council in December. In August, Japan hosted the Japan-China-ROK Ministerial Conference on Transport and Logistics online and the Trilateral Culture Ministers' video teleconference to overcome the impacts of COVID-19 and discuss the direction

of trilateral cooperation in the post COVID-19 era. Practical exchanges of views were conducted between the Ministers of the three countries, and joint statements were adopted.

#### **(8) Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) (See Chapter 3, Section 3, 3 (2))**

Consisting of 21 economies (countries and regions) in the Asia-Pacific region, APEC promotes regional economic integration and cooperation across the region among the member economies on a voluntary basis. As the Asia-Pacific region is positioned as the “world’s growth center,” strengthening economic cooperation and trust in the economic aspect in this region is crucial in pursuing Japan’s further economic development.

At the APEC 2021 – New Zealand summit teleconference in November, in addition to the Leaders’ Declaration, the “Aotearoa Plan of Action” for implementing the “APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040” was adopted as an addendum to the Leaders’ Declaration. Prime Minister Kishida, who attended the summit, expressed his determination to put the Japanese economy on a new growth trajectory and contribute to the growth of the Asia-Pacific region by aiming to realize new capitalism.

#### **(9) South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC)**

SAARC was officially inaugurated in 1985 with multiple objectives such as enhancing the welfare

of citizens of the South Asian countries, and cooperation and collaboration in economic and social development and cultural areas. As of 2020, SAARC has eight member states (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, Maldives and Afghanistan) and nine observer countries and institutions including Japan. As a relatively loose framework of regional cooperation, SAARC has worked primarily on economic, social and cultural areas, through summit meetings and meetings of the Council at the ministerial level (foreign ministers’ meetings). As part of youth exchange between Japan and SAARC, Japan has invited 3,615 people to date.

#### **(10) Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA)**

IORA is a regional organization whose main purpose is to promote economic cooperation in the Indian Ocean rim region, and Japan has been participating as a dialogue partner country since 1999. At the IORA Day 2021 reception, held in March to commemorate the 24th anniversary of the establishment of IORA, Foreign Minister Motegi sent a video message and expressed that Japan will continue to work with IORA toward the realization of a FOIP. Additionally, in November, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda Taro attended the 21st IORA Council of Ministers Meeting via teleconference, explaining Japan’s support for IORA member countries in such areas as response to COVID-19 and climate change policies, including for disaster prevention.

## Section 3

# North America

### 1 United States

#### (1) Situation in the U.S.

##### A Politics

The Biden administration (Democratic Party) started in January 2021 after the delay in the confirmation of the presidential elections and the mob attack on the U.S. Capitol. The key focus of U.S. politics in 2021 was on whether the Biden administration would be able to stably manage the political situation by steadily implementing measures to combat the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and achieve economic recovery. In addition, as many hold the opinion that the U.S. public is becoming increasingly divided and partisan, attention was also focused on whether President Joseph Biden would be able to make progress in his efforts to achieve national reconciliation.

On January 20, former Vice President Biden and former Senator Kamala Harris were respectively inaugurated as the 46th President and 49th Vice President of the U.S. after taking the oath of office at the presidential inauguration ceremony. Due to the effects of COVID-19 and the mob attack on the U.S. Capitol, the number of attendees at the inauguration ceremony was greatly limited, a large number of National Guard members was dispatched, and the general public was prohibited from entering the area around the venue. The inauguration was also unusual because

former President Donald Trump did not attend. In his inaugural address, President Biden spoke about the fight against COVID-19 and his aspirations for his “Build Back Better” agenda, strongly emphasized the need for national unity in dealing with many challenges, and reiterated his pledge to be a president for all Americans.

President Biden emphasized a stance of placing importance on diversity in the appointment of cabinet members who will form the core of his administration. These included the first female Secretary of the Treasury, the first African-American Secretary of Defense, the first Native American cabinet member, and first openly LGBTQ cabinet member. Moreover, in accordance with his campaign promises, during his first few days in office, President Biden signed a series of executive orders and took other executive measures that transformed many of the policies of the previous Trump administration. Among these, measures that attracted a high degree of attention included more rigorous COVID-19 countermeasures as well as immigration-related measures such as suspending the construction of the border wall between the U.S. and Mexico. Furthermore, in February, President Biden delivered a speech on foreign policy and emphasized that the U.S. would once again engage with the world by repairing and strengthening its alliances under the slogan “America is back.” The United States returning to the Paris Agreement and revoking its

withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO) were symbolic of this policy.

From the outset, the Biden administration gave top priority to COVID-19 countermeasures and economic recovery. In regard to COVID-19 countermeasures, in March, Congress passed the 1.9 trillion US dollar American Rescue Plan Act, which strengthened the testing system and vaccine supply, and also provided direct benefits to the public. Vaccination numbers showed steady growth. In May, President Biden called for the public to be further vaccinated, with the goal of 70% of adults having received at least one dose by Independence Day on July 4 in order to return the nation closer to normal. As a result, the number of daily COVID-19 infections in the U.S. declined from approximately 200,000 at the time of his inauguration to a level below 12,000 in late June.

Moreover, in regard to economic measures, in addition to “rescue” from COVID-19, President Biden announced a massive fiscal stimulus plan focused on “jobs” and “families.” In his speech to a joint session of Congress delivered before the 100th day of his administration, he appealed for support for these economic policies in order to help the middle class.

On the diplomatic front, the main policies were presented on occasions such as President Biden’s foreign policy speech in February, his policy speech before the Congress in April, and Secretary of State Antony Blinken’s speech in March. Under the basic policy that the U.S. alone cannot deal with various challenges and that the U.S. will take a strong position toward China, which it positions as a strategic competitor, the Biden administration has pursued a foreign policy that emphasizes strengthening alliances, which it regards as its greatest asset, international cooperation, and values such as democracy and human rights. President Biden emphasized the restoration of U.S. leadership in the international community by hosting the online Leaders Summit on Climate in April, attending the G7 Summit 2021 in Cornwall on his first overseas trip in June, and

other actions. While promoting such active diplomacy, he has also indicated his policy of perceiving foreign policy and domestic policy issues as two sides of the same coin, identifying the revival of U.S. economic and technological strength and the rebuilding of U.S. democracy as key priorities.

At first, U.S. public opinion generally responded favorably to the Biden administration’s various measures, and the President’s approval rating remained stable at around 55%. However, six months after the inauguration, his approval rating gradually declined. Behind the decline was an increase in the number of infected people and deaths caused by the spread of the Delta variant of COVID-19. Although President Biden touted progress toward normalization of social life in his speech celebrating Independence Day on July 4, he fell short of his goal of having 70% of adults receive at least one vaccine dose by that date. There was strong opposition to moves to make vaccination and the wearing of masks mandatory, and some pointed out later that the sluggish growth in the vaccination rate led to the resurgence of infections after July. Although President Biden announced in September his policy to require federal agencies and large corporations to make vaccination obligatory for employees, some Republican state governors opposed this, and filed lawsuits one after the other, claiming that the administration oversteps its authority and infringes on personal liberty. Amidst this, the number of deaths from COVID-19 in the U.S. in 2021 exceeded that of the previous year, reaching a cumulative total of 750,000 in November.

It was also pointed out that the administration’s policy on Afghanistan was a factor in the further decline of the approval rating. In keeping with his pledge to end the longest war in U.S. history, President Biden announced and carried out the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Afghanistan by the end of August. In the process, the anti-government forces of the Taliban expanded their influence throughout Afghanistan and gained control of the capital city of Kabul on August 15,



resulting in chaos at Kabul airport as people tried to flee the country. Although public support for the policy to withdraw U.S. troops was relatively high, the chaos led to increased criticism of the administration's analysis of the situation as inadequate. Republicans in Congress severely accused this, and there was also critical commentary from within the Democratic Party. Although President Biden emphasized the success of the evacuation operation for U.S. citizens, Afghani allies, and others as well as the fulfillment of his campaign pledge, disapproval continued to outweigh approval from August onward.

In terms of economic policy, President Biden personally devoted much of his energy to facilitating Congress to pass a bipartisan infrastructure investment bill and the Build Back Better bill on investments in social security, climate change, and other fields. The former was passed as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act in November, but the process highlighted the difficulty of bringing the Democrats together. In addition, the difference between the two Parties intensified on the debt ceiling issue as well, and the difficulty of overcoming partisan divisions was once again encountered.

In 2021, the Democratic Party won majorities in the Senate and the House of Representatives, giving them control of the administration and both houses of Congress for the first time in 12 years, since 2009. However, the very small difference in seats with the Republicans had a significant impact on the administration's ability to implement major policies and manage its relations with Congress. For the Biden administration and the Democratic Party, maintaining majorities in both the House of Representatives and Senate in the 2022 midterm elections will be essential for further advancing COVID-19 countermeasures and economic recovery measures, and at the same time, alleviating divisions over economic disparity, race, immigration, and other issues. However, history shows there are many examples of the parties of first-term presidents faring poorly in midterm

elections. Furthermore, the Biden administration's approval rating continues to be lower than its disapproval, and developments such as the defeat of the Democratic candidate who was seen as the frontrunner in the Virginia gubernatorial election in November were viewed as signs of a growing sense of alarm within the Democratic Party.

As for the presidential election in 2024, the White House Press Secretary stated in November that President Biden intends to run as a candidate. This intention was widely reported, as President Biden is currently the oldest U.S. president in history and will be 81 years old at the time of the next election. Vice President Harris has also been garnering attention. As the first female and black vice president in U.S. history, she has played a role in promoting President Biden's diplomacy by holding telephone calls with many foreign leaders at the beginning of his administration and visiting Central America in June, Southeast Asia in August, and Europe in November. Additionally, she was assigned by President Biden to guide the U.S. through difficult domestic issues, such as reform of the immigration and voting systems.

On the other hand, in regard to the Republican Party, many pointed out that former President Trump was key for Republican success in the midterm and upcoming presidential elections. In January 2021, former President Trump was impeached for the second time during his term, the first time for a president in U.S. history, for inciting the mob attack on the U.S. Capitol. Although he was acquitted during his impeachment trial in the Senate after leaving office, criticism of former President Trump momentarily increased. However, former President Trump and his policy stances remained popular with many Republican supporters. With his popularity in the backdrop, he bolstered his political activities by denouncing Senators and Congresspersons who were critical of him at political rallies and supporting his own candidates in the upcoming elections.

At the same time, former President Trump continued to claim that fraud had been committed

in the 2020 presidential election and repeatedly made statements suggesting that he would run again for the next presidential election. In response to the claims of fraud, states with Republican control of state legislatures, such as Georgia and Florida, proceeded to revise their state election laws for restrictions on mail-in ballots and stricter requirements for showing ID from the perspective of preventing election fraud. Many of these measures are believed to be disadvantageous to racial minorities, who are mostly supporters of the Democratic Party, and some have criticized them as being aimed at suppressing voting, thus accelerating the partisan divide. In addition, in the wake of the decennial census results, states proceeded to redraw their congressional districts, and the Republican Party reportedly took the lead in more states in this process as well. Meanwhile, it was also pointed out that within the Republican Party, there is friction between those who devotedly support former President Trump and those who maintain a certain distance from him as he has repeatedly made extreme statements.

Going forward, attention will be focused on developments in the two parties' offensive and defensive actions in the run-up to the midterm elections, and what impact this will have on President Biden's administration.

## **B Economy**

### **(A) Current Economic Situation**

2021 was a volatile year for the U.S. economy, having had to recover from 2020, a year in which the U.S. was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting global supply chain disruptions. The unemployment rate, which deteriorated to its worst postwar level (14.8%) in April 2020, improved to 3.94% in December 2021, and recovered to a level close to that of the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic (3.5% in February 2020). GDP also exceeded its pre-pandemic level (October-December 2019 quarter) in the April-June 2021 quarter. In particular, the recovery of consumer spending, which accounts

for 70% of GDP, has significantly contributed to this recovery. The Biden administration regards that this was achieved by normalizing economic activity through stimulus checks of up to 1,400 US dollars and vaccination promotion measures included in the 1.9 trillion US dollar COVID-19 economic stimulus package (the American Rescue Plan) enacted in March 2021. Amid this recovery of consumer demand, the mismatch between the global supply chain disruption and labor shortages caused by COVID-19 intensified, resulting in the U.S. consumer price index (CPI) remaining above 5% year on year since May. In December, it reached 7.1%, the highest level in approximately 40 years. Federal Reserve Board (FRB) Chairman Jerome Powell acknowledged that inflation, which he initially characterized as temporary and limited to a few items such as automobiles, was now on a broad-based and persistent trend, covering markets such as energy and rents, and expressed his intention to pursue monetary policy that would prevent prolonged high inflation. The Biden administration aims to ease the negative impact of inflation on citizens' lives and psychology by developing a concrete action plan to strengthen supply chains by upgrading ports and waterways, including relocating shipping containers stuck at ports to inland areas, as stipulated by the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act enacted on November 15, 2021.

### **(B) Economic Policy**

Prior to its inauguration in January 2021, the Biden Administration announced the American Rescue Plan, a 1.9 trillion U.S. dollar COVID-19 economic stimulus framework, with the hopes of recovering the domestic economy that had languished due to the pandemic and to "Build Back Better." The plan was signed into law on March 11, and included stimulus checks of up to 1,400 US dollars, expansion of unemployment benefits, support for small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as support for state governments that took financial hits due to COVID-19 countermeasures.

Furthermore, in the same month, the administration announced the American Jobs Plan, an approximately 2 trillion U.S. dollar investment that included investments in infrastructure and higher taxes on corporations. In April, the Biden administration announced the approximately 2 trillion U.S. dollar American Families Plan, which invests in education, social welfare and increases the tax rates for wealthy individuals. Out of the American Jobs Plan, only the 550 billion U.S. dollar Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which is limited to investment in infrastructure such as roads and ports, was passed with bipartisan support following congressional inquiries in November 2021. However, the Build Back Better Act, which includes measures on climate change and contents from the American Families Plan that lack bipartisan support, is still under consideration between the Biden administration and congressional democrats. As for monetary policy, amid the ongoing trend of high inflation since May 2021, the FRB began slowing down the rate at which it conducts quantitative easing (tapering) in November, gradually reducing the pace of purchases of Treasury bonds and other securities in response to further significant progress in domestic economic conditions. In December, the FRB decided to accelerate the tapering process. Moreover, in November, President Biden announced the reappointment of FRB Chairman Powell, whose term was set to expire in January 2022, as well as the nomination of FRB Member Lael Brainard to the Vice Chair of the FRB upon the end of her predecessor's term in February 2022.

## **(2) Japan-U.S. Political Relations**

Since the Biden administration took office in January 2021, frequent policy coordination at high levels has continued between Japan and the U.S., including eight summit meetings (of which three were telephone calls and one was a teleconference meeting) and 15 foreign ministers' meetings (of which nine were telephone calls), even in the difficult situation with restrictions on international

travel due to COVID-19, and the Japan-U.S. Alliance has become stronger than ever. In particular, the two countries have closely cooperated in further strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance, realizing a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP), addressing regional issues such as China and North Korea, and responding to global challenges such as COVID-19, climate change, and nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation through opportunities such as the meeting between Prime Minister Suga and President Biden in April 2021 and the teleconference meeting between Prime Minister Kishida and President Biden in January 2022. In addition, First Lady Jill Biden visited Japan to attend the Opening Ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 in July 2021 as well as Second Gentleman Douglas Emhoff who visited Japan to attend the Opening Ceremony of the Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 in August of the same year. Each of them held wide-ranging exchanges of views with Prime Minister Suga.

After President Biden was inaugurated on January 20, 2021, Foreign Minister Motegi and Secretary of State Blinken held their first telephone call on January 27, and Prime Minister Suga and President Biden held their first telephone call on January 28. During the Japan-U.S. Summit telephone call, the leaders shared the view to work closely together in order to further strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance. President Biden expressed his unwavering commitment to the defense of Japan, including the application of Article 5 of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty to the Senkaku Islands. The two leaders also shared the view on the importance of strengthening the U.S. presence in the Indo-Pacific region, and affirmed that they would work side-by-side to address regional challenges and to realize FOIP. During the Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' telephone call, the two ministers confirmed that they would closely coordinate to further strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and exchanged views on the regional issues including China, North Korea and the ROK, as well as the importance of FOIP. In addition, the two ministers

concurred on continuing close coordination between Japan and the U.S., as well as with like-minded countries including Australia and India, on challenges facing the region and the international community.

On February 11, Foreign Minister Motegi held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken. The two foreign ministers confirmed that Japan and the U.S. would continue to closely cooperate on the situation in Myanmar. They also agreed on close cooperation among like-minded countries to realize FOIP, and to steadily strengthen the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. cooperation.

On March 16, Foreign Minister Motegi held his first Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken, who was visiting Japan on his first overseas visit since assuming his position as Secretary of State. The two foreign ministers reaffirmed that Japan and the U.S. will continue to take the lead in strengthening cooperation to realize the vision of FOIP in cooperation with Australia, India, ASEAN and others. They also exchanged views on regional issues including China, North Korea, the ROK, Myanmar and Iran. Furthermore, the foreign ministers also exchanged views on common issues of the international community, such as COVID-19 countermeasures and climate change.

From April 15 to 18, Prime Minister Suga was the first among other leaders of the world to visit Washington, D.C. since President Biden's inauguration and held an in-person Summit Meeting with President Biden. The two leaders noted their shared universal values, including freedom, democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and they shared the view on strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance, which is the cornerstone of peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region, while strengthening their relationship of personal trust. They also confirmed that Japan and the U.S. will strengthen their unity and cooperation while partnering with like-minded countries such as Australia, India and ASEAN countries

toward the realization of FOIP. After the meeting, a Japan-U.S. Joint Leaders' Statement titled "Japan-U.S. Global Partnership for a New Era" was issued. The Joint Leaders' Statement also emphasized the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait based on the Joint Statement of the Japan-U.S. "2+2" held in March, and encouraged the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues. The two leaders also shared the view on the "Japan-U.S. Competitiveness and Resilience (CoRe) Partnership" to lead efforts to "Build Back Better" in the world. They also shared the view on promoting competitiveness and innovation in the digital and science and technology fields, common priorities to both countries, and cooperating in areas such as COVID-19 countermeasures, green growth, and climate change. Furthermore, the leaders shared the view on launching the "Japan-U.S. Climate Partnership on Ambition, Decarbonization, and Clean Energy" to strengthen cooperation on the implementation of the Paris Agreement, clean energy technology, and the transition to decarbonization in developing countries.

On May 3, Foreign Minister Motegi, who was visiting the UK to attend the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. The two ministers confirmed that they would follow up one by one on the results achieved at the previous Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting and other meetings and further strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance. They also exchanged views on the regional issues, including China and North Korea, and agreed to continue working toward the realization of FOIP.

On June 12, Prime Minister Suga, who was visiting the UK to attend the G7 Summit in Cornwall, held intermittent talks with President Biden. Prime Minister Suga emphasized the importance of FOIP and the role of ASEAN. In response, President Biden showed his agreement and stated that the U.S. would like to work closely with Japan.

On June 29, Foreign Minister Motegi, who was visiting Italy to attend the G20 Foreign Ministers'

Meeting, held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. The two ministers exchanged views on Japan-U.S. relations and the situation in East Asia, and affirmed cooperation between Japan and the U.S. in the G20 and other frameworks. .

On July 23, Foreign Minister Motegi held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken. The two ministers exchanged their views on a broad range of issues, such as the regional issues and global issues. They also confirmed that Japan and the U.S. would continue to take the lead and cooperate with like-minded countries in strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance and realizing FOIP.

On August 6, Foreign Minister Motegi held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken. The two ministers reconfirmed that Japan and the U.S. will cooperate to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to realize FOIP. They also exchanged their views on regional issues based on the discussion at the series of ASEAN-related Foreign Ministers' Meetings held during the same week.

On August 10, Prime Minister Suga held a Japan-U.S. Summit telephone call with President Biden. President Biden expressed his congratulations on the success of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020. In response, Prime Minister Suga expressed appreciation for the consistent, strong support and cooperation of the U.S. Government to Japan's hosting of the Games. The two leaders reconfirmed to continue close cooperation to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to realize FOIP.

On September 22, Foreign Minister Motegi, who was visiting New York to attend the United Nations General Assembly, held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. The two ministers shared the view to continue to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance. They also confirmed to further deepen cooperation among allies and like-minded countries through various frameworks, including

Japan-U.S., Japan-Australia-India-U.S. and cooperation with European countries toward the realization of FOIP. They also exchanged views on Afghanistan, China, and North Korea, and agreed to coordinate closely in their response. In addition, the two foreign ministers discussed the international order in the Indo-Pacific region, including the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), from a strategic perspective, and Foreign Minister Motegi encouraged the U.S. to return to the TPP.

On September 24, Prime Minister Suga, during his visit to Washington, D.C. to attend the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Summit Meeting, held a conversation with President Biden. Prime Minister Suga stated that the importance of the Japan-U.S. Alliance will remain unchanged.

Prime Minister Kishida was inaugurated on October 4. He held a Japan-U.S. Summit telephone call with President Biden on October 5, the day after he assumed office. At the outset, Prime Minister Kishida stated that the Japan-U.S. Alliance will continue to be the core of Japan's foreign and security policy. In response, President Biden offered his congratulations to Prime Minister Kishida on his assumption of office and the start of his administration. The two leaders shared the view to work closely together toward the peace and stability of the region and beyond, through further strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance and realizing FOIP. In addition, the two leaders shared the view to coordinate closely in responses to COVID-19 and climate change, and in efforts toward "a world free of nuclear weapons."

On October 7, Foreign Minister Motegi held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken. The two foreign ministers confirmed that they would continue to cooperate in strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance and realize FOIP. Furthermore, both sides exchanged a wide range of views on regional issues, such as China and North Korea, and cooperation on dealing with climate change.

On November 2, Prime Minister Kishida, who was visiting the UK to attend COP26, held informal



Informal talk between the leaders of Japan and the U.S.  
(November 2, Glasgow; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting  
(December 11, Liverpool)

talks with President Biden. The two leaders confirmed that Japan and the U.S. will continue to work closely together toward further strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance, realizing FOIP, and tackling climate change.

Foreign Minister Hayashi assumed his position as Foreign Minister on November 10, and held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken three days later on November 13. The two foreign ministers reaffirmed to work closely in further strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance, realizing FOIP, and responding to global issues such as COVID-19 and climate change. They also exchanged views on regional affairs including China and North Korea. In light of the increasingly severe regional security environment, the two ministers concurred to advance the strengthening of the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance as a matter of strongest priority.

On December 11, Foreign Minister Hayashi, who was visiting the UK to attend the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers Meeting, held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. The two foreign ministers shared the view that in light of the increasingly severe regional security environment, it is essential to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and that Japan and the U.S. will continue to work closely together to that end. Foreign Minister Hayashi also welcomed

the U.S. commitment to the Indo-Pacific region, including President Biden's attendance at the East Asia Summit (EAS) and Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Leaders' Meeting, as well as Secretary Blinken's visit to Southeast Asia. The two ministers also confirmed that Japan and the U.S. will continue to further deepen cooperation with ASEAN countries and coordination with like-minded countries such as Australia and India, toward the realization of FOIP.

On January 6, 2022, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken. The two foreign ministers reaffirmed that Japan and the U.S. will work together to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to realize FOIP. They also exchanged views on the COVID-19 situation among the U.S. Forces in Japan as well as exchanged views on regional issues including North Korea, Russia, and Ukraine.

On January 21, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting with President Biden. The two leaders shared the intention to coordinate closely under the strong Japan-U.S. Alliance and to deepen cooperation with like-minded countries such as Australia, India, ASEAN, and Europe, toward realizing FOIP. In this regard, Prime Minister Kishida expressed his intention to host the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (QUAD) Summit Meeting in Japan in the first half of this year by inviting President Biden





Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting  
(January 21, 2022; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting  
(February 11, 2022, Melbourne)

to Japan, to which President Biden expressed his support. The two leaders also exchanged views on regional issues, including China, North Korea, Russia, and Ukraine. Furthermore, the two leaders shared the intention to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance amidst the increasingly severe security environment in the region. Prime Minister Kishida expressed his determination to fundamentally reinforce Japan's defense capabilities by newly formulating the National Security Strategy, the National Defense Program Guidelines, and the Mid-Term Defense Program, and President Biden expressed his support to it and underscored the importance of sustaining vital investments in defense over time. Prime Minister Kishida then explained the idea of a "New Form of Capitalism," and the two leaders shared the view to deepen discussions on new policy initiatives toward realizing a sustainable and inclusive economy and society at the next summit meeting. The two leaders also concurred on the launch of the ministerial Japan-U.S. Economic Policy Consultative Committee (the Economic "2+2"), and shared the intention to expand and deepen bilateral economic cooperation and mutual exchanges based on the CoRe. In addition, Prime Minister Kishida illustrated his idea of nuclear disarmament grounded in realism, to which President Biden expressed his support, and the two leaders confirmed their intention to work together toward a world without nuclear

weapons. In addition, the two leaders underscored the significance of the Japan-U.S. Joint Statement on the NPT released on the same day.

On February 2, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-U.S. telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken. The two ministers exchanged views on North Korea's nuclear and missile activities, and agreed that in light of the increasingly severe regional security environment, it is essential to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and to continue close coordination between Japan and the U.S. The two ministers also exchanged views on the situation in Russia and Ukraine.

On February 11, Foreign Minister Hayashi, who was visiting Australia to attend the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting, held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. The two ministers concurred on continuing close coordination between Japan and the U.S. and deepening cooperation with like-minded countries such as Australia, India, ASEAN and Europe toward realizing FOIP. They also exchanged views on regional issues, including China, North Korea, Russia, and Ukraine. In light of the increasingly severe regional security environment, they concurred that it is essential to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and to continue close coordination between Japan and the U.S. Furthermore, they exchanged views on "New

Form of Capitalism” and “Build Back Better” efforts that Prime Minister Kishida and President Biden promote respectively, and concurred that they will deepen discussion on economic policies of both in the future, utilizing the ministerial Japan-U.S. Economic Policy Consultative Committee (the Economic “2+2”). In addition, Minister Hayashi urged the U.S. to return to the TPP. In addition, based on the exchange between Prime Minister Kishida and President Biden at the Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting on January 21, the two foreign ministers shared the view to make appropriate arrangements for President Biden’s visit to Japan during the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Summit Meeting to be held in Japan in the first half of 2022.

On February 26, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers’ telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken. The two ministers exchanged views on the situation in Russia and Ukraine, and shared the view that Japan and the U.S. would continue to closely cooperate with the international community, including the G7. The two foreign ministers also reaffirmed the necessity of strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and concurred to continue close coordination toward the realization of FOIP.

### (3) Japan-U.S. Economic Relations

Japan-U.S. economic relations are one of the three pillars of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, together with security and people-to-people exchanges.

Since 2019, Japan has been the leading source of foreign investment in the U.S. as the foreign direct investment leader (679 billion US dollars in 2020 (U.S. Department of Commerce)). Direct investment by Japanese companies also contributes to the regional economy of the U.S. in the form of employment creation. In fact, in 2019, Japan was responsible for the creation of approximately one million jobs in the U.S., a figure second only to the UK. In particular, Japan has created approximately 530,000 jobs in the

manufacturing sector, a leading figure within the industry. Furthermore, R&D investment (corporate R&D activities) by Japan exceeded 10 billion US dollars in 2019, higher than any other country in the world. Such multifaceted efforts to strengthen our bilateral relationship through vigorous investment and employment creation serve as the foundation of Japan-U.S. relations that are better than ever before.

The Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held in April 2021 marked the launch of the CoRe. Through the Partnership, Japan and the U.S. seek to present a bright vision of the future to the international community by having Japan and the United States take the lead in efforts to “Build Back Better” from COVID-19 not only for the two countries but for the international community as a whole. The three pillars of the Partnership are (1) Competitiveness and Innovation, (2) COVID-19 Response, Global Health, and Health Security and finally (3) Climate Change, Clean Energy and Green Growth and Recovery. Concrete and comprehensive cooperation is to be promoted under these three pillars. Moreover, in December 2021, Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment Jose Fernandez visited Japan to follow up on the Partnership with Senior Deputy Minister Suzuki Hiroshi, and confirmed continued Japan-U.S. cooperation under the CoRe partnership.

Going forward, Japan will utilize the Economic “2+2” established at the Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting in January 2022 in holding high-level discussions concerning cooperation based on the CoRe Partnership as well as efforts to maintain the rules-based economic order within the Indo-Pacific region and the broader international community, thus further deepening and expanding Japan-U.S. cooperation in the economic realm.

In November 2021, U.S. Secretary of Commerce Gina Raimondo and U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai visited Japan and paid courtesy calls on Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsuno Hirokazu



Meeting between Foreign Minister Hayashi and U.S. Secretary of Commerce Raimondo (November 15, Tokyo)

as well as held meetings with Foreign Minister Hayashi and Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry Hagiuda Koichi. These opportunities for in-person diplomacy made it possible to broadly exchange views on Japan-U.S. cooperation and U.S. engagement in the Indo-Pacific region. In the same month, MOFA, the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) launched the “Japan-U.S. Partnership on Trade,” a Director-General level framework to discuss various international trade issues that should be addressed jointly by Japan and the U.S.

With regard to the infrastructure sector, the Fourth Japan Infrastructure Investment Forum was held online in March 2021 in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation and the State of Indiana as one of its local partnership cooperation projects. During the Forum, the governments of Japan and the U.S. gave talks on new technologies and digital technologies such as smart cities and smart mobility, efficient infrastructure maintenance, and infrastructure policies such as the use of next-generation energy. In addition, Japanese companies and other stakeholders active in the U.S. gave insight into their experiences in the U.S. as well as the technologies they have developed.

In the energy sector, in light of the CoRe Partnership and the Japan-U.S. Climate Partnership announced at the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting in April, the existing Japan-U.S. Strategic Energy Partnership (JUSEP) was reorganized



Meeting and working dinner between Foreign Minister Hayashi and U.S. Trade Representative Tai (November 17, Tokyo)

to have a stronger focus on cooperation in the clean energy field, launching the Japan-U.S. Clean Energy Partnership (JUCEP). Thus, Japan and the United States will support countries in the Indo-Pacific region and around the world to accelerate their decarbonization efforts and implement clean, affordable, and safe energy technologies with the goal of promoting energy security and sustainable growth. The June 2021 inaugural meeting identified (1) Renewable Energy, (2) Power Grid Optimization, (3) Nuclear Energy, and (4) Decarbonization Technologies as core areas of cooperation. The second meeting, which was held in December, followed up on the first meeting and discussed ways to move forward.

With respect to the digital sector, in May 2021, cooperation under the existing Japan-U.S. Strategic Digital Economy Partnership (JUSDEP) was expanded, and the Japan-U.S. Global Digital Connectivity Partnership (GDGP) was launched as a framework to promote secure connectivity and a vibrant digital economy. Expert-level working groups were held in May and October to discuss cooperation with third-party regions such as the Indo-Pacific, Africa, and Latin America. Cooperation within multilateral frameworks and the promotion of bilateral initiatives on 5G and Beyond 5G were also discussed. Next, at the 12th U.S.-Japan Policy Cooperation Dialogue on the Internet Economy (U.S.-Japan IED) held in November, there were wide-ranging discussions on matters related to the internet economy,

including cooperation in promoting Open RAN and capacity building for cyber security in third-party countries, diversification of 5G vendors on a Japan-U.S. bilateral basis, cooperation on Beyond 5G and related matters, further cooperation on AI, DFFT, and similar fields in multilateral fora, as well as utilization of ICT to contribute to green growth and recovery.

Cooperation with the regional governments, including various U.S. states, is also advancing. Cooperation is being conducted based on the memorandums of cooperation concerning economic and trade relations between Japan and subnational governments such as states of Washington, Maryland, and Indiana as well as the city of Chicago. Moreover, in addition to the states of Maryland, Washington, Hawaii, and Virginia, memorandums concerning reciprocal partial exemptions of driver's license tests were established with the state of Ohio in March 2021 and the state of Indiana in May 2021. These memorandums reduce the burden associated with acquiring a driver's license for local Japanese nationals.

Since the launch of the Government Taskforce on Strengthening Japan-U.S. Ties at the Grass Roots in 2017, the Government of Japan has undertaken efforts based on a tailor-made approach that accords with the characteristics of each region and the level of interest in Japan within the target regions, recognizing that it is important to implement grassroots initiatives to further strengthen Japan-U.S. ties. In 2021, in light of the inauguration of the Biden administration, the government compiled a new approach named "Action Plan 2.0," which was in line with the incoming administration's priority policies (emphasis on workers and the middle class, COVID-19 countermeasures, climate change and energy, and innovation, science, and technology). In addition, various initiatives are being implemented with the cooperation of various ministries, agencies, and organizations. These include the promotion of local activities of Japanese companies and Japanese food products

through video streaming, networking and match-making events for Japanese companies and other economic stakeholders, "regional caravans" that visit areas hosting several Japanese companies, and various webinars held in cooperation with think tanks. Japan will continue to realize a wide range of all-Japan initiatives to boost Japan-U.S. economic relations and promote understanding of Japan at a grassroots level.

## 2 Canada

### (1) Situation in Canada

In September 2021, a general election was held following the dissolution of the House of Commons of the Parliament of Canada. It resulted in the continuation of the administration of Prime Minister Trudeau with almost no change in the number of seats held by any party, including the ruling Liberal Party led by Prime Minister Trudeau and the largest opposition party, the Conservative Party. The new Trudeau cabinet was established in October, with 38 ministers excluding the Prime Minister and consisting of an equal number of male and female cabinet members). Former Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages Mélanie Joly was newly appointed as Minister of Foreign Affairs. Prime Minister Trudeau's priorities include the full containment of the pandemic, a strong economic recovery, combating the issue of steeply rising housing prices, issues revolving around climate change, and reconciliation with indigenous peoples.

The Trudeau administration positions COVID-19 countermeasures as a top priority, and has strongly promoted vaccinations while continuing to provide benefits, wage subsidies, and cash flow support to companies in 2021. The GDP growth rate slowed again to -0.8% (annual rate of -3.2%) in the quarter from April to June 2021 due to the resurgence of COVID-19 infections, but recovered to 1.3% (annual rate of 5.4%) in the quarter from July to September due to the gradual removal of various restrictions (real GDP growth rate of

4.6%). The unemployment rate has remained generally flat at the 6% level (from 6.0% in December to 6.5% in January 2022), but there are concerns about rising inflation and other issues due to supply chain disruptions and rising oil prices.

Prime Minister Trudeau also focuses efforts on climate change policy. At the Leaders Summit on Climate in April, he announced a greenhouse gas emissions reduction target of 40-45% below 2005 levels by 2030. In September, during the general election for the House of Commons, Prime Minister Trudeau pledged to make zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) account for the majority of new car sales by 2035, decarbonize the electricity grid, impose restrictions on total emissions in the oil and gas sector, consider border carbon adjustments, and utilize Carbon dioxide Capture and Storage (CCUS) as well as hydrogen.

On the diplomatic front, the Trudeau administration has been strengthening engagement in the Indo-Pacific region, in addition to the relationships that Canada placed importance on in the past such as the U.S.-Canada relations, the UN, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the G7, the G20 and the Organization of American States (OAS). In particular, Canada has been active in monitoring and surveillance activities against illicit maritime activities, including illegal ship-to-ship transfers by North Korean-flagged vessels as prohibited by the UN Security Council resolutions. Canada dispatched Royal Canadian Air Force aircraft in October, and Navy vessels conducted monitoring and surveillance activities from October to November. As for Canada-China diplomatic relations, the arrest of Huawei Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Meng Wanzhou by the Government of Canada in late 2018, and the subsequent detention of two Canadian citizens by the Government of China afterward, had remained an unresolved issue. However, in 2021, a plea deal with the U.S. resulted in the release of CFO

Meng in September, followed by the release of the two Canadians by China. Canadian public opinion toward China continues to be dour, not only due to this case, but also from distrust of China's COVID-19 response as well as human rights issues in Hong Kong and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Future relations with China will be the focus of attention.

On the economic front, the Canada-UK Trade Continuity Agreement entered into force in April. In addition, July marked one year since the entry into force of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). Canada also announced the start of CEPA negotiations with Indonesia in June and the start of FTA negotiations with ASEAN in November.

## (2) Japan-Canada Relations

In 2021, two summit meetings (including one teleconference meeting) and four foreign ministers' meetings (including one telephone call and one teleconference meeting) were held between Japan and Canada. On February 9, 2022, a summit telephone call was also held.

The Japan-Canada Foreign Ministers' Meeting in May 2021 marked the unveiling of the "Shared Japan-Canada Priorities Contributing to a Free and Open Indo-Pacific"<sup>1</sup>, which works toward realizing FOIP that Japan and Canada share. At the Japan-Canada Summit Meeting during the G7 Cornwall Summit in June, the leaders shared the view to further promote concrete and robust cooperation and coordination in the six priority areas of cooperation between the two countries.

In more recent events, Foreign Minister Hayashi, who was visiting the UK to attend the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, held a meeting with Foreign Minister Joly on December 11th. The two ministers concurred to advance further cooperation on the concrete aspects of the six priority areas of cooperation. They also exchanged views on

<sup>1</sup> Six Priority Areas of Cooperation: (1) The Rule of Law; (2) Peacekeeping Operations, Peacebuilding, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief; (3) Health Security and Responding to COVID-19; (4) Energy Security; (5) Free Trade Promotion and Trade Agreement Implementation; (6) Environment and Climate Change

regional issues, including China and North Korea. Furthermore, they exchanged views on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, and shared the view to cooperate for a meaningful outcome at the NPT Review Conference in 2022. They also held strategic discussions on the international order in the Indo-Pacific region, including the CPTPP Agreement, and shared the view on the importance of maintaining the high standard of the CPTPP Agreement.

Although trade between Japan and Canada declined in 2020 due to the effects of COVID-19, there has been a steady recovery throughout 2021. Trade and investment relations have further deepened, with the two countries marking three

years since the entry into force of the CPTPP Agreement, the first economic partnership agreement between Canada and Japan. In December, the 31st Meeting of the Japan-Canada Joint Economic Committee (JEC) was held in an online format. In addition to exchanges of views on recent international economic developments, such as the CPTPP and the WTO, and the realization of FOIP, among other areas of Japan-Canada cooperation, there were discussions on five priority areas of cooperation: (1) Energy; (2) Infrastructure; (3) Science and technology cooperation and innovation; (4) Tourism and youth exchange; and (5) Improving the business environment and promoting Investment.



## Section 4

# Latin America and the Caribbean

### 1 Overview

#### (1) Situations in Latin America and the Caribbean

The Latin American and the Caribbean (hereafter referred to as “LAC”) region mostly consists of countries who share universal values with Japan such as freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. It has a population of about 650 million and is a major producer of natural resources such as minerals and energy as well as food and has considerable economic potential with its large market.

Although the LAC region was affected by the global spread of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in 2020, by the second half of 2021, the number of infections had significantly decreased in many countries and vaccination had progressed. The economy, which greatly shrank in 2020, is showing signs of recovery, including the GDP growth rate turning positive in 2021. On the political front, stable order was generally maintained, and democratic elections were held peacefully in many countries.

On the other hand, in 2021, the spread of COVID-19 further highlighted social problems such as the disparity between rich and poor people, and the rise of leftists and new political forces were seen as an expression of the mistrust in the existing political systems. In Venezuela, confrontations are continuing between the administration

and the opposition parties. The number of Venezuelans who have fled to neighboring countries as refugees due to the worsening political, economic, and social situation in Venezuela exceeded 5.9 million as of November, and receiving these refugees continues to be a regional challenge. A dialogue between the ruling and opposition parties has been held in Mexico since August, and its direction is the subject of attention.

In addition, in the LAC region, there are Nikkei (Japanese immigrants and their descendants) communities of over two million people or about 60% of the world's Nikkei population. The Nikkei community has fostered a sense of affinity toward Japan in LAC countries through contributions to the local community for more than 100 years. On the other hand, generations have transitioned over 100 years since the Japanese migration began, and how to deepen ties to Japan among the community, including among the younger generation, has become a challenge.

#### (2) Japanese Diplomacy toward Latin America and the Caribbean Countries

Japan's diplomacy toward the LAC region has developed under the guiding principle of the three “Juntos!!” (meaning “together”, namely “progress together,” “lead together,” and “inspire together”) announced by Prime Minister Abe in 2014. In December 2018, Prime Minister Abe summarized the results under this principle for the entire region,



Japan-SICA Foreign Ministers' Meeting (July 16, Guatemala)

and announced the concept of the Initiative to Enhance Connectivity between Japan and Latin America and the Caribbean as the guideline for further cooperation. Japan has been aiming to deepen cooperative relations with LAC countries based on this concept.

In 2021, although international travel was restricted due to the influence of COVID-19 as it was in 2020, in-person diplomatic activities were gradually resumed. Exchanges of views were held on cooperation to maintain and expand the free and open international order based on the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” (FOIP) and the rule of law, measures to address global challenges including COVID-19, the strengthening of economic relations, and other matters. In January, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Mexico, Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil, where he conducted activities such as paying courtesy calls to presidents and holding ministerial meetings with his counterparts. Furthermore, in July, he visited Guatemala, Panama, and Jamaica, where he held meetings with the destination countries, as well as the Japan-SICA (Central American Integration System) Foreign Ministers' Meeting and the Japan-Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Ministerial-Level Conference. In addition, in the same month, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Uto Takashi visited the Dominican Republic and Ecuador. He met with government dignitaries of each country, attended a ceremony in the Dominican Republic commemorating the 65th anniversary of Japanese



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Uto delivers remarks at a ceremony commemorating the 65th anniversary of Japanese immigration to the Dominican Republic (July 26, Dominican Republic)

immigration, and held talks with representatives of Nikkei organizations. Furthermore, the Foreign Minister of Antigua and Barbuda visited Japan on the occasion of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 (Tokyo 2020 Games). In November, the Vice President of Colombia and the Foreign Minister of Paraguay visited Japan, and held ministerial meetings and other events. Through such meetings, Japan worked to strengthen bilateral relations as well as to strengthen cooperation to resolve various issues in the international arena.

On the economic front, supply chain connections are strengthening, as shown in the doubling of the number of Japanese companies operating in the LAC region since 2011. Japan is working on promoting free trade together with LAC countries including through the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP11 Agreement), in which Mexico, Peru, and Chile participate. In 2021, economic relations continued to deepen, including the entry into force of the TPP11 Agreement in Peru.

In the field of development cooperation, for some areas of the LAC region that have achieved economic growth, South-South cooperation is being accelerated by countries that have already “graduated” or will “graduate” from the status of recipient countries on the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) List of ODA Recipients by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Japan

is promoting triangular cooperation with these countries. Moreover, given that, in addition to the serious damages caused by COVID-19, many countries have vulnerable medical systems, Japan is also cooperating with the region on COVID-19 countermeasures. Within the bilateral cooperation framework, for example, since the spread of COVID-19, Japan has provided grant aid (totaling about 9.1 billion yen as of December 2021) to 25 LAC countries for the provision of health- and medical-related equipment that contributes to COVID-19 countermeasures and the strengthening of healthcare and medical systems. In 2021, Japan also supported provision of vaccines, providing about 500,000 COVID-19 vaccine doses to Nicaragua through the COVAX Facility. Furthermore, Japan is providing assistance to the Nikkei community in the LAC region affected by COVID-19.

## 2 Regional Organizations

In addition to the Forum for East Asia-Latin America Cooperation (FEALAC) and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC),<sup>1</sup> the following regional organizations in the LAC region conduct policy coordination on various issues. In February, Japan held an online meeting for 26 young officials from FEALAC member states in lieu of in-person invitation to Japan. On the theme of “utilizing science and technology for a sustainable society and environment,” Japanese technologies related to the Tokyo 2020 Games, such as the Olympic Torch, were introduced and opinions were exchanged.

### (1) Pacific Alliance

The Pacific Alliance (composed of Chile, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru; hereafter referred to as “PA”) aims to conclude a comprehensive

free trade agreement with Australia, Canada, and New Zealand, and is currently conducting negotiations toward an early conclusion of the agreement. Singapore completed negotiations for a comprehensive free trade agreement with the PA in July 2021 and signed it at the Summit of the PA in Colombia in January 2022. In addition to these four countries, the Republic of Korea (ROK) and Ecuador are expressing interest in participating in the negotiations.

Japan is an observer country of the PA, and places importance on cooperation with it as a group with which Japan shares fundamental values.

### (2) Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR)<sup>2</sup>

MERCOSUR is a customs union composed of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. With a few exceptions, tariffs have been eliminated for all goods traded within the region since January 1995. In 2019, negotiations were concluded on free trade agreements (FTAs) with the EU and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), and negotiations are underway with the ROK, Singapore, Canada, and others. Meanwhile, Venezuela's participation has been suspended<sup>3</sup> and Bolivia is an Associated State.<sup>4</sup>

### (3) Caribbean Community (CARICOM)

CARICOM was founded by 14 Caribbean nations for its economic integration and foreign policy coordination. It has a large presence in the international arena for their coordinated actions. Although CARICOM countries include many countries with relatively high incomes, they are threatened by natural disasters such as catastrophic hurricanes almost every year, and also have vulnerabilities particular to small island states due to the small size of their populations and economies. The situation in Haiti remains

<sup>1</sup> CELAC: Comunidad de Estados Latinoamericanos y Caribeños (Community of Latin American and Caribbean States)

<sup>2</sup> MERCOSUR: Mercado Común del Sur (Southern Common Market)

<sup>3</sup> Venezuela's participation qualifications have been suspended as of December 2021

<sup>4</sup> Bolivia signed the participation protocol in December 2012, and is awaiting approval by the National Congress of Brazil

unstable; the political instability continues as the president was assassinated in July, and a massive earthquake killed over 2,000 people in August.

Japan is leading its diplomacy in accordance with the three pillars for Japan-CARICOM cooperation ((1) Cooperation toward sustainable development, including overcoming the vulnerabilities particular to small island states; (2) Deepening and expanding fraternal bonds of cooperation and friendship; and (3) Cooperation in addressing challenges of the international community). Japan is also providing support to high income level countries based on their development needs and economic capabilities. Japan provided emergency relief supplies and emergency grant aid in response to the damage caused by the volcanic eruption in Saint Vincent in April and the massive earthquake in western Haiti in August.

The 19th Japan-CARICOM Working-Level Consultation was held online in March. In July, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Jamaica and strengthened Japan-CARICOM relations amidst the COVID-19 pandemic by paying a courtesy call to the Prime Minister, conducting a foreign ministers' meeting, and holding the 7th Japan-CARICOM Ministerial-Level Conference. In addition, for the Tokyo 2020 Games, the Foreign Minister of Antigua and Barbuda visited Japan and held a foreign ministers' meeting, and online exchange programs were implemented to deepen interaction between host towns among Japan and CARICOM countries.



Foreign Minister Motegi pays a courtesy call to Prime Minister Andrew Michael Holness of Jamaica (July 20, Jamaica)

### 3 LAC Countries (See 2 (3) for CARICOM Countries)

#### (1) Mexico

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador, who was inaugurated in December 2018, is halfway through his six-year term and continues to have a high approval rating among the public in 2021. In June, large scale midterm elections were held involving federal deputies and 15 state governors. The ruling coalition led by the National Regeneration Movement (MORENA) lost a few seats in the Chamber of Deputies, but retained its majority.

Even after the spread of COVID-19, the current administration has not adopted mandatory measures such as lockdowns, but has implemented measures prioritizing the avoidance of the collapse of the medical system. Particular emphasis has been placed on securing vaccines since the end of 2020, and vaccine administration in the country has been promoted since the beginning of 2021.

In terms of Mexico's relations with the U.S., the U.S.-Mexico High-Level Economic Dialogue and the U.S.-Mexico High-Level Security Dialogue (ministerial level) were respectively held in September and October. In November, for the first time in five years, a trilateral summit meeting with the U.S. and Canada was held in Washington, D.C.

In July 2021, a ministerial-level meeting of the three countries was held in Mexico City to commemorate the first anniversary of the entry into force of the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). In regard to relations with Japan, economic relations have been increasingly strengthened in recent years, and Mexico has become Japan's largest economic base in the LAC region, with 1,300 Japanese companies operating in the country. In January 2021, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Mexico and held meetings with Secretary of Foreign Affairs Marcelo Ebrard and Secretary of Economy Tatiana Clouthier. During



Japan-Mexico Foreign Ministers' Meeting (January 4, Mexico)



Foreign Minister Motegi pays a courtesy call to President Alejandro Eduardo Giammattei Falla of Guatemala (July 15, Guatemala)

the meetings, Foreign Minister Motegi confirmed the further strengthening of strategic cooperation with Mexico, which has close relations with the U.S. where a new administration has been formed. It was also reaffirmed that Japan would cooperate on various international and regional issues with Mexico, which will be a member of the UN Security Council in 2021 and 2022. Foreign Minister Motegi also called for the business environment in Mexico to be further improved and stabilized, requested support for the Japanese companies operating in Mexico amid COVID-19, and confirmed continued cooperation for the steady implementation and expansion of the TPP11 Agreement and the realization of World Trade Organization (WTO) reform.

## (2) Central America (El Salvador, Guatemala, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, Panama, Belize and Honduras)

Foreign Minister Motegi visited Guatemala and Panama in July. In Guatemala, he paid a courtesy call to the President and held a Foreign Ministers' Meeting. He also held the Japan-SICA (Central American Integration System) Foreign Ministers' Meeting, as well as a Japan-El Salvador Foreign Ministers' Meeting and a Japan-Costa Rica Foreign Ministers' telephone call, and exchanged views with the foreign ministers of eight Central American countries. In Panama, he also paid a courtesy call to the president and held a Foreign



Foreign Minister Motegi pays a courtesy call to President Laurentino Cortizo Cohen of Panama (July 17, Panama)

Ministers' meeting. Through these visits, Foreign Minister Motegi exchanged views with Central American countries, with which Japan has traditionally had friendly relations, regarding cooperation for the maintenance and expansion of a free and open international order based on the rule of law as well as measures to address the challenges facing the international community, including COVID-19 countermeasures.

In Nicaragua, presidential elections were held in November, and President Daniel Ortega won his fourth consecutive election. However, criticism from the international community grew over the fact that the election was held while many opposition party candidates and others were arrested and detained. Honduras also held a presidential election in November, and the leftist candidate Xiomara Castro won the election, becoming the country's first female president.



### (3) Cuba

Due to the global spread of COVID-19, Cuba's economy, including the major industry of tourism, was damaged, and the lives of the people became more difficult. On the other hand, with its high healthcare standards, Cuba developed its own vaccine, promoted domestic vaccine administration, and dispatched medical personnel to other countries. In July, a Japan-Cuba Foreign Ministers' telephone call was held to discuss COVID-19 countermeasures, bilateral relations, and international affairs.

### (4) Brazil

While President Jair Bolsonaro has been criticized for his COVID-19 countermeasures, he has not changed his stance of emphasizing the importance of the economy since taking office and has been advancing reform such as deliberation on tax reform legislation and privatization.

In terms of relations with Japan, although there were restrictions on mutual visits by dignitaries due to COVID-19, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Brazil in January and reaffirmed the shared fundamental values such as democracy, as well as the traditional bonds of Nikkei people, with the Bolsonaro administration, which is pursuing new diplomacy emphasizing cooperation with Japan and the U.S. In February, Minister of Communications Fábio Faria visited Japan and met with State Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Shintani Masayoshi. They exchanged views on the efforts and collaboration directions of both countries in the ICT and digital field, including 5G, and agreed to further strengthen cooperative bilateral relations going forward. In October, the 9th Japan-Brazil Policy Consultation was also held between Secretary for Bilateral Negotiations in Asia, the Pacific, and Russia Márcia Donner Abreu, who was visiting Japan, and Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki Hiroshi. The two representatives discussed policies to strengthen bilateral relations in political and economic aspects based on the

"Japan-Brazil Strategic and Global Partnership," responses to important issues in the international community including climate change and COVID-19, and regional situations. Furthermore, in December, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Carlos França held a telephone call in which they confirmed close cooperation in various fields to further strengthen bilateral relations, and agreed on cooperation to realize a free and open international order based on the rule of law.

### (5) Argentina

In the midterm legislative election held in November, the midpoint of the Alberto Fernández administration's (four-year) term, the ruling coalition's share of the vote fell below that of the opposition coalition, causing the ruling coalition (the Justicialist Party) to lose its majority in the Senate for the first time since the transition to democratic government in 1983. The Fernández administration has made it an urgent matter to respond to the debt problems with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and others, as well as the economic recession, which was affected by COVID-19. The current administration's efforts to deal with the political and economic situation after the midterm election are garnering attention.

In terms of relations with Japan, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Argentina in January and held the first Japan-Argentina Foreign Ministers' Meeting since the inauguration of the Fernández administration. The ministers confirmed further strengthening of cooperation as "Strategic Partners" that share fundamental values. In addition, in December, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Foreign Minister Santiago Andrés Cafiero held a video conference, in which they agreed on cooperation to realize a free and open international order based on the rule of law, and confirmed close cooperation in various fields to further strengthen bilateral relations.



**(6) Peru**

In the presidential election held on April 11, amidst the absence of a strong political party or candidate, candidates Pedro Castillo (radical left) and Keiko Fujimori (center-right), who did not rank highly in preliminary polls, advanced to the run-off. The run-off vote was held on June 6, but after both candidates' camps appealed to invalidate some of the votes that had been counted, the Jurado Nacional de Elecciones (JNE) held deliberations. A month and a half later, candidate Castillo was finally announced as the winner on July 19. The Castillo administration, which was inaugurated on July 28, has been working on socialist economic policies, the convening of the Constitutional Assembly (constitutional reform), and the urgent issues of COVID-19 countermeasures and restoration of political stability. However, less than a month after the administration's inauguration, the foreign minister was replaced due to his past comments, and in October, the entire cabinet resigned due to the ouster of the prime minister. Although Vásquez's cabinet was given a vote of confidence by the National Assembly in November, President Castillo continues to face difficulties in running his administration.

On the other hand, on the diplomatic front, the TPP11 Agreement entered into force for Peru in September, and is expected to further strengthen the multilateral trade system based on free and fair trade rules. In terms of relations with Japan, the Japan-Peru tax treaty entered into force in January, and is expected to further promote investment and economic exchange between the two countries.

**(7) Chile**

In response to public protests demanding the correction of disparities and other issues triggered by the raising of subway fares in October 2019, elections for members of the Constitutional Convention were held in May 2021 and it was established in July 2021 in preparation for the enactment of a new constitution, which was

approved by a referendum in October 2020. The Constitutional Convention will spend nine months (with a possible three-month extension) drafting a new constitution, and after a 60-day review period, a referendum is planned to be held to approve it. In addition, the presidential election was held at the end of the term, and the centrist party lost in the first round of voting due to dissatisfaction with policies under the centrist government that had been in power for 30 years. In the decisive vote in the December presidential election, the first run-off between the right and the left since the transition to democratic government, candidate Gabriel Boric (leftist), who seeks fundamental change to correct disparities, won the most votes in Chilean history at the young age of 35 against candidate José Antonio Kast (rightist), who places more emphasis on order and stability. The new administration will be inaugurated in March 2022.

In terms of relations with Japan, Minister of Energy and Mining Juan Carlos Jobet Eluchans visited Japan in November to exchange views on hydrogen cooperation.

**(8) Uruguay**

The Luis Lacalle Pou administration, which was inaugurated in March 2020, has continued to achieve results in the fight against COVID-19, including high vaccination rates, and has maintained a high approval rating.

The year 2021 marks the 100th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Uruguay. In January, Foreign Minister Motegi made the first visit in 35 years to Uruguay as a Japanese Foreign Minister. Both countries issued commemorative stamps and carried out a variety of other commemorative projects. In addition, a tax convention and a Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement entered into force respectively in July and October, and further strengthening of economic relations is expected going forward (see the Column on page 115).

## Deepening bonds: 100 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Uruguay

In 2021, a variety of initiatives were undertaken to mark 100 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Uruguay. This column provides a new introduction to Uruguay, which, despite being located on the other side of the world to Japan, has deepened bonds with Japan through engagement across a wide range of fields.

### ■Uruguay: A small but brilliantly sparkling country

The best way to describe Uruguay in one phrase is likely “a small but brilliantly sparkling country.” With a territory around half the size of Japan and a population smaller than Yokohama City, it is small in scale, but one of the most politically, socially, and economically stable countries in Latin America. This position is quantified by Uruguay being rated number one in Latin America in both the Democracy Index and the Rule of Law Index, as well having the highest per capita GDP in South America.

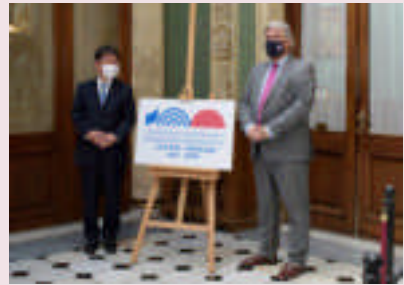
Its main industries are agriculture and forestry, with cattle breeding particularly successful. Notably, the number of cows (11.88 million) and sheep (6.34 million) are significantly higher than the number of people, being more than three times and nearly twice as large respectively as the human population of 3.47 million. In addition to its traditional strength in hydropower, Uruguay has been actively promoting energy supply from wind, solar, and biomass, resulting in around 96% of its electricity supply now coming from renewable sources, making it well-known as a leader in renewable energy.

### ■A history of friendship

Since the first migrations from Japan to Uruguay in 1908, the two countries have engaged in exchange and cooperation across a wide range of fields. For example, through technical collaboration by the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), Japan has welcomed trainees and sent Japanese specialists in many fields, notably forestry. In addition, Japan has backed initiatives investing in Uruguay’s sustainable development through grants such as for *Hikari*, Uruguay’s first solar power station. Through many years of exchange between the countries and thanks also to the great efforts of the Japanese Association in Uruguay in promoting the likes of martial arts and Japanese drumming (*wadaiko*), the country and culture of Japan are familiar to many Uruguayans. One demonstration of the bonds between the countries was when Japan was struck by an unprecedented disaster, the Great East Japan Earthquake. The Government of Uruguay sent warm messages in the Japanese language wishing for “everyone in Japan to be well,” followed by delivering a large number of cans of corned beef to the disaster-struck area.

### ■100 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations: Toward the next century

In recent years, relations between Japan and Uruguay have followed a clear and steady development path. In 2018, Prime Minister Abe made the first visit to Uruguay by a Japanese Prime Minister, further strengthening



Foreign Minister Motegi and Minister of Foreign Relations Bustillo unveiling the “Commemorating 100 Years since the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Uruguay” logo (January 6, Montevideo, Uruguay)



Corned beef delivered from Uruguay after the Great East Japan Earthquake

relations between the two countries. As a result, the mutual ban on beef exports was lifted, meaning that both Japanese and Uruguayans can now experience the flavor of *wagyu* and Uruguayan-raised beef.

To mark the 100th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, in January 2021 Foreign Minister Motegi made the first visit in 35 years to Uruguay by a Japanese Foreign Minister. The two countries reaffirmed that they are important partners sharing fundamental values such as freedom, human rights, and the rule of law. Moreover, following on from the Japan-Uruguay Investment Agreement, which entered into force in 2017, the bilateral Tax Convention took effect in July 2021 and the Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement entered into force in October 2021, raising the prospect of further promoting economic relations between the two countries. In addition, a variety of events have been held in both countries to commemorate 100 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations. For example, Japan Post issued special stamps featuring iconic Uruguayan scenery and cultural symbols. In Uruguay, the Embassy of Japan organized commemorative projects such as planting cherry trees (*sakura*) in a range of locations, hosted a kimono exhibition in collaboration with the Museum of Pre-Columbian and Indigenous Art (MAPI), and assisted in the issuing of commemorative stamps. Through these initiatives marking 100 years, it is hoped that relations between the two countries will become even stronger.



Planting cherry trees in La Paz city



The special stamp for the "100th Anniversary of the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations between Japan and Uruguay" issued on September 24, 2021

## (9) Paraguay

The Mario Abdo Benítez administration is continuing to maintain its "free and open economic policies." Japan and Paraguay celebrated the centenary of their diplomatic relations in 2019, and have maintained friendly relations even during the spread of COVID-19, including due to the traditional bonds of 10,000 Nikkei people. In January 2021, Foreign Minister Motegi made the first bilateral visit to Paraguay as a Japanese Foreign Minister. Japan and Paraguay, which places



Japan-Paraguay Foreign Ministers' Meeting (November 22, Tokyo)

particular importance on fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, and the rule of law, and has traditional bonds of Nikkei people, agreed to cooperate to maintain and strengthen the free and open international order. Furthermore, in November, Foreign Minister Euclides Acevedo Candia visited Japan as the first Paraguayan Foreign Minister to do so in five years, and Foreign Minister Hayashi held his first foreign minister's meeting with an LAC country since he assumed his position. The two foreign ministers confirmed that Japan and Paraguay are important partners that share fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, human rights, and the rule of law, and Foreign Minister Acevedo expressed support for the realization of FOIP, which Japan emphasizes.

### (10) Colombia

President Iván Duque, who was inaugurated in August 2018, worked to implement the 2016 peace agreement in Colombia<sup>5</sup> and has promoted anti-corruption measures, tax and pension reform, and the like. On the diplomatic front, Colombia held the presidency of the PA and the Forum of the Progress Integration of South America (PROSUR) in 2021.

In terms of relations with Japan, Vice President and Foreign Minister Marta Lucía Ramírez visited



Prime Minister Kishida receiving a courtesy call by Vice President and Foreign Minister Marta Lucía Ramírez Blanco of the Republic of Colombia (November 9, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japan in November, paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Kishida, and held a meeting with Chief Cabinet Secretary Matsuno. It was agreed that Japan and Colombia would expand cooperation toward realizing FOIP in the LAC region.

### (11) Venezuela

The inauguration ceremony for President Nicolás Maduro was held in January 2019 amid doubts about the legitimacy of the presidential election held in May 2018. During the same month, the President of the National Assembly Juan Guaidó was sworn in as Interim President based on the provisions of the constitution, which intensified conflict between the administration and the opposition party. In December 2020, the election for Venezuela's National Assembly was held without participation of the main opposition parties, and the Maduro administration's party was declared the winner. In response, people in Venezuela, including the main opposition party, as well as the international community reacted against the election, claiming that it lacked legitimacy. Similarly, Japan has been calling for the restoration of democracy in Venezuela through the early implementation of a free and fair election.

In August 2021, a dialogue between the ruling and opposition parties began in Mexico under the mediation of Norway to overcome this situation. However, it was temporarily suspended in October when a Venezuelan diplomat who had been arrested in Cabo Verde was extradited to the U.S. In addition, in November, nationwide local elections were held, and the outcome was the focus of attention as the EU deployed an election observation mission. The situation in Venezuela continues to be disordered, as the elections were assessed to have structural shortcomings, including arrests for political reasons and arbitrary disqualification of candidates to participate in the elections.

<sup>5</sup> Then-President Santos started the peace talks with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the largest guerrilla organization in Colombia, in 2012 in order to end the domestic strife that had lasted for over half a century. The peace agreement was announced in 2016.

Moreover, due to the worsening economic, social, and humanitarian situation in the country, Venezuelan nationals have been flowing into neighboring countries as refugees and immigrants, and receiving them has become a regional challenge. Japan has been providing support to the Venezuelan people, including people fleeing from Venezuela, as well as to the neighboring countries affected.

### (12) Bolivia

In November 2019, after President Evo Morales resigned and fled Bolivia,<sup>6</sup> the pro-U.S. right-wing interim government of Jeanine Áñez was formed. However, candidate Luis Alberto Arce, who served as former Minister of Economy and Public Finance during the Morales administration, won the presidential election held in October 2020. In the following November, the Arce administration was formed, restoring a leftist government after about a year. In March 2021, former interim President Áñez and several members of the interim administration were arrested on charges of terrorism, sedition, and conspiracy.

### (13) Ecuador

The presidential election in February was a crowded contest among 16 candidates, with the top three candidates being Andrés Arauz (from the faction of former President Rafael Correa), Guillermo Lasso (a right-wing banker), and Yaku Pérez (a candidate of indigenous descent). In April, candidate Lasso won the run-off election with 52.4% of the vote, and was inaugurated as president in May. The Lasso administration has declared that it will strengthen relations with the U.S., the EU, and other Western countries, as well

as with the IMF and other international financial institutions. It aims to stimulate the economy through the promotion of free trade and the attraction of foreign investment. On the other hand, the ruling Creating Opportunities Party has only 12 out of 137 seats in the unicameral National Assembly, and smooth legislative management is an issue.

In terms of relations with Japan, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Uto visited Ecuador in July and confirmed that the two countries' traditional friendly bilateral relations will be further strengthened through close cooperation under the new administration.

### (14) Collaboration with the Nikkei Community

The Nikkei community has fostered a sense of affinity toward Japan in LAC countries. Nevertheless, generations have transitioned over 100 years since Japanese immigration to LAC countries began, thus how to deepen ties to Japan among the community, including among the younger generation, has become a challenge. Amid this situation, in addition to inviting young Nikkei people to visit Japan, Japan also implements measures toward strengthening collaboration with the Nikkei community, through supporting events by young Nikkei people in various countries for creating networks among them. In February 2021, the supplementary budget allocated 2.4 billion yen to support Nikkei communities by subsidizing through the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) the cost of supporting medical and welfare facilities operated by Nikkei organizations affected by the COVID-19 epidemic.

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<sup>6</sup> During the October 2019 presidential election, the incumbent candidate President Evo Morales (in office since 2006), who had declared his victory, resigned and fled Bolivia in November due to protests, alienation from the military and police, and other factors because of suspicions of fraud in the election procedure.



## Development and Prospects of Relations Between Japan and the Latin America and the Caribbean region

The year 2021 was a year of deepening relations between Japan and the Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) region. Many people may remember that during the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, Cuban boxers won the most medals in four boxing weight classes and the Brazilian team won the seventh most gold medals in the world at the Paralympic Games. There was also a heartwarming behind-the-scenes story of the Jamaican athlete who took the wrong bus to the competition venue, but made it in time to compete and won the gold medal thanks to a Japanese staff member. In addition, despite the restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic, exchanges among host towns also took place.

In the field of diplomacy, the year 2021 was an important year for Japan-LAC relations. While face-to-face diplomacy was constrained, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Mexico, Uruguay, Argentina, Paraguay, and Brazil in January, as well as Guatemala, Panama and Jamaica in July. It was the first time in history that a Japanese Foreign Minister visited as many as eight LAC countries. Foreign Minister Motegi held both in-person and online regional dialogues with eight Central American countries during his visit to Guatemala, and with 14 Caribbean countries during his visit to Jamaica. Furthermore, the Vice President and Foreign Minister of Colombia as well as the Foreign Minister of Paraguay visited Japan in November. Given that many other online meetings between Japan and LAC countries were also held, it has been an unprecedented year of close dialogue.

Behind this close dialogue, there are common issues to the international community that Japan and the LAC region should address together. During dialogues with various countries, Japan explained its initiatives for a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” and called for the expansion of such initiatives as well as cooperation to maintain and expand the free and open international order based on the rule of law. Japan also appealed for cooperation in the international arena, including the United Nations, to confront global challenges such as COVID-19, natural disasters and climate change. Furthermore, Japan called for improving the business environment for Japanese companies operating in LAC countries. The in-person, in-depth discussions among the foreign ministers were particularly fruitful, and Japan was able to gain the understanding and cooperation of various countries on all of these important issues.

Despite the geographical distance, there is a foundation for such in-depth communication between Japan and the LAC region. The Nikkei (Japanese immigrants and their descendants) have been serving as a “bridge” to foster a sense of affinity toward Japan in these countries for over 100 years. The presence of Nikkei people continues to be very important to this day. In addition, many LAC countries share fundamental values such



Antigua is a World Heritage City in Guatemala. Japan provides ODA for the protection of many cultural assets in the LAC region, including this World Heritage site. (@INGUAT)



Meeting between Foreign Minister Motegi and Secretary of Economy Clouthier (January 5, Mexico)



Courtesy call to President Bolsonaro by Foreign Minister Motegi (January 4, Brazil)



as freedom, democracy, the rule of law and human rights. Many of the countries, including the Caribbean island nations, place importance on the free and open maritime order. They also share with Japan a high incidence of natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and hurricanes, and we have received much appreciation for cooperation in disaster risk reduction and other areas that leverage Japan's expertise.

Furthermore, as one of the world's leading producers of minerals, energy and food resources, the LAC region has built up mutually complementary trade relations with Japan. As a series of economic partnership agreements has been concluded in recent years, the region has become increasingly important as a manufacturing base supporting the global supply chain, and Japanese companies are increasingly expanding into the region. Recently, technological innovations in areas such as telecommunications have expanded the possibilities for cooperation, and it is expected to deepen the cooperation for clean energy and green economies.

On the other hand, LAC countries also face serious challenges. In addition to problems such as security and natural disasters, long-standing challenges such as corruption remain in some countries, and structural issues including inequality and poverty have been a drag on development and a destabilizing factor in regional affairs. The damage caused by COVID-19, which is more serious in the region than in other parts of the world, is further exacerbating this situation.

Japan has been strengthening its ties (connectivity) with the LAC region under the guiding principle of the three "Juntos!!" (Together!!), which are to progress together by deepening economic relations, to lead together in the international arena, and to inspire together by promoting people-to-people exchanges. At a time when the world and LAC countries are facing difficulties, we will further strengthen our long-standing friendly relations through close dialogues that transcend distance, and walk forward together as partners who share values while combining our wisdom in addressing new challenges.

# Section 5

## Europe

### 1 Overview

#### <The Importance of Cooperation with Europe, with which Japan Shares Fundamental Values and Principles>

The European Union (EU) and European countries are important partners for Japan, and share fundamental values and principles such as freedom, democracy, the rule of law, and human rights. Amidst the spread of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), cooperation with the EU and European countries is necessary to respond to the challenges faced by the international community and to realize fundamental values in the international community.

European countries pursue common policies across a wide range of fields such as diplomacy and security, economy, and state finance, through various frameworks including the EU. They also play an important role in formulating standards in the international community. The countries also influence international opinion benefiting from their language, history, cultural and artistic activities, and through communication activities utilizing major media organizations and think tanks. Cooperation with Europe is important in enhancing Japan's presence and influence in the international community.

#### <Response to COVID-19 in Europe>

Even in 2021, European countries continued to

be compelled to take strict measures dramatically, including the lockdown across England following the confirmation of a new COVID-19 variant (the Alpha variant) in the UK in December 2020. The tendency of tight restrictions continued through the spring all over Europe, including the implementation of a nationwide lockdown in France in April. However, as vaccinations progressed in various countries before the summer vacation season, restrictions began to be relaxed to achieve a balance between COVID-19 countermeasures and socioeconomic activities, including the reopening of restaurants and entertainment facilities and the resumption of classes at schools. Although the number of infections began to increase again in various countries after June due to the spread of the Delta variant and the relaxation of restrictions, the number of severe cases and deaths remained relatively low. Amidst this, ahead of other countries, the UK introduced a “living with COVID-19” policy in which it eliminated most restrictions, including large-scale sporting events being held in June and July that attracted tens of thousands of spectators.

In July beginning with the operation of the “EU Digital COVID Certificate” in the EU, resumption of socioeconomic activities has been progressing since the summer through active implementation of vaccination certificates. In many EU member-states, certificates must be presented in order to use stores, facilities, and transportation systems.

In August, the European Commission announced that it had achieved its goal of vaccinating 70% of the adult population of the EU and appealed to continue recommending vaccinations to unvaccinated people, support for low- and middle-income countries to close the vaccination gap, and the need for international cooperation.

Thereafter, the overall tendency toward relaxation of restrictions continued until mid-November. However, the emergence of the Omicron variant later that month prompted countries to once again tighten quarantine measures and domestic restrictions. In December, as the outbreak of the variant continued to spread throughout Europe, the trend toward tighter restrictions continued, including mandatory wearing of masks and restrictions to enter entertainment facilities.

#### **<Relations with Countries and Regions Outside Europe>**

In regard to relations with China, there were activities to manage relations with China, including online summit meetings with the leaders of France, Germany, and China in April and July, as well as online summit meetings with President Xi Jinping held four times by Germany, twice by France, and once by Italy. There were also moves toward cooperation on global challenges such as climate change, including the holding of the EU-China High Level Environment and Climate Dialogue. On the other hand, Europe's sense of vigilance toward China has been growing, with especially high interest regarding the situation in Hong Kong and the human rights situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, as well as the situations concerning the South China Sea and Taiwan. Concerns about China are growing, as seen by the EU Foreign Affairs Council's decision to impose sanctions on China for large-scale arbitrary detentions in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, the release of the Joint Communication on the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in September, and the adoption of the resolution on a new EU-China

Strategy in the European Parliament. Furthermore, concern is growing in Europe about economic coercion and disinformation. In December, the European Commission released a proposed regulation on anti-coercive measures against economic coercion by third countries against the EU and its member states. In regard to relations with the United States, U.S. President Biden visited Europe in June, and it was indicated that there would be cooperation in a wide range of fields, including COVID-19, climate change, and trade and investment. At the NATO Summit held during the same period, a Communiqué issued at the meeting announced the enhancement of political dialogue and practical cooperation with partner countries in the Asia-Pacific, including Japan.

Relations with Russia continued to be a priority issue for Europe, but following Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022 and Europe's reaction of strong condemnation and economic sanctions, the confrontation is intensifying between the two.

#### **<Multilayered, Attentive Diplomacy with Europe>**

In Europe, while the spread of COVID-19 has raised awareness of the importance of fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, and human rights, there have been in fact differences in the views of member countries on matters such as the recovery instrument, the rule of law, and relations with countries outside the region. Amidst this, Japan supports a strongly united Europe and conducts multilayered, attentive diplomacy with them. In 2021, despite major limitations on in-person visits by dignitaries due to COVID-19, diplomacy using teleconference meetings and telephone calls was actively developed.

In addition, taking the opportunity of in-person attendance at the G7 Cornwall Summit (June) and the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meetings (May and December) held under the Presidency of the UK, and the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (June) held under the Presidency of Italy, Japan held summit meetings

and foreign ministers' meetings with the UK, France, Germany, and other countries to confirm realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" (FOIP) as well as cooperation on global challenges such as climate change and responding to COVID-19. In addition, security and defense cooperation with European countries in particular was deepened in 2021. The Japan-UK Foreign and Defence Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") and the first Japan-Germany "2+2" were held online respectively in February and April. Moreover, the UK, French, Dutch, and German vessels were dispatched to the Indo-Pacific, and port calls to Japan, joint exercise, and other activities were implemented.

In the context of Japan-EU relations, close cooperation is conducted based on the Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) which entered into force in February 2019, the Japan-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA) of which the provisional application started at the same time, the Japan-EU Partnership on Connectivity signed in September 2019, and the Japan-EU Green Alliance established in May 2021. In the same month, Prime Minister Suga held the Japan-EU Summit (online) with President Michel of the European Council and President von der Leyen of the European Commission. They confirmed cooperation in addressing global challenges and further developing Japan-EU relations, including strengthening cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and COVID-19 countermeasures. Concerning relations with NATO, specific cooperation has been advanced in cyber and other fields based on the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme Between Japan and NATO, which was updated in 2020. In addition, in order to promote cooperation in areas such as women, peace, and security (WPS), a fourth female Self-Defense Force (SDF) personnel member has been dispatched to NATO Headquarters since December 2021.

Regarding the regions of the Visegrad Group (V4),<sup>1</sup> the Baltic States, and the Western Balkans, multilayered diplomacy was implemented with promotion of cooperation through bilateral relations and the EU as well as promotion of cooperative relations with each country. Foreign Minister Motegi visited Poland in May to attend the "V4+Japan" Foreign Ministers' Meeting, and in July he made the first visit to the Baltic States by a Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Furthermore, Japan conducts public diplomacy activities including dispatch of experts, cooperation with European think tanks and Japan's Friendship Ties Programs "MIRAI" (see the Column on page 126) for intellectual and people-to-people exchange that allows young people from Europe to visit Japan. These activities are aimed to promote the right picture of Japan and Asia and mutual understanding. Particularly by utilizing online exchanges, Japan is working on strengthening relations with Europe by conducting information-sharing and exchanges of views with European countries, organizations, and experts in a wide range of fields such as politics, security, economy, business, science and technology, education, culture and art.

## 2 Regional Situations in Europe

### (1) The European Union (EU)

The EU is a political and economic union consisting of 27 member states with a total population of about 447 million. Sharing fundamental values and principles, the EU is an important partner for Japan in addressing global issues.

#### <Recent Developments of the EU>

For the EU, responding to COVID-19 remained a major challenge in 2021 continuing on from 2020. The European Commission, the executive body of the EU, had been procuring vaccines in bulk for EU member states. However, due to

<sup>1</sup> For more information, see "Other European Regions" on p. 136.

delays in supply from pharmaceutical companies, the Commission began applying the transparency and authorisation mechanism for exports of COVID-19 vaccines from January 30. The EU has stated that the mechanism, which was initiated amidst the growing trend to secure supply of vaccines for one's own country centered on developed countries, is not an export ban but rather a temporary system that requires approval from member states for exports to third countries to ensure transparency in vaccine exports outside the EU, and conforms with the EU's international commitments under the WTO and the G20. Although vaccine supplies within the EU have stabilized since spring, the mechanism was extended three times and remained in place until December 31. The stabilization of vaccine supply has led to a sharp increase in the vaccination rate in the EU. On August 31, the European Commission announced that 70% of the adult population in the region has been fully vaccinated, achieving the target set at the beginning of the year. On the other hand, looking at the vaccination rates in individual EU member states, there is a clear disparity between Eastern and Western Europe, with low vaccine coverage particularly in Eastern European countries.

With the increase in vaccination rates, some EU member states started to resume economic activities in May. On May 20, the EU revised its recommendations on border control into the EU, announcing a direction to allow vaccinated people to enter the EU and relaxing the criteria on third countries for allowing travel from outside the EU.

In addition, as a move toward Europe's economic recovery, the EU's recovery instrument, NextGenerationEU, was launched in January 2021 to support economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and work on measures to create a greener, more digital, and resilient future. As for the Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF), which is at the core of NextGenerationEU, 22 member countries have completed the EU

approval process for their country's own recovery and resilience plan and advance payments of the requested funds have begun (as of March 1, 2022).

While working on its response to COVID-19, the EU released the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in April followed by the Joint Communication on the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in September, which further elaborates on the Strategy released in April. The Joint Communication released in September mentions China's growing military power in the Indo-Pacific and increasing tensions in the East and South China Seas and the Taiwan Strait. It also states that the EU will advance cooperation with its partners in the Indo-Pacific in seven priority areas: the economy, climate change, ocean governance, the digital field, connectivity, security and defense, and human security. Japan was mentioned as a partner for cooperation in all of these areas. Moreover, in July, the EU released a new document on EU connectivity titled "A Globally Connected Europe," and in December, the EU announced its "Global Gateway" to embody its connectivity strategy and to support quality infrastructure development.

#### <Japan-EU Relations>

Japan and the EU are strengthening their cooperation under the Japan-EU EPA, which entered into force in February 2019, and the Japan-EU Strategic Partnership Agreement (SPA), of which provisional application started at the same time. In May 2021, Prime Minister Suga held the Japan-EU Summit (in the teleconference format) with President Michel of the European Council and President von der Leyen of the European Commission. During the Summit, they exchanged views regarding FOIP, global challenges such as climate change and COVID-19 countermeasures, Japan-EU relations, and regional situations and they agreed on Japan-EU cooperation and collaboration in extensive fields. They also distributed a joint announcement and decided to

launch the “Japan-EU Green Alliance” on climate change and environmental issues. In addition, Foreign Minister Motegi attended the EU Foreign Affairs Council (virtual format) in January as the first Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs to ever attend the Council. He explained Japan’s views and initiatives on FOIP. In May, on the occasion of the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers’ Meeting, Foreign Minister Motegi also held a Japan-EU Foreign Ministers’ Meeting with High Representative of the EU for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Borrell in London, in which they exchanged views regarding FOIP, EU-Japan cooperation on global challenges, and regional situations. In February 2022, Foreign Minister Hayashi attended the Ministerial Forum for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific (virtual format) co-hosted by France, which held the EU Presidency for the first half of the year, and the EU. He gave a speech in which he referred to the severe security environment in the Indo-Pacific region and stressed the importance of strengthening cooperation with like-minded countries and partners.

In relation to COVID-19, Japan has been importing vaccines from within the EU, and they were imported smoothly under the transparency and authorisation mechanism for exports of COVID-19 vaccines. In addition, since July 1st 2020, the EU has published a list of third countries for which the EU member states should apply relaxation of restriction measures for entry from outside the EU and Schengen Area (in which national borders have been abolished based on the Schengen Agreement, which ensures freedom of movement between European countries). The list is reviewed every two weeks in principle. Japan was initially included in this list. It was

later removed on January 28, 2021, then added to the list again on June 3, 2021. Following its removal again on September 9, Japan has not been included since then (as of March 1, 2022).

The EU, with its economy scale that follows the United States and China, is an important economic partner of Japan, ranking second among Japan’s import partners, third among export partners, and first in terms of the balance of direct investment in Japan. Economic relations between Japan and the EU are further deepening on the basis of the Japan-EU EPA, which entered into force in 2019. Since the entry into force of the EPA, Japan and the EU have been appropriately implementing the agreement through the Joint Committee and advisory committees as stipulated in the agreement. In February 2021, the second meeting of the Joint Committee was held to discuss the implementation of the Japan-EU EPA among ministers. Preliminary discussions were also held to reassess the need to include provisions on the free flow of data in the Japan-EU EPA. Various advisory committee meetings were also held sequentially through teleconferences and other means despite COVID-19. Japan will continue to aim for the steady implementation of the Agreement and further development of Japan-EU economic relations by strengthening cooperation between Japan and the EU.

Furthermore, on June 30, the Agreement on Civil Aviation Safety between Japan and the European Union entered into force. This agreement aims to reduce the burdens on the aviation industry and promote the free flow of civil aeronautical products by removing duplication in inspections and other procedures for the import and export of aircraft and other civil aeronautical products.



## MIRAI<sup>(Note)</sup>, future connected through Japan-Europe Youth Exchange Program: Initiatives under the COVID-19 pandemic

The MIRAI Program, a short-term youth exchange program between Japan and Europe, is striving to promote exchange between young people in Japan and Europe and to improve understanding of Japan even while facing the challenge that the participants were unable to visit Japan due to the COVID-19 pandemic through online interaction with Japanese universities and networking events for previous participants.

### ■Online exchange with Japanese universities

#### Feedback from students that participated from Europe

- The time we spent with the Japanese university students was very meaningful, and I fully understood their way of thinking about Japanese society and culture. My understanding and affection for Japan became even deeper.
- I deepened my knowledge not only of Japan, but also European countries. I plan to write an essay on how I learned about issues from a range of perspectives.
- It was fascinating to learn with the Japanese students about how Edo (former name of Tokyo) - the city with the highest population in the 19th century - embraced the concept of *mottainai* (waste not, want not), and treasured all of its resources.

**Tachibana Masahiko, Professor, Innovative Global Program, College of Engineering, Shibaura Institute of Technology (collaboration on university exchange)**

The students from Europe showed great interest in Japanese traditions such as innovative long-standing Japanese companies and how Edo was a recycling and sustainable city. It seemed that the Japanese and European students learned a lot from each other through the program, and more than 90% of participants responded in a follow-up survey that they were "satisfied" with it. It was the biggest benefit for us to show that online programs work well enough as a platform for international exchange.

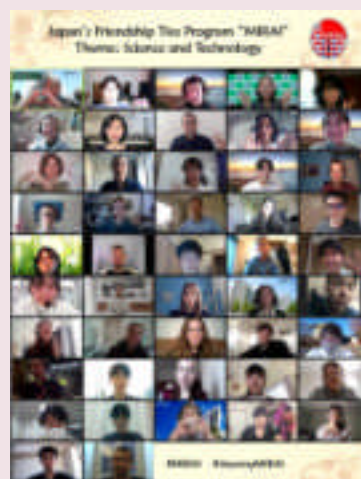
### ■MIRAI alumni networking events

#### Shokhrukh Sirojiddinov (participated from Uzbekistan in FY2015)

The MIRAI program marked my first exposure to Japan. I was personally impressed with the technological development and public etiquette among the Japanese. After participating in the MIRAI Program, I returned to Japan and studied there for three years. I had a job offer from a Japanese company and currently live and work in Tokyo. At a MIRAI Alumni event, I was chosen as one of the speakers to talk about my life and career in Japan for over 100 participants from European countries. Many participants reached out to me asking questions. I was happy to answer them and share my experience with fellow participants.

#### Claudia Bonillo Fernández (participated from Spain in FY2018)

My growing fascination with Japan made me want to deepen my research on its culture at an academic level, so I specialized in Japanese Studies at a university in Spain. Participating in this program allowed me to experience Japan in a deeper way, which reasserted my wish to learn much more about this culture and above all, to live there, which led me to do a research stay at Kyoto University. During my stay, I coordinated an online seminar on the topic of my doctoral thesis, supported and attended by Japanese and European



Online exchange with Shibaura Institute of Technology (April and May)

universities, being a prime example of how one event has managed to connect different countries including Spain and Japan.

**Antonio Meleca (participated from Italy in FY2019)**

My experience as a MIRAI delegate allowed me to differentiate myself among many applicants for multiple high-level internships. I was able to do an internship within international organizations and join a youth-led think tank contributing to the research for EU-Asia/Pacific Studies. Thanks to these positive experiences, I decided to present my career path during the 2021 MIRAI reunion. The presentation allowed me to broaden my network and I ended up completely taking up the role of a MIRAI promoter through social media. I frequently find myself inviting my fellow interns to apply to the MIRAI program.

The continuation of online exchange has been an opportunity to learn thoughts about relations between Japan and Europe from each and every participant as well as to strengthen the bonds among them. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan will continue initiatives leading to a bright MIRAI ("future" in Japanese) between Japan and Europe.

**Note:** MIRAI: Mutual-understanding, Intellectual Relations and Academic Exchange Initiative

## (2) United Kingdom

Following the resurgence of COVID-19, lockdown measures were introduced for the third time in the UK from January to March. On the other hand, the UK approved COVID-19 vaccines at the end of 2020, ahead of the rest of the world, and proceeded with vaccinations, which temporarily contributed to enhancing the Johnson administration's approval rate. Since March 2021, the Government of the UK has relaxed restrictions in stages, and in July, amid rising numbers of infections, it's "living with COVID-19" policy was introduced by eliminating most of the restrictions. Additionally, the Johnson administration has been promoting initiatives for "levelling up" every part of the UK and reforming the health and nursing care systems. As part of the cabinet reshuffle in September, Elizabeth Truss, former Secretary of State for International Trade, was appointed as Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs.

In regard to Brexit, the Trade and Cooperation Agreement between the EU and the UK that was concluded on December 24, 2020 (and officially entered into force in May) and avoided the situation of tariffs being established between the UK and the EU. On the other hand, challenges remain

in relations with the EU over the implementation of the Northern Ireland Protocol, fishing rights, and other issues.

On the security front, the UK has been strengthening its engagement in the Indo-Pacific region. In March 2021, it issued the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, in which it positioned Japan as "one of our closest strategic partners, including on security." As for Japan-UK relations, the UK carrier strike group centered on the UK's aircraft carrier HMSQueen Elizabeth made a port call to Japan in September, and various forms of joint exercises have been implemented. Bilateral security and defense cooperation have deepened dramatically in recent years, including the start of negotiations for a Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement in October.

Dialogue and exchanges between Japan and the UK have been actively conducted at various levels, including at the summit and foreign minister level. During these, the two countries shared the view that Japan and the UK would promote cooperation toward the realization of FOIP, and they cooperated closely for G7 solidarity, regional situations, climate change countermeasures, and the like in light of the UK holding the



Japan-UK Summit Meeting (November 2, Glasgow, UK)

G7 Presidency and Presidency for the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) in 2021. Prime Minister Suga held telephone calls with Prime Minister Johnson in February and May, and held an in-person meeting during the G7 Cornwall Summit in June. Prime Minister Kishida also held a telephone call with Prime Minister Johnson in October and an in-person meeting during COP26 in November.

Foreign Minister Motegi held the Fourth Japan-UK Foreign and Defence Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") online in February. He also held the Ninth Japan-UK Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue in May, a Japan-UK Foreign Ministers' Meeting in June, and a telephone call in September with Secretary of State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs Dominic Raab. In addition, he held a telephone call with Secretary of State for International Trade Truss in May, and again in September immediately after her appointment as State for Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Affairs. He also held an in-person meeting with her during the UN General Assembly in the same month. Foreign Minister Hayashi held an in-person meeting with Foreign Secretary Truss during the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in December.

With regard to culture, in relation to the "Japan-UK Season of Culture," the period which bridges the two major sports events of the Rugby World Cup 2019 and the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, the "Japan Season of Culture" in the UK was extended until 2021 following

postponement of many events resulted from the spread of COVID-19. Various related events were held throughout the year, mainly online.

### (3) France

President Macron's approval rating, which rose due to his response to COVID-19, remained relatively high at around 40% in 2021. In France, infections spread again from the beginning of the year and strict measures were adopted, including a nationwide curfew. However, restrictions have been eased since June 2021, when vaccinations helped bring down the spread of infections. With a 100 billion euro economic recovery plan announced in September 2020, the Macron administration is working on the recovery of the damaged economy while responding to COVID-19. While effectively postponing pension reform in anticipation of the presidential election in April 2022, President Macron announced in a televised speech in November countermeasures against COVID-19, an energy policy that included the construction of new nuclear power plants, and the launch of a plan to strengthen investment to secure the country's technological and production capacity.

With respect to external affairs, France promoted engagement in the Indo-Pacific, including leading the formulation of the EU's Indo-Pacific Strategy. France also strengthened security and defense cooperation in the Indo-Pacific with Japan, including the training fleet "*Jeanne d'Arc*" which held the Japan-France-U.S.-Australia-India joint exercise in May, and the bilateral ground exercise between Japan and France which took place within Japan for the first time during a port call in Japan.

In addition, dialogues were held between Japan and France at various levels, including at the summit and foreign minister levels. In May, Foreign Minister Motegi met with Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Jean-Yves Le Drian, and they confirmed that they would work together to materialize the bilateral cooperation towards the



Japan-France Summit Meeting (July 24, Tokyo)

realization of FOIP. In June, Prime Minister Suga met with President Macron during the G7 Summit, and they confirmed cooperation toward the success of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, held in 2021 as well as the Paris Games to be held in 2024. In July, Prime Minister Suga held a summit meeting and luncheon meeting with President Macron, who was the only leader of a major country to visit Japan to attend the opening ceremony of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020. The leaders confirmed the promotion of bilateral cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and exchanged views on cooperation for global challenges such as climate change, biodiversity, and development in Africa. In September, during his visit to New York, Foreign Minister Motegi met with Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Le Drian and confirmed continued cooperation in the Indo-Pacific region. In November, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with President Macron, in which he welcomed the significant strengthening of the bilateral security and defense cooperation, and shared the view to continue to work closely together. In the same month, Foreign Minister Hayashi also held a telephone call with Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs Le Drian. In December, during the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting, they held an in-person meeting and shared the view to further deepen Japan-France cooperation in the Indo-Pacific.

#### (4) Germany

The Bundestag election held on September 26



Japan-Germany Foreign Ministers' Meeting (December 11, Liverpool, UK)

attracted a great deal of attention as the election to determine the successor to Chancellor Angela Merkel, who had announced her decision not to run in the election. Until 2020, under the leadership of Chancellor Merkel, the response to COVID-19 was highly evaluated, and the Christian Democratic Union and Christian Social Union (CDU/CSU) had a high approval rating. However, from the beginning of 2021, the approval rating rose for the Social Democratic Party (SPD) candidate Olaf Scholz as the CDU chancellor candidate, Armin Laschet, lost ground due to the response to flooding in western Germany and the scandal involving false statements on the resume of Green Party chancellor candidate, co-chair Annalena Baerbock. As a result, the SPD became the leading party (25.7%, an increase of 5.2% compared to the previous election), the CDU/CSU came in second but with the lowest turnout since its formation (24.1%, a decrease of 8.8%), and the Green Party came in third (14.8%, an increase of 5.9%). Coalition negotiations between the parties continued after the election. On November 24, the SPD, Green Party, and Free Democratic Party (FDP) reached a consensus on a coalition agreement. On December 8, the new administration (the so-called "traffic light coalition") was inaugurated with former Vice Chancellor and Federal Minister of Finance Scholz as Prime Minister. Attention is being paid to administration operations after Former Chancellor Merkel, who had led the government for 16 years since 2005, steps down.

With regard to Japan-Germany bilateral

relations, high-level exchanges continued in 2021, the 160th anniversary of the establishment of Japan-Germany relations, in the form of summit meetings and foreign ministers' meetings, both in person and by telephone. In addition, the Japan-Germany Agreement on the Security of Information was signed in March, and the first Japan-Germany Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting ("2+2") was held online in April. In November, the German naval frigate "Bayern," which was dispatched to the Indo-Pacific region under Germany's "Indo-Pacific Guidelines" established in September 2020, paid a port call to Japan and conducted a joint exercise. Japan-Germany relations have thus been strengthened, centered on the security field.

### (5) Italy

In January, a vote of confidence on the Conte administration was held in both the Chamber of Deputies and Senate of the Republic after one of the ruling coalition parties broke away due to conflicts over the European Stability Mechanism and the European recovery funds. Although the vote passed in both houses, the administration could not receive an absolute majority in the Senate of the Republic, and Prime Minister Conte announced his resignation. President Sergio Mattarella called on all the political parties to give confidence to a non-party cabinet to deal with the emergency situation, and a new broad coalition government was formed in February 2021 with former European Central Bank President Mario Draghi inaugurated

as Prime Minister. Prime Minister Draghi enjoys a high approval rating because of the concrete results he has achieved regarding his administration's priorities of the promotion of vaccination and the use of the European recovery funds.

In regard to COVID-19, the number of infections had been on the decline since late November 2020, but began to increase in late February. After peaking in late March, infections began to decline again as vaccination progressed. Since late April, restrictions on the use of theaters, gyms, and other facilities have been gradually eased, and in late June, restrictions were lifted throughout Italy. Due to the rapid progress of vaccination, the majority of the population has completed the second dose, and the government is implementing efforts for the third dose. In October, a measure requiring all workers to have vaccination certificates and employers to confirm possession of such certificates came into effect. However, protests against the measure broke out, and there were clashes between some rioters and the police.

As for Japan-Italy relations, Prime Minister Suga held a telephone call with Prime Minister Draghi in March, confirming cooperation with Italy, which held the G20 Presidency. Foreign Minister Motegi held meetings with Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Di Maio during the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting in May and the G20 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting in June. They confirmed the strengthening of cooperation for addressing global challenges such as recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, as well as for the realization of FOIP. Foreign Minister Hayashi also met with Minister Di Maio during the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in December.

### (6) Spain

The second administration of Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez, inaugurated in January 2020, is governed by a minority ruling coalition government in cooperation with various parties outside the cabinet. The government has achieved a



Japan-Italy Foreign Ministers' Meeting (June 29, Bari, Italy)



high vaccination rate, and it is also focusing on economic measures that will continue even after COVID-19 is contained, using recovery funds distributed by the EU. The administration has maintained a certain level of approval since the outbreak of COVID-19.

In regard to Japan-Spain relations, the two countries are closely cooperating in the international arena, while strengthening bilateral relations in various fields, including politics, economy, and culture, under the strategic partnership agreed upon at the summit level meeting in 2018. In March, an interim meeting of the Japan-Spain Symposium, which aims to promote mutual understanding and strengthen cooperation between the two countries, was held online. Another meeting was held in a hybrid format in December. In addition, cooperation was promoted in both the public and private sectors in the fields of the economy, science and technology, among others, including the entry into force of the new Japan-Spain tax convention in May, and the third Meeting of the Japan-Spain Joint Committee on Cooperation in Science and Technology being held in June.

### (7) Poland

The coalition government established in 2015, led by the ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party, continues to govern with relative stability against the backdrop of a strong economy and generous welfare policies. Although support for the Morawiecki administration temporarily declined due to the effects of COVID-19, the economic impact was limited compared to other European countries, and support for the administration has been recovering along with economic recovery.

In regard to Japan-Poland relations, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Poland in May and held a Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Foreign Minister Rau. At the meeting, they confirmed the policy of strengthening cooperation in various fields, including politics, economy, and culture, through the signing of the Action Plan for the Implementation of the Strategic Partnership between Japan and

Poland (2021-2025). In addition, the 7th "V4 plus Japan" Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held under the Polish Presidency, in which the ministers agreed to advance cooperation with the V4 for FOIP and to support the Western Balkans. Furthermore, in July, President Duda visited Japan on the occasion of the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020. During the summit meeting with Prime Minister Suga, they exchanged views on FOIP and the "Three Seas Initiative" led by Poland, and agreed to further deepen the strategic partnership between the two countries.

### (8) Ukraine

The situation in eastern Ukraine, which had been unstable since 2014, had been relatively calm since the cease-fire agreement in July 2020. However, the situation began to deteriorate again around February 2021. In the first half of April, concerns increased about the buildup of Russian military forces, particularly around Ukraine's eastern border. During the second half of April, Russia ordered its troops to return to their original bases, and the situation appeared to have reached a lull.



Prime Minister Kishida attending the G7 Summit Teleconference Meeting (February 24, 2022, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting (February 19, 2022, Germany)



However, from the second half of October, the Russian military buildup around the Ukrainian border was again confirmed. In December, at the G7 Foreign Affairs and Development Ministers' Meeting, a statement was issued calling on Russia to ease tensions and pursue dialogue through diplomatic channels. Despite continued diplomatic efforts, including two U.S.-Russia videoconference summit meetings in December, there were no signs of improvement during 2021.

The situation became even more tense in 2022. While Russian forces were further reinforced, especially in the areas near the Ukrainian border, diplomatic negotiations continued among various countries to reduce tensions, including at the G7 Foreign Ministers' Meeting held on February 19. However, Russia's aggression began on February 24, when President Putin announced the start of a "special military operation" in pursuit of "demilitarization" and "denazification" in Ukraine, claiming that the purpose of the operation was to "protect people who have been subjected to genocide" by the Government of Ukraine. On the same day, Japan issued a Statement by Foreign Minister in which it condemned Russia's actions in the strongest terms. In addition, at the G7 Summit Teleconference Meeting, a G7 Leaders' Statement was issued condemning Russia's aggression against Ukraine in the strongest possible terms. Furthermore, on February 25, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a telephone call with Foreign Minister Kuleba, and conveyed Japan's readiness to urgently provide assistance to Ukraine through loans of at least 100 million US dollars, and stated that sanctions against Russia would be implemented promptly. On February 28, Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with President Zelenskyy, in which he stated that Japan would impose further sanctions on Russia. Prime Minister Kishida also conveyed that in addition to the loans

already announced, Japan would provide 100 million US dollars in emergency humanitarian assistance to the Ukrainian people who were facing hardship in Ukraine and neighboring countries. President Zelenskyy expressed his high appreciation and deep gratitude to Japan for these efforts.

On February 28, the first round of talks between Ukraine and Russia was held in Gomel Oblast near the Ukrainian border in southeastern Belarus. The Russian side made demands such as the confirmation of Ukraine's status as a neutral country with demilitarization as a prerequisite and recognition of Russia's jurisdiction over Crimea. The future of the negotiations is unpredictable.

Russia's recent aggression against Ukraine is an attempt to unilaterally change the status quo by force. It is an outrageous act that shakes the very foundation of the international order, not only in Europe but also in Asia, a serious violation of international law, and completely unacceptable. This is a matter that also concerns Japan's own security. Japan will act in solidarity with Ukraine and unity with the international community, including the G7, in order to resolutely defend the international order.

### **3 Collaboration with European Regional Institutions, and the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)**

#### **(1) Cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)**

As a military alliance that aims at providing collective defense for its 30 member countries, NATO<sup>2</sup> provides collective defense for its member countries, and also provides engagement in cooperative security efforts with non-EU countries and organizations and in crisis management outside of the region that could pose a direct threat to the security of the territories and

**2** NATO: North Atlantic Treaty Organization  
See the MOFA website for details: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/nato/index.html>



peoples of NATO member countries, including security-keeping operations and counter-terrorism efforts. In Afghanistan, NATO had been conducting its Resolute Support Mission (RSM) since 2015, which ended with the withdrawal of U.S. troops in August.

NATO has been increasingly interested in the Asia-Pacific region in recent years. At the Meeting of NATO Ministers of Foreign Affairs held online in December 2020, a statement by Foreign Minister Motegi was read out by the Ambassador of Japan to NATO. This was done for the first time by a Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs. Foreign Minister Motegi pointed that the current security environment in East Asia has become increasingly severe, and that NATO is a reassuring partner for the FOIP vision promoted by Japan. In the Communiqué issued at the NATO Summit in June, it was announced that NATO would enhance dialogue and cooperation with its partners in the Asia-Pacific, including Japan.

Japan and NATO are partners that share fundamental values, and both have been taking specific steps toward collaboration based on the Individual Partnership and Cooperation Programme (IPCP) (revised in May 2018 and June 2020), which was signed in May 2014. Japan has participated in NATO's Cyber Coalition, as well as training exercises related to humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HA/DR) as an observer. Japan has also dispatched a female SDF official to the NATO headquarters for the fourth time since December 2021 in order to promote Japan-NATO cooperation on cyber issues, Women, Peace and Security (WPS) and other fields. Through the Partnership for Peace (PfP) Trust Fund, a project that aims to promote arms control and disarmament, as well as democratization and regional stabilization, utilizing NATO's specialized military expertise, Japan has also been providing support to process unexploded ordnance in Ukraine, and to help capacity building for demilitarization of Serbia's Ministry of Defense arsenal.

## **(2) Cooperation with the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE)**

OSCE is a regional security organization with 57 participating States across Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus region, and North America, that works to bridge differences between member countries and foster trust through conflict prevention, crisis management, and post-conflict recovery and reconstruction in these regions through a comprehensive approach. Japan has cooperated with OSCE activities since 1992 as an Asian Partner for Co-operation. Japan provides support for preventing terrorism by means such as strengthening border patrol in Afghanistan and Central Asia through the Border Management Staff College (a capacity building organization) in Tajikistan, and also gives support in conducting election monitoring as well as to the projects that promote women's social advancement. Considering that the OSCE plays an important role in improving the situation in Ukraine, Japan has been providing financial support and dispatching experts to the OSCE Special Monitoring Mission (SMM) (experts have been dispatched intermittently since August 2015). At the Ministerial Council held in Sweden in December, Ambassador of Japan to Austria Mizutani Akira participated and stated that Japan will continue to support capacity-building for border control of the OSCE participating states, and will continue to actively cooperate with the OSCE upon marking the 30th anniversary of the Japan-OSCE partnership in 2022.

## **(3) Cooperation with the Council of Europe (CoE)**

The CoE is an international organization comprising 47 member states in Europe which has played a key role in establishing international standards in areas concerning democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. As the CoE's sole observer country in Asia, Japan has contributed to the CoE, including by providing knowledge and supporting the holding of meetings. There

were participants from Japan who gave policy statements at the side event of the Meeting on AI in July, at the World Forum for Democracy in November, and at the Octopus Conference 2021. Besides this, as 2021 marked the 25th anniversary of Japan's appointment as an observer country, cherry blossom trees were donated and planted at the CoE headquarters, and a special website was opened to issue congratulatory messages from the Japanese government and Council of Europe officials.

#### **(4) Cooperation through the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM)**

ASEM was established in 1996 as the sole forum for dialogue and cooperation between Asia and Europe. Its members currently comprise 51 countries and two institutions, and works through summit meetings, ministers' meetings including Foreign Ministers' meetings, seminars, and other activities focused on three pillars, namely (1) politics, (2) economy, and (3) society and culture.

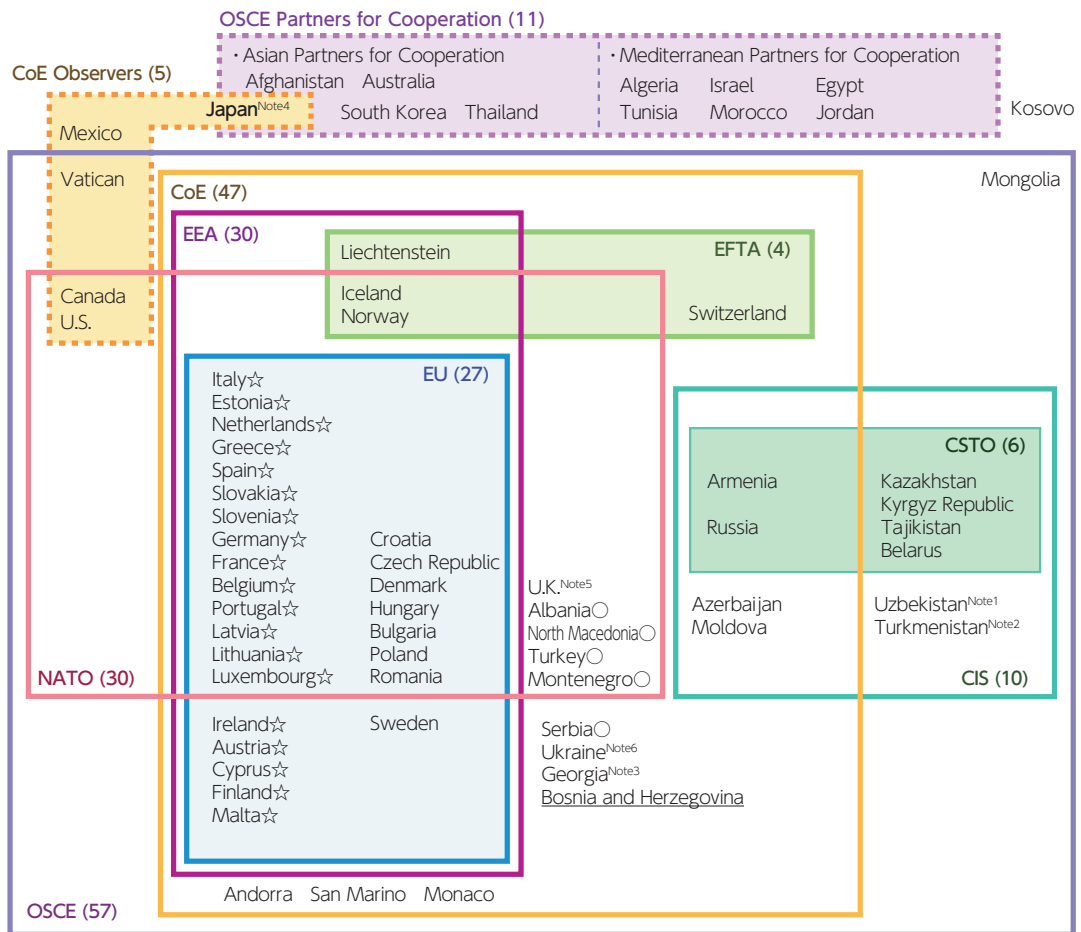
On November 25 and 26, the 13th ASEM Summit was held online under the chairmanship of Cambodia. Prime Minister Kishida attended the Summit from Japan, and expressed his determination to aim for the realization of a new form of capitalism, to actively contribute to the resolution of global challenges through measures against COVID-19 and climate change, and to lead international efforts to "build back better" from COVID-19. Furthermore, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan would play an active role in strengthening rules-based connectivity in cooperation with other countries toward the realization of FOIP, and pointed out the importance of implementing quality infrastructure investment in accordance with international principles. In regard to the regional situation, he expressed strong concern over nuclear and missile activities by North Korea, and said that Japan would cooperate with ASEM partners to respond to

North Korea, including for the abductions issue. He strongly opposed that unilateral attempts to change the status quo and activities to increase tensions had been escalated and actions against the rule of law had been seen in the East China Sea and the South China Sea. He also expressed strong concern over the situation in Hong Kong and the human rights situation in Xinjiang.

The Chair's Statement of the 13th ASEM Summit reaffirmed the importance of the partnership between Asia and Europe. It also mentioned the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement (CVID) of North Korea's nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs, the immediate resolution of the abductions issue, full compliance with international law, including the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, and ensuring maritime security. In light of the spread of COVID-19, the Phnom Penh Statement on the post-COVID-19 Socio-Economic Recovery, issued in conjunction with the Chair's Statement, communicated priority measures for recovery of Asian and European countries, including international cooperation on COVID-19 vaccines, Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT), and further climate change measures.

Japan has supported the Asia-Europe Foundation (ASEF), ASEM's only permanent institution, with its project of stockpiling personal protective equipment (PPE) and antiviral drugs to combat infectious diseases, cooperating in the emergency transportation of stockpiled supplies to ASEM partners, as well as the implementation of capacity building workshops and public health network projects. From May to October, ASEF stockpiled supplies were provided to Cambodia, Laos, Bangladesh, Brunei, and Viet Nam. In addition, Japan contributed to the activities of ASEM by assisting with the online Environment Forum co-hosted by the ASEF and related organizations, and making financial contributions to the ASEF.

## Major Frameworks of Europe



## &lt;Legend&gt;

- : Candidate to be an EU member (5)
- ☆: Euro member states (19)
- : Member states of the NATO Membership Action Plan (MAP) (1)

( ) indicates number of member countries

Note1 Uzbekistan ceased its membership in the CSTO in 2012.

Note2 Turkmenistan has been an associate member of the CIS since 2005.

Note3 Georgia notified the CIS of its decision to leave the organization in August 2008, and formally withdrew from the CIS in August 2009.

Note4 Japan is a partner country of NATO.

Note5 The U.K. withdrew from the EU on January 31, 2020.

Note6 Ukraine signed a presidential decree in April 2018 to withdraw from the CIS.

## &lt;Abbreviations&gt;

- CoE (Council of Europe): (47)
- CIS (Commonwealth of Independent States): (10)
- CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization): (6)
- EEA (European Economic Area): (30)
- EFTA (European Free Trade Association): (4)
- EU (European Union): (27)
- NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization): (30)
- OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe): (57)

## Other European Regions

### Nordic countries

**Iceland:** In May, the 3rd Arctic Science Ministerial Meeting, co-hosted by Iceland, was held in Tokyo, which was the first one to be held in Asia. The meeting focused on promoting Arctic research through international cooperation.

**Sweden:** In March, Prime Minister Suga held a telephone call with Prime Minister Stefan Löfven, and they shared the view to further enhance bilateral relations in a wide range of fields including the economy, climate change and digitalization. Prime Minister Löfven agreed to cooperate with Japan toward the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific," and both leaders shared the view to cooperate on regional affairs, including China and Myanmar.

**Denmark:** In November, Foreign Minister Hayashi met Minister for Foreign Affairs Jeppe Kofod, who was visiting Japan. The two ministers welcomed the progress made in the coordination of the "Joint Strategic Work Program" aimed at developing the "Strategic Partnership" that was agreed upon by the leaders of the two countries in 2014, into more concrete cooperation. The ministers confirmed further cooperation in the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific", as well as in international fora, such as measures on climate change. The two ministers also exchanged views on regional affairs and shared the view to strengthen cooperation as like-minded countries that share the fundamental values.

**Norway:** Prime Minister Kishida became a member of the Norwegian-led "High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy," and at its third meeting in November, he introduced Japan's efforts and expressed Japan's contribution to building a sustainable ocean economy.

**Finland:** Foreign Minister Motegi held talks with Minister for Development Cooperation and Foreign Trade Ville Skinnari, who was visiting Japan. The two ministers welcomed progress in bilateral cooperation, especially in digital and cyber fields, and shared the view to strengthen cooperation in international arenas, including measures against COVID-19. They also exchanged views on cooperation in the Indo-Pacific and concurred on the importance of realizing a free and open international order based on the rule of the law.

### Benelux countries

**The Netherlands:** In June, on the occasion of the G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Italy, Foreign Minister Motegi held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs Sigrid Kaag. The two ministers affirmed that they would strengthen cooperation toward the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific". Furthermore, the Netherlands dispatched the frigate *Evertsen* to the Indo-Pacific as part of the UK's Carrier Strike Group and also made a port call in Japan, in accordance with its own Indo-Pacific guidelines announced in 2020.

**Belgium:** During the COVID-19 pandemic, Belgium played a major role in supplying vaccines to the world with its vaccine development and production bases, trading ports, and international airports. Regarding relations with Japan, Prime Minister Suga and Foreign Minister Motegi issued messages of condolences regarding the flood damage caused by torrential rains in southern Belgium in July.

**Luxembourg:** In July, His Royal Highness Grand Duke Henri visited Japan to attend the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.

**San Marino:** Following the general election of the Grand and General Council of San Marino (equivalent to the parliament) held on December 8, 2020, the Beccari administration, headed by Luca Beccari, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, International Economic Cooperation and Telecommunications, took office on January 8, 2021. In July, Captains Regent Gian Carlo Venturini and Marco Nicolini visited Japan to attend the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.

**Portugal:** In July, Minister in charge of International Exposition Inoue visited Portugal and held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs Augusto Ernesto Santos Silva. Minister Santos Silva expressed Portugal's participation in the Osaka-Kansai Expo, while Minister Inoue welcomed Portugal's announcement of its participation and affirmed cooperation with Portugal for the success of the Expo.

**Monaco:** In July, His Royal Highness Prince Albert II visited Japan to attend the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020.

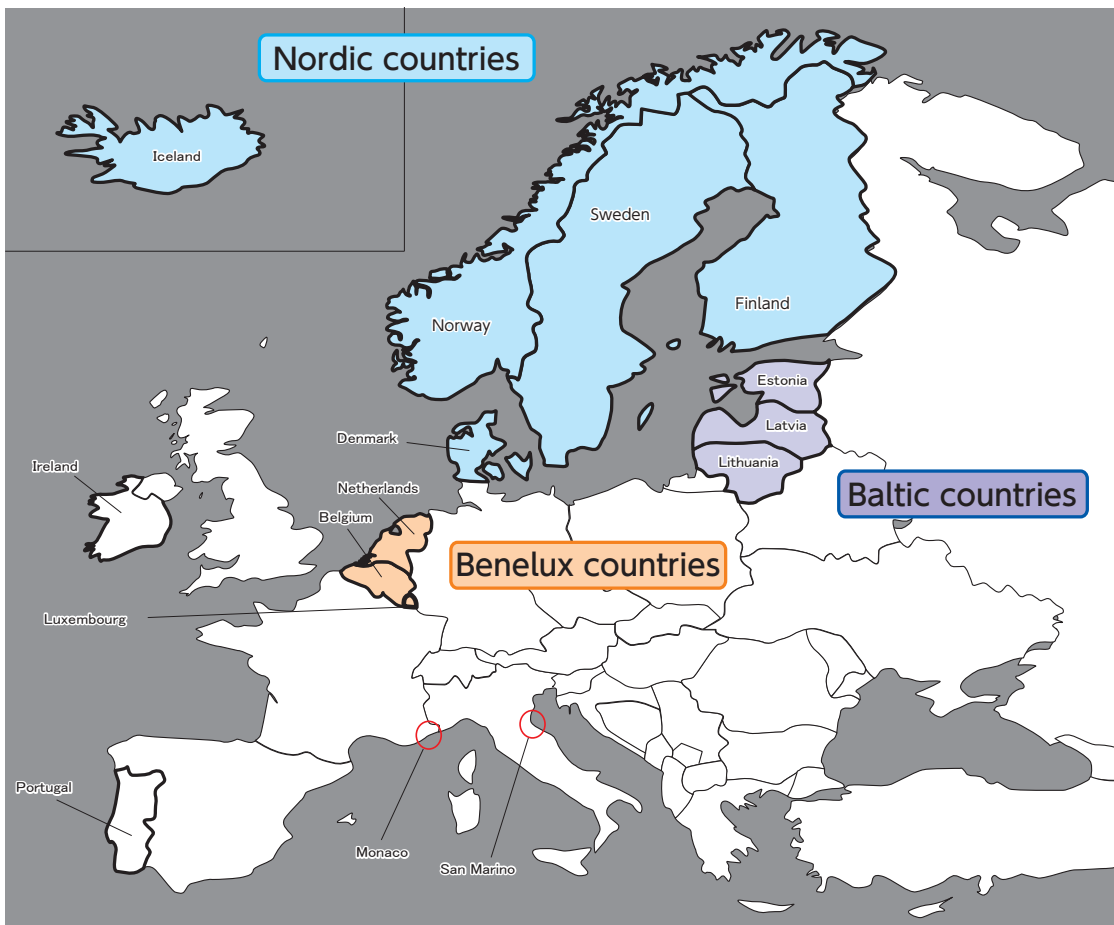
### Baltic countries

**Estonia:** In July, Foreign Minister Motegi became the first Japanese Foreign Minister to visit Estonia, where he held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs Eva-Maria Liimets and paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Kaja Kallas. Both sides confirmed that they would further promote broad cooperation on the occasion of the visit and the 100th anniversary of the friendship between Japan and Estonia in 2021. Estonia expressed its support for a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" and shared the view on the importance of like-minded countries to maintain and strengthen a rules-based free and open international order. In August, Prime Minister Suga held a summit meeting with President Kersti Kaljulaid, who was visiting Japan, and concurred on cooperation in the digital and cyber fields, and the cooperation toward the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific."

**Latvia:** In July, Foreign Minister Motegi became the first Japanese Foreign Minister to visit Latvia, where he held a talk with Minister of Foreign Affairs Edgars Rinkevics and paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Krišjānis Kariņš. Minister Motegi confirmed with both ministers to further promote broad cooperation on the occasion of the visit and the 100th anniversary of the friendship between Japan and Latvia in 2021. The Latvian side expressed its strong support for the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" and shared the view on the importance of like-minded countries to maintain and strengthen a rules-based free and open international order.

**Lithuania:** In July, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Lithuania and held a talk with Minister of Foreign Affairs Gabrielius Landsbergis and paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Ingrida Simonyte. Minister Motegi confirmed with both ministers to further promote broad cooperation on the occasion of the visit and the 100th anniversary of their friendship in 2022. The Lithuanian side expressed its support for a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" and shared the view on the importance of like-minded countries to maintain and strengthen a rules-based free and open international order.

**Ireland:** In December, Foreign Minister Hayashi held a video conference with Minister for Foreign Affairs and Defense Simon Coveney, where the ministers shared the view to further promote cooperation to develop bilateral relations, including in the political and economic fields. The ministers also exchanged views on regional affairs and shared the view to strengthen cooperation among like-minded countries toward the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific."





## V4

Bilateral relations between Japan and the V4 countries of Poland, Hungary, Slovakia and the Czech Republic have a long history and are traditionally friendly. During Foreign Minister Motegi's visit to Warsaw in May, he attended the 7th "V4 plus Japan" Foreign Ministers' Meeting, where the ministers confirmed their cooperation toward the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific" and their cooperation in assistance for the Western Balkans.

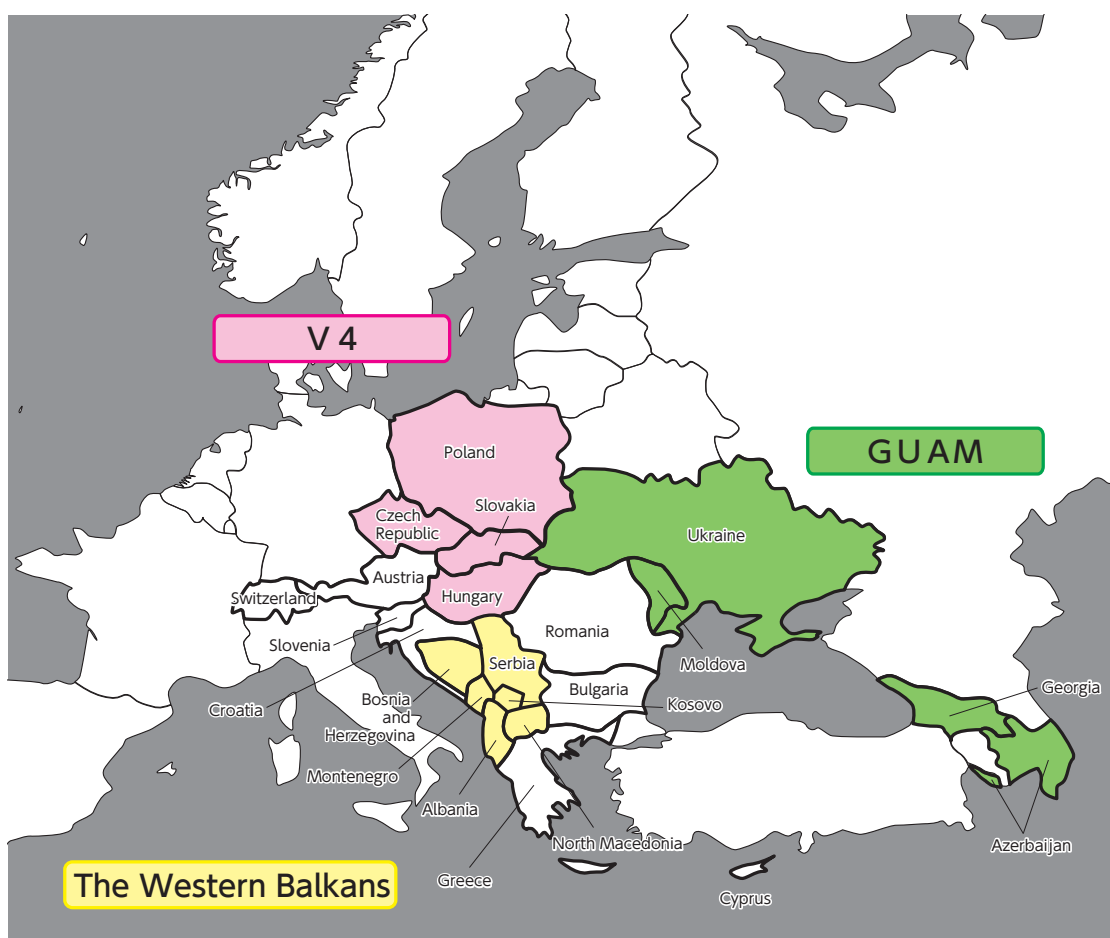
Poland and Hungary are increasingly at odds with the EU over "the rule of the law," delaying EU approval of recovery funds for both countries. The passage of LGBT-related legislation in Hungary in July and a ruling by the Polish Constitutional Court in October on the relationship between the Constitution and EU law and other decisions have created problems concerning the basic values of the EU and the sovereignty of individual countries.

**Poland:** Japan was active in high-level dialogues, including a telephone call between Prime Minister Suga and Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki in March, a foreign ministers' meeting during Foreign Minister Motegi's visit to Poland in May, and President Andrej Duda's visit to Japan in July, in which the two countries affirmed to strengthen their strategic partnership relations.

**Hungary:** Foreign Minister Motegi held a meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó during his visit to Japan in March and during Foreign Minister Motegi's visit to Warsaw in May. Both ministers agreed to promote "V4 plus Japan" cooperation under Hungary's V4 Presidency (V4 Presidency since July). The ministers also welcomed new investments by Japanese companies and shared the view to strengthen economic relations.

**Slovakia:** Foreign Minister Motegi visited Warsaw in May and held a meeting with Minister of Foreign and European Affairs Ivan Korčok. The ministers welcomed new investment by Japanese companies and agreed to strengthen economic relations.

**Czech Republic:** Foreign Minister Motegi visited Warsaw in May and held a meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs Jakub Kulháněk. The ministers signed the "Action Plan for Cooperation between Japan and the Czech Republic for the period of 2021-2025" and confirmed the strategic partnership between the two countries.



## The Western Balkans

Although there still remains ethnic conflict, overall progress can be seen for stability and development in the Western Balkan region owing to each country's commitment to reforms toward EU membership. Prime Minister Abe visited Serbia in January 2018, the first visit ever by a Japanese Prime Minister. During the visit, he announced the "Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative" designed to advance cooperation with the Western Balkans (Albania, Kosovo, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, North Macedonia and Montenegro), which aims for EU membership. Japan has promoted cooperation with the entire Western Balkan region in areas such as youth and economic exchanges. In April, as a collaborative project with the West Balkan Fund established by the governments of the West Balkans, participants from each West Balkan country participated online in the report on the "Impact of COVID-19 on sustainability of Civil Society Organizations in the Western Balkans Region." In May, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Bosnia and Herzegovina, and in July Kosovo President Vjosa Osmani-Sadriu and Montenegro Prime Minister Zdravko Krivokapic visited Japan.

## GUAM (Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Moldova)

GUAM was established by four countries of the former Soviet Union to promote democracy and stable economic development. Japan established the "GUAM+Japan" cooperation framework in 2007, and holds foreign minister-level and vice-minister-level meetings, as well as theme-based workshops with professionals and experts from GUAM countries, as a project to invite visitors to Japan. Japan places importance on ensuring that fundamental values take root in the international community through the stability and economic development of GUAM countries.

**Slovenia:** In April, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Slovenia, which will hold the EU Presidency in the second half of 2021, and met Minister for Foreign Affairs Anze Logar, and paid courtesy calls to President Borut Pahor and Prime Minister Janez Jansa. The two countries took the opportunity of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2022 to agree to develop relations in the areas of economic development, Society 5.0 and cybersecurity. They also agreed to cooperate toward integrating the Western Balkans into the EU under the "West Balkan Initiative."

**Romania:** Japan and Romania coordinated their efforts to sign a strategic partnership document in 2021, the 100th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

**Bulgaria:** Since 2018, Japan has promoted cooperation with Bulgaria under the "Western Balkans Cooperation Initiative." In November, Japan and Bulgaria co-hosted the second Western Balkans Workshop on Seismic Risk Challenges.

**Croatia:** With bilateral relations gaining momentum from the mutual visits of foreign ministers in 2019 and the telephone call between Foreign Minister Motegi and Minister for Foreign Affairs Gordan Grlic Radman in 2020, further progress in bilateral relations, including in the economic sector, is expected ahead of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2023.

**Austria:** Various events were held in both countries in 2019, the 150th anniversary of exchanges with Austria, and visits to Japan were made by Chancellor Sebastian Kurz and other officials. In September 2020, Prime Minister Abe held a telephone call with the Chancellor.

**Switzerland:** In July 2021, President Guy Parmelin visited Japan for the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2022 and held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Suga. Also in July, a protocol to amend the tax treaty was signed, and a new Swiss Consulate in Osaka was established.

**Greece:** Japan continues to maintain stable and good relations after the 120th anniversary of the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation between Japan and Greece in 2019. Further strengthening of relations, including economic relations, is expected in the future.

**Cyprus:** Following the opening of the Embassy of Japan in Cyprus in January 2018, the Embassy of Cyprus in Tokyo was opened in September 2019. Further strengthening of relations is expected ahead of the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2022.

## 100 Years of Friendship between Japan and the Baltic States

After World War I and against the backdrop of the Russian Revolution, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania declared independence from the Russian Empire, and became republic countries after international recognition. Japan recognized the then Estonia and Latvia in 1921 and Lithuania in 1922. 100 years later, Japan celebrated the 100th year anniversary of friendship with Estonia and Latvia in 2021, and with Lithuania in 2022, further developing the friendly relations between Japan and the Baltic states.



Cabinet decision of March 1, 1921, legal recognition of the Governments of Estonia, Latvia, and Georgia.

In 1929, a Japanese legation was established in the Latvian capital Riga, which played an important role for gathering information about the situation in Europe. In addition, a consulate was opened in Kaunas in Lithuania, where Vice-Consul Sugihara Chiune issued “Visas for Life” that saved the lives of many Jewish people during World War II. The Baltic states were subsequently annexed into the Soviet Union during World War II, but in 1990, they declared their independence or transition to independence from the Soviet Union. In the following year, 1991, Japan again recognized the current Baltic states, which became independent as the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia, and the Republic of Lithuania and established diplomatic relations with them. Since then, the Baltic states have played active roles in the international community as members of Europe, and they are important partners to Japan, sharing fundamental values. Bilateral relations have grown steadily and in 2007, Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress (of the time) visited the Baltic states, and in 2018, Prime Minister Abe made the first visit to the Baltic states by a Japanese Prime Minister.

In 2021, frequent high-level visits between Japan and the Baltic states took place. In January, Prime Minister Suga sent a video message to the “Centenary of the International de jure Recognition of the Republic of Latvia,” and in July, Foreign Minister Motegi made the first visit to the Baltic states by a Japanese Foreign Minister. In August, President Kaljulaid of Estonia and the wife of President Levits of Latvia respectively visited Japan on the occasion of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020. The meetings held on the occasion of these visits affirmed the friendly relations between Japan and the Baltic states, which is to celebrate



Foreign Minister Motegi planting a tree during his visit to Latvia with Minister of Foreign Affairs Rinkēvičs (center)

the 100th anniversary. Furthermore, both sides concurred on promoting cooperation on the common issues of the international community as like-minded countries, such as realizing a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).”

Commemorative events between Japan and the Baltic states were affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, however, some events were successfully held by adapting to the pandemic situation and taking appropriate infection control measures, such as a kimono exhibition in Estonia from June to November, and

an digital *ukiyo-e* (woodblock prints) exhibition in Latvia from October to December. In addition, in November “The Edo Ukiyo-e Woodblock Prints” Webinar, Japan Brand Program, was held in the two countries.

The Baltic states have also been developing as European logistics hubs. Large-scale infrastructure projects are underway to strengthen integration with western Europe, and they are actively strengthening economic relations with Japan. The Government of Japan intends to provide support in order to contribute to strengthening the unity of Europe by promoting economic connectivity. On the occasion of the 100th anniversary of friendship, we will further strengthen economic and cultural exchange to make the Baltic states become more familiar to the people of Japan.

## A “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” and Japan’s Diplomacy with Europe

Amid the increasing severity of the security environment of East Asia and the growing uncertainty in the international community, in order to realize a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP),” strengthening cooperation with like-minded countries that share fundamental values has become extremely important. 2021 was the year in which Europe, who has not necessarily displayed a strong interest in the Indo-Pacific region due to the geographical distance, began to demonstrate its growing interest and engagement in the region.

Momentum has been growing for formulating independent strategies on the Indo-Pacific by the European Union (EU), following France, which holds territories in the South Pacific, and the Netherlands and Germany, which have strong historical and economic ties with Asia. Against this backdrop, Foreign Minister Motegi attended a meeting (in virtual format) of the EU Foreign Affairs Council in January. As the first Japanese foreign minister to attend the meeting, he explained Japan’s stance and initiatives on FOIP. Thereafter, the EU issued a Joint Communication on the EU Strategy for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific in September, clearly setting out its policy to cooperate with partners in the Indo-Pacific, including Japan. Furthermore, Foreign Minister Hayashi attended (in virtual format) the Ministerial Forum for Cooperation in the Indo-Pacific, held in February 2022 and co-hosted by the EU and France, which held the presidency of the Council of the EU for the first half of the year. At the meeting, Foreign Minister Hayashi emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation with partners. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has also touched on expanding cooperation with Asia-Pacific partners, including Japan, in the outcome document of the NATO Summit held in June. These show that NATO is becoming a reassuring partner toward the realization of the FOIP vision.

In its strategy document titled “Global Britain in a Competitive Age,” published in March, the UK also set out policies aimed at deepening its engagement with the Indo-Pacific region.

Cooperation between Japan and Europe in the Indo-Pacific region covers a wide range of areas. The aforementioned Joint Communication published by the EU sets out a total of seven priority areas in which it will strengthen cooperation with partners, including Japan. This includes, for example, the digital sector, in addition to the green sector and connectivity, which Japan and the EU have already been cooperating on. Japan has also shared the view to advance cooperation with many European countries in areas such as response to COVID-19, climate change, digitalization, and economic security.

Particularly in the field of security, European countries have been demonstrating their firm policy of strengthening engagement with the Indo-Pacific, through concrete means such as deploying naval vessels to the region. France has deployed fleets repeatedly, held joint exercises with Japan and participated in the monitoring of illegal ship-to-ship transfers. In particular, when the training fleet “Jeanne d’Arc” called at Japan in May, a joint exercise was conducted with the participation of the U.S. and Australia. In relation to the UK, a carrier strike group, composed of the HMS “Queen Elizabeth” aircraft carrier and British, Dutch, and U.S. naval vessels, made a port call in Japan and conducted bilateral and multilateral joint exercises. This demonstrated the UK’s unwavering engagement with the region. Germany is also strengthening its engagement with the Indo-Pacific through the port call in Japan by the frigate “Bayern” and its participation in bilateral and multilateral exercises, as well as in the monitoring of illegal ship-to-ship transfers for the first time.

Amid significant changes to the balance in the international community, strengthening cooperation with European countries that share fundamental values with Japan, such as the rule of law, is becoming increasingly important toward the realization of FOIP, as well as in upholding and strengthening a free and open international order based on the rule of law. Japan welcomes the greater interest and engagement in the Indo-Pacific shown by Europe in 2021. At the same time, Japan aims to continue working closely with the region to ensure that this interest and engagement remains steadfast.



Foreign Minister Motegi in attendance at the EU Foreign Affairs Council and explaining the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” vision (January)

## Section 6

# Russia, Central Asia and Caucasus

### 1 Russia

#### (1) Situation in Russia

##### A Russia's aggression against Ukraine

In February 2022, Russia recognized the “Donetsk People’s Republic” and the “Luhansk People’s Republic,” which are the territory of Ukraine, as “independent states” and began the aggression against Ukraine under the pretext of protecting these regions. In response, the international community, including Japan, strongly condemned and imposed sanctions against Russia. Under the Putin administration, Russia has made a series of moves to undermine the territorial integrity of its neighboring countries in order to regain the sphere of influence it lost after the Cold War, causing serious concern in regions near Russia. Russia’s aggression against Ukraine is an outrageous act that caused damage to another country which resulted in a serious humanitarian crisis claiming the lives of many civilians, and that shakes the very foundation of the international order that humanity has built up over the past century such as the prohibition of the use of force, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, not only in Europe but also in Asia.

The following is a review of the events before Russia’s aggression against Ukraine in February 2022.

##### B Internal Situation in Russia

In the September 19 elections for the Russian State Duma (lower house), the ruling party “United Russia” retained more than two thirds of the seats on its own, despite a slight reduction in the number of seats compared to before the election, which allows them to amend the constitution. The organizations related to the Russian opposition figure Alexey Navalny was declared “extremist,” and those associated with the group were stripped of their eligibility for elections.

##### C Russian Economy

The Russian economy recovered rapidly in the second quarter (April-June), returning to pre-COVID-19 levels (GDP growth in the first half (January-June) was +4.8% year on year). This was due to factors such as the recovery of oil prices following the OPEC+ agreement on coordinated production cuts in December 2020, and the expansion of domestic demand, including investment, in a wide range of industries. However, inflation has been rising (+7.4% year on year as of September), and the Bank of Russia raised its key rate in stages. Since food prices also surged from the end of 2020, the Russian government introduced measures such as price ceilings on some items and export tariffs.

##### D Russian Diplomacy

In early February 2021, shortly after President



Biden took office, the United States and Russia agreed to a five-year extension of the Treaty on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START), which is the only remaining nuclear disarmament framework between the United States and Russia. Russia held its first face-to-face summit with President Biden in Geneva in June. While there have been attempts to explore cooperation in certain areas, these have not led to improved relations. The Russian military buildup in areas along the Ukrainian border since the fall became a new point of contention between the U.S. and Russia and was the main topic of discussion at the December U.S.-Russia summit held virtually.

Russia's relations with NATO also became more strained over the issue of closer Ukraine-NATO relations, and in October Russia decided to suspend the functions of its Permanent Mission to NATO in Brussels and the NATO Military Liaison Mission in Moscow.

Russia maintained close relations with China, although annual reciprocal visits between leaders did not take place following 2020 amid the COVID-19 pandemic. 2021 marked the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Good-Neighborliness and Friendly Cooperation between the People's Republic of China and the Russian Federation, and the two countries agreed to an automatic five-year extension. There were concerning developments with respect to Japan's security. For example, in October, Chinese and Russian naval vessels sailed together around Japan for the first time, and in November, Chinese and Russian bombers flew together for the third time following July 2019 and December 2020. At the China-Russia summit held during the Beijing Winter Olympics in February 2022, China expressed support for Russia's proposal

on security guarantees in Europe, which is noteworthy as a move that shows the strengthening ties between China and Russia in the context of European security.

In addition to its traditional cooperation with the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries, Russia continues to be actively involved in multilateral frameworks such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).

## (2) Japan-Russia Relations

### A Japan-Russia Relations in the Review of the Post-Cold War Order

Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022 constitutes a challenge to the fundamental principle of the international community that unilateral change of the status quo by force is unacceptable, and threatens the post-Cold War world order. Japan, in solidarity with the G7 and the international community, strongly urged Russia to immediately withdraw its troops and comply with international law. In response to this situation, Japan, in close coordination with the international community, including the G7, is working to improve the situation by imposing sanctions against Russia in three areas: (1) asset freeze of Russian related individuals and entities, including President Putin; (2) sanctions in the financial sector, including restrictions on transactions with the Russian central bank and freezing the assets of seven Russian banks that are excluded from SWIFT<sup>1</sup>, and (3) an export ban to Russia of dual-use goods such as semiconductors, as well as of luxury goods.

The greatest concern between Japan and Russia is the Northern Territories issue. It is yet to be resolved even after more than 75 years have passed since the end of World War II and

<sup>1</sup> Overview of SWIFT (Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication):

- An association (cooperative) that serves as an intermediary and executor of financial transactions between banks around the world. Headquartered in Belgium.
- More than 11,000 banks and other financial institutions in more than 200 countries are connected to it, sending an average of more than 42 million messages related to international financial transactions per day.
- The association was established under Belgian law and is subject to the EU regulatory framework.

the Government of Japan has firmly worked on the negotiations under the policy of concluding a peace treaty through the resolution of this issue. There is no change to Japan's position on the Northern Territories issue and its intention to meet the wishes of the elderly former residents of the islands. However, under the current circumstances of Russia's aggression against Ukraine, now is not a moment in which Japan can talk about the prospects for the peace treaty negotiations. Above all, Japan strongly urges Russia to take seriously the condemnation of the international community, withdraw its troops immediately and comply with international law.

The following is a review of the events before Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022.

### **B The Northern Territories and Negotiations on a Peace Treaty**

The greatest concern between Japan and Russia is the Northern Territories issue. The Northern Territories are islands over which Japan has sovereignty. The islands are an inherent territory of Japan but currently illegally occupied by Russia. Holding frequent dialogues between the two leaders and foreign ministers, the Government of Japan energetically worked on negotiations with Russia on its basic policy to conclude a peace treaty through the resolution of the issue of the attribution of the Four Northern Islands<sup>2</sup>.

In July 2021, Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin "visited" Etorofu island, and in September, President Putin announced at the Eastern Economic Forum the introduction of a "preferential regime" in the "Kurile" Islands. In October, deputy prime ministers Grigorenko and Khusnullin "visited" the islands



Japan-Russia Foreign Ministers' Meeting  
(September 23, New York, U.S.)

including Etorofu. These move by the Russian side are incompatible with Japan's position on the Four Northern Islands, and the Government of Japan lodged protests or made demarche at various levels.

Under these circumstances, Japan held a summit telephone call, a face-to-face foreign ministers' meeting, and two foreign ministers' telephone calls with Russia in 2021 amid the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The September meeting between Foreign Minister Motegi and Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov during the UN General Assembly in New York was the first face-to-face meeting between the two in over a year and a half.

In October, immediately after the inauguration of the Kishida administration, the two leaders held a Japan-Russia summit telephone call. In November, the first Japan-Russia Foreign Minister's Telephone Talk took place after Foreign Minister Hayashi took office.

Regarding the joint economic activities on the Four Northern Islands on which the leaders agreed<sup>3</sup> to commence discussions during President Putin's visit to Japan at the end of 2016, Japan and Russia continued discussions in order to materialize the

<sup>2</sup> Refer to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website for the position of the Government of Japan on the Northern Territories issue:

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/hoppo/hoppo.html>

<sup>3</sup> As a result of the Japan-Russia Summit Meeting in December 2016, the two leaders expressed their sincere determination to resolve the peace treaty issue, agreed to commence discussions on joint economic activities on the Four Northern Islands, and agreed to improve procedures for grave visits by former island residents.



five candidate projects<sup>4</sup> designated at the Japan-Russia Summit Meeting in September 2017.

The Government of Japan actively worked on projects contributing to the improvement of the atmosphere for the resolution of the Northern Territories issue, such as the four-island exchange program, free visits and visits to graves. In 2019, as part of humanitarian measures for the former island residents of the Northern Territories, a temporary additional entry/exit point was established on the occasion of a grave visit by ship, and furthermore, a grave visit by airplane was realized for a third year in a row. During the grave visits, the former island residents were able to visit places they had been unable to go to in recent years. However, due to the circumstances surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic the programs were canceled in 2021 as in 2020.

In addition, the Government of Japan is approaching and coordinating with the Russian side in order to ensure safe operations of Japanese fishing vessels around the Four Northern Islands and to continue the fishing of salmon and trout using alternative fishing methods to driftnet fishing prohibited by Russia. At the same time, Japan lodged protests against Russia over Russia's moves to build up military forces in the Four Northern Islands, on the grounds that such moves are contradictory to the Government of Japan's position regarding the territorial issue.

### **C Japan-Russia Economic Relations**

Trade volume between Japan and Russia in 2021 recovered from the decline caused by COVID-19 in 2020, and the trade volume from January to December increased 35.7% year on year. (The total trade volume in the statistics for January-December 2021 is approximately 2.4055 trillion Japanese yen (Source: Trade Statistics of Japan, Ministry of Finance)). The volume of direct investment from Japan to Russia increased

from 239.5 billion Japanese yen (2019) to 247.6 billion Japanese yen (2020) (Source: Balance of Payments Statistics, Bank of Japan).

There have been some developments with regard to the Eight-point Cooperation Plan for Innovative Reform in the Fields of Industry and Economy and a Favorable Living Environment of Russia proposed by Prime Minister Abe in 2016, including the conclusion of a basic agreement on Japanese companies' participation in an LNG transshipment terminal project.

In November, Japan and Russia held the 13th meeting of the Trade and Investment Subcommittee of the Japan-Russia Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Issues and the 10th Meeting of the Subcommittee on Region-to-Region Cooperation online, which are vice-ministerial level talks. In February 2022, the Meeting of the Co-chairs of the Japan-Russia Intergovernmental Committee on Trade and Economic Issues, was held online between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Minister of Economic Development Reshetnikov.

Furthermore, the Japan Centers operating in six cities in Russia carried out business matching between companies from both countries and held management courses and training in Japan for Russian businesspersons. The training programs in Japan could not be conducted in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but management courses were held online by Japanese instructors in which approximately, 6,800 people participated.

### **D Initiatives between Japan and Russia in various fields**

#### **(A) Security, Defense Exchanges and Maritime Security**

As part of efforts to address "non-traditional threats" such as drugs, in September, a training course for counter-narcotics officers (Domodedovo Project), which has been ongoing since 2012

<sup>4</sup> (1) Propagation and aquaculture of marine products, (2) Greenhouse cultivation, (3) Development of tours compatible with the islands' features, (4) Wind power generation, (5) Garbage disposal

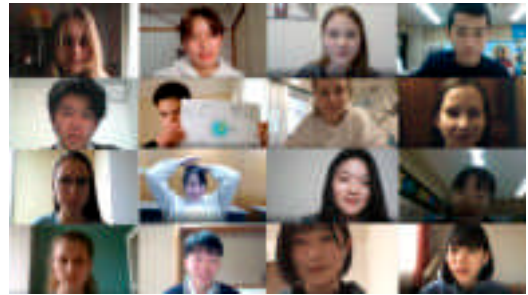
between Japan, Russia, and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), was conducted for counter-narcotic officers from Central Asian countries.

With regard to defense exchanges, Japan and Russia conducted the Japan-Russia Foreign and Defense Ministerial Consultation (“2+2” Ministerial Meeting), various dialogues between defense authorities, an annual meeting based on the Japan-Russia Incidents at Sea Agreement, the Japan-Russia Search and Rescue Exercise (SAREX), and joint counter-piracy exercise in the Gulf of Aden from the perspective of building trust between Japan and Russia.

### (B) Cultural and people-to-people Exchanges

It became difficult to hold many in-person events due to the spread of COVID-19, but exchanges in a broad range of fields took place mainly online, including the Japan-Russia Youth Exchange Program.

The “Japan-Russia Year of Regional and Sister-City Exchanges (Japan-Russia Regional Exchange



The Second Online Japanese Language Course High School Student Exchange, one of the Japan-Russia Youth Exchange Programs (March, Japan-Russia Youth Exchange Center)

Year)” was advanced mainly online. More than 400 Japan-Russia Regional Exchange Year programs have been accredited in Japan, with over 1.3 million participants that included the online introduction to the Japanese culture program “J-FEST” in which approximately 120,000 people participated.

## 2 Countries in Central Asia and Caucasus, etc.

### (1) Overview

Countries in Central Asia and Caucasus are situated in a location of geopolitical importance that connects East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and Russia, and have abundant natural resources such as oil, natural gas and uranium. Stability of the region as a whole, including Central Asia and Caucasus, has significant importance in addressing key challenges that the international community faces such as fighting against terrorism and countering illicit drugs. Japan continues to work to strengthen bilateral ties with these countries through high level talks and will be continuing initiatives to promote regional cooperation using the framework of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue.

In 2021, the spread of COVID-19 continued in Central Asia and Caucasus countries, and while it affected travel, high-level bilateral exchanges were actively conducted, including through the use of online formats. Under these circumstances, 2022 marks the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan



Japan-Russia Grassroots Exchange Program “Consul General’s Cup Kyudo Tournament “White Night Style” (June, St. Petersburg, Russia)



Japan-Russia Grassroots Exchange Program “Tomari City Japanese Culture Festival” (October, Sakhalin Oblast, Russia)

and Central Asian and Caucasus countries, and momentum is building for further strengthening of relations.

## **(2) Central Asian Countries**

The countries of Central Asia, celebrating the 30th anniversary of their independence in 2021, are partners in maintaining and strengthening a free and open international order, and Japan is promoting diplomacy aimed at contributing to peace and stability in Central Asia. From January to February 2022, Prime Minister Kishida and Foreign Minister Hayashi exchanged congratulatory messages with the leaders and foreign ministers of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan to mark the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

In the framework of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue<sup>5</sup>, the 6th Expert Meeting (clean energy) was held in March, where working-level experts from the five Central Asian countries and Japan exchanged views. In June, the 14th Senior Officials Meeting (SOM) was held online, where the five Central Asian countries and Japan discussed ways to strengthen cooperation in the region. At the SOM, officials affirmed the results of cooperation between Japan and the five Central Asian countries in the areas of health, economy, and environment (clean energy) since the Foreign Ministers’ Special Video Conference Meeting of the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue in August 2020, and agreed to proceed with preparatory work for the next Foreign Ministers’ Meeting.

The diplomatic role of the Central Asian countries bordering Afghanistan, particularly Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan, has become more prominent following the Taliban’s control of Afghanistan in August. In October, Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov of the

Republic of Uzbekistan and Rashid Meredov, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, visited Kabul, respectively. Both countries are engaged in dialogue with the Taliban with a view to ensuring border stability and strengthening energy, railway and other connectivity areas with South Asia. By contrast, Tajikistan takes a cautious approach to dialogue with the Taliban.

Japan provided emergency humanitarian assistance to the Central Asian countries to prepare for the influx of refugees due to the deteriorating situation in Afghanistan since August, while continuing to support the strengthening of border management capabilities in these countries. In August, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakanishi Satoshi visited Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, where he met with Shakhmat Nuryshev, First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kazakhstan, while in Uzbekistan he met with Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade Sardor Umurzakov, Foreign Minister Abdulaziz Kamilov, and First Deputy Chairman of the Senate in Uzbekistan Sadik Safaev. In both visits, he exchanged views on the situation in Afghanistan as well.

In Uzbekistan, President Shavkat Mirziyoyev, who has pursued reforms over the past five years, was reelected in the October presidential election. In relations with Japan, Japan has actively pursued high-level political dialogue, including a January video conference meeting between Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Aso Taro and Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade Sardor Umurzakov, and a summit telephone call between Prime Minister Suga and President Mirziyoyev in May. During the summit telephone

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<sup>5</sup> Japan launched the “Central Asia plus Japan” Dialogue framework in 2004 as a precursor to the “Five Central Asia Countries plus One country” format dialogue from the perspective that regional cooperation for solving common regional issues is indispensable for the stability and development of Central Asia, with Japan as a “catalyst” to promote regional cooperation. In addition to the seven foreign ministers’ meetings, various discussions have been held with the participation of experts and businesspersons. More than 15 years have passed since its establishment, and in recent years it has focused on practical cooperation.

call, Prime Minister Suga stated that Uzbekistan is an important partner for building a free and open international order based on the rule of law and welcomed deepened and expanded strategic partnership between the two countries. President Mirziyoyev stated that he would steadily implement all the agreements made during his visit to Japan in December 2019.

In Kazakhstan, a state of emergency was declared in January 2022 after rallies sparked by protests over fuel price hikes spread across the country and became radicalized. Kazakhstan requested assistance from the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), and Peacekeeping Forces led by Russian troops were dispatched, after which the situation subsided. The upheaval led to the resignation of first President Nursultan Nazarbayev from the presidency of the Security Council and acceleration of President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's efforts at large-scale domestic reforms. In May 2021, a summit telephone call with Japan was held between Prime Minister Suga and President Tokayev. The two leaders shared the view to further enhance the strategic partnership relationship between the two countries, touching on cooperation in a wide range of areas, including politics and the economy. In May, Speaker of the House of Representatives Oshima Tadamori held an online meeting with Nurlan Nigmatulin, Speaker of the Kazakh Parliament's Lower House.

In the Kyrgyz Republic, a new government was formed by President Sadyr Japarov, who won the presidential election in January, and presidential powers were strengthened through constitutional amendments in May. In November, the Kyrgyz Republic re-held the parliamentary elections that were invalidated following the political upheaval in 2020, and pro-government parties won a majority of seats in parliament. Regarding relations with Japan, Prime Minister Kishida and President Japarov held a brief meeting during the 26th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on

Climate Change (COP26) in November, during which President Japarov expressed his gratitude for Japan's support, including human resources development.

In relations with Tajikistan, Japan held political consultations in an online meeting in March. Both sides discussed a wide range of topics, including cooperation in the areas of human resources development and enhanced border control, and shared the view to further promote good relations between the two countries.

Regarding relations with Turkmenistan, Prime Minister Suga and President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov held a summit telephone call in May in which both leaders welcomed the development of bilateral economic relations, with the realization of many major projects involving Japanese companies. Deputy Prime Minister Serdar Berdymukhamedov attended the opening ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 and held a meeting with Prime Minister Suga.

In recent years, efforts toward advancing regional cooperation have become active among Central Asian and neighboring countries. In 2021, leaders of Central Asian countries attended a variety of online and hybrid meetings that included the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council of the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Summits both held in May and October, the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit and the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Summit held in September, and the Organization of Turkic States held in November.

In addition, there are active foreign minister-level meetings with one country added to the five Central Asian countries. In 2021, the five Central Asia countries held foreign ministers' meetings with the U.S., the EU, China, Russia, the Republic of Korea (ROK), Italy, and India respectively.



### **(3) Caucasus Countries**

The Caucasus region has a potential to be a gateway connecting Asia, Europe and the Middle East, and geopolitical importance that directly affects the peace and stability of the international community. However, there are still outstanding issues such as in Georgia over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh. Japan is developing its diplomacy based on the basic policy for this region, which is comprised of two pillars announced in the Caucasus Initiative in 2018: (1) assistance for human resources development for state building (human resources development) and (2) assistance for paving the way to “Appealing Caucasus” (infrastructure development and business environment improvement).

With regard to the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, the ceasefire agreement reached by the leaders of Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia in November 2020 has generally been observed, but sporadic gunfights have occurred along the border areas of Azerbaijan and Armenia since then. Meanwhile, there have been efforts toward dialogue through the mediation of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs and Russia, including a meeting of Azerbaijan and Armenia's foreign ministers and a summit meeting. Japan hopes that the outstanding issues related to the conflict between the two countries will be resolved peacefully based on principles of international law through dialogue, including the OSCE Minsk Group.

In relations with Azerbaijan, Foreign Minister Motegi and Minister of Foreign Affairs Jeyhun Bayramov held a telephone call in August. The ministers exchanged views on international cooperation in the fight against COVID-19 and shared the view to further develop bilateral relations on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 2022.

Regarding relations with Armenia, President Armen Sarkissian, who visited Japan in July to attend the opening ceremony of the Olympic

Games Tokyo 2020, held a summit meeting with Prime Minister Suga where the two leaders shared the view to deepen cooperation in economic areas, including IT, while valuing the historical ties between the two countries. Domestic politics in Armenia became fluid following the military conflict with Azerbaijan in the fall of 2020, and elections to the National Assembly were held ahead of schedule in June. As a result, incumbent Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan was re-elected.

Georgia is an important partner in building a free and open international order based on the rule of law. In economic areas, the Japan-Georgia Investment Agreement and the Tax Convention between Japan and Georgia came into effect in July. In addition, in October, a program inviting Natela Turnava, Minister of Economy and Sustainable Development of Georgia to Japan in an online format was held where she met with Japanese businesspersons and officials. Besides, at the political consultations held online in November, both sides exchanged views on a wide range of topics, including decarbonization and international affairs.

### **(4) Republic of Belarus**

While the massive protests that erupted after the August 2020 presidential election gradually died down due to strict controls by authorities, the human rights situation continued to deteriorate, with large-scale searches of independent media and NGOs and the detention of those involved.

On May 23, 2021, a commercial aircraft flying over Belarus was forced to land at Minsk Airport, and the independent journalists on board were detained. Western countries strongly condemned the incident and took measures such as not allowing Belarusian aircraft to board or to fly over their countries. Japan also took measures in the aviation sector.

Since the summer, the number of people crossing the border from Belarus into neighboring Poland, Lithuania and Latvia has increased sharply compared to previous years. This has been the case

especially since November, with those attempting to cross into the Schengen area massing in the border region between Belarus and Poland. The situation became tense, with the Polish side closing checkpoints in the area and mobilizing its military as a precaution. In response, Japan, along with the G7 nations, issued a statement by the G7 foreign ministers condemning the Belarusian regime's attempts at irregular migration. Japan also contributed 500,000 US dollars in emergency grant aid to conduct humanitarian and medical assistance through the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

In addition to the worsening human rights situation, the conflict between Belarus and western countries has deepened further with the forced landing of a commercial aircraft and the detention of journalists, as well as the rapid increase in the number of people crossing the border through Belarus. Japan has issued two foreign press secretary statements on the situation in Belarus and has strongly urged the authorities of Belarus to immediately cease the arbitrary detention and forceful oppression of citizens, engage in national dialogue that respects the principles of the rule of law and democracy, and make an earnest effort in responding to the situation.

In 2022, amidst increasing tensions in the area along the Ukrainian border due to the buildup of Russian troops and other factors, Belarus began joint military exercises with Russia on February 10, and supported Russia by letting them use its own territory during the Russian aggression against of Ukraine that began on February 24.



Courtesy call by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Nakanishi Satoshi to Sardor Umurzakov, Deputy Prime-Minister and Minister of Investments and Foreign Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan (August 28, Uzbekistan)



Japan-Armenia summit meeting  
(July 24, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Japan has strongly condemned Belarus. In light of Belarus' obvious involvement in this aggression, on March 3 and 8, Japan decided to impose sanctions on Belarus, including sanctions against President Lukashenko and other individuals and entities, as well as export control measures.

## Section 7

# The Middle East and North Africa

### 1 Overview

The Middle East and North Africa (the Middle East) is located in a geopolitically important area: the crossroads of Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, Central Asia and South Asia. The region is a vital supplier of energy, representing approximately 50% of the world's oil reserves and 40% of the world's natural gas reserves and also a market with high potential, pursuing the diversification of economy and decarbonization, especially in the Gulf countries, against a backdrop of a high population growth rate.

Meanwhile, the region has gone through various conflicts and disputes along its history, and still faces a number of destabilizing factors and challenges. In recent years, regional tension is growing over Iran, and political turmoil continues in various regions since the “Arab Spring” in 2011. The civil war continues in Syria, resulting in a large number of refugees and internally displaced persons, and it has made a great impact on the stability of the entire region, including its neighboring countries. In Yemen, severe security and humanitarian conditions continue as the Houthis clash with the Yemeni Government and the Arab Coalition (led by Saudi Arabia and others, at the request of the Yemeni Government). The risk of the spread of violent extremism such as the “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL) also remains in some areas. On the other hand, there

were signs in 2020 that the situation is changing. The United Arab Emirates(UAE), Bahrain, Sudan and Morocco have agreed to normalize diplomatic relations with Israel, and in January 2021, severance of the diplomatic relations with Qatar, which had been ongoing since June 2017, was resolved.

The Biden administration of the U.S., inaugurated in January 2021, has announced that it will hold talks with Iran to return to the Iran nuclear deal, from which the previous administration had withdrawn. Regarding the Middle East Peace Process, the administration has worked on improving relations with Palestine. As such, the impact of various policies on the Middle East is drawing attention, and at the end of August 2021, the U.S. military ended its mission in Afghanistan after about 20 years.

Japan imports approximately 90% of its crude oil from the Middle East, and it is extremely important for Japan's peace and prosperity to promote peace and stability in the Middle East and to maintain and develop good relations with countries in the region. From this perspective, Japan in recent years has been striving to strengthen relations with Middle Eastern countries in a wide range of fields that include the economy, politics, security, culture and people-to-people exchanges. In August, Foreign Minister Motegi visited eight countries and regions in the Middle East, including Iraq, which was the first visit in 15 years for a Foreign Minister of Japan. As Japan has continued

its contribution to the peace and stability of the region and has earned the trust of each country, the Minister reiterated Japan's commitment to the Middle East and affirmed to work together closely for regional stability. Regarding Afghanistan, Japan has been providing humanitarian assistance and reaching out to the Taliban in cooperation with the international community since the situation in Afghanistan deteriorated in August 2021.

With infections of COVID-19 continuing to spread in the Middle East, Japan has provided ODA totaling about 2.9 billion Japanese yen to fight the virus. Japan has been introducing such assistance and the importance of addressing the issue based on the concept of human security, especially in vulnerable regions, as well as at international conferences at the ministerial level.

## 2 Situation in the Middle East

### (1) Afghanistan

Peace negotiations between the Afghan government and the Taliban, which began in September 2020, was stalled without substantial progress, and the U.S. stepped up its efforts since the Biden administration took office to encourage peace on both the government and the Taliban sides. Based on the U.S.-Taliban agreement signed in February 2020, the Trump administration reduced the number of U.S. troops stationed in Afghanistan from 13,000 at the time of the agreement to 2,500 in January 2021, and on April 14, U.S. President Biden announced that the final withdrawal from Afghanistan would begin on May 1 and that U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) forces would fully withdraw by September 11 (in July, he announced that the withdrawal deadline would be moved up to the end of August). On the same day, NATO also announced its intention to complete the withdrawal of its troops within a few months. The Taliban, on the other hand, strongly objected asserting that the May 1 withdrawal deadline under the U.S.-Taliban agreement was postponed, and firmly refused to participate in

a peace conference scheduled for late April in Istanbul, Turkey. As such, the conference was not held.

As the withdrawal of U.S. and NATO forces progressed, the Taliban stepped up its offensive not only in its traditional stronghold of southern Afghanistan, but also in the provinces adjacent to the capital Kabul and primarily in the rural areas in the northern provinces. By July, the Taliban had also taken control of major border checkpoints with neighboring countries. Although there were efforts such as high-level talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban, the Taliban launched a full-scale offensive into urban areas from late July, and fierce urban fighting also broke out in Kandahar and Lashkar Gah. On August 6, the Taliban seized control of the provincial capital of Nimruz province, and in a little more than a week, they took control of more than 30 provincial capitals, one after another. The Taliban then shocked the international community by entering the capital city of Kabul on August 15, far more quickly than observers expected. Although there was no large-scale fighting at this time, Afghan President Mohammad Ashraf Ghani left the country. Following the fall of Kabul, many countries decided to temporarily close their embassies, and the Japanese Embassy temporarily relocated to Istanbul where it continued its operations, including the protection of Japanese nationals.

After the Taliban seized Kabul, they announced that they would not take revenge on their opponents but would grant them amnesty, and that they would respect the rights of women within the framework of Islamic law. However, the sudden change in the situation caused great turmoil in the country, and many countries, especially Western countries that had deployed troops to Afghanistan, accelerated their efforts to evacuate their own citizens and local staff. Japan also dispatched its Self-Defense Force aircraft to transport one Japanese national and 14 Afghans who had requested evacuation. The U.S. completed the withdrawal of its forces on August 30, with President Biden

stating in a speech that “the United States ended 20 years of war in Afghanistan — the longest war in American history.”

In early September, the Taliban took control of Panjshir province, the last stronghold of the resistance, and announced the formation of a “transitional government,” but it has been noted that the government has no women and lacks inclusiveness. Also, terrorist attacks by groups affiliated with the “Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant” (ISIL) targeting areas near Kabul airport in August and Shiite mosques in provincial cities in October have also been a source of instability in various parts of the country.

Against this backdrop, Japan has been working with the international community to affirm the importance of a united message to the Taliban and has been involved in the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers’ Meeting (August 19, Foreign Minister Motegi), the G7 Leaders’ Meeting (August 24, Prime Minister Suga), the Ministerial Meeting hosted by the U.S. (August 30, Foreign Minister Motegi), the Expanded Ministerial Meeting co-hosted by the U.S. and Germany (September 8, Foreign Minister Motegi), the UN Humanitarian Meeting (September 13, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio Eiichiro), the G20 Foreign Ministers’ Meeting (September 22, Foreign Minister Motegi), the G20 Leaders’ Meeting (October 12, Prime Minister Kishida), and other international meetings.

On September 1, Japan temporarily relocated the Embassy of Japan in Afghanistan to Doha,

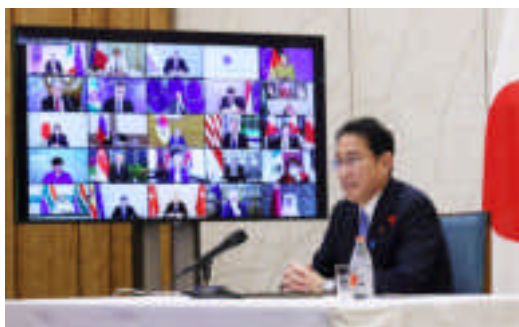
Qatar, where the Taliban’s political office is located. Japan strongly urged the Taliban to ensure the safe departure of those who wish to leave the country, respect the rights of women and ethnic minorities and build an inclusive political system, through seizing opportunities such as the dispatch of Uemura Tsukasa, Representative of the Government of Japan, to Doha in September, and the visit of Okada Takashi, the Ambassador of Japan to Afghanistan, to Kabul in November 2021 and January 2022. As a result of these negotiations with the Taliban and diplomatic efforts, including through cooperation with the U.S., Qatar and other countries concerned, more than 500 Afghans (as of the end of January, 2022), including the local staff of Japanese embassy and other Japan-related organizations, have arrived in Japan with the support of the Japanese government since the situation deteriorated in Afghanistan.

The current humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan is of great concern to the international community, which is also concerned about the damage to the economy caused by the “lack of liquidity” - the lack of sufficient cash and foreign currency circulating in the country. In October, Japan provided 65 million US dollars (approximately 7.1 billion Japanese yen) in emergency grant aid to Afghanistan and neighboring countries to support humanitarian needs such as shelter, food, health, water and sanitation, agriculture, and education via international organizations, and is currently providing humanitarian assistance. In December, Japan decided to provide an additional 109 million US dollars (approximately 11.8 billion Japanese yen) in the FY2021 supplementary budget. Japan intends to continue to provide assistance that stand with the people of Afghanistan and to contribute to ensuring stability in the region surrounding Afghanistan.

## (2) Middle East Peace Process

### A Developments surrounding the Middle East Peace Process

The Middle East Peace Process has stagnated



Prime Minister Kishida attends the G20 Summit video conference on Afghanistan (October, Tokyo)



since negotiations between Israel and Palestine faltered in April 2014. Since the inauguration of Biden administration of the U.S., there have been some signs of resumption of cooperation between the parties whose relations had deteriorated under the previous administration, but since mid-April 2021, Israeli security forces and Palestinian citizens clashed mainly in East Jerusalem and the situation became more severe. From May 10, rockets were fired intermittently from the Gaza Strip toward Israel, leading to an exchange of attacks with the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), which launched counterattacks. By the time of the ceasefire on May 21, brokered by the countries concerned including the U.S. and Egypt, 260 Palestinians and 12 Israelis had been killed. After cease-fire positive movements have been observed such as the gradual resumption of high-level contacts between a new Israeli government established in June and the Palestinian Authority, but the conflict continues to smolder, especially in Gaza and East Jerusalem, and the situation remains tense and unstable.

### **B The Japanese Government's Efforts**

In working toward achieving a “two-state solution” that would enable Israel and Palestine to coexist in peace, Japan, in cooperation with the international community, has actively contributed through the three pillars of political dialogue with stakeholders, confidence building among the concerned parties, and economic assistance for the Palestinians.

Immediately following the ceasefire in May, Japan held foreign ministers' telephone calls with Israel, Palestine, Egypt and Jordan to urge them to maintain the cease-fire and ease tensions. Since June, Japan has provided 23 million US dollars as humanitarian and reconstruction assistance to the Gaza Strip. Furthermore, during Foreign Minister Motegi's visit to Israel and Palestine in August, he again encouraged officials from both sides to take concrete measures to ease tensions and restore trust.

As Japan's unique initiative, it has been promoting the “Corridor for Peace and Prosperity” initiative, aiming at facilitating economic self-reliance of Palestine over the mid- and long-term through regional cooperation among Japan, Palestine, Israel and Jordan. As of the end of 2021, 18 Palestinian private companies are operating in the flagship Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP) project, creating approximately 200 jobs. In addition, Japan is mobilizing the resources and economic development knowledge of East Asian countries to support Palestinian nation building through the Conference on the Cooperation among East Asian countries for Palestinian Development (CEAPAD).

### **(3) Israel**

Israel excels in the development of advanced technology and innovation, and holds importance for the Japanese economy as well as for the stability of the Middle East. Israel attracted worldwide attention in 2021 as a leading country in COVID-19 vaccinations. The country became the first in the world in August to begin offering a third dose of vaccination to the general public.

In Israel, the general election held in March brought an end to the 12-year Netanyahu administration with the formation of a coalition government headed by Naftali Bennett of the Yamina party (religious right-wing party). Under the banner of change from the previous administration, the new government comprised a wide range of parties from the religious right to the secular left, and, for the first time in history, included an Arab



Japan-Israel Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 2021, Tel Aviv)



party, the Ra'am party. The new government adopted a rotating prime minister system, with Bennett as prime minister and Yair Lapid, head of Yesh Atid (centrist), as alternate prime minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs until August 2023, and then until the end of his term in November 2025, with Lapid as Prime Minister and Bennett as Alternate Prime Minister and Interior Minister.

Regarding relations with Japan, Foreign Minister Motegi delivered a video message to the kickoff event of the Tohoku-Israel Startup Global Challenge Program with Alternate Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Lapid in July. In August, he visited Israel and exchanged views with President Isaac Herzog, Prime Minister Bennett, and Alternate Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Lapid.

#### **(4) Palestine**

Based on the 1993 Oslo Accords and other agreements, the Palestinian Authority (PA) began self-rule in the West Bank and Gaza Strip from 1995. Prime Minister Abbas assumed office as president after the presidential elections held in January 2005. Following that, however, relations between the Fatah led by President Abbas and Hamas deteriorated, and Hamas seized control of the Gaza Strip by military force. No progress has been made in the transfer of power to the PA in Gaza through Egypt's mediation efforts, which was agreed to in principle in October 2017, and the elections, such as that of the Palestinian Legislative Council, scheduled after May 2021 throughout Palestine, including Gaza, were also postponed on the grounds that Israel disagreed with the vote in East Jerusalem, and the division remains, with the West Bank of the Jordan River still held by Fatah and the Gaza Strip remaining under Hamas's de facto control.

Regarding relations with Japan, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Palestine in August and exchanged views with President Abbas, Prime Minister Muhammad Shtayyeh, and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates Riad Malki. In November,

Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda Taro participated in the "Ad Hoc Liaison Committee (AHLC) Ministerial Meeting" in the form of a video message, and expressed that Japan would continue to advance its efforts, such as the "Corridor for Peace and Prosperity" initiative.

#### **(5) Iran**

Iran is a major Shiite regional power with a population of about 85 million that boasts abundant natural resources. Japan has developed a traditionally friendly relationship with Iran for more than 90 years. In recent years, bilateral cooperation has taken place in a wide range of areas, including medical and health care, environment, tourism and consular affairs, including the provision of COVID-19 vaccines.

As a result of Iran's presidential election that was held in June for the first time in four years, Ebrahim Raisi, a conservative Chief of the Judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran, won with 62% of the votes, and the Raisi administration was inaugurated in August. President Raisi prioritized measures to fight COVID-19 and the reconstruction of the domestic economy, which has been stagnant due to US economic sanctions, and is developing a foreign policy that emphasizes enhancing relations with neighboring countries in the Middle East and in Asia. Foreign Minister Motegi visited Iran immediately after President Raisi's inauguration in August. He was the first foreign dignitary from a major industrialized country and an Asian country to visit Iran and meet with President Raisi and other key officials of the new administration. They agreed to further strengthen and develop the relationship between the two countries.

Regarding the Iranian nuclear issue, since July 2019, Iran has taken steps that undermine its commitment to the Iran nuclear deal (Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)), claiming that it has not received the expected economic benefits that would have been obtained by the JCPOA due to the U.S. withdrawal from

the deal by the former Trump administration and the subsequent resumption of sanctions on Iran by the U.S. Iran announced that it began producing 20% enriched uranium in January 2021, and in April it started producing uranium enriched up to 60%. Iran has also suspended implementation of the Additional Protocol, which allows for unannounced inspections by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), among other things.

The Biden administration has announced that the U.S. is ready to return to the JCPOA, subject to Iran's strict compliance with the nuclear deal. Since April, talks between the U.S. and Iran have been held intermittently in Vienna, mediated by the European Union and other relevant countries, with the aim of returning to the nuclear deal. The talks were suspended following a change of government in Iran since June but resumed in November. However, negotiations have faced difficulties, and as of February 2022, mutual return by the U.S. and Iran to compliance with their commitments under the JCPOA has not been realized.

Under these circumstances, the situation in the Middle East surrounding Iran remains highly tense, with a fire incident at a uranium enrichment facility in Natanz in April and an attack on a centrifuge manufacturing facility on the outskirts of Tehran in June. Furthermore, there have been a series of incidents that hinder the free navigation of vessels since January in the Middle East including Iran since January. In January, a Korean tanker was captured by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Navy in the Strait of Hormuz. Between February and April, there have been attacks on ships related to Iran and Israel, and in July, an oil tanker operated by a British company was attacked in the Gulf of Oman, killing two crew members.

Meanwhile, Iran and Saudi Arabia, which severed diplomatic ties, have held talks since

April, and both countries have expressed their willingness to ease tensions in the Middle East and improve bilateral relations. In August and September, Iraq hosted a gathering of regional countries that included Iran and Saudi Arabia and dialogues between parties in the Middle East have been actively conducted.

From the perspective of having an alliance with the U.S. and maintaining its long-standing friendly relationship with Iran, Japan has made its own diplomatic efforts to ease tensions and stabilize the situation in the Middle East. Japan is using every opportunity to communicate closely with Iran. In March, Foreign Minister Motegi held a telephone call with Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammad Javad Zarif and, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Iran in August. Foreign Minister Hayashi held telephone calls with Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs Hossein Amir Abdollahian in December and February, and Prime Minister Kishida held a telephone call with Iranian President Raisi in February. (See the Special Feature on page 159.)

## (6) Turkey

Turkey is a geopolitically important regional power. As a member country of the NATO, Turkey plays a significant role in regional security while proactively pursuing multifaceted diplomacy with Europe and the U.S., Russia and countries in the Middle East, Asia and Africa. Turkey has traditionally been one of the friendliest countries with Japan, as typified by episodes such as the Ertugrul Frigate<sup>1</sup> incident in 1890.

After the transition from a parliamentary cabinet system to a new presidential system in 2018, President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan showed strong leadership in the fight against COVID-19, keeping the number of deaths at low levels through enhanced testing and Turkey's own model

<sup>1</sup> [https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/ms/da/page22\\_001052.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/ms/da/page22_001052.html)



of treatment, which temporarily restored his approval rating. However, the previously unfavorable economic indicators were further aggravated by COVID-19. In particular, the Turkish lira continued to hit market lows due to repeated policy rate cuts amid accelerating inflation. Accelerating inflation has squeezed the livelihoods of conservative workers and low- and middle-income groups that have supported the president.

On the diplomatic front, Turkey promoted the resumption of dialogue and rebuilt relations with regional countries, such as Egypt, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, where there had been concerns about deteriorating relations. In particular, relations with the UAE were strengthened when Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi Mohammed visited Turkey for the first time in about 10 years and signed 10 agreements on energy, the environment and other issues. Although there were pessimistic views about the future of U.S.-Turkish relations due to the sanctions by the U.S. over the purchase of a Russian-made missile defense system (S-400) continues to be a concern for bilateral relations, and the Biden administration's statement mourning the Armenian "genocide" early in its administration, the two countries held two face-to-face summit meetings where communication was promoted.

Regarding relations with Japan, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Turkey in August and held talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs Mevlut Cavusoglu and paid a courtesy call to President Erdoğan. At the summit level, Prime Minister Kishida

held a telephone call with President Erdoğan in December, where President Erdoğan expressed his congratulations on Prime Minister Kishida's new post, while Prime Minister Kishida expressed his desire to work with President Erdoğan to further develop relations with Turkey as a strategic partner.

## (7) Iraq

After the Iraq War in 2003, Iraq enacted a new constitution in 2005, and a government formed through democratic elections is in charge of running the country. The stability of Iraq is important for the stability of the Middle East region, and its main challenges are reconstruction after eliminating the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), restoring security and improving administrative services such as the supply of electricity.

Japan has continued to provide assistance to Iraq since 2003. In August, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Iraq for the first time in 15 years as Japan's Minister of Foreign Affairs, and met with President Barham Salih, Prime Minister Mustafa Al-Kadhimi, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Fuad Hussein, and gave advance notice regarding yen loans of up to 32.7 billion Japanese yen relating to the "Basra Refinery Upgrading Project." In addition, in order to support the fifth elections for the Iraqi Council of Representatives held in October, the Government of Japan provided equipment to the Independent High Electoral Commission of Iraq via the UNDP, such as servers for biometric registration and COVID-19 supplies for polling stations.

On the diplomatic front, the Al-Kadhimi administration is aiming for a balanced diplomacy in Iraq, where cooperation with neighboring countries is essential in countering terrorism and strengthening economic and energy relations. In August, Iraq hosted an international meeting with the heads of neighboring countries.

With regard to domestic affairs, in the fifth elections for the Iraqi Council of Representatives in October, the Shiite Sadrist Movement became the



Japan-Turkey Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 2021, Istanbul)

## Support for Japanese Companies in Iran While Operating Under Economic Sanctions

### Embassy of Japan in Iran

The history of diplomatic relations between Japan and Iran spans more than 90 years, since the establishment of Japan's legation in Iran in 1929. Japan continues to strengthen bilateral relations with Iran in various fields, while at the same time, making diplomatic efforts toward easing tensions and stabilizing the situation in the Middle East region.

Looking at the economic and trade relations, Japan used to import a high volume of Iranian crude oil, and the two countries have been expanding their economic relations. After the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) was established, Japan concluded the Japan-Iran Investment Agreement with Iran and has provided support to Japanese companies to set up business in Iran. However, with the resumption of economic sanctions on Iran following the withdrawal of the U.S. from the JCPOA in 2018, Japan-Iran economic and trade relations have shrunk significantly. Many Japanese companies that invested in Iran and established offices in the country had no choice but to scale down or reduce the number of offices. Moreover, Japanese companies that have continued their businesses in Iran face unique challenges. For example, they are unable to convert Japanese yen to the local currency nor remit money into Iran from overseas. Hence, they currently face various problems in conducting their businesses in Iran.

However, Japanese companies that are active in Iran are maintaining their local presence, as well as maintaining their relationships with Iranian companies and other business partners, in anticipation of future resumption or expansion of business. There is a strong and deeply-rooted trust in Japanese products, such as cars and electrical appliances, among many Iranian people. As such, we are able to sense a strong desire and anticipation for the return of more Japanese companies to Iran as soon as possible. One of the roles of the Embassy of Japan in Iran is to identify the issues Japanese companies are facing, such as through regular interviews with Japanese company workers stationed in Iran, and to work towards resolving these issues. Although many of the issues - including the impact of economic sanctions - that the various companies are confronting are unique, the Embassy is actively working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Central Bank of Iran, among other Iranian authorities, with a view to resolving them. Taking the opportunity of visit of Foreign Minister Motegi to Iran in August, the two countries signed a Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement (CMAA) with a view to promoting the flow of people and goods between Japan and Iran in the future.

In addition, amid the growing severity of air pollution in Iran, Iran aims to increase the proportion of renewable energy in its power generation capacity. Hence, future business growth is anticipated in fields such as solar power and hydropower generation. In addition to conventional energy sources such as its rich resources of crude oil and natural gas, there is also business potential in Iran for new energy fields such as hydrogen and ammonia. Furthermore, Iran is demonstrating strong interest in working with Japanese companies on efforts to promote recycling, an area that is relatively new to the country.

Despite many constraints, the Embassy of Japan in Iran is living and working on a united front with Japanese residents and companies in Tehran to explore future business opportunities. Going forward, we will continue to support Japanese companies to realize greater development in Japan-Iran relations in the economic field as well as other sectors.



Signing of Customs Mutual Assistance Agreement (CMAA) (August, Tehran)

leading party. While the elections were generally peaceful, some groups, mainly Shiite, protested against the results, and on November 5, protesters were killed when security forces clashed with demonstrators. On November 7, an assassination attempt was also made on Prime Minister Al-Kadhimi when a drone carrying an explosive device attacked his residence.

Regarding the security situation, although the Iraqi government is working to strengthen security measures, ISIL carried out two suicide bombings in central Baghdad in January, killing 32 civilians and wounding 110 others. There have also been attacks targeting the U.S. embassy and bases where U.S. troops are stationed.

The coalition forces led by the U.S., that have supported the Iraqi armed forces and security agencies in operations to wipe out ISIL, have handed over its mission to the Iraqi armed forces from the end of March 2020 and have withdrawn from several bases. As a result, the U.S. has reduced its troops to 2,500 by January 15, 2021. In July, the U.S.-Iraq Strategic Dialogue was held between Prime Minister Al-Kadhimi and U.S. President Biden where they agreed that the U.S. forces stationed in Iraq would end their combat mission by the end of 2021 and shift to an advisory, support and reinforcement role. In northern Iraq, Turkish troops have been conducting military operations against the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) since June 2020, including ground fighting.

## **(8) Jordan**

The situation in Jordan remains relatively stable compared to other parts of the continuously turbulent Middle East region. Jordan has, under the leadership of King Abdullah II, played an important role in promoting the peace and stability of the region, such as with countermeasures against extremists, its acceptance of a large number of Syrian and Palestinian refugees, and active involvement in the Middle East Peace. The country's role is highly regarded by the international



Japan-Jordan Foreign Ministers' video teleconference meeting (December 2021)

community. In April, Prime Minister Suga released a video message to congratulate the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on the State's first Centennial.

Regarding relations with Japan, a foreign minister's telephone call was held in May in response to clashes in Gaza, and the two countries shared the view on the importance of working on confidence-building between Israel and Palestine by all means. In August, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Jordan to discuss ways to strengthen bilateral relations with Minister of Foreign Affairs Ayman Safadi at the Second Japan-Jordan Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue, such as assistance for the fight against the COVID-19 pandemic, economic cooperation, people-to-people exchanges and support for refugees. The two ministers also exchanged views on a broad range of matters that included the situation in Afghanistan. In addition, the visit resumed face-to-face exchanges, such as a courtesy call on Prince Faisal bin Al Hussein, the king's younger brother. In December, the two countries held a Foreign Ministers' video conference in conjunction with Minister Hayashi's appointment to his post as Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Ministers reaffirmed that the two countries would further develop cooperative relationship under a strategic partnership.

Japan attaches importance to its relations with Jordan, a cornerstone of regional stability. Security cooperation is ongoing as the third Japan-Jordan Politico-Military Dialogue was held in November. In addition, Japan provides economic and financial

support via disbursement of 100 million US dollars of development policy loans in December.

### (9) The Gulf States and Yemen

The Gulf States are important partners for Japan from the perspective of Japan's energy security. In recent years, the Gulf States have been working toward social and economic reforms, prioritizing issues such as industry diversification, human resources development and a departure from dependence on oil. Japan has been cooperating and supporting the realization of these reforms in order to contribute to the long-term stability and prosperity of the Middle East. Specifically, these efforts include cooperation based on the "Japan-Saudi Vision 2030," which was formulated by Japan and Saudi Arabia as a compass for bilateral cooperation modeled after the "Saudi Vision 2030," Saudi Arabia's initiative for industry diversification and departure from dependence on oil, and on the "Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Initiative" between Japan and the UAE.

Although COVID-19 affected official travel, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Qatar in August and held the First Japan-Qatar Strategic Dialogue with Minister of Foreign Affairs Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani where both sides shared the view to further enhance cooperation in a wide range of fields beyond the energy field under the "Comprehensive Partnership." During his visit to New York in September for the UN General Assembly meeting, Foreign Minister Motegi also met face-to-face with Qatari Minister of Foreign Affairs Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani where both ministers reaffirmed to continue to work together to strengthen bilateral relations, including responses to the various issues related to Afghanistan. Furthermore, Foreign Minister Motegi held telephone calls with Kuwait (August and October) and the UAE (September), where he affirmed to strengthen bilateral relations and work toward easing tensions and stabilizing the situation in the Middle East. Various celebratory events were held in the

region in 2021, such as the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Qatar and the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Kuwait.

Stability in Yemen is important not only for the peace and stability in the Middle East as a whole, but also from the perspective of securing sea lanes, which are directly related to Japan's energy security. In Yemen, the Houthis have continued to fight against the Yemeni Government and the Arab Coalition for over six years despite the international mediation efforts led by Hans Grundberg, Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General. The severe humanitarian situation in Yemen, considered to be the "worst in the world," has continued due to the impact of the prolonged conflict. Since 2015, Japan, as a major donor nation, has provided support of more than 300 million US dollars in total to Yemen through cooperation with UN agencies and others. At the "High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen," which was held online in March, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio announced that Japan was committed to continuing both its humanitarian and political efforts, in cooperation with countries concerned, to realize peace and stability in Yemen.

### (10) Syria

#### A Changes in the situation

The Syrian crisis, which began in March 2011, has spanned a decade, sees neither prospects of stabilization nor political resolution, and has forced the population to live below the poverty line with more than 90% living on about 2 US dollars a day. The situation is considered to be the century's worst humanitarian crisis.

Amid a lack of progress in the political process, the Syrian government held presidential elections in May in accordance with the current constitution, while a cease-fire across Syria failed to materialize and discussions under the Constitutional Commission, established in October 2019 through



the mediation of the United Nations, remained far apart. President Assad was re-elected with approximately 95% of the vote, and the future of the political process remains uncertain.

Regarding foreign relations, as the Assad administration has regained control over much of the country and its predominance is evident, high-level exchanges between some Arab countries and Syria resumed, including the first summit telephone call with Jordan in a decade (October) and a visit to Damascus by the UAE foreign minister (November). Meanwhile, European countries and the U.S. remain cautious about resuming relations with the Syrian government due to the Assad administration's use of chemical weapons and human rights violations.

On the military and security front, the Assad administration has stepped up its offensive to take control of Idlib in the northwest, the last rebel stronghold. In the south, the Syrian government has made progress in pacifying the remaining rebel militants after major clashes between government forces and former rebels opposed to disarming. Although security in the capital Damascus has generally been maintained, an explosion targeting a government forces bus occurred on October 20 (the first large explosion in the capital in a year).

## **B The Japanese Government's Efforts**

Japan has consistently maintained its position that the crisis in Syria cannot be resolved by any military means, and a political solution is indispensable, while continuous assistance is important for the improvement of humanitarian situation. From this standpoint, following the aggravation of situation in Syria since 2012, Japan has provided total assistance worth more than 3.2 billion US dollars to Syria and neighboring countries for humanitarian assistance.

### **(11) Lebanon**

In September, a new cabinet headed by former Prime Minister Najib Mikati was formed after a political vacuum of more than a year after the

massive explosion at the Port of Beirut in August 2020. The new cabinet has challenges, such as carrying out administrative and financial reforms, dealing with a severe power crisis associated with the unprecedented economic and financial crisis, fighting COVID-19 and investigating the truth behind the port explosion, but no major progress has been made. In October, clashes broke out between protesters demanding the dismissal of the judge in charge of investigating the case of the port explosion. Later that month, Lebanon's Information Minister's comments about the civil war in Yemen before assuming office provoked protests from Gulf countries, leading to a diplomatic row with Gulf countries that resulted in his resignation.

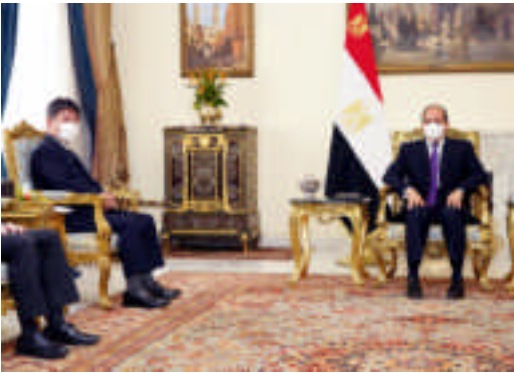
Since 2012, Japan has provided more than 250 million US dollars in assistance to help the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in Lebanon. In August, France and the UN co-hosted the "International Conference in Support of the Lebanese People" in a virtual format. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio explained the additional support for Lebanon through international organizations, and emphasized that the only way for Lebanon to overcome the current challenges is to take action toward reforms and make progress in talks with the International Monetary Fund.

## **3 The Situation in North Africa** **(Egypt, Libya, Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco)**

### **(1) Egypt**

Egypt is a major power in the region playing a significant role in the stability of the Middle East and North Africa located in the northeast of the African continent and bordering Europe across the Mediterranean Sea. On the economic front, whereas the negative impact of COVID-19 (such as declining tourism revenues) continues, it has been limited compared with neighboring countries, and its GDP continues to maintain positive growth.

Steady progress has been seen in Japan-Egypt relations since President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's



Foreign Minister Motegi pays a courtesy call to Egyptian President El-Sisi (August, Cairo, Egypt)

visit to Japan in February 2016. Cooperation covers various areas such as introduction of Japanese-style education, strengthening support for the Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST), and the construction program of the Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM). In March, a Japanese-related vessel ran aground in the Suez Canal, but the vessel departed safely in July. In March, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio issued a video message to the “Second Annual Meeting of the Aswan Forum” hosted by the Egyptian government. In April, Foreign Minister Motegi co-chaired the “Second Japan-Arab Political Dialogue” in an online format, attended by foreign ministers and representatives from member states and region of the League of Arab States. Following the Japan-Egypt Foreign Ministers’ telephone call in June, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Egypt in August to strengthen relations with the country through talks with President El-Sisi and Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry. Minister Motegi also met with Ahumed Aboul Gheit, Secretary General of the League of Arab States, to strengthen relations with the League.

Regarding the two SDF personnel of the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) stationed in the Sinai Peninsula, who have been dispatched since April 2019, a third rotation of personnel was conducted in April to continue to contribute to regional peace and stability.

## (2) Libya

In Libya, following the collapse of the Qadhafi administration in 2011, the parliament and the government have split, with each located in the east and the west of the country, respectively, and the situation remains unstable. In April 2019, Field Marshal Khalifa Haftar, powerful commander of the eastern “Libyan National Army (LNA),” ordered an advance on Tripoli. Although it developed into an armed conflict, the Government of National Unity (GNA), with the support of Turkey, launched a counterattack since May 2020, resulting in a standoff along a line connecting the central coastal city of Sirte and the inland city of Jufra. Meanwhile, a permanent ceasefire agreement was signed between both sides later in October, and no major armed clashes have occurred since then.

On the political front, the UN-led National Dialogue Forum was held in Tunis in November 2020 with 75 Libyan representatives, and a basic agreement was reached to hold a series of elections on Independence Day on December 24, 2021. However the election-related law has not been enacted, and postponement of the elections was announced on December 22.

## (3) Maghreb Countries

The Maghreb region is of great economic importance in Africa due to its geographical advantage of being located at the junction to Europe, the Middle East and Africa and its high potential due to its abundant and inexpensive young labor force. In addition, each country in the region has overcome the “Arab Spring” and maintained political stability in its own way. On the other hand, due to the impact of COVID-19, overcoming regional disparities and high unemployment rates has become an issue in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. There are also concerns about the security implications of the flow of weapons and illegal immigrants from Libya and the Sahel region.

The economic stagnation in Tunisia caused by COVID-19 and problems in the health care system have led to public dissatisfaction, and the Hechem

Mechichi cabinet, which was inaugurated in September 2020, was forced to step down on July 25, 2021 by President Kais Saïed, who announced he would initiate political reforms in the country. He also suspended the activities of the Assembly of Representatives the same day with the aim of eradicating corruption in politics. Subsequently, the president nominated Najla Bouden to head the cabinet, and inaugurated the new cabinet on October 11 as the first female prime minister in Tunisia's history. It remains to be seen whether the new Bouden administration, under the leadership of President Saïed, will be able to quickly and adequately address the pressing economic and social challenges it faces today in a manner that enjoys broad public support.

In Algeria, the protests against the long rule of President Abdelaziz Bouteflika since February 2019 have become prolonged, resulting in the administration resigning in April. The presidential election was held in December 2019, and former Prime Minister Abdelmadjid Tebboune was elected. As part of the political reforms aimed at realizing a "new Algeria," President Tebboune amended the constitution and held elections for the People's National Assembly (lower house). A referendum on constitutional reform was held on November 1, 2020, the anniversary of the Revolution, and despite the extremely low turnout (23.7%), the proposed constitutional reform was adopted. In June 2021, the People's National Assembly elections were held ahead of schedule, and the National Liberation Front continued

to be the largest political force. Following the results of the election, Prime Minister Aïmene Benabderrahmane was appointed in July and a new cabinet was formed. In August, the Algerian government announced that it would sever diplomatic relations with Morocco, citing the country's ongoing hostilities.

In Morocco, the House of Representatives election was held on September 8, 2021, and the former second place party, the National Rally of Independents (RNI), advanced to hold the most seats, and occupied two-thirds of all seats by forming a coalition government with the Authenticity and Modernity Party (PAM) and the Istiqlal Party (PI). However, the Justice and Development Party (PJD), which has led the government for 10 years from 2011, was relegated to the opposition as it lost its seats to incumbent ministers, including Head of Government Saad Dine el Otmani, primarily due to the delay in taking measures against COVID-19 and the high unemployment rate. In the House of Councilors election held on October 5, the RNI, PAM and PI coalition also won a majority, but the PJD drastically reduced the number of seats. Following the results of both elections, leader of the RNI, Aziz Akhannouch, who was appointed by King Mohammed VI as Head of Government, formed a new cabinet on October 7. With the support of the ruling coalition, which has a majority in both houses, the focus of attention will be on how the Head of Government will implement economic and social policies in a stable manner.

## 60 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Kuwait

2021 marked 60 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Kuwait.

The relations between Japan and Kuwait date back further than the formal establishment of diplomatic relations on December 8, 1961. Kuwait became independent in 1961, but active economic activity was already occurring, such as in 1958 when the Japanese-owned Arabian Oil Company conducted oil drilling in the Khafji Oil Field located offshore of the Saudi Arabian-Kuwaiti neutral zone.

In 2021, while taking thorough precautions against the spread of COVID-19, a range of commemorative events were held. To celebrate 60 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries, Foreign Minister Motegi held two telephone calls with H.E. Sheikh Dr. Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohamed Al-Sabah, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

On December 8, the anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, the Embassy of Kuwait in Japan hosted a photo exhibition charting the shared history of the two countries, and was attended by Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda Taro. The opening of the exhibition featured a video message from Minister Ahmad, expressing congratulations to the governments and people of both countries.

On the same day, the landmark Kuwait Towers were specially illuminated to mark the 60th anniversary, with scenes of Japanese residents and Kuwaiti locals celebrating together beside the towers featured in state-run Kuwait Television and various newspapers.

2021 also marked ten years since the Great East Japan Earthquake, and the towers lit up in March to show solidarity between the two countries, which was demonstrated by the large amount of recovery assistance from Kuwait such as donations of crude oil. In addition, the Embassy of Japan in Kuwait produced and released a video conveying gratitude for the recovery assistance from Kuwait, which attracted many comments from Kuwaitis showing their hopes for the recovery of the disaster-struck area. In Japan, Nihonmatsu City in Fukushima Prefecture expressed its appreciation for assistance from Kuwait to the disaster-struck area by becoming the host town for the Kuwait Team at the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020.

In addition, in November, the Japanese Association in Kuwait held the “Operation Tortoise” coastline cleanup day in Kuwait City. Hosted with the assistance of the Kuwait Environment Public Authority, in addition to Japanese residents, more than 800 Kuwaiti locals participated in the cleanup day. All participants wore T-shirts with the logo commemorating 60 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Kuwait.



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda attending the Kuwait photographic exhibition (December, Tokyo)



Illumination of the Kuwait Towers (March)



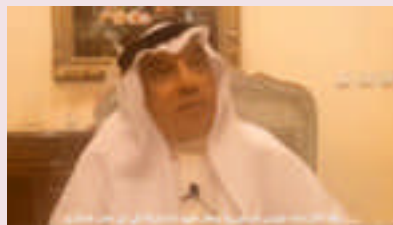
Logo commemorating 60 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Kuwait



"Operation Tortoise" cleanup day (November, Kuwait City)

Furthermore, the Embassy of Japan in Kuwait released online videos throughout the year showcasing Japanese language and culture as well as the cooperative relations between the two countries, such as Japan's initiatives in response to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

The wide range of initiatives taken in both Japan and Kuwait in 2021 provided reminders of the bonds between the two nations, and made it a year renewing the determination to further develop bilateral relations in the future.



Interview with H.E. Abdulla Bishara, former Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) from the video "Japan and Kuwait in Solidarity -Witnesses of History-" (August, online)

## 50 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Qatar

2021 marked 50 years since the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Qatar.

Qatar may not be very familiar to the people of Japan, but many will likely have heard the name of its capital, Doha. In 1993, the Japanese men's national soccer team played against Iraq in a match that determined whether or not the team would participate in the FIFA Soccer World Cup for the first time. During the extra time of the second-half of that match, the Japanese team allowed Iraq to catch-up to a tie, and ended up being eliminated in the preliminary round. This match, held in Qatar, became known as the "Tragedy of Doha."

In addition, Japan and Qatar have built strong relations in the field of liquefied natural gas (LNG), which is mainly used as fuel for electricity generation. Japan imports over 8 million tons of LNG each year from Qatar, which is around 11% of the total import volume. Qatar is one of the world's leading LNG exporters, and with a per capita GDP of approximately 62,000 dollars, has become in a short period, one of the world's ten wealthiest countries. Japan has contributed to Qatar's development through its purchases of LNG.

In August 2021, which marked the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Qatar, holding the First Japan-Qatar Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue with H.E. Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. At the outset, Minister Motegi praised the outstanding performance of Qatari athletes at the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, and also expressed his will to further develop "the Comprehensive Partnership" between the two countries, taking this opportunity. The two Ministers of Foreign Affairs also held talks in New York at the United Nations General Assembly in September, agreeing to continue close collaboration to strengthen bilateral relations, including in response to issues concerning Afghanistan. Subsequently, Qatar assisted in the evacuation of Afghani nationals who have connections with Japan, and by the end of 2021, approximately 500 of them had left Afghanistan and safely arrived in Japan.

In addition, while taking thorough precautions against the spread of COVID-19, a range of events were successfully held, including a Japanese poetry competition in November co-hosted with the Qatar Ministry of Culture. In 2022, many occasions are being planned to further enliven the relations between Japan and Qatar, including a Japanese speech competition as well as karate and judo events.



Japan-Qatar Foreign Ministers' Strategic Dialogue (August, Qatar)



Poster promoting entry to the Japanese poetry competition (November, Qatar)



## Section 8

# Africa

### 1 Overview

Africa, with a population of over 1.3 billion in 54 countries, has attracted the interest of the international community, owing to its high potential and rich natural resources. At the same time, Africa still faces challenges such as conflicts, political turmoil, and terrorism that threaten peace and stability, and serious poverty and development issues. Overcoming these challenges in Africa is also important for the peace and prosperity of the international community as a whole.

Leading into 2021, COVID-19 continues to have tremendous impacts on Africa's economy and society. The third wave of COVID-19 has arrived in Africa, and the cumulative number of infected people has risen to more than nine million (as of December 2021). However, as vaccine development progresses around the world, improving the vaccination rate has become an important issue while the rate in Africa as a whole is only 11% (as of December 2021). Under these circumstances, in Japan announced in April assistance to 25 countries in Africa to build a vaccination system with cold chain equipment and enhance vaccination capabilities, as "Last One Mile Support." In addition, Prime Minister Kishida announced at the Tokyo Nutrition Summit 2021 held in December that Japan would provide vaccines to Africa.

2021 was also a year of significant political instability in multiple parts of Africa. In Mali,

provisional government leaders were detained by a group of army soldiers, while in Guinea, the president was detained. In Ethiopia, armed clashes between the government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) occurred, and in Sudan, the army detained the prime minister and other officials and dissolved the cabinet.

As part of its efforts to address challenges in the areas of peace and stability, Japan provided emergency grant aid of 3.179 billion Japanese yen to seven African countries facing humanitarian crises in March 2021 to address political instability and the enormous economic and social impacts of COVID-19. This initiative is aimed at preventing regional instability by providing food assistance to countries facing humanitarian crises, including food crises, due to sluggish economic activity caused by COVID-19. Furthermore, under the New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa (NAPSA) advocated at the 7th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 7), Japan is working to provide assistance for stabilizing regions affected by conflict and terrorism, as well as institution building, strengthening governance, and preventing the radicalization of youth.

In 2021, people-to-people exchanges took place at various levels between Japan and Africa even in the situation where official travel was restricted by the impact of COVID-19.

In January, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Kenya and Senegal to reaffirm the friendship

between Japan and Africa that has developed over many years.

In addition, ministerial-level officials from 27 countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, including Vice President Rebecca Nyandeng de Mabior of South Sudan, visited Japan on the occasion of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 (Tokyo 2020 Games) held in the summer. The exchanges through the Olympic host town were an opportunity to encourage exchange between Africa and Japanese towns.

Japan has been contributing to African development for many years through the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), which has a history of over a quarter of a century, based on the basic principles of African ownership and partnership with the international community. The Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) is scheduled to be held in Tunisia in 2022. While COVID-19 has brought to light various development issues in Africa, Japan will strongly support African-led development through TICAD 8 and set out a pathway of African development looking ahead to the post-COVID-19 era. (See the Column on page 178)

## 2 East Africa

### (1) Uganda

Under President Yoweri Museveni's long-serving administration, Uganda has enjoyed sustained economic growth owing to its stable domestic politics and has contributed to regional stability as a major actor in East Africa. Uganda also actively accepts refugees, including those from South Sudan staying in the northern part of the country. In the presidential election held in January, the incumbent President Museveni won his sixth term.

### (2) Ethiopia

Ethiopia hosts the headquarters of the African Union (AU) and occupies an important position in African politics. It has the second largest

population in Africa (110 million people) and high annual growth rate of around 10% from 2004 to 2019 (6% in 2020). Addis Ababa, the capital, is one of Africa's leading hubs and is home to the only African airline that operates direct flights to Japan (Ethiopian Airlines).

Armed clashes occurred between the federal government and the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) in November 2020, and a State of Emergency was declared nationwide in November 2021. The number of internally displaced persons due to this conflict has risen to 9.4 million, and human rights and humanitarian issues are severe. Japan provided humanitarian assistance through international organizations, such as emergency grant aid of 6.6 million US dollars in February and 12.4 million US dollars in December and is working with the international community for the early resolution of the situation.

### (3) Eritrea

Eritrea is a country located on the international strait connecting the Indian Ocean, the Suez Canal and Europe. The country has the potential for economic growth thanks to its rich mineral, fishery and tourism resources. Since November 2020, as the situation in northern Ethiopia deteriorates, Eritrea has had an important role in regional stability. In January 2022, Japan opened an embassy in the capital Asmara.

### (4) Kenya

As a major power in East Africa, Kenya contributes to the peace and stability of the region and plays a role as a gateway for Japanese companies to expand their markets into Africa. In January, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Kenya to pay a courtesy call to President Uhuru Kenyatta and to meet with Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs Raychelle Awuor Omamo and other officials.

In December, a subcommittee of the 2nd Japan-Africa Public-Private Economic Forum was held online between Nairobi and Japan. Japanese and African businesses and government officials who

participated the forum discussed the promotion of business in Africa. At the forum, expectations were expressed for the promotion of activities by private companies in the healthcare field while a memorandum of cooperation on the “Africa Health and Wellbeing Initiative” was introduced, which was signed between Japan and Kenya in December.

### **(5) Union of Comoros**

The Union of Comoros is an island country located in the Indian Ocean and is an Islamic nation endowed with fishery resources. Under President Azali Assoumani, the Union of Comoros has established the “the Emerging Comoros Plan (ECP) for 2030” and is promoting development with tourism, transportation, health, energy and other sectors as priority fields.

### **(6) Djibouti**

Djibouti, located at one of the great trade arteries that passes through the Indian Ocean and connects Europe and Asia, is aiming to be a regional distribution hub. Stability in Djibouti is a key for regional security, and also in achieving a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific.” Since 2011, Djibouti has been hosting the facility of Japan Self-Defense Forces to carry out Japan's counter-piracy operations, and the two countries have developed an excellent relationship.

A presidential election was held in April, and the incumbent President Ismail Omar Guelleh won his 5th term. In May, the first Japan-EU-Djibouti joint exercise on counter-piracy operations was held.

### **(7) Sudan**

Sudan is endowed with crude oil, water resources from the Nile, and fertile land. Civil war has continued for over 40 years since its independence in 1956. In addition, the Bashir administration, which lasted for 30 years, collapsed in 2019 at the outset of demonstrations against rising prices. A provisional government was later established based on an agreement between the

armed forces and civilians with the aim of transitioning to civilian rule. The international community supported this initiative: in May 2021, French President Emmanuel Macron hosted a meeting to support this effort. Prior to the Conference, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio Eiichiro held an online meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs Mariam Al-Sadiq Al-Mahdi. However, in October, the armed forces seized power and dissolved the cabinet. Demonstrations by people calling for the transition to civilian rule are continuing. Japan calls for the restoration of transitioning to civilian rule in collaboration with the international community.

### **(8) Seychelles**

Seychelles is an island country in the Indian Ocean and has maintained its stable political situation even through the democratic changes of government in 2020. After COVID-19 swept the country, Seychelles promoted vaccination comparably early in Africa and boasts a high vaccination rate among the population (about 80% of the population has received their second vaccination). The decline in the number of visitors has affected the country, in which tourism is its economic pillar, but it has shown signs of recovery in 2021.

### **(9) Somalia**

In Somalia, a federal government was established in 2012 for the first time in 21 years, but the political situation in the country remains unstable due to challenges such as the humanitarian crisis and continuing terrorist activities by Al-Shabaab. The presidential election was scheduled to take place in February 2021 but as of end 2021, the election was not yet held.

### **(10) Tanzania**

Tanzania, which supports the peace and stability in Southeast Africa, has maintained a high economic growth rate over many years. In recent years, as private sector shows its high willingness to expand into Tanzania, the bilateral relationship with Japan has become closer, especially in

terms of the economy and development cooperation. Following the passings of former President John Magufuli in March, President Samia Suluhu Hassan became the first female president in April.

In October, novelist Abdulrazak Gurnah won the Nobel Prize in Literature to become a first Tanzanian laureate of the prize.

### (11) Burundi

Burundi's domestic human rights and security situation has continued to deteriorate since the attempted coup d'état by its military in May 2015. President Évariste Ndayishimiye, who took office in June 2020, has promoted a policy of reconciliation with international community, which helped generate momentum for domestic and regional stabilization. Under these circumstances, the United States issued an executive order in November 2021 to lift sanctions on Burundi.

### (12) Madagascar

Madagascar is an island country located off the southeastern coast of Africa. On the economic front, investments by Japanese companies in the integrated production of nickel and cobalt, which is the largest mining investment in Africa, are contributing to the economy.

The food crisis caused by the drought is becoming more severe in the southern part of the country, and in February, Japan provided humanitarian assistance such as food aid through emergency grant aid of 3 million US dollars.

### (13) South Sudan

South Sudan celebrated its 10th anniversary of independence in 2021 and is preparing for a transition process to a democratic government based on an agreement signed between the parties to the conflict in September 2018. Despite some progress, such as the appointment of governors and the reorganization of the National Legislative Assembly, there are also many issues such as reorganizing the unified force. Japan has been supporting the implementation of the peace process



Courtesy call to Prime Minister Suga by Vice President Rebecca Nyandeng de Mabior of South Sudan (July 22. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

through the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and other organizations to support the efforts of the South Sudanese government to achieve peace and stability. Vice President Rebecca Nyandeng de Mabior visited Japan in July 2021 to attend the opening ceremony of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games and paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Suga. In addition, South Sudan opened an embassy in Japan in November.

### (14) Mauritius

Mauritius is located at the center of the Indian Ocean and is an important country for promoting a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific." In 2020, following the oil spill of the cargo ship *Wakashio*, Foreign Minister Motegi provided Prime Minister Pravind Kumar Jugnauth with medium- to long-term support for the restoration and reconstruction of Mauritius. As part of this, in February and August 2021, Japan decided to provide equipment for the purpose of preventing marine accidents.

### (15) Rwanda

Rwanda, under the leadership of President Paul Kagame who won his third term in 2017, has continued its efforts on economic development and national reconciliation. In recent years the country has been experiencing rapid growth, especially in the field of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), and the number of Japanese businesses expanding into Rwanda has been also growing.



Japan-Rwanda Foreign Ministers' Meeting  
(June 29, Italy, Rome)

In June, a foreign ministers' meeting was held between Foreign Minister Motegi and Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Vincent Biruta on the occasion of the G20 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting. The two ministers also held a telephone call in August, expressing their hopes to further deepen bilateral relations in various fields, including business relations.

### 3 Southern Africa

#### (1) Angola

The structure of Angola's economy is dependent on oil industry. Combined with the decline in oil prices caused by COVID-19 pandemic, the country has recorded negative growth for five consecutive years since 2016 (-5.2% in 2020 (IMF)), making economic diversification and stabilization an urgent task. Angola is actively working to strengthen relations with its development partners and opened the Honorary Consulate of the Republic of Angola in Nagoya in May.

#### (2) Eswatini

In Eswatini, King Mswati III has outstanding power in administration and legislation, and maintains the only absolute monarchy in Africa. In April 2018, the country changed its name from the "Kingdom of Swaziland" to the "Kingdom of Eswatini." It is the only country in Africa that has diplomatic relations with Taiwan. In May 2021,

Japan celebrated the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations and sent a congratulatory message from Japan during an online commemorative event.

#### (3) Zambia

Zambia which has abundant mineral resources has been working on economic diversification in recent years to shift its economy away from over-dependence on minerals. In the presidential election held in August, President Hakainde Hichilema took office. The democratic change of power was realized for the first time in 10 years.

#### (4) Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe is located in the center of southern Africa and is a landlocked country where successive kingdoms have prospered between the 11th and 15th centuries, leaving behind a large group of stone ruins known as "Great Zimbabwe." Promoting distribution and infrastructure development is also important for the development of the regional economy. In May, the "Project for the Road Improvement of the Northern Part of the North-South Corridor" to rehabilitate a part of the main road connecting the country and the Zambia border, which was supported by Japan, was completed. President Emmerson Mnangagwa and others expressed their gratitude for Japan's cooperation.

#### (5) Namibia

Namibia has abundant marine and mineral resources, and as a distribution hub on the Atlantic side of southern Africa, it is expected that its trade and investment will expand in the fields of resource development and energy. Namibia is a stable democratic country, and thus remained the top among African countries in the 2021 Press Freedom Index following 2020.

#### (6) Botswana

Botswana has developed as a middle- and high-income country with diamonds as core

industry which boasts the second-largest production in the world under stable political situation since gaining independence in 1966. In recent years, it has been focusing on diversifying industry and reducing poverty with the aim of breaking away from its diamond-dependent economy.

### (7) Malawi

Malawi has had relatively stable domestic affairs since its independence in 1964, but there have been frequent demonstrations against the result of the presidential election in May 2019. Re-election was held in June 2020, the leader of the Malawi Congress Party (MCP), Lazarus Chakwera defeated the incumbent and became president, and the country is regaining stability.

In 2021, Japan and Malawi celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)'s dispatch to the country, which began in 1971. Since the start of the dispatch, JICA has contributed to nation-building through rural development, medical care and school education. As of the end of December, the total number of dispatched workers was 1,897, the highest in the world.

### (8) South Africa

South Africa is the only G20 member in Africa. It continues to garner attention from foreign companies including Japanese companies as a major economic power in Africa and as a hub from which to carry out business expansion.

After former President Jacob Zuma was imprisoned in July for contempt of court over alleged corruption, riots broke out centered on plundering shops that killed more than 330 people and resulted in more than 3,400 arrests. In addition, following the spread of COVID-19, President Cyril Ramaphosa has been continuously implementing domestic measures to both control infections and restart the economy. In August, South Africa became chair of the Organ on Politics, Defense and Security Affairs of the SADC and continues to play an important role in controlling infections

regionally.

In November, unitary local elections were held, and the African National Congress (ANC), the ruling party, received less than 50% of the votes for the first time since democratization in 1994.

### (9) Mozambique

In Mozambique, attacks by armed groups claiming to be IS and others have occurred frequently in the northern province of Cabo Delgado since the latter half of 2019. In March, a large-scale attack occurred near the LNG project site in the province. Since the summer, the security situation has been improving with the participation of the SADC and Rwanda security forces in operations to eliminate terrorists. Japan has been providing humanitarian assistance such as food aid for internally displaced persons and development assistance to help the local residents achieve economic independence.

### (10) Lesotho

Lesotho, a landlocked country composed mostly of mountainous highlands, continues to grow economically through mining and water resources development. Trout aquaculture is carried out in the lake of the Katse Dam constructed by utilizing natural resources, providing a major export product to Japan.

In March, the Honorary Consulate General of the Kingdom of Lesotho in Gunma was opened. In July, Japan celebrated the 50th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations and sent a congratulatory message from Japan during an online commemorative event.

## 4 Central Africa

### (1) Cameroon

Under the leadership of President Paul Biya, Cameroon is making efforts to bring stability to the English-speaking regions in the North West and South West regions based on the "Presidential Plan for the Reconstruction and Development



of the North West and South West Regions” launched in April 2020. Japan, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), is contributing to the reconstruction of the regions by providing 291 million Japanese yen in support for the renovation of health centers and other facilities.

Japan and Cameroon are maintaining and strengthening friendly relations, including sports exchanges. During the Tokyo 2020 Games, Cameroon athletes held their pre-Games training camp in Hita City, Oita prefecture.

## **(2) Democratic Republic of the Congo**

President Félix Antoine Tshisekedi Tshilombo declared the state of emergency martial law in Ituri and North Kivu provinces in May, and is working to stabilize the eastern region, where the activities of armed groups such as the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF, Ugandan rebels) have created major security challenges. In addition, the President Tshisekedi serves as the AU Chair and is actively involved in discussions on Africa in the international arena and in solving issues relating to peace and stability within Africa. The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo is also working with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to rebuild the domestic economy that was crippled by COVID-19.

Also in May, the Nyiragongo volcano erupted near Goma City, North Kivu, and Japan provided emergency relief supplies as the lava flow caused many casualties, including deaths, as well as physical damage. In August, the Minister of Sport and Leisure, Serge Chembo Nkonde, visited Japan for the Tokyo 2020 Games.

## **(3) Chad**

In Chad, President Idriss Deby Itno, who had been in power for more than 30 years, passed away in April after being injured in a battle with the rebel armed group FACT. Also in April, the Transitional Military Council (CMT), chaired by President General Mahamat Idriss Deby Itno, the

son of the former President Idriss Deby Itno, was set up to hold elections after an 18-month transition period.

Japan and Chad have friendly bilateral relations, Minister of Youth, Employment and Sport and Entrepreneurship Promotion, Routouang Mohamed Ndonga Christian visited Japan for the Tokyo 2020 Games in August as an exchange through sports.

## **(4) Central Africa**

In Central Africa, under President Faustin-Archange Touadera, who was reappointed in March 2021, completed the election for members of the National Assembly by July, despite security problems caused by attacks of armed groups. He also announced a “unilateral cease-fire” in October and continues to work for peace and stability in Central Africa.

Japan has been providing humanitarian assistance, such as food aid, for Central Africa, which is facing humanitarian crises, such as a large number of refugees and internally displaced persons and is contributing to the strengthening of peace and stability in the country.

# **5 West Africa**

## **(1) Ghana**

The Akufo-Addo administration (New Patriotic Party (NPP)) that took office in 2017 and was re-elected for the second term from 2021, has adopted the concept of Ghana Beyond Aid, and is working to attract investment and diversify industries. Since the spread of COVID-19, the government has been focusing on counter measures against the virus and on rebuilding the domestic economy.

Japan has supported the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research for many years through ODA. The institute is a symbol of friendship between the two countries and has been responsible for about 80% of the country's PCR tests at its peak and has played a central role

as a center for measures against COVID-19. Dr. Noguchi Hideyo's hometown of Inawashiro, in Fukushima Prefecture, was the host town for Ghana during the Tokyo 2020 Games.

### (2) Cabo Verde

Cabo Verde has a well-established democracy with relatively high political stability among African countries. With the expiration of the term of office of former President Jorge Carlos Fonseca, a peaceful presidential election was held in October, and Jose Maria Neves became president.

Japan has contributed to the development of Cabo Verde for many years through ODA. In 2021, it supported the country's efforts to reduce inequality and create sustainable economic development through food aid and the provision of medical and fishery-related equipment.

### (3) Guinea

In Guinea, in September, a group of soldiers detained President Alpha Condé by force. Subsequently, Colonel Mamady Doumbouya became the interim president, and under the transition charter, a transition system is being put in place, including the appointment of ministers of the transitional government.

Guinea has abundant water resources and fertile land, has high development potential for agriculture and fisheries, along with the largest mineral resources in West Africa that produce bauxite and iron. Japan has had a friendly cooperative relationship with Guinea for many years.

### (4) Côte d'Ivoire

Under President Alassane Ouattara's stable administration of more than 10 years, during which he was re-elected at the end of 2020, Côte d'Ivoire has achieved steady economic development with its increasing presence as a distribution hub in West Africa centered on the port of Abidjan. In June, former President Laurent Gbagbo returned to Côte d'Ivoire after being acquitted by the International Criminal Court, and further

domestic reconciliation and dialogue is expected.

Japan is supporting the sustainable social stability of Côte d'Ivoire and promoting economic and social development through infrastructure development and pursuing a good health society. In addition to favorable bilateral relations, the Japan-Côte d'Ivoire Investment Agreement came into effect in March 2021, and it is expected that economic relations will become even closer at the private level.

### (5) Senegal

Against the backdrop of domestic political stability, President Macky Sall has pursued active diplomacy even during COVID-19 epidemic and has been actively involved in the issue of peace and stability in the region through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). He also hosted the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) in November and the Dakar International Forum on Peace and Security



Japan-Senegal Foreign Ministers' Meeting  
(January 11, Dakar, Senegal)



Courtesy call to President Sall of Senegal by Minister Motegi  
(January 11, Dakar, Senegal)

in Africa in December, demonstrating his presence in the international community.

In January, Foreign Minister Motegi visited Senegal and paid a courtesy call to President Sall and two two-day foreign ministerial talks with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Senegalese Abroad Aïssata Tall Sall. Through this visit, Foreign Minister Motegi affirmed that Japan will further strengthen its multi-layered cooperative relationship with Senegal, including cooperation in tackling international issues, based on the friendly relationship with Senegal, with which Japan celebrated the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations in 2020. In the Dakar International Forum in December, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki Takako participated by sending a video message, touching on Japan's efforts to support Africa's peace and stability, while appealing for the strengthening of international cooperation to help Africa building back better from COVID-19 pandemic.

## **(6) Nigeria**

President Muhammadu Buhari, who started his second term in 2019, continues to prioritize the economic, security and anti-corruption measures he has been working on to take Nigeria to the "next stage." On the security front, following the report that the leaders of Boko Haram and Islamic State (IS) West Africa (ISWAP), which had been engaged in terrorist activities in the northeast, died in May and October, respectively, it is said that the number of armed groups, including their families, surrendered one after another, reaching a total of 17,000 people in November.

Forty-seven Japanese companies have set up operations in Nigeria. Japan and Nigeria are deepening exchanges in various fields, including economic relations. In December, Japan and Nigeria exchanged notes concerning grant aid of 300 million Japanese yen for road maintenance-related equipment ("The Economic and Social Development Programme").

## **(7) Niger**

Mohamed Bazoum assumed office as president in April after a peaceful presidential election. Buttressed by the establishment of democracy, Niger is striving to tackle development issues and counterterrorism and violent extremism. It also actively contributes to the international peace and security, especially the Sahel region, for instance by hosting a high-level open debate on climate change and international peace and security as the UN Security Council President for December.

Japan has been supporting the promotion of Niger's sustainable development through improving education and agricultural and rural development. In October, Japan provided grant aid of 400 million Japanese yen for food aid and is working on cooperation to improve food security.

## **(8) Burkina Faso**

Under President Roch Marc Christian Kaboré, who was re-elected at the end of 2020, Burkina Faso has continued to work on development issues, such as formulating its next five-year strategy, "National Plan for Economic and Social Development (PNDES II)." However, there has been growing dissatisfaction with counter-terrorism measures as terrorist acts have occurred in various places, and in January 2022, a group of soldiers of the armed forces detained the president and others and seized power. While Burkina Faso has been suspended from participating in ECOWAS and the AU, prompt return to a constitution-based order is expected.

## **(9) Benin**

A presidential election was held in Benin in April, and President Patrice Talon, who had been promoting various reforms including infrastructure development and anti-corruption measures since taking office, was re-elected.

Japan has been providing economic cooperation focusing on infrastructure development, industrial promotion and improving the people's livelihoods. The Hospital Allada, which was

constructed with the support of Japan, also plays an important role as a hub to fight COVID-19.

#### (10) Mali

Since the armed uprising by a group of Malian army soldiers in August 2020 followed by the resignation of President Ibrahim Keita, the provisional government led by interim President Bah Ndaw had been preparing to hold presidential and national parliamentary elections by February 2022. In May 2021, a group of Malian army soldiers detained officials of the provisional government, and the political situation once again became unstable. Under the new interim President Assimi Goita, although he is working toward the restoration of constitutional order and the transition to civilian rule, the transfer to civilian rule is stalled as the provisional government hopes that the election will be postponed significantly because the restoration of security is the highest priority.

The peace and stability of Mali are also essential for the prosperity of the Sahel region, and Japan intends to support Mali's efforts toward

the early restoration of constitutional order and the transition to civilian rule, in cooperation with the international community. In December, Japan made the decision to provide the equipment necessary for conducting elections through the UNDP for the early implementation of transparent and reliable elections.

#### (11) Mauritania

Mauritania continues to have a stable government under President Mohamed Ould Cheikh El Ghazouani, who took office in August 2019, as he reaches a turning point in his term. On the economic front, Mauritania's economy is based on exporting abundant marine, mineral, and energy resources. In particular about 30% of its octopus exports are for Japan.

Japan has friendly relations with Mauritania. In 2021, the Mauritania parliament created the Mauritania-Japan Friendship Parliamentary Group. Japan is supporting Mauritania in its efforts toward food security through food aid, in addition to support for capacity building in fisheries.

## Towards TICAD 8

– Japan's African Diplomacy through the TICAD Process to Date

The year 2023 marks the 30th anniversary since Japan launched the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 1993. Looking ahead to the Eighth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD 8) in August this year, we look back on the history of TICAD.

TICAD is an international conference launched by Japan in 1993 with the aim of reviving interests within the international community in supporting Africa and advocating the importance of extending assistance to the region, against the backdrop of such interests waning after the end of the Cold War. As a forum on African development, this conference is a pioneering initiative in the international community. The first conference (TICAD I) emphasized the importance of harnessing the successful experience of Asia's economic growth for the benefit of African development.

TICAD II (the second TICAD) was held in 1998 based on the theme of "Poverty Reduction and Integration into the Global Economy." At this conference, "ownership" of Africa and "partnership" of the international community were also advocated as underlying principles of TICAD. These principles reflect the application of Japan's post-war experience to African development, as Japan itself had developed with the support of the international community while retaining its autonomy after World War II. Today, these principles of "ownership" and "partnership" are shared globally and are inspiring African countries.

TICAD III (the third TICAD) was held in 2003 amidst the strengthening of ownership among the African countries towards promoting development. For example, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was established in 2001, and the African Union (AU) was established in 2002. Under the recognition that "there will be no stability and prosperity in the world in the 21st Century unless the problems of Africa are resolved," Japan has engaged in discussions with a view to bringing together the knowledge and experiences of the international community to provide support for Africa.

TICAD IV (the fourth TICAD) was held in 2008 under the theme "Towards a Vibrant Africa: a Continent of Hope and Opportunity." At this conference, discussions were focused on the priority matters of boosting economic growth, ensuring human security, and addressing environmental issues and climate change. Japan announced its intention to double its ODA and private investment in Africa, and affirmed the importance of the TICAD follow-up mechanism, which has remained as one of the features of TICAD till the present day.

TICAD V (the fifth TICAD) was held in 2013 on the theme "Hand in Hand with a More Dynamic Africa," and discussions were held on further boosting Africa's economic growth. In light of the importance of human resource development for industries in Africa, the "African Business Education Initiative for Youth" ("ABE Initiative")<sup>(Note)</sup> was announced at this conference.

TICAD VI (the sixth TICAD) was held in Kenya in 2016 as the first TICAD conference held in Africa. At this conference, Japan announced that it would invest in Africa's future through measures such as developing quality infrastructure, promoting resilient health systems, and building a foundation for peace and stability, amounting to approximately 30 billion US dollars under



At TICAD IV (May 28, 2008, Yokohama)



Group photograph at TICAD 7 (August 28, 2019, Tokyo. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

public-private partnership.

TICAD 7 was held in 2019 under the theme “Advancing Africa’s development through people, technology and innovation.” Discussions were held at this conference based on the three pillars of economy, society, and peace and stability. The promotion of business was the main focus of discussions, and the conference served as an opportunity to affirm the importance of promoting more private investment in Africa than ever before. The number of Japanese companies entering the African market has almost doubled over the past decade, from 520 to 910 companies.

Since the launch of TICAD, Japan has worked actively on enhancing the international community’s interest in African development. Today, Africa’s potential as the “final frontier of the 21st century” is attracting an unprecedented level of attention from the international community. It is also important for Japan to further deepen its cooperative relationship with Africa through the TICAD process.

As COVID-19 has shed light on various development challenges faced by Africa, Japan aims to strongly support Africa-led development and set out a pathway for African development through TICAD 8, looking ahead to the post-COVID-19 era.

**Note** African Business Education Initiative for Youth (ABE Initiative): A program that invites African youths to Japan and provides them with opportunities to study for their master’s degrees in Japan and participate in internships at Japanese companies. It fulfills the important role to build a bridge between Japan and Africa.



# Chapter 3

## Japan Strengthening Its Presence in the International Community

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## Section 1

# Efforts for Peace and Stability of Japan and the International Community

### 1 National Security Initiatives

#### (1) Security Environment Surrounding Japan

The security environment surrounding Japan is becoming increasingly severe at a more rapid pace than ever before. Changes in the balance of power in the international arena are accelerating and becoming more complex, and uncertainty over the existing order is increasing. Against such a backdrop, competitions among states are prominently emerging, in which states seek to shape global and regional order to their advantage as well as increase their influence. What is more, in the international community, there is a broadening and diversifying array of security challenges that cannot be dealt with by a single country alone. With respect to space and cyber domains, establishing international rules and norms has also been a security agenda. In the maritime domain, there have been cases where a country unilaterally claims its entitlements or takes actions based on assertions that are incompatible with existing international order. These have generated undue infringement to rights accorded under international law, including the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). Given that national security has been expanding its scope to economic and technological fields in recent years, the enhancement of efforts regarding the security policy in these fields is necessary. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and

ballistic missiles, as well as increasingly complex international terrorism, remain a grave challenge for the international community. Against such a background, strong military powers are concentrating in the areas surrounding Japan, where clear trends are observed in further military buildup and an increase in military activities.

Facing such a security environment and other factors, it has become indispensable for Japan to make more proactive efforts in line with the principle of international cooperation. Japan cannot secure its own peace and security by itself, and the international community expects Japan to play a more proactive role for peace and stability in the world, in a way commensurate with its national capabilities. Japan will continue to adhere to the course that it has taken to date as a peace-loving nation, and as a major player in world politics and the economy, contribute even more proactively to securing the peace, stability and prosperity of the international community, and achieve its own security as well as peace and stability in the region (for Japan's Legislation for Peace and Security, see the Special Feature on page 183).

#### (2) Territorial integrity

Maintaining territorial integrity is a fundamental responsibility of the Government. Japan's policy to resolutely protect its land, sea and air-space remains unchanged. Japan will continue to

## Fifth Anniversary of the Enforcement of Japan's Legislation for Peace and Security

One of the most important responsibilities of a government is to secure the lives and peaceful livelihood of its people under any circumstances. March 2021 marks the fifth anniversary since the enforcement of Japan's Legislation for Peace and Security in March 2016. After the enforcement of the legislation, Japan has been engaged in various forms of cooperation with the U.S. and other relevant countries. The Japan-U.S. Alliance is stronger than it has ever been, and Japan is contributing further to peace and stability in the region and the international community.

For example, according to Paragraph 2 of Article 95 of the Self-Defense Forces Law newly established in the Legislation for Peace and Security, it has become possible for the Self-Defense Forces to protect the weapons, etc., of U.S. Forces and other troops currently engaged in activities in cooperation with the Self-Defense Forces to contribute to Japan's defense, from invasions that do not reach the level of an armed attack. From 2017 till the end of 2020, Japan escorted the U.S. Forces a total of 57 times on occasions such as joint exercises, information gathering, and warning and surveillance activities, including ballistic missile warnings. In November 2021, Japan also escorted the Australian Forces for the first time during a joint exercise.

In view of the enforcement of the Legislation for Peace and Security, a new Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA) between Japan and the U.S. entered into force in 2017 to facilitate more extensive and smooth security cooperation between the two countries. With the entering into force of the new Japan-U.S. ACSA, it became possible to also apply the same framework, as for the settlement procedures in the previous Japan-U.S. ACSA (entered into force in 1996, second amendment entered into force in 2004), to the provision of goods and services that the Self-Defense Forces could provide additionally to the U.S. Forces under the Legislation for Peace and Security (for example, goods and services for multilateral exercises that both the Self-Defense Forces and U.S. Forces participate in). This further enhanced the effectiveness of Japan-U.S. cooperation.

In addition, Japan has also expanded and enhanced activities relating to cooperation on international peace and cooperation, such as UN Peacekeeping operations (PKO). In November 2016, new missions were assigned to the Japan engineering units deployed to the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) from January 2012 to May 2017. The new missions included the so-called "*kaketsuke-keigo*" (coming to the aid of geographically distant units or personnel under attack) by the Self-Defense Forces and joint defense of encampments with the forces of other countries, in response to emergency requests from NGOs or other parties under attack by rioters or others when they are engaged in activities in the vicinity of Self-Defense Forces working on PKO missions overseas.

The deployment of headquarter personnel to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) is also an activity that is not coordinated by the United Nations, and which has become possible for Japan to engage in with the enforcement of the Legislation for Peace and Security. MFO is an international organization that has been conducting ceasefire monitoring activities and providing support for dialogues and trust-building between Egypt and Israel on the Sinai Peninsula, since 1982. Japan began deploying international peacekeeping units to the Sinai Peninsula in April 2019, and currently has two headquarter personnel deployed to the organization. The deployment of headquarter personnel to MFO not only contributes to the peace and stability of the Middle East, which constitutes Japan's cornerstone for peace and prosperity, but also leads to the

accumulation of useful knowledge for the future promotion of international cooperation on peacekeeping.

Since the enforcement of the Legislation for Peace and Security, Japan has been deepening cooperation not only with the U.S., but also with various other countries. Going forward, MOFA will strive to maintain and develop diplomatic relations that further advance mutual cooperation with other countries, with a view to securing the lives and peaceful livelihood of the people of Japan.



Japan-Australia joint exercise "Trident"  
(November. Photo: Ministry of Defense)



Headquarter personnel deployed to MFO  
(Photo: PKO Secretariat)

maintain its stance of responding firmly but in a calm manner. Based on this, the relevant government agencies are working in close cooperation to advance measures to ensure a seamless and adequate response to any form of unlawful acts. At the same time, the Government of Japan engages in proactive efforts to promote awareness of Japan's position on territorial integrity among the international community, making use of the contacts and knowledge of our diplomatic missions overseas.

## **2 Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements**

### **(1) Overview of Japan-U.S. Security Relationship**

Under the security environment surrounding Japan, which is becoming increasingly severe at an ever more rapid pace, it is indispensable to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements and to enhance the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance not only for the peace and security of Japan, but also for the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region. Japan and the U.S. are further enhancing their deterrence and response capabilities under the Guidelines and the Legislation for Peace and Security. Through such efforts, Japan and the U.S.

have been expanding and strengthening cooperation in a wide range of areas, including ballistic missiles defense, cyberspace, space and maritime security. Japan and the U.S. have been working closely on the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan, including the relocation of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma and of approximately 9,000 U.S. Marine Corps in Okinawa to Guam and other locations in order to mitigate the impact on local communities, including Okinawa, while maintaining the deterrence capabilities of U.S. Forces in Japan.

### **(2) Japan-U.S. Security and Defense Cooperation in Various Fields**

#### **A Multilayered Efforts Under the Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation**

The Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation, which were formulated in 2015, reviewed and updated the general framework and policy direction of Japan-U.S. defense cooperation. Through the Alliance Coordination Mechanism (ACM) and other efforts established under these Guidelines, Japan and the U.S. have been sharing information closely, establishing a common understanding of the situation, and engaging in "seamless" responses and efforts from peacetime to contingencies. From the very

beginning, the Biden administration has made it clear that it places great importance on the Japan-U.S. Alliance. In March 2021, just two months after the inauguration of the Biden administration, Antony Blinken, Secretary of State, and Lloyd Austin, Secretary of Defense, visited Japan in the first overseas trip made by cabinet members under the administration, and held a Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (“2+2”) meeting with Foreign Minister Motegi and Defense Minister Kishi Nobuo. The four Ministers reaffirmed that the Japan-U.S. Alliance remains the cornerstone of peace, security and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region, and renewed the unwavering commitment of both countries to the Japan-U.S. Alliance. They also concurred to further deepen the coordination to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Furthermore, the U.S. underscored its unwavering commitment to the defense of Japan through the full range of its capabilities, including nuclear. The four Ministers affirmed that Article V of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty applies to the Senkaku Islands and affirmed that both nations oppose any unilateral action that seeks to undermine Japan’s administration of these islands.

In January 2022, the “2+2” meeting was convened virtually for the first time. The meeting was attended by Foreign Minister Hayashi and Defense Minister Kishi from the Japanese side, and Secretary of State Blinken and Secretary of Defense Austin from the U.S. side. The four Ministers engaged in candid and important discussions on how to advance the evolution of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and continue to effectively address current and future challenges. The outcome of the meeting is broadly summarized in the following three points. Firstly, the Ministers affirmed their commitment to a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).” They also held an in-depth discussion and aligned their understanding on the changing strategic environment in the region, including China’s efforts to undermine the rules-based order and North Korea’s nuclear and missile

activities. Secondly, they affirmed that they would advance concrete discussions toward fundamentally enhancing the Alliance’s deterrence and response capabilities. Furthermore, they concurred on pursuing investments to ensure that the Alliance will maintain its competitive edge into the future, including in the field of space, cyberspace as well as emerging technologies. Thirdly, they concurred on the importance of steadily implementing the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan and sharing information in a timely manner, from the perspective of mitigating the impact on local communities including Okinawa while maintaining the deterrence of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Also, in-person visits by senior U.S. defense officials continued to take place in 2021, Admiral John C. Aquilino, Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, and Admiral Samuel Paparo, Commander of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, respectively visited Japan in June, while there were also visits



Japan-U.S. “2+2” (videoconference) (January 2022)



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Miyake Shingo receiving a courtesy call from Carlos Del Toro, Secretary of the Navy (October, Tokyo)



by Admiral Charles A. Richard, Commander of the U.S. Strategic Command, in July, and Carlos Del Toro, Secretary of the Navy, in October. Admiral Aquilino, Commander of the U.S. Indo-Pacific Command, visited Japan once again in November, and was the first foreign dignitary to pay a courtesy call to Foreign Minister Hayashi after his inauguration. In addition, the Japan-U.S. Extended Deterrence Dialogue was held virtually in April. This Dialogue has been held on a regular basis since 2010 as part of security and defense cooperation between Japan and the U.S. It provides an opportunity for the two governments to discuss regional security, Alliance defense posture, nuclear and missile defense policy, and arms control issues, to frankly exchange views on means to enhance alliance deterrence and to deepen mutual understanding. Through these multilayered efforts, Japan will continue to promote security and defense cooperation with the U.S., further enhancing the deterrence and response capabilities of the Alliance.

### **B** Missile Defense

Japan has been making steady efforts to develop and engage in the production of the BMD system while continuing cooperation with the U.S., including on the steady implementation of joint development and joint production of the Standard Missile 3 (SM-3 Block IIA) since 2006, and Japan is fully prepared to protect the lives and property of its citizens from the threat of ballistic missiles to Japan under any circumstances.

### **C** Cyberspace

Japan and the U.S. affirmed the importance of cyberspace in the field of security at the “2+2” meeting convened in March 2021, and, at the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held in April, declared that they would advance defense cooperation in the cyber domain. Based on these discussions, at the “2+2” meeting held in January 2022, the two sides confirmed that it was imperative for the Alliance to jointly address threats in the cyber

domain. In light of the necessity for cross-governmental efforts by both Japan and the U.S., stakeholders from both sides engaged in discussions, through frameworks such as the Japan-U.S. Cyber Dialogue, on bilateral cooperation across a wide range of areas. The two sides are continuing to cooperate on matters related to cyberspace, promoting bilateral policy coordination, strengthening systems and capabilities, and exchanging incident information, while taking into consideration Japan’s cybersecurity strategy and the cyber policies of the U.S.

### **D** Space

Japan and the U.S. affirmed the importance of space in the field of security at the “2+2” meeting convened in March 2021, and, at the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting held in April 2021, declared that they would advance defense cooperation in the space domain. Based on these discussions, at the “2+2” meeting held in January 2022, the two sides confirmed that it was crucial for the Alliance to jointly respond to severe threats to, from and within space. Japan and the U.S. are continuing to cooperate on space security, including through mutual exchanges of information in the field of Space Situational Awareness and others, as well as concrete examinations of cooperation over hosted payloads (mission instruments loaded onto other entities’ satellites).

### **E** Information Security

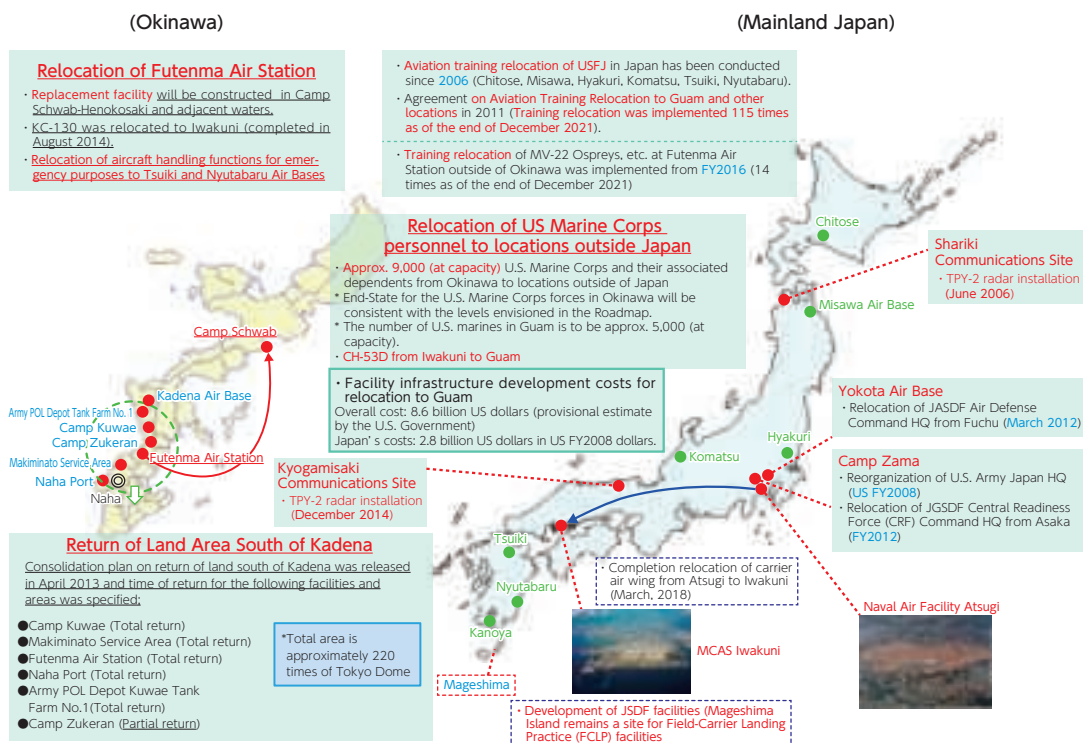
Information security plays a crucial role in advancing cooperation within the context of the alliance. Based on this perspective, both countries continue to hold discussions designed to enhance their cooperation regarding information security, the importance of which was affirmed in the Japan-U.S. Joint Leaders’ Statement of April 2021 and the “2+2” Joint Statement of January 2022.

### **F** Maritime Security and Multilateral Cooperation

In forums such as the East Asia Summit (EAS)



## Realignment of USFJ – An Overview



Note: In the "2+2" joint statement released in April, 2012, Japan and the U.S. decided to delink both the relocation of U.S. Marine Corps personnel from Okinawa to Guam and land returns south of Kadena from progress on the relocations of MCAS Futenma.

and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), Japan and the U.S. stress the importance of peacefully resolving maritime issues in accordance with international law, in particular the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). The Guidelines announced in April 2015 also provide that Japan and the U.S. will cooperate closely with each other on measures to maintain maritime order in accordance with international law, including the freedom of navigation. Even under the conditions of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic in 2021, Japan and the U.S. continued to conduct bilateral training and exercises in the surrounding waters in the region including the South China Sea, and strengthened their cooperation with regional partners including Australia and India through exercises such as MALABAR (Japan-U.S.-Australia-India joint exercise). Furthermore, Japan and the U.S. also conducted multilateral exercises with the UK, which

deployed the UK Carrier Strike Group to the Indo-Pacific region, and with European partners such as France, Germany and the Netherlands, and affirmed that the importance of realizing a free and open Indo-Pacific is widely shared among these countries. Both Japan and the U.S. will continue to place importance on strengthening cooperation with allies and partners in the Indo-Pacific region.

### (3) Realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan

The Government of Japan will continue to make every effort to mitigate the impact on local communities, including Okinawa, by soundly promoting the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan, including the relocation of MCAS Futenma to Henoko, while still maintaining the deterrence capabilities of said forces.

In the U.S.-Japan Joint Leaders' Statement issued in April 2021, Japan and the U.S. reaffirmed

their commitment to current arrangements on the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan, including the construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility (FRF) at Henoko as the only solution that avoids the continued use of MCAS Futenma, the Field-Carrier Landing Practice (FCLP) Facility at Mageshima, and the relocation of the U.S. Marine Corps units from Okinawa to Guam. Similarly, in the Joint Statement of the “2+2” issued in January 2022, the ministers confirmed the importance of accelerating bilateral work on these force realignment efforts.

Japan and the U.S. will also continue to work closely on the steady implementation of plans for matters such as the relocation of approximately 9,000 U.S. Marine Corps from Okinawa to locations outside of Japan, including Guam, and on the returns of land south of Kadena based on the April 2013 “Consolidation Plan for Facilities and Areas in Okinawa.”

In particular, the return of lands in Okinawa has been realized by completing various return projects based on this Consolidation Plan, even after the return of a major portion of the Northern Training Area (NTA, approximately 4,000 hectares) in December 2017. The return of all areas indicated as “Immediate Return” under the Consolidation Plan was achieved with the return of a portion of the Facilities and Engineering Compound in Camp Zukeran in March 2020. The land near Samashita Gate at Futenma Air Station was also returned in December 2020, followed by the return of the laundry factory area of Makiminato Service Area (land along National Route No. 58) in May 2021.

#### **(4) Host Nation Support (HNS)**

Since 1987, Japan has borne part of the costs which the U.S. is obliged to bear under the provision of Article XXIV of the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA), by concluding Special Measures Agreements (SMAs) as special measures relating to the SOFA, with a view to ensuring the effective operations of U.S. Forces in Japan amidst

the growing severity of the security situation surrounding Japan.

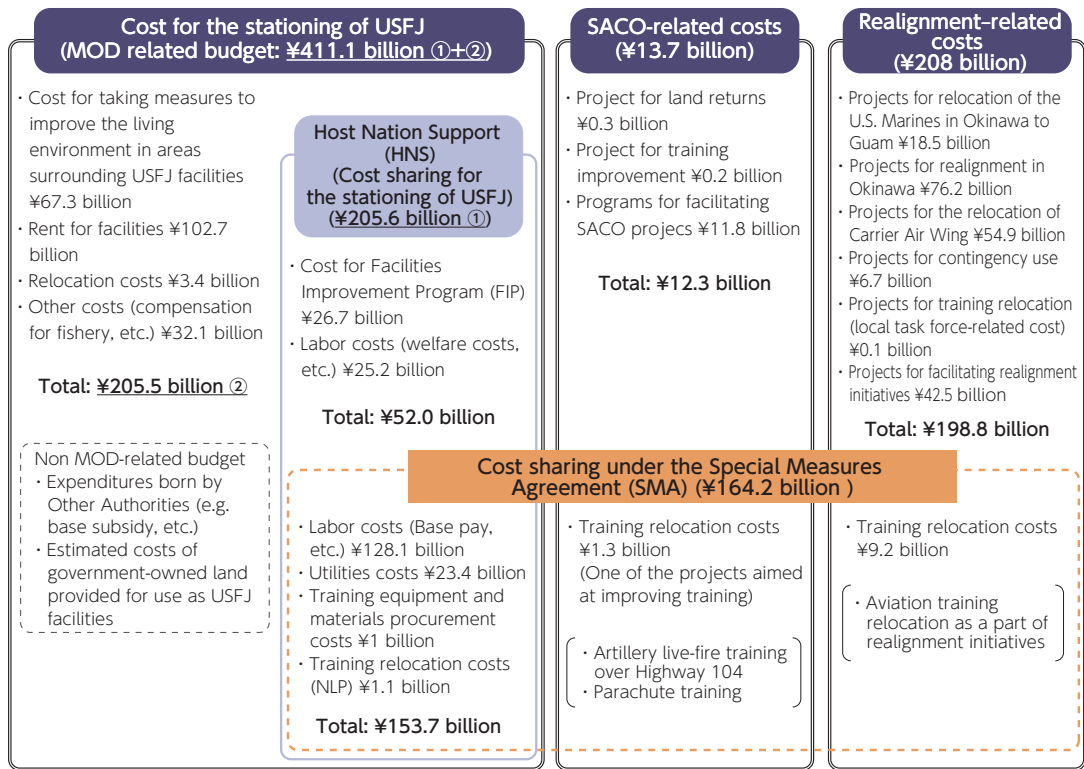
The Governments of Japan and the U.S. have been engaged in discussions on how HNS should be borne after April 1, 2022. Taking Japan’s difficult financial situation into consideration and amidst the increasingly severe security environment surrounding Japan, Japan has been engaged in the consultations under the recognition that it is necessary to support the stable presence of U.S. Forces in Japan while also more effectively strengthening the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. In December 2021, the two countries reached consensus, and the signing of the SMA took place on January 7, 2022, in Tokyo between Foreign Minister Hayashi and Mr. Raymond F. Greene, Chargé d’Affaires ad interim of the Embassy of U.S.A. in Japan. Furthermore, as both parties concurred that the costs borne by Japan should be used to build a foundation upon which the Japan-U.S. Alliance will be further strengthened, the Japanese side decided to refer to this budget by a Japanese phrase that points to its goal of enhancing Alliance readiness and resiliency.

The outline of the new Special Measures Agreement (SMA) during the effective period of the agreement (April 1, 2022 to March 31, 2027) is as follows. The annual average budget for HNS is approximately 211 billion Japanese yen.



Signing of the New Special Measures Agreement (SMA)  
(January 2022, Tokyo)

## USFJ-related costs (FY2022 Budget)



## Notes:

- Training relocation costs under the SMA can be categorized into those that fall under HNS (cost sharing for the stationing of USFJ), SACO-related costs, or realignment-related costs.
- The SACO-related costs refer to the costs for implementing the contents of the SACO Final Report to reduce the impact on people in Okinawa, while the realignment-related costs refer to the costs relating to measures to contributing to reducing the impact on local communities as part of the realignment initiatives. On the other hand, since HNS (the cost-sharing for the stationing of USFJ) is Japan's voluntary effort to bear some costs in light of the importance of ensuring the smooth and effective implementation of the Japan-U.S. Security Arrangements, its nature is different from the SACO-related costs and the realignment-related costs, and is categorized separately.
- The cost for stationing of USFJ includes the MOD related budget, other ministry-related budgets (base subsidy, etc.): ¥40 billion, FY2021 budget), and the estimated costs of government-owned land provided for use as USFJ facilities (¥164.3 billion, FY2021 estimate).
- Numbers may not add up due to rounding.

## (1) New SMA

- A. Labor costs: The Government of Japan will bear the labor costs (basic salary and other components) for 23,178 workers in U.S. Forces' facilities and areas in Japan (maintaining the number of workers funded by Japan in FY2021, which was 23,178 workers).
- B. Utilities costs: The Government of Japan will bear annual utilities costs of 23.4 billion Japanese yen for FY2022 and FY2023, 15.1 billion Japanese yen for FY2024, and 13.3 billion Japanese yen for FY2025 and FY2026.
- C. Training equipment and materials procurement: The Government of Japan will newly bear expenditures related to the procurement of training equipment and materials (up to a

maximum of 20 billion Japanese yen over five years), which will contribute, not only to the readiness of U.S. Forces in Japan but also to the enhancement of the interoperability between the Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) and the U.S. Forces.

- D. Training relocation: The annual training relocation costs funded by the Government of Japan will be approximately equal to the budget amount of FY2021 (approximately 11.4 billion Japanese yen). Alaska will be confirmed as a permissible training relocation site for the Aviation Training Relocation program.

**(2) Cost for the Facilities Improvement Program (FIP)**

The Government of Japan will fund a maximum of 164.1 billion Japanese yen over five years to prioritize the promotion of projects that contribute to strengthening the readiness and resiliency of U.S. Forces in Japan.

**(5) Various Issues Related to the Presence of U.S. Forces in Japan**

To ensure the smooth and effective operation of the Japan-U.S. security arrangements and the stable presence of U.S. Forces in Japan as the linchpin of these arrangements, it is important to mitigate the impact of U.S. Forces' activities on residents living in the vicinity and to gain their understanding and support regarding the presence of U.S. Forces. The Government of Japan has been making utmost efforts to make improvements in specific issues in light of the requests from local communities. Among these issues are preventing incidents and accidents involving U.S. Forces, abating the noise by U.S. Forces' aircraft, and dealing with environmental issues at U.S. Forces' facilities and areas, including the sound implementation of the Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Stewardship of 2015 and the Agreement on Cooperation with regard to Implementation Practices relating to the Civilian Component of the United States Armed Forces in Japan of 2017. For example, when the leakage of water containing Perfluorooctane Sulfonate (PFOS) occurred at an army oil storage facility in June 2021, Japanese officials accessed the site based on the Supplementary Agreement on Environmental Stewardship, just as they did during the leakage accident at MCAS Futenma in April 2020, and conducted water sampling. With regard to the measures to combat COVID-19, the Government of Japan and U.S. Forces in Japan issued a Joint Press Release in June 2021

on vaccinating local employees of U.S. Forces in Japan. In response to the occurrence of COVID-19 cases in U.S. Forces in Japan facilities and areas as well as their surrounding municipalities across Japan since December 2021, the Government of Japan took the opportunity of the Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' telephone call held on January 6, 2022, and the "2+2" meeting convened on the following day, to put forward strong requests to the U.S. authorities to take thorough measures to prevent the spread of infections and take steps to mitigate the anxiety within the local communities. Consequently, the U.S.-Japan Joint Committee Statement on Measures to Address the Spread of COVID-19 was issued on January 9, and at the Japan-U.S. Summit Video Teleconference Meeting held on January 21, the two governments agreed to continue working closely together to prevent the spread of COVID-19. Japan and the U.S. will continue to further strengthen cooperation to put in place thorough measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and to mitigate the anxiety among the local communities.

The TOFU: Think of Okinawa's Future in the U.S. program provides an opportunity for high school and university students from Okinawa to witness for themselves what Japan's alliance partner, the U.S., is truly like, and the role that Japan plays in the international community, as well as to promote mutual understanding between the two countries. Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, this program was implemented as a Tokyo Dispatch Program<sup>1</sup> in March 2021. Meanwhile, since FY2020, the Project to Promote Exchanges and Enhance Mutual Understanding Between Japan and the United States has been implemented in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA) to facilitate cultural and educational exchanges between Japanese and American middle and high school students (see the Column on page 192).

<sup>1</sup> Participants from Okinawa are invited to Tokyo to meet related persons involved in Japan-U.S. relations and experts active in the international community (including online meetings), as well as visit and tour various facilities.

### **(6) the United Nations forces and U.S. Forces in Japan**

Coincident with the start of the Korean War in June 1950, the UN forces was established in July of the same year based on the recommendation of the UN Security Council resolution 83 in June. Following the ceasefire agreement concluded in July 1953, the United Nations Command (UNC) Headquarters was relocated to Seoul, South Korea in July 1957, and UNC-Rear (UNC-R) was established in Japan. Established at Yokota Air Base, UNC-R currently has a stationed commander and four other staff and military attachés from nine countries who are stationed at embassies in Tokyo as liaison officers for the UN forces. Based on Article 5 of the Agreement Regarding the Status of the United Nations Forces in Japan, the UN forces in Japan may use the U.S. Forces' facilities and areas in Japan to the minimum extent required to provide support for military logistics for the UN forces. At present, the UN forces in Japan is authorized to use the following seven facilities: Camp Zama, U.S. Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, U.S. Fleet Activities, Sasebo, Yokota Air Base, Kadena Air Base, MCAS Futenma and White Beach Area.

In July 2019, a joint board was held between the Government of Japan and UNC. The meetings saw discussions held over the situation on the Korean Peninsula, with the two sides reaching an agreement on notification procedures in case of unusual occurrences related to the UN forces in Japan. The Government of Japan will continue to work closely with the UN forces.

## **3 Global Security**

### **(1) Regional Security**

The security environment surrounding the Asia-Pacific region is becoming increasingly severe for various reasons such as the shift in the global power balance. It is more important than ever to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance in the face of the increasingly severe security environment of

the region. There is also a need for Japan to fundamentally reinforce its own defense capabilities. At the same time, by actively strengthening bilateral and multilateral security cooperation with each country, Japan has been making efforts to realize a desirable regional security environment for Japan.

ASEAN is located in a geopolitically strategic position and faces Japan's important sea lane. A more stable and prosperous ASEAN region is crucial to the stability and prosperity not only of the East Asia region but also of the international community. From this perspective, Japan has, for example, continued to provide support to enhance maritime safety capabilities in the Philippines, Malaysia, Viet Nam, and Indonesia, through the provision of patrol vessels, among others. In March, Japan and Indonesia held the Second Japan-Indonesia Foreign and Defense Ministerial Meeting ("2+2"), while they signed the Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology and concurred on further promoting bilateral security cooperation. Japan and Viet Nam also signed the Agreement Concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology in September, and are accelerating bilateral discussions toward the realization of specific transfer of defense equipment including naval vessels. In November, Japan and the Philippines concurred on considering the launch of the "2+2" meeting.

Japan and India concurred to elevate the "Japan-India Special Strategic and Global Partnership" to greater heights at the Japan-India Summit telephone call held in October, immediately after Prime Minister Kishida assumed office, and the Japan-India Foreign Ministers' telephone call held in November, immediately after Foreign Minister Hayashi assumed office. In addition, they affirmed that they would coordinate to hold the Japan-India Foreign and Defence Ministerial Meeting ("2+2") at an early date. The Japan-India Consultations on Disarmament, Non-Proliferation and Export Control (February),

## Project to Promote Exchanges and Enhance Mutual Understanding between Japan and the U.S. (Youth Exchange Program)

Since 2020, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), has conducted exchange programs for the children of U.S. Forces personnel and local junior and high school students in communities that host U.S. Forces Japan. This program aims to nurture human resources who will take an active role in the international society as well as to increase mutual understanding between Japanese and American junior and senior high school students through cultural and educational exchanges.

In 2020, the program was held in Misawa City, Aomori Prefecture, followed by those in Iwakuni City, Yamaguchi Prefecture (twice), in Sasebo City, Nagasaki Prefecture and in Misawa City, Aomori Prefecture in 2021. This column introduces the voices of Japanese students who participated in the programs in Iwakuni City and Sasebo City.

### ■Horikawa Maria, Yamaguchi Prefectural Iwakuni High School

My future dream is to become a nurse, bilingual in English and Japanese, so I was really looking forward to participating in this program. Once the program started, however, I really struggled to convey what I was thinking due to my poor English, but the high school students on the American base were friendly and polite to me. Communicating actively in the group work projects of making flags and mascot characters was very worthwhile, as it helped us understand each country's culture more deeply. Attending this program motivated me to keep interacting more with people from overseas. To do so, I will devote myself even more to learning English, conveying my thoughts and opinions while being considerate of others. I would like to participate again if a similar program is available.

### ■Urago Saki, Nagasaki Prefectural Sasebo Nishi High School

At first, I believed that I would have enjoyable conversations with ALTs<sup>(Note)</sup> and a good time with kids of the same age. However, when we tried to communicate, we couldn't understand each other, and my initial confidence had almost disappeared by the time we had gotten half-way through the first day. Even still, American high school students talked to me in a very friendly way, and we managed to get the conversations going despite my poor English. I was really happy when we finally shared a laugh together. In the session where we created mascot characters symbolizing Japan-U.S. exchanges, sharing opinions about each other's culture sparked my curiosity about the differences I wasn't normally aware of. This program helped me widen my perspectives and area of interests, making it a very valuable experience for me.



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Odawara Kiyoshi interacting with students (November 7, Iwakuni City)



Japanese and American students making presentations (November 6, Iwakuni City)

**Note:** ALT stands for Assistant Language Teacher, a teacher from overseas whose native language is English.



the sixth Japan-India Maritime Affairs Dialogue (September), and the Second Meeting of the Japan-India Space Dialogue (November) were held online, and both sides exchanged views on the situation and potential for cooperation in the respective fields.

In relation to Australia, at the Japan-Australia Leaders Video Teleconference Meeting held in January 2022, the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement was signed to facilitate cooperative activities between the JSDF and the Australian Defence Force, such as bilateral/multi-lateral exercises and disaster relief activities. At the same meeting, the two leaders also concurred on further deepening cooperation between the JSDF and the Australian Defence Force, on expanding the scope for cooperation to economic security and new domains such as space and cyberspace, and furthermore, on elevating the “Special Strategic Partnership” between the two countries to greater heights with a view to realizing a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP).” At this meeting, the two leaders also reaffirmed the importance of promoting not only bilateral cooperation, but also cooperation between Japan, Australia, India and the U.S., as well as between Japan, Australia and the U.S. At the ninth Japan-Australia Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations (“2+2”) held in June, the Ministers confirmed the importance of sharing their strategic awareness based on a consideration of regional security challenges, and of elevating security and defence cooperation

between Japan and Australia to a new level so as to contribute to the peace, stability and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

In relation to the UK, Japan’s “global strategic partner,” at the fourth Japan-UK Foreign and Defence Ministers’ Meeting (“2+2”) in February as well as at various leaders’ and foreign ministers’ meetings (including telephone calls), and in relation to France, Japan’s “exceptional partner,” at various meetings (including telephone calls) between the leaders and foreign ministers, Japan and both countries confirmed that they would strengthen their cooperation in areas such as maritime security, toward the realization of a free and open Indo-Pacific. Japan’s security and defense cooperation with both the UK and France has advanced significantly in recent years. The UK Carrier Strike Group (CSG21) led by the British aircraft carrier “Queen Elizabeth” called at Japan in September and conducted joint exercises, and the first round of negotiations on the Japan-UK Reciprocal Access Agreement was held in October. The French training fleet “Jeanne d’Arc” visited Japan in May and conducted joint exercises, and the 23rd Japan-France Politico-Military (PM) Dialogue was held in Tokyo in October. In relation to Germany, the first Japan-Germany Foreign and Defense Ministers’ Meeting (“2+2”) was held as an online meeting in April, and the Japan-Germany Politico-Military (PM) Dialogue was held in June. At these meetings, Japan and Germany affirmed that they would continue to work closely toward the realization of a FOIP. German Navy frigate “Bayern” also called on Japan in November and conducted a bilateral exercise. During the Japan-Netherlands Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in June, Japan and the Netherlands confirmed that they would strengthen cooperation toward the realization of a FOIP. In September, a Royal Netherlands Navy Frigate joined with CSG21 to visit Japan. Japan has also concurred with Italy (Japan-Italy Summit telephone call in March, and Japan-Italy Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in June) on working closely toward the realization



Signing Ceremony of the Japan-Australia Reciprocal Access Agreement (January 6, 2022, Tokyo. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

of a FOIP. In relation to the EU, the two sides concurred on strengthening Japan-EU cooperation in the Indo-Pacific at the Japan-EU Summit held in May, and the JSDF also engaged in joint exercises with the European Union Naval Force (EU NAVFOR) on several occasions. The EU also announced its Indo-Pacific Strategy in April and September. The September document clearly sets out “security and defense” as one of seven priority areas and touches on cooperation with Japan as one of its like-minded partners.

In relation to Canada, at the Japan-Canada Foreign Ministers’ Meeting held in May, the Ministers announced the “Shared Japan-Canada Priorities Contributing to a Free and Open Indo-Pacific” (hereafter referred to as “the six priority areas”) established with a view to the realization of a FOIP. At the Japan-Canada Summit Meeting in June, the two leaders agreed to further promote cooperation and coordination, in a concrete and robust manner, on these six priority areas. The six priority areas cover cooperation to address activities in violation of the UN Security Council resolutions on North Korea, such as ship-to-ship transfers, and to make the most of the Japan-Canada Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreement (ACSA), as well as cooperation on energy security, *inter alia*. The Japan-Canada Foreign and Defense Vice Ministerial Meeting (“2+2”) has been convened four times to date. With regard to bilateral exercises with the Canadian Armed Forces, the bilateral training “KADEX,” which has been held every year since 2017, was conducted in November. Several multilateral joint military exercises were also conducted. With regard to ship-to-ship transfers, naval vessels and aircraft from the Canadian Armed Forces conducted surveillance activities from the middle of September and the middle of October respectively.

There are various issues of concern in relation with China, such as the rapid strengthening of its military with lack of transparency, increasing activities by its military in the waters and air spaces surrounding Japan, and its intrusion into

Japan’s territorial waters, based on its own assertions in the areas around the Senkaku Islands, an inherent territory of Japan. Japan will continue to make use of opportunities at high-level dialogues, including summit meetings and foreign ministers’ meetings, to firmly assert its position and resolve the issues of concern one by one, as well as to take a calm and resolute approach while strongly requesting for China’s concrete action. As China’s military trends are matters of grave interest to Japan, Japan is working on communicating its policies through security dialogues such as the Japan-China Security Dialogue, as well as efforts to build multilayered channels for exchanges. At the same time, Japan is communicating its concerns and urging China to improve transparency in relation to its defense policies and military power, as well as to take more concrete actions to contribute to the security environment and to the region, including Japan. The Maritime and Aerial Communication Mechanism between the defense authorities of Japan and China that commenced operation in June 2018 has great significance in the sense of promoting mutual understanding and confidence and avoiding unexpected collision.

In relation to the Republic of Korea, based on the recognition of the importance of Japan-ROK as well as Japan-U.S.-ROK cooperation toward the denuclearization of North Korea, the two countries held Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers’ Meetings (January (telephone call), May, September), Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers’ Meetings (May, September), and a Japan-ROK Summit telephone call (October). The two sides confirmed that Japan and the ROK, as well as Japan, the U.S. and the ROK, would work closely together.

Peace and stability in the Middle East region is vital to the peace and prosperity of the international community including Japan. The Middle East is one of the world’s key energy suppliers and approximately 90% of Japan’s crude oil imports rely on the region. It is, therefore, extremely important to ensure the safety of navigation of Japan-related vessels in this region. As Japan’s

independent efforts toward ensuring peace and stability in the Middle East region and the safety of Japan-related vessels, the Government of Japan has made a Cabinet decision in December 2019 on (1) making further diplomatic efforts toward easing tensions and stabilizing the situation in the Middle East, (2) taking thorough measures for ensuring safety of navigation including robust information sharing with relevant stakeholders, and (3) utilizing vessels and aircraft of the SDF for strengthening its information gathering posture. Japan has continued to conduct information gathering activities using SDF vessels and aircraft in the waters of the Middle East since January 2020.

In addition, Japan has actively participated in and contributed to multilateral frameworks in the region, including the East Asia Summit (EAS), the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus), in order to strengthen security cooperation in the region. The ARF is an important security dialogue framework in which various entities participate including North Korea and the EU, and it aims to improve the security environment of the Indo-Pacific region through dialogues and cooperation on political and security issues. It is also an important forum that focuses on confidence-building through various initiatives. At the 28th ARF Ministerial Meeting held in August, participating ministers candidly exchanged views mainly on regional and international affairs, including issues concerning North Korea and the East and South China Seas, as well as the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Japan is also making a proactive contribution through, for example, serving as a co-chair of all the Inter-Sessional Meetings (ISM) on Maritime Security, Non-Proliferation and Disarmament, Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime, Disaster Relief, and ICTs Security.

Furthermore, in addition to government-to-government dialogues (track 1), Japan actively utilizes frameworks where participants from both public and private sectors exchange opinions and

explain their security policies (track 1.5), as well as other means, as part of its efforts to promote other countries' understanding of Japan's security policies, and to facilitate cooperation and confidence-building in the region.

## (2) Economic Security

### A Trends Surrounding Economic Security

In recent years, various challenges have been surfacing in fields that cut across national security and the economy. The scope of the national security domain is expanding rapidly. For example, emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things (IoT), which bring greater convenience to people's lives, could be diverted to military uses and pose risks to national security. There are also growing moves by some countries to leverage economic dependency to coerce other countries or regions in order to achieve their own strategic interests. To address such security risks that are associated with economic activities, it is important to put in place comprehensive and effective economic measures that serve to ensure Japan's self-determination of its economic structure, as well as ensure its technological advantage and make itself even more indispensable for the international community. Efforts to strengthen economic security, centered on this approach, are becoming increasingly important.

In light of this situation, MOFA is actively engaged in efforts to strengthen cooperation with ally and like-minded countries as well as to establish norms to address new issues, as the ministry responsible for promoting diplomatic policies related to national security and external economic relations and for concluding, interpreting and implementing treaties and other international agreements.

### B Recent Initiatives by Other Countries

Other major countries have also been rapidly advancing initiatives to promote economic security in recent years.

In June, the U.S. published a report based on the reviews directed under Executive Order 14017 “America’s Supply Chains,” in which it set out the policy for the immediate implementation of initiatives including support for the domestic production of important pharmaceuticals, ensuring domestic supply chains for advanced storage batteries, investing in sustainable production and processing of critical minerals in the U.S. and abroad, and addressing the semiconductor shortage in cooperation with industries, allies and like-minded countries.

In May, the EU set out in its new industrial strategy the policy of reducing its dependency on specific regions for raw materials and technologies in strategic industries.

Australia formulated its International Cyber and Critical Tech Engagement Strategy in April. In this Strategy, it presented a policy of promoting initiatives such as identifying technologies that should be protected by Australia, while taking into consideration the geopolitical implications brought about by the development of critical technologies.

China is also rapidly promoting national strategies on economic security, including “Made in China 2025” and the new economic development model “dual circulation.” Efforts to develop the relevant domestic legislation are also advancing steadily. For example, the Data Security Law was enforced in September. This law, which pertains to data processing activities in and outside China, includes provisions that make it possible to pursue liability in cases where China’s safety, public interests, or the legitimate interests of its citizens or organizations have been damaged.

### **C** Japan’s Direction Toward the Promotion of Economic Security

Discussions are also accelerating within Japan. The “Basic Policy on Economic and Fiscal Management and Reform 2021” (Cabinet Decision in June 2021) sets out the strategic direction on economic security. For example, the Government decided to work on realizing and implementing

measures to expand and deepen cooperation with like-minded countries under the international order based on fundamental values and rules; ensure Japan’s self-determination and acquire its advantage; from this perspective, strengthen its efforts to identify, protect, and develop critical technologies; and, enhance the resilience of essential industries.

The Kishida Cabinet, inaugurated in October, has positioned economic security as one of its priority issues and announced the formulation of a bill to promote Japan’s economic security in the policy speech. At the first meeting of the Council for the Promotion of Economic Security, convened in November, the following were identified as areas where legislative measures should be required: (1) Enhancing the resilience of supply chains; (2) Ensuring security and reliability of essential infrastructure; (3) Public-private cooperation regarding advanced critical technologies; and, (4) Non-publication of certain patent applications. In addition, the following three points were set out as the broad direction toward the promotion of economic security: enhancement of self-determination, acquisition of advantage and indispensability, and maintenance and strengthening of international order based on fundamental values and rules.

### **D** Economic Security Cooperation Between Japan and Other Countries

MOFA is playing an active role in efforts to strengthen cooperation with its ally and like-minded countries toward the maintenance and strengthening of an international order based on fundamental values and rules, and efforts toward the establishment of new norms.

For example, in the U.S.-Japan Joint Leaders’ Statement issued in April, the two leaders affirmed their commitment to the security and openness of 5th generation (5G) wireless networks, and concurred that it is important to rely on trustworthy vendors. They also confirmed that they will promote and protect the critical technologies that are

essential to the security and prosperity of both countries, and partner on sensitive supply chains, including on semiconductors. Furthermore, they affirmed that they will continue to work together, utilizing the G7 and WTO frameworks, to address the use of non-market and other unfair trade practices, including violations of intellectual property rights, forced technology transfer, excess capacity issues, and the use of trade distorting industrial subsidies. In the U.S.-Japan Competitiveness and Resilience (CoRe) Partnership, Japan and the U.S. also affirmed their commitment to promote Open Radio Access Networks (“Open-RAN”) through trusted suppliers and diversification of markets, and to strengthen competitiveness in the digital field by investing in secure networks, etc., such as 5G and next-generation mobile networks. The two countries also confirmed that they will cooperate on sensitive supply chains, including semiconductors, and on the promotion and protection of critical technologies, advance biotechnology including genome sequencing, and reinforce collaboration and partnerships between research institutions in the field of quantum science and technology. Furthermore, at the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (“2+2”) held in January 2022, Japan and the U.S. affirmed that they will advance and accelerate collaboration on emerging technologies, including accelerating innovation in critical emerging fields such as artificial intelligence and quantum computing, and pursuing joint investments to secure the technological superiority of the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

At the Japan-Australia Foreign and Defence Ministerial Consultations held in June, the Ministers committed to further strengthening cooperation in the area of economic security. For example, they concurred on further deepening cooperation in areas such as addressing illicit technology transfer and building the resilience of supply chains. They also affirmed that, by deepening cooperation on cyber and critical technology, the two countries will promote regional capacity building and strengthen the industry

resiliences. At the Japan-Australia Leaders Video Teleconference Meeting held in January 2022, the leaders also pledged to strengthen bilateral cooperation on economic security, including addressing illicit technology transfer, building resilient supply chains, and strengthening the protection of critical infrastructures.

In addition to strengthening bilateral cooperation in these ways, Japan is also strengthening its cooperation with its ally and like-minded countries by utilizing initiatives such as the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. dialogue and G7.

At the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers’ Meeting held in May, the Ministers affirmed that the G7 members will work jointly to address arbitrary and coercive economic policies and practices, so as to foster global economic resilience. In relation to China, they also affirmed they will urge China to assume and fulfill its obligations and responsibilities commensurate with its global economic role.

At the G7 Summit held in June, the leaders affirmed that they would consider mechanisms and share best practices among members in order to address vulnerability risks in supply chains for critical minerals and semiconductors. They also concurred on cooperating in the modernization of global trade rules to protect against unfair practices such as forced technology transfer, intellectual property theft, market-distorting actions of state owned enterprises, and harmful industrial subsidies. At the ministerial level, at the G7 Trade Ministers’ Meetings held in March, May and October, the Ministers concurred to work cohesively to correct unfair trade policies and practices.

At the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Leaders’ Video Conference held for the first time in March, the leaders put forward “The Spirit of the Quad” in relation to the need to govern and operate critical and emerging technologies based on shared interests and values, in order to establish a free, open, inclusive, and resilient Indo-Pacific. Under this spirit, they concurred on the following actions:

launch a critical and emerging technology working group; develop a statement of principles on technology design, development, and use; facilitate coordination on technology standards development; facilitate cooperation to monitor trends and opportunities in biotechnology, and; convene dialogues on critical technology supply chains.

At the Quad Leaders' Summit held in September, the leaders affirmed that Japan, Australia India and the U.S. will cooperate on the following areas to guide toward responsible, open, high-standards innovation: development of technical standards on advanced communications and artificial intelligence; strengthening the resilience of supply chains of critical technologies and materials, including semiconductors; diversification of vendors for 5G networks including Open-RAN, and; monitoring of trends in the development of technologies including biotechnology. The "Quad Principles on Technology Design, Development, Governance, and Use" was also launched at the summit. The leaders affirmed the following points: the importance of universal values including freedom of expression and privacy; that technology should not be used for authoritarian surveillance and oppression; that they will advance cooperation with like-minded countries, etc., toward the development of resilient, diverse, and secure supply chains, and; that it is important to have a fair and open marketplace in order to bring about technological innovation and inclusive prosperity.

As for initiatives toward the establishment of new norms, in addition to issuing policy documents such as the aforementioned, various countries are also putting effort into diplomacy with a view to reflecting these norms in their domestic regulations and policies. For example, dozens of countries, including Japan, participated in the Prague 5G Security Conference convened in November and engaged in discussions on important principles relating to emerging technologies such as 5G, artificial intelligence, and quantum communications. These discussions covered points such as mitigating risks arising from unlawful foreign

influence through subsidies and legal systems, and building trustworthy supply chains, as well as the diversification of suppliers and promoting competitiveness. As an outcome of the conference, Chairman's statements were issued on the principles of the development and use of emerging technologies, and on the principles for promoting the diversification of telecommunications suppliers, such as suppliers of 5G equipment.

### **E Economic Security Initiatives by MOFA**

MOFA will continue to expand and deepen cooperation with like-minded countries under international order based on fundamental values and rules, while positioning the Japan-U.S. alliance as the cornerstone of diplomacy and security. It will also play an active role in government-wide efforts including the enactment of necessary legislation to ensure economic security.

### **(3) Cyber**

The advanced use of cyberspace has brought greater convenience to the lives of people, but cyberattacks have also increased the potential security risks to Japan's economy and society as a whole. For example, the cyberattack on oil pipeline businesses that occurred in the U.S. in May had a major impact on socio-economic activities. Cyberspace has become a realm where countries compete with one another including during peacetime, in a way that reflects geopolitical tensions. With the growing threat of sophisticated cyberattacks that are prepared carefully and systematically, including attacks that states are suspected to be involved in, cyberspace is presenting an aspect that can no longer be described as a "peacetime situation."

In light of this situation, Japan is cooperating with various relevant countries and putting in place initiatives to address and deter malicious cyber activities. One of these efforts is known as "public attribution," which is to deter attackers by identifying them and condemning them publicly. Japan has publicly condemned North Korea's



involvement behind the scenes of the WannaCry<sup>2</sup> incident in 2017, as well as the long-running cyberattacks perpetrated by the China-based group APT10 in 2018. In July 2021, the Press Secretary of MOFA issued a statement on cyberattacks, assessing that a group known as APT40, which the Chinese government is behind, as well as a group known as Tick, which Unit 61419 of the Chinese People's Liberation Army is behind, were highly likely to have been involved in these cyberattacks, and firmly condemned these activities in coordination with Japan's ally and like-minded countries.

From the perspective of deterring cyberattacks, it is also important to formulate and promote rules that contribute to the peace and stability of the international community as well as to the security of Japan, through means such as discussions in the international fora. From the viewpoint that existing international law is also applicable to activities involving the use of cyberspace, Japan participates actively in the United Nations Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) and the UN Open-ended Working Group (OEWG), and contributes to discussions on how international law should be applied and the norms that countries should comply with. The Sixth GGE adopted a report that covered the application of existing international law to cyberspace and reaffirmed 11 norms that complement existing international law. At the OEWG, serious concerns were raised against cyberattacks on medical services and facilities amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, and Japan, as one of six countries including the U.S. and Australia, jointly recommended that medical services and facilities should be protected as a critical infrastructure in the same way as electric and water utilities. A report that incorporated these contents was adopted unanimously in March. After the agreement on this report, the new OEWG for the session spanning 2021 to

2025 was established with effect from June. Japan will continue to contribute to discussions toward ensuring a free, open and secure cyberspace.

In addition to deterrence efforts, gaining a better understanding of one another's views and enhancing mutual confidence are critical to prevent unforeseen situations stemming from cyber activities. With this in mind, Japan served as the co-chair alongside Singapore and Malaysia at the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on ICTs Security held in April. During the meeting, opinions were exchanged on viewpoints about the regional and international cybersecurity environment as well as initiatives by various countries and regions. Japan also took the lead in discussions on confidence-building measures that should be taken in the future based on the outcome of efforts by the international community, including the United Nations.

In view of the borderless nature of cyberspace, it is important to enhance the capacity of other countries and regions in order to stabilize cyberspace and the security environment for Japan and the world as a whole. From this perspective, Japan has continued to provide capacity building support mainly to ASEAN countries. For example, since 2017, Japan has established the ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Capacity Building Centre (AJCCBC) and conducted cybersecurity exercises through the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF), among other initiatives. At the 14th ASEAN-Japan Cybersecurity Policy Meeting held in October, Japan and ASEAN member states confirmed the progress of various collaborative activities. Japan also contributes to the World Bank's Cybersecurity Multi-Donor Trust Fund, which is dedicated to capacity building support in the field of cybersecurity in developing countries. Japan will continue to promote human resource development and other relevant efforts. Furthermore, the Basic Policy on Cybersecurity Capacity

<sup>2</sup> A malicious program that North Korea is believed to have been involved in. In May 2017, more than 300,000 computers in more than 150 countries were infected and ransom was demanded.

Building Support for Developing Countries was revised in December, and MOFA will actively promote cooperation with relevant ministries and agencies to support capacity building in developing countries.

Through these initiatives, Japan will continue to contribute to the realization of a free, fair and secure cyberspace.

#### **(4) The Oceans and Seas**

Japan is surrounded by the sea on all sides, and is blessed with a vast exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and long coastlines. It is a maritime nation that has achieved economic growth through maritime trade and development of marine resources, and has pursued “Free, Open and Stable Seas.” “Free, Open and Stable Seas,” which are upheld by maritime order based on the rule of law including freedom of navigation and overflight, rather than force, are essential for the peace and prosperity not only of Japan but also of the international community as a whole. To maintain and develop “Free, Open and Stable Seas,” Japan promotes initiatives to ensure safe maritime transport and cooperate on maritime security. Such initiatives are also important toward securing Japan’s maritime interests, which form the basis for Japan’s economic survival.

Japan is advancing efforts toward the realization of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” that aims to bring stability and prosperity to the Indo-Pacific region, in particular, by strengthening maritime order in the region where important sea lanes are located.

#### **A Order at Sea**

##### **(A) Basic Stance**

There is an increasing number of cases where the interests of countries clash with each other from the perspective of securing maritime interests

and national security. In particular, in the seas of Asia, there has been an increasing number of cases of tension arising from friction between countries, and the international community is closely monitoring these cases with much interest. At the 13th Asia Security Summit (Shangri-La Dialogue) held in Singapore in 2014, Prime Minister Abe shared the view that it was necessary to fully uphold the “Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea” (see 6(2) on page 240).

Japan also utilizes frameworks such as the G7 and ASEAN-related meetings including the East Asia Summit (EAS) and the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)<sup>3</sup> to actively send a message regarding the importance of “Free, Open and Stable Seas” based on the rule of law, and Japan’s stance on maritime security as well as the importance of international cooperation in this area. At the EAS in October 2021, Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan highly valued the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP), which upholds values such as openness, transparency, inclusiveness and the rule of law. He reiterated full support for the AOIP, which shares the fundamental principles with the FOIP, and called on each country for their support. In addition, at the ASEAN-Japan Summit Meeting in the same month, Prime Minister Kishida spoke about the steady progress of concrete cooperation in the four priority areas of AOIP,<sup>4</sup> including maritime cooperation, that contributes to the fundamental principles of AOIP, based on the Joint Statement of the 23rd ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific adopted by Japan and ASEAN in 2020.

Among the frameworks related to ASEAN, the Expanded ASEAN Maritime Forum (EAMF) and the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security are frameworks that are focused on the maritime sector. At the 9th EAMF hosted

<sup>3</sup> Regional cooperative frameworks with the participation of the 10 ASEAN countries as well as various countries, regions and organizations. In addition to the East Asia Summit (EAS) and ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), other examples include the ASEAN+3 (Japan, China, ROK) and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

<sup>4</sup> The four areas of maritime cooperation, connectivity, SDGs and economy.

by Brunei in November, Japan spoke about the importance of maritime order based on the rule of law, and Japan's initiatives toward a sustainable ocean economy. An expert from Japan also made a presentation about international trends of and Japan's contributions toward the issue of marine plastic litter, which is also a pressing regional issue.

Japan is also promoting bilateral coordination and dialogues in the maritime sector. The 6th Japan-India Maritime Affairs Dialogue was convened in September, and the 4th Meeting of the Japan-Philippines Maritime Dialogue was held in October. During these meetings, the participants affirmed the importance of free and open maritime order based on the rule of law, and concurred on strengthening maritime cooperation in the future. In addition, at the Japan-Turkey Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in August, the Ministers agreed to establish a dialogue on maritime issues between Japan and Turkey with a view to deepening discussions on various maritime issues, including maritime order based on the rule of law.

#### **(B) United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS)**

Also known as the "Constitution for the Oceans," UNCLOS is the very basis of maritime order governed by the rule of law. Japan regards maritime order with the Convention at the core as the cornerstone that safeguards Japan's maritime rights and interests while facilitating its maritime activities across the international community. As such, Japan actively contributes to discussions among concerned international organizations at conferences that include the Meetings of States Parties to the Convention, as well as to the sharing of ideas for achieving stability in the maritime legal order, in order to ensure that the convention will be even more widely applied and implemented appropriately (see 6(2) on page 240).

#### **(C) Challenge to Japan's Maritime Sovereignty (Situation Surrounding the East China Sea) (see Chapter 2, Section 2, 2(1) B(D) on page 45)**

In the East China Sea, China Coast Guard vessels have continued to intrude into Japan's territorial sea around the Senkaku Islands in 2021. Incidents of China Coast Guard vessels approaching Japanese fishing vessels were repeated, and in some cases intrusions into the territorial sea took place for prolonged periods. The number of days of navigation in the contiguous zone by China Coast Guard vessels also reached a record high. Chinese military vessels and aircraft are also becoming increasingly active and expanding their operations. Furthermore, China has been continuing with unilateral resource development in areas where the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) and the continental shelf are pending delimitation. Additionally, in recent years, Japan has found numerous research projects being conducted by China in the waters surrounding Japan, such as the East China Sea, without Japan's consent.

Given China's continued unilateral attempts to change the status quo in the East China Sea, Japan will carefully monitor the trends and movements around its air and sea spaces, and continue to respond in a firm but calm manner while making claims that should be made. At the same time, it will promote cooperation with the relevant countries including the U.S. in order to achieve peace and stability in the East China Sea.

#### **(D) Challenge to the Maritime Order (Problems Surrounding the South China Sea) (see Chapter 2, Section 2, 7 (2) on page 88)**

In the South China Sea, China has been conducting unilateral attempts to change the status quo and that run counter to the rule of law and openness, as well as attempting to create a fait accompli. These include the further militarization of disputed features. China has also continued or enhanced actions that escalate tensions in the region. The international community, including Japan, has expressed serious concerns over

Uotsuri Island of Ishigaki City, Okinawa Prefecture



Photo: Office of Policy Planning and Coordination on Territory and Sovereignty, Cabinet Secretariat

Large-scale, rapid outpost building in the South China Sea by China

	Before reclamation	2015 (After reclamation)	2020
Fiery Cross Reef	August 14, 2014 	September 3, 2015 	March 27, 2020 
Subi Reef	January 8, 2014 	September 3, 2015 	March 27, 2020 
Mischief Reef	January 25, 2015 	September 8, 2015 	April 23, 2020 

Source: CSIS Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative/Digital Globe

these actions. Japan strongly opposes unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion, and has consistently supported the full enforcement of the rule of law in the South China Sea, while focusing on ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight and ensuring the safety of sea lanes. Japan has also emphasized the importance of all parties involved with the South China Sea to work toward the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law, in particular the UNCLOS.

The issue with regard to the South China Sea is directly related to the peace and stability of the region and constitutes a legitimate concern of the international community. The issue is also an important matter of concern for Japan, which depends on marine transport for much of its resources and energy and which is a stakeholder that utilizes the South China Sea. Cooperation within the international community is of great importance in maintaining and developing “Free, Open and Stable Seas” based on the rule of law. For this reason, Japan supports the U.S. Freedom of Navigation Operations.<sup>5</sup>

## **B Ensuring Safe Maritime Transport**

Japan actively contributes to ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight and safe maritime transport through counter-piracy measures in Asia and Africa as well as close partnership and cooperation with other countries.

### **(A) Counter-piracy Measures in Asia**

According to the International Maritime Bureau (IMB) of the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), the number of piracy cases in the seas of Southeast Asia was 62 in 2020 and 56 in 2021.

To encourage regional cooperation in coping with incidents such as acts of piracy in Asia, Japan took the initiative in formulating the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating

Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP), which entered into force in 2006. Each of the contracting parties provides information and cooperates on incidents such as acts of piracy in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore and other regions, via the Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP-ISC) established in Singapore. Japan has been supporting the activities of ReCAAP-ISC by dispatching the Executive Directors and Assistant Directors and making financial contributions. Moreover, Japan is carrying out programs to support for enhancing maritime law enforcement and surveillance capabilities of coastal states in Asia, which have been highly acclaimed in the international community.

### **(B) Counter-piracy Measures Off the Coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden**

According to the IMB, the number of piracy and armed robbery cases off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden was 237 at its peak in 2011 but has since declined to a low level (zero in 2019 and 2020, and one in 2021). Despite efforts such as maritime operations of the navies and self-defense measures by merchant ships, the root causes of piracy off the coast of Somalia remain unresolved. Pirates off the coast of Somalia still have the intention and capability to carry out acts of piracy, which requires a careful watch on the situation.

Since 2009, Japan has been conducting counter-piracy operations by deploying Maritime Self-Defense Force destroyers (with coast guard officers on board) and P-3C patrol aircraft off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden. To solve the root causes of piracy off the coast of Somalia and in the Gulf of Aden, Japan has been making multi-layered efforts that include support for enhancing the maritime security capabilities of Somalia and its neighboring countries and ensuring the stability of Somalia.

<sup>5</sup> The U.S. Government explains its “freedom of navigation” operations as efforts to challenge excessive claims that can infringe freedom of navigation and overflight, and the right of lawful uses of the sea. One example of this is the navigation of the U.S. Navy’s USS Benfold guided-missile destroyer through the waters around the Spratly Islands on September 8, 2021.



Japan has supported the establishment of Information Sharing Centres in Yemen, Kenya and Tanzania, as well as the construction of the Djibouti Regional Training Centre (DRTC) by contributing 15.53 million US dollars to date to a fund established by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). Moreover, Japan has contributed 4.5 million US dollars to an international trust fund that enhances capacity building for piracy prosecution, to support Somalia and its neighboring countries. In addition, Japan provided two patrol vessels to the Djibouti Coast Guard in 2015, and decided in 2021 to provide support for the construction of two patrol vessels as well as the improvement of a floating pier. Japan has also been supporting the enhancement of its capacity to secure maritime security through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)'s technical cooperation and joint exercises with the Deployment Surface Force for Counter-Piracy Enforcement. Furthermore, with a view to promoting the stability of Somalia, Japan has provided a total of 500 million US dollars since 2007 aimed at supporting improvement in basic services and public security through support for the police, as well as revitalization of the domestic economy through vocational training and job creation, among other measures.

### **(C) Counter-piracy Measures in the Gulf of Guinea**

According to the IMB, while the number of piracy and armed robbery cases in the Gulf of Guinea had remained at a high level in recent years with 64 cases in 2019 and 84 cases in 2020, it fell to 35 cases in 2021. Although many of these used to occur in the territorial waters of coastal states, a growing number of cases has been occurring in the open seas in recent years. For this reason, coastal states are required to strengthen their maritime law enforcement capabilities and to enhance their ability to address piracy through

coordination with other countries. Japan has provided coastal states with capacity building assistance through trainings conducted by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and JICA. Japan has also been involved in discussions in the international community through participation in the "G7++ Group of Friends of the Gulf of Guinea,"<sup>6</sup> a cooperative and coordination mechanism to address illegal maritime activities in the Gulf of Guinea.

## **C Cooperation on Maritime Security**

### **(A) Capacity Building Assistance**

Japan provides seamless assistance to various countries for capacity building in the area of maritime security, through cooperation between MOFA, the Ministry of Defense and Self-Defense Forces, the Japan Coast Guard and other agencies.

MOFA provides capacity building assistance to law enforcement agencies and other organizations in developing countries, through the provision of equipment such as patrol vessels and human resource development implemented through bilateral ODA. Japan has been providing support toward the Maritime Law Enforcement Capacity Building Project implemented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) under its Global Maritime Crime Programme (GMCP), with the aim of addressing the diverse illegal maritime activities that have been increasing further in recent years. Through this project, MOFA is conducting training and workshops for practitioners involved in measures to address illegal maritime activities

The Ministry of Defense and Self-Defense Forces have provided capacity building assistance in the area of maritime security to Myanmar,<sup>7</sup> Thailand, Malaysia, Viet Nam, Indonesia, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Brunei to date. Through these support initiatives, it is strengthening cooperative relations with partners that share strategic interests with Japan.

<sup>6</sup> In addition to the G7, non-G7 countries and international organizations participate in the Group.

<sup>7</sup> Assistance is currently suspended (as of December 2021)



To provide capacity building assistance to coast guard authorities of coastal states of the Indo-Pacific, the Japan Coast Guard dispatches highly skilled Japan Coast Guard officials with expert knowledge as well as the Japan Coast Guard Mobile Cooperation Team (MCT), a special team that provides capacity building support, to the coast guard authorities of each country. In addition, the Japan Coast Guard also invites the coast guard officials from each country to Japan where it conducts training for them. It also administers the Maritime Safety and Security Policy Program, a Master's level education program on maritime policy that accepts coast guard officials from Asian countries. Through this program, the Japan Coast Guard contributes to the development of human resources with advanced practical and applied knowledge, knowledge on international law and international relations as well as research into the relevant case studies, the ability to conduct analysis and make proposals, and international communication skills.

When providing such capacity building assistance, Japan cooperates closely with like-minded countries including the U.S., Australia, India, the UK and France.

#### **(B) Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)**

Consolidating and sharing a wide range of maritime information and understanding maritime domain effectively and efficiently are vital toward the realization of “Free, Open and Stable Seas.” Japan places great importance on international cooperation in such maritime domain awareness (MDA) initiatives.

In recent years, progress has been made in the Indo-Pacific region to establish information sharing centers for the consolidation, analysis and sharing of maritime information, such as phenomena related to the safety of navigation and ship information. Japan has dispatched personnel (Executive Directors and Assistant Directors) to the ReCAAP-ISC based in Singapore, as well as liaison officers to the Information Fusion Centre

(IFC) established by the Republic of Singapore Navy, and the Information Fusion Centre – Indian Ocean Region (IFC-IOR) established by the Indian Navy. Furthermore, the authorities of Japan and India exchange information based on the Implementing Arrangement for Deeper Cooperation between the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force and the Indian Navy, signed on the occasion of the Japan-India Summit Meeting held in October 2018.

Japan also organizes the “ARF Workshop on International Cooperation on Maritime Domain Awareness (MDA)” as an official event of the ARF Inter-Sessional Meeting on Maritime Security.

#### **(5) Outer Space**

In recent years, outer space has become congested due to its diversified use and increasing number of countries using space. In addition, the increase of space debris due to factors such as Anti-Satellite (ASAT) tests and satellite collisions poses a growing risk to the sustainable and stable use of outer space.

In order to cope with this situation, Japan has been engaging in initiatives such as strengthening Space Situational Awareness (SSA) and mission assurance for space systems, while working on international rule-making and international space cooperation, including cooperation with its ally, the U.S., in particular.

#### **A Realizing the Rule of Law in Outer Space**

Reflecting the changing situation concerning outer space, the international community has been vigorously discussing international rule-making concerning outer space activities in a variety of ways. Japan has also been actively involved in these efforts toward establishing and strengthening the rule of law in outer space.

The Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) is a permanent committee established under the UN General Assembly. It is becoming increasingly important as a forum for establishing international rules related to civil

space activities. Professor Aoki Setsuko of the Keio University Law School was the first Japanese person to chair the COPUOS Legal Subcommittee for the 2021 session. During her term, she contributed to the progress of the sustainable development and use of outer space (see the Column page on 207).

In recent years, there have been growing expectations toward the development and use of commercial space resources in Japan and abroad. Following from the U.S. and other countries, Japan enacted a domestic law on space resources (Act on the Promotion of Business Activities for the Exploration and Development of Space Resources) in June, and enforced it in December. Active discussions have also been held within COPUOS on the approach to international rules related to space resources, and Japan is working together with the governments of various countries to construct internationally consistent space resources frameworks.

With regard to the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (PAROS), in 2021, same as the previous year, the resolution on “Reducing space threats through norms, rules and principles of responsible behaviours” was jointly proposed by the UK, Japan, and other countries at the UN General Assembly First Committee, and was adopted with the support of 163 countries. Thereafter, this draft resolution was adopted at the Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly with the support of 150 countries. Based on this resolution, an Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) was established for the period of 2022 to 2023, with the aim of further deepening discussions on responsible behaviors. Japan will continue to engage actively in discussions in this OEWG and to promote international discussions on responsible behaviors, so as to prevent the escalation of an arms race in outer space.

In November, Russia conducted a test of a direct ascent anti-satellite missile against its satellite. The destruction of a satellite, which generates a large amount of space debris, is an irresponsible

behavior that undermines the sustainable and stable use of outer space. The Government of Japan expressed concerns toward the test and calls upon the Government of Russia not to conduct this kind of test in the future.

Furthermore, with a view to contributing to the rule of law in outer space, Japan has been offering support to developing countries toward capacity building in the development and implementation of domestic space-related laws. In May, Japan announced that it will cooperate on the “Space Law for New Space Actors” project of the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA). Under this initiative, Japan provides support to emerging space-faring nations in the Asia Pacific region for the development and implementation of domestic space-related laws. Through these efforts, Japan is contributing to the building of legal capacity of these nations necessary for the appropriate management and supervision of domestic space activities, including private sector activities.

### **B** International Dialogues and Consultations on Outer Space

Japan promotes dialogues and consultations on outer space primarily with major space-faring nations and nations in the Asia-Pacific region.

In relation to the U.S., at the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee (“2+2”) held in March, the two countries affirmed the importance of the space domain in terms of national security. At the Japan-US Summit Meeting held in April, the leaders declared that Japan and the U.S. will deepen cooperation in the space domain, both in the defense and the civilian sectors.

In relation to India, the Second Meeting of the Japan-India Space Dialogue was convened in November. In addition to exchanging information on the space policies of Japan and India, the two sides also exchanged views on topics including security, cooperation between the relevant organizations, the space industry, global navigation satellite systems, space situational awareness

## Serving as Chair of the Legal Subcommittee of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS)

Professor Aoki Setsuko, Keio University Law School

I am currently serving as Chair of the Legal Subcommittee (two-year term) of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS). COPUOS is a subsidiary organ under the UN General Assembly that was established as a permanent committee in 1959. With the aim of promoting the peaceful exploration and use of outer space through international cooperation, it provides support for research and information exchanges in space science and technology, encourages reviews on legal regime governing outer space, and reports the results of its activities to the UN General Assembly. There are two Subcommittees under the COPUOS: the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee and the Legal Subcommittee. Every year, meetings are convened for two weeks for each Subcommittee and 10 days for the main Committee in Vienna, Austria, where the UN Office for Outer Space Affairs is based. Japanese Chairs at the COPUOS to date include Dr. Horikawa Yasushi, who served as the Chair of the main Committee from 2012 to 2014, and astronaut Dr. Mukai Chiaki, who chaired the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee in 2018.

The Legal Subcommittee plays a pivotal role in formulating international space law. All five United Nations treaties on outer space, including the Outer Space Treaty (1967), were drafted by the Legal Subcommittee, and upon their adoption, a draft treaty was sent by the Committee to the UN General Assembly. After being adopted by the General Assembly, they were signed and ratified by each Member State before entering into force, and are serving as the core of international space law concerning space exploration and use.

In 2020, meetings of the Legal Subcommittee were cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, the scheduled discussions were postponed to the following year. In 2021, the situation did not improve dramatically, so the Legal Subcommittee meeting that is usually convened from the end of March to early April was held in hybrid format, both online and in-person, for two weeks from May 31 to June 11. As the meeting is held in the six official languages of the United Nations: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish, a special online system was prepared to facilitate interpretation for the attendees. Agenda items discussed for the 2021 session included: space traffic management, space debris, small satellite activities, national space legislation, national implementation of non-legally binding UN instruments, and the legal issues of space resources. Among these, the greatest attention was paid to issues of space resources, which had been first included in agenda items in 2017. One of the greatest accomplishments of the 2021 session was the successful establishment of a space resources working group, where detailed and concrete discussions on legal norms on the exploration, exploitation and utilization of space resources would be held. The Outer Space Treaty provides non-appropriation of outer space, but does not set out provisions on the exploitation, extraction, and commercial use of space resources. Thus, it is a preferable step that the newly made working group would be the platform to clarify and collectively make new norms on space resources activities that remain vague today. I think the successful setting up of this working group could fully demonstrate a solid basis of international cooperation nurtured through decades of efforts.

The hybrid meeting format sometimes made discussions more difficult than usual, with problems such as the occasional instability in connections. However, this conversely brought out the cooperative spirit of delegations of States members, which enabled the effective and amicable discussions of the meeting as well as the adoption of the report of this Subcommittee during the morning session of the final day. Despite the difficult conditions, this was achieved through the delegations' strong will to promote the peaceful uses of outer space for the benefit of all humanity. I feel deeply grateful and fortunate to have had the opportunity to witness this as the Japanese Chair of the Legal Subcommittee.



The author in the Chair's seat for the Legal Subcommittee of COPUOS

(SSA), and international rules and norms pertaining to outer space.

Furthermore, at the Second Japan-Australia-India-U.S. Summit Meeting in September, the parties concurred on launching a working group on space as a new initiative, in order to advance cooperation in the space domain. Specifically, the four countries will engage in discussions on the sharing of satellite data to address issues such as climate change, providing support for capacity building to other countries in the Indo-Pacific region, and international rule-making.

With regard to multilateral meetings, the 27th session of the Asia-Pacific Regional Space Agency Forum (APRSAF-27), co-organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA), and the Vietnam Academy of Science and Technology (VAST), was held in November and December. At this Forum, discussions were held on the expansion of the space industry, promoting sustainable space activities for the future, and contributing to the resolution of social issues.

### **C** Space Science and Exploration

The progress of space exploration and application for peaceful purposes is a common benefit for all humankind, and is also significant in terms of diplomacy.

In 2019, Japan decided to participate in international space exploration under the proposal of the U.S. (Artemis program). Thereafter, in 2020, the Minister of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology of Japan and the Administrator for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) signed a Joint Exploration Declaration of Intent for Lunar Cooperation (JEDI), and announced the details of cooperation between Japan and the U.S. During the same year, eight countries including Japan and the U.S. signed the Artemis Accords, which set out a political commitment to establish principles for creating a safe and transparent environment

in promoting outer space activities, including the Artemis program. In addition, Japan and the U.S. concluded a Memorandum of Understanding concerning Cooperation on the Civil Lunar Gateway, a human outpost in the lunar vicinity that will be developed as a part of the Artemis program. Afterwards, more countries signed the Artemis Accords, and the total number of signatories reached 13 countries with the addition of Poland in October 2021.

The International Space Station (ISS) is an epic project in which 15 countries participate and has become a symbol of international cooperation regarding outer space. With the aim of providing support for capacity building in the space field, Japan provides many emerging and developing countries with the opportunities to conduct experiments using the ISS/Japanese Experiment Module “Kibo” and to deploy cube satellites. In June, Mauritius’ first satellite was deployed through the KiboCUBE program, a cooperative framework between JAXA and UNOOSA that provides developing countries with the opportunity to deploy CubeSats from Kibo. Furthermore, continuing from 2020, the second Kibo Robot Programming Challenge (Second Kibo-RPC), an educational program for students from the Asia-Pacific region who represent the next generation, was held from July to October.

### **D** International Cooperation through the Utilization of Space Technology

Outer space is a unique space that enables the constant observation of the Earth’s atmosphere, land and seas. In recent years, there have been growing expectations toward the role of space technology in resolving global issues such as climate change, forest conservation, water resources management, disaster prevention and food security. Japan promotes international cooperation through utilization of space technology, which is one of Japan’s strengths in the international arena, and contributes to the achievement of the SDGs.

For example, the world's first greenhouse gases observing satellite "IBUKI" has been capturing information on the concentration of greenhouse gases on Earth for more than 10 years. The 2019 Refinement to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories defined, for the first time, the utilization of satellite data to improve the precision of emissions from each country and included examples from the utilization of IBUKI. In addition, the JICA-JAXA Forest Early Warning System in the Tropics (JJ-FAST), developed for the conservation of forests that serve as an important "carbon sink" for the absorption of greenhouse gases, uses data from the Advanced Land Observing Satellite-2 "DAICHI-2" to provide free information on forest changes in 77 countries around the world. This system is used for purposes such as detecting illegal logging.

Japan also provides, at no charge, the Global Satellite Mapping of Precipitation (GSMaP) system, which utilizes multiple satellites to observe the global rainfall situation. This system is applied to a wide range of uses, including rainfall situation monitoring, disaster management and agriculture, in 141 countries and regions around the world. Furthermore, Japan took the lead in launching "Sentinel Asia," an initiative to provide free observational satellite information during disasters to contribute to disaster management in the Asia-Pacific region. To date, this project has responded to more than 350 emergency requests from 35 countries.

In light of the global spread of COVID-19, JAXA, NASA and the European Space Agency (ESA) joined forces to implement an observation project to capture information on the Earth's environment, economic activities and other aspects (such as changes in carbon dioxide concentration in large cities, changes in airport hangars and car parks, etc.) before and after the pandemic. The results of their analysis are published on a dedicated website.

## (6) Peacekeeping and Peacebuilding

### A On-the-Ground Initiatives

#### (A) UN Peacekeeping Operations (UN PKO)

As of December 31, 2021, 12 UN PKO missions are on active duty, primarily in the Middle East and Africa, to handle a wide range of duties that include monitoring ceasefires, promoting the political process, and protecting civilians. More than 80,000 military, police, and civilian personnel have been deployed to these missions. In response to the increasing complexity and scale of the mandates and the associated shortages of personnel, equipment, and financial resources, discussions on more effective and efficient implementation of UN PKO are underway in various forums, primarily within the UN. In December, under the themes of technology and medical support, the 2021 Seoul UN Peacekeeping Ministerial was held as an online meeting in the Republic of Korea to address issues faced by UN PKO.

In addition to PKO missions, the UN has also established Special Political Missions (SPMs) mainly consisting of civilian personnel. SPMs fulfill diverse roles including conflict prevention and mediation, and post-conflict peacebuilding.

Based on the Act on Cooperation with UN Peacekeeping Operations and Other Operations (PKO Act), since 1992 Japan has dispatched more than 12,500 personnel to a total of 28 missions, including UN PKO. More recently, since 2011 Japanese staff officers have been dispatched to the UN Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), while engineering units used to be deployed there from 2012. The engineering units in the South Sudanese capital of Juba and the surrounding areas have undertaken such activities as developing infrastructure that includes roads, the provision of water supplies to displaced persons, as well as site preparation, and concluded their activities in May 2017. As of December 31, 2021, four Self-Defense Forces of Japan (SDF) officers are on active duty at the UNMISS Headquarters, who continue to work toward peace and stability in South Sudan. Additionally, since April 2019, Japan has been

conducting activities contributing to peace and stability in the Middle East by dispatching two SDF officers to the Force Headquarters for the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO), which is stationed in Egypt's Sinai Peninsula. Under the banner of "Proactive Contribution to Peace," by building on the past experiences of peacekeeping operations and making use of its own strengths, Japan will continue to contribute proactively in the field of international peace cooperation in the future by means such as enhancing capacity building support and dispatching units and individuals.

#### **(B) ODA and Other Cooperation to Facilitate Peacebuilding**

In addressing prolonged conflicts and increasingly diverse humanitarian crises, peacebuilding and preventing the recurrence of conflict even in peacetime, in addition to humanitarian assistance and development cooperation, are important toward the realization of an inclusive society. There is a greater need than before to address the root causes of crises by providing support toward building resilient nations and stabilizing societies from a medium- to long-term perspective, and by supporting self-sustaining development. Japan has been providing support for peacebuilding based on this "humanitarian-development-peace nexus" approach, and positions peacebuilding as one of the priority issues in its Development Cooperation Charter. The following are some of the main initiatives implemented recently.

##### **a. Middle East**

Japan has provided comprehensive support for peace and stability in the Middle East. This includes providing food and refugee assistance, as well as support for the development of human resources who can play an active role in nation-building. Japan received 16 students from Syria in 2021 to offer education to young people who were deprived of opportunities to attend school due to the Syrian crisis. As for Palestine, in

addition to an increase in the refugee population, it is also facing serious deterioration of the living environment, including the deteriorated refugee camp infrastructure as well as unemployment and poverty. In light of this, Japan worked on improving the living environment of refugees through the implementation of the Camp Improvement Project (CIP) at refugee camps in Palestine, as well as by providing support to educational facilities, and contributed to the stabilization and improvement of the people's welfare based on human security.

##### **b. Africa**

At the Seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD7) in 2019, Japan announced the New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa (NAPSA). Through support for institution building and enhancing governance, strengthening the resilience of local community, prevention of youth radicalization and other efforts, Japan supports African-led efforts and contributes to peace and stability in Africa under the banner of NAPSA which respects Africa's ownership in conflict resolution and addresses the root causes that hamper peace and stability in Africa.

For example, Japan has conducted criminal justice training since 2014 for Francophone African countries, and has supported stabilization of the Sahel region by strengthening the capabilities of investigative and judicial bodies. In Guinea-Bissau, Japan worked in cooperation with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to provide support for the capacity building of the National People's Assembly, and to strengthen access to the judiciary in the southern region of the country. Japan is also supplying security equipment to strengthen countries' ability to maintain security against frequent terrorist attacks and transnational crimes, and providing support for the removal of landmines.

In South Sudan, along with dispatching personnel to UNMISS headquarter, in response to the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the



Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (R-ARCSS)<sup>8</sup> signed in 2018, Japan has been supporting the implementation of the agreement and cease-fire monitoring through the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), a regional organization in East Africa. Furthermore, Japan, in collaboration with the UNDP, has disbursed a total of 63 million US dollars between 2008 and 2021 to Peacekeeping Training Centers located in 14 African countries, contributing to strengthening Africa's capacity for peacekeeping activities.

### **B Initiatives within the UN (Peacebuilding)**

Based on the understanding that many regional conflicts and civil wars are rekindled even after the conflict has ended, and that it is extremely important to provide appropriate support in the post-conflict period, the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) was established in 2005 with the aim of offering consistent advice on assistance, from conflict resolution to recovery, reintegration and reconstruction. The PBC conducts discussions to identify priority issues and formulate peacebuilding strategies in the agenda countries.<sup>9</sup> Japan has served as a member of the Organizational Committee since the PBC's establishment and contributed to its activities while communicating the importance of institution and capacity building, the need to address the root causes of conflicts, and the strengthening of PBC's relationships with key UN agencies and institutions such as the World Bank and IMF.

Based on the "Review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture" including the PBC of April 2016, the UN Secretary-General issued a report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (A/72/707-S/2018/43) in February 2018. The report makes a variety of proposals for, inter alia: enhancing financing for peacebuilding; increasing operational and policy coherence of the PBC; and

strengthening UN leadership, accountability and capacity. The third "Review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture" was conducted in 2020, and the UN General Assembly resolution (A/RES/75/201) and Security Council resolution 2558 were adopted in December the same year. While welcoming progress on the implementation of the relevant resolutions of the past, the review affirmed that efforts will be made to continue with the implementation of these resolutions, the importance of the role of the PBC, and the convening of a meeting to discuss sustained financing.

Japan has contributed proactively to the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) since its establishment in 2006. Announcing its aim to allocate 10 million US dollars in September 2016, Japan has contributed a total of 57.7 million US dollars (2.2 million US dollars in 2021) and ranks seventh among the major donor countries as of December 2021. In the address delivered by Prime Minister Suga at the General Debate of the United Nations General Assembly in 2021, he announced that Japan will remain committed to peacebuilding.

### **C Human Resource Development**

#### **(A) The Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development**

While civilian experts with a high level of skill and expertise have a substantial role to play in the field of post-conflict peacebuilding, the number of those capable of fulfilling the role is insufficient, and therefore, the development of relevant human resources remains a major challenge. Japan has been implementing programs for human resource development in order to cultivate civilian experts who can play a leading role in the field of peacebuilding and development. As of the end of the FY2021, more than 800 people have been trained. The trainees who completed the programs have

<sup>8</sup> As the implementation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in South Sudan, issued in 2015, seemed to have stagnated, this Revitalized Agreement, bringing together stakeholders in South Sudan by IGAD, set out matters including the implementation schedule for the observance of ceasefire.

<sup>9</sup> The four countries of Guinea-Bissau, Central African Republic, Liberia and Burundi.

gone on to play an active role in the field of peacebuilding and development in Asia, Africa, and other parts of the world, and have received high acclaim from both the UN and other countries. Out of the approximately 180 people who have completed the training course for entry level human resources (hereafter, “entry level course”) to date, more than 50 work as regular employees of international organizations. Hence, this program also contributes significantly to the career development of Japanese nationals, as well as to enhancing their presence in international organizations in the fields of peacebuilding and development. In the FY2021 program, an entry level course and a training course for mid-career practitioners with experience in the fields of peacebuilding and development were conducted (see the Column on page 213).

#### **(B) Training for Peacekeepers of Various Countries**

Japan has been supporting peacekeepers from various countries participating in UN PKO to enhance their capabilities. Since 2015, in conjunction with cooperative efforts among the UN, supporting member states, and troop contributing countries, Japan has provided support for the Triangular Partnership Programme (TPP), a framework for innovative cooperation aimed at addressing the urgent need to improve the capabilities of PKO personnel by providing necessary training and equipment to personnel deployed to UN PKO. For example, Japan has sent 172 SDF personnel and other individuals to Kenya and Uganda as instructors and conducted training on the operation of heavy engineering equipment for 277 personnel from eight African countries that expressed intentions to dispatch engineering units to UN PKO. Since 2018, this project has been extended to Asia and the surrounding regions. Japan has dispatched 68 SDF personnel and other individuals to Viet Nam and conducted training on the operation of heavy engineering equipment for 56 personnel from nine countries of Asia and

the surrounding regions. Additionally, in October 2019 a lifesaving training program began in the medical field, a considerably problematic area for UN PKO, while support for the introduction of telemedicine into UN PKO missions was launched from 2021. In December the same year, training for the construction process management course in the field of military engineering was conducted remotely for the first time. Other than TPP, Japan dispatches instructors and other personnel, as well as provides financial assistance, to Peacekeeping Training Centers in Asia and Africa.

### **(7) Initiatives to Combat Security Threats**

#### **A Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism**

Since the end of 2019, the COVID-19 pandemic has had profound impacts not only on domestic politics, economy and society, but also on the international political and economic order, and further, affected people’s behavior, mindsets and values. It has also had a major impact on the environment surrounding terrorism. Terrorists continue to carry out their terrorist activities in Asia and other parts of the world while adapting to the new social circumstances that have resulted from the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the weakening of governance as well as social divisions brought about by the manifestation of poverty and racial and ethnic issues. Furthermore, the increased dependence on information and communications technology by people around the world has motivated terrorists or terrorist organizations to spread extremism through the Internet and social media, and moreover, to conduct illegal behavior that could lead to terrorism in cyberspace, such as acquisition of funding for terrorism. There is a pressing need to respond comprehensively to these developments.

Based on the “G7 Action Plan on Countering Terrorism and Violent Extremism” compiled at the G7 Ise-Shima Summit in 2016, Japan has to date implemented the following actions: (1) measures to enhance counter-terrorism capacity, which includes promoting the utilization of Interpol

## Participating in the Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development

Yamasaki Tomomi, Program Support Officer (Peacebuilding), Nigeria office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM)

My name is Yamasaki Tomomi. Under the Program for Global Human Resource Development for Peacebuilding and Development, commissioned by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, I have been posted as a UN Volunteer to the Nigeria office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the UN organization that specializes in the migration issues of people around the world.

In Nigeria, IOM has the largest country office among UN entities and bodies and provides a wide range of support, including assistance to internally displaced persons, human trafficking countermeasures, and border control. My main role is to assist IOM in developing, monitoring and evaluating projects, mainly in the area of peacebuilding.

For example, as of July 2021, approximately 2.18 million people have been internally displaced in the northeastern part of Nigeria due to the presence of non-state armed groups (NSAGs) for over a decade. In order to address the causes of the forced migration, IOM has been assisting the Government of Nigeria through a program to promote disengagement, disassociation, reintegration, and reconciliation (DDRR) in the northeastern part of Nigeria. Under this program, activities are conducted to encourage NSAG associates to disengage from the organizations and return to civil society. I supported the development of new projects under the DDRR program to strengthen the capacity of the Government-run rehabilitation centers for former NSAG associates through activities including staff training and facility maintenance. I have also developed questionnaires as a monitoring tool for a series of town hall meetings that aimed to promote communities' preparedness for the reinsertion and acceptance of former NSAG associates. The tool was helpful in assessing the impacts of the meetings and receiving feedback to improve the program.

While assistance by the international community has been focusing on the assistance in the northeastern part of the country, the northwestern part where the same level of support has not been provided is experiencing increased insecurity highlighted with organized crimes, such as kidnappings for ransom and robbery murders, which resulted in forced migration. In order to plan responses to the situations in northwest Nigeria, I participated in a field assessment and proposed possible interventions to IOM Nigeria.

The participation of diverse stakeholders, starting from the stage of project development, is vital in providing support for peacebuilding. This is why the processes are so time-consuming. Nevertheless, I feel greatly rewarded by my experience in the IOM, which contributes to the peace and stability of Nigeria through the development of new programs and projects while listening to the viewpoints of various parties, and the affirmation of project outcomes through monitoring and evaluation.



At a rehabilitation center for former NSAG associates (Photo: IOM)

databases and measures against the funding of terrorism, (2) education and promotion of moderation in communities through dialogues and other means, in order to prevent violent extremism, which is a root cause of terrorism, and (3) support for capacity building of law enforcement agencies, including measures to support rehabilitation in prisons.

To steadily promote measures to counter terrorism and violent extremism, which is an issue that has gained importance as the COVID-19 pandemic becomes a protracted situation, Japan provided contributions in the amount of 2.1 billion Japanese yen (supplementary budget for FY2020) to the projects implemented by international organizations and funds, including the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT), the Hedayah, International Center of Excellence for Countering Violent Extremism, and the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF), among others, by using their respective strengths and expertise effectively.

As an initiative that Japan has carried out continuously for the past 16 years, Japan has also run an exchange program inviting Islamic school teachers and providing opportunities to experience interfaith dialogue, school visits and cultural events in Japan. However, this has been suspended since FY2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Japan will work toward the resumption of the program going forward, in order to help promote moderation and the creation of more tolerant societies that are receptive to different values.

Through bilateral and trilateral counter-terrorism consultations, Japan also exchanges information on the world terrorism situations and affirms the strengthening of cooperation in the field of countering terrorism with other countries.

The Government of Japan has promoted counter-terrorism measures in collaboration with relevant countries and organizations. Based on the view that information gathering is critical

for combating terrorism, the Government established the Counter Terrorism Unit - Japan (CTU-J) in December 2015 and has been making concerted efforts to gather information with the Prime Minister's Office serving as the control tower. Regarding the incident in which a Japanese national being detained in Syria was safely released in October 2018, this outcome is owed to CTU-J playing a key role in requesting the cooperation of the countries concerned and handling the situation by leveraging Japan's information network. Following the series of terrorist bombings that occurred in Sri Lanka in April 2019, the Director General and other officials from CTU-J were immediately dispatched to the area to gather information. To fulfill the critical responsibility of securing the safety of Japanese nationals overseas, Japan will continue to further enhance its information gathering through the CTU-J and take all possible measures to counter terrorism to ensure the safety of Japanese nationals overseas.

## **B Criminal Justice Initiatives**

The UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice ("Congress") and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (both of which have their secretariats under UNODC) are in charge of shaping policy on crime prevention and criminal justice in the international community. Despite inviting the Congress to Japan for the second time since the Fourth Congress held in 1970, the meeting was postponed for about a year due to the impact of COVID-19. In March 2021, the 14th Congress ("Kyoto Congress") was convened in Kyoto. The hybrid meeting, combining online sessions and in-person participation, was attended by approximately 5,600 participants from 152 countries and regions, a record high. Under stringent border measures, foreign delegations, including Ministerial level participants from 13 countries, visited Japan to participate in the event. At the Kyoto Congress, Minister of Justice Kamikawa was elected as President of the Congress and delivered statements at the



Opening Ceremony of the Kyoto Congress  
(March 7, Kyoto. Photo: UNDGC)

opening and closing ceremonies. The opening ceremony was also attended by Prime Minister Suga and other key government officials, and UN Secretary-General António Guterres delivered a speech online via live stream. Japan, as the chair of the Congress, led discussions on the draft political declaration, and worked in cooperation with participating countries and international organizations, most of all the UNODC, toward the adoption of the political declaration. In accordance with the overall theme, “Advancing crime prevention, criminal justice and the rule of law: towards the achievement of the 2030 agenda,” the political declaration (“Kyoto Declaration”), summarizing the matters that should be addressed over the medium- to long-term by the international community in the areas of crime prevention and criminal justice, was adopted. Going forward, it is important for the UN and member states to steadily implement the contents of the Kyoto Declaration. With a view to taking the lead in the implementation of the Kyoto Declaration, Japan will launch the Criminal Justice Forum for Asia and the Pacific, regularly hold the Global Youth Forum for a Culture of Lawfulness, and formulate model strategies on reducing reoffending. At the same time, Japan is also actively taking part in international meetings such as the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to promote its initiatives.

Furthermore, Japan provides support to improve prosecution capabilities and other criminal justice functions, to improve the operation

of prisons, and to enhance capacities related to measures against cybercrime in Southeast Asian countries by providing financial contributions to UNODC and through financial contributions from the Japan-ASEAN Integration Fund (JAIF).

Japan is a State Party to the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), which establishes a global legal framework for promoting cooperation to prevent and combat transnational organized crime including terrorism more effectively. Japan advances international cooperation that includes providing international assistance in investigation in accordance with the UNTOC and reviewing the implementation of the Convention.

### **C** Anti-corruption Measures

As a State Party to the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), which sets out provisions for international cooperation and measures to address corruption such as bribery and embezzlement of property by public officials, Japan has actively participated in discussions for the effective implementation of the UNCAC and strengthening international cooperation on preventing and combating corruption. In addition, Japan contributes to the capacity building of criminal justice practitioners in developing countries by conducting the International Training Course on the Criminal Justice Response to Corruption (UNCAC Training Programme) through the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFEI). In order to promote the implementation of the UNCAC, the UN General Assembly Special Session against Corruption was held in June, during which State Minister for Foreign Affairs Uto Takashi delivered a speech on behalf of Japan. The political declaration adopted at this Session is significant from the perspective of strengthening the concerted efforts of the international community toward the further prevention and eradication of corruption. It also highlighted the continued commitment to promote the steady implementation of existing

international conventions, including the UNCAC and the OECD Convention on Combating Bribery of Foreign Public Officials in International Business Transactions (OECD Anti-Bribery Convention), and to contribute to international cooperation on anti-corruption measures.

Japan is an active participant in the OECD Working Group on Bribery, which verifies the implementation of the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention by each state party to prevent the bribery of foreign public officials.

#### **D Measures to Combat Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism**

Regarding anti-money laundering and counter-terrorist financing (AML/CFT) measures, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an international framework that establishes the international standards that countries should implement and conducts peer reviews to assess levels of implementation. In recent years, the FATF has also been engaged in initiatives to prevent financing for the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and has issued the FATF statement that calls for the eradication of illegal financial activities by North Korea.

As a founding member, Japan has actively participated in these discussions. The Fourth Round Mutual Evaluation Report of Japan was adopted at the FATF Plenary held in June, and was published at the end of August. Japan is steadily making preparations and implementing measures to address the points for improvement raised in this Report.

In addition, Japan takes measures to combat the financing of terrorism as a State Party to the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism, and also implements measures to freeze the assets of terrorists and terrorist organizations in accordance with the UN Security Council resolution 1373, and designated by the UN Security Council Taliban Sanctions Committee or the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee. Japan added one individual

designated by the ISIL (Da'esh) and Al-Qaida Sanctions Committee in June and November, and two individuals and one organization were similarly designated in December, as subjects for asset freezing measures. As of December 31, Japan has implemented asset freezing measures on a total of 405 individuals and 121 organizations.

#### **E Measures to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Smuggling of Migrants**

Japan has strengthened its domestic system to combat trafficking in persons, for which methods are becoming increasingly sophisticated and obscure, while proactively providing assistance to developing countries, in accordance with "Japan's 2014 Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Persons." For example, in 2021, Japan continued to conduct training programs through JICA to deepen mutual understanding on human trafficking countermeasures (especially prevention, protection and support to restore the financial independence of victims) of stakeholders in Asian countries, including Japan, and to promote more effective regional cooperation. With respect to cooperation with international organizations, in 2021, through funding to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Japan continued to provide assistance for the safe repatriation of foreign victims of trafficking in persons protected in Japan, and to carry out social rehabilitation support programs to prevent the recurrence of trafficking after they return to their countries. Japan also funded training programs and other awareness-raising activities for law enforcement authorities in Southeast Asian and South Asian countries through projects organized by UNODC, UN Women and other organizations.

Japan also implemented support projects mainly toward ASEAN and African countries, with a view to preventing the smuggling of migrants.

As a State Party to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, and the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea



and Air, Japan has also further deepened its cooperation with other countries with a view to combating trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants.

#### **F Measures to Combat Illicit Drug Trafficking**

Japan works in cooperation with UNODC to investigate and analyze synthetic drugs, strengthen capacity for drug control at national borders, and provide support for the production of alternative crops, thereby working to take measures against illicit drug trafficking that is spreading across borders.

## **4 Disarmament and Non-proliferation and the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy**

### **(1) Nuclear Disarmament**

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during wartime, Japan has the responsibility to lead the international efforts to realize a world without nuclear weapons.

The global security environment has been severe in recent years. As seen in the situation surrounding the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) that entered into force in January, there exists an apparent divergence of views on how best to advance nuclear disarmament, a divergence that exists not only between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states but also among non-nuclear-weapon states that are exposed to the threat of nuclear weapons and those that are not. Considering these circumstances, it is necessary to persistently advance realistic measures while bridge-building between states with divergent views, in order to promote nuclear disarmament.

Japan has continued to pursue bridge-building between states with divergent views with the aim of realizing a world without nuclear weapons. It has done this through cooperation and collaboration with like-minded countries, in ways such as holding meetings of the Group of

Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament and the follow-up Track 1.5 Meeting for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament, submitting the Resolution on Nuclear Disarmament to the UN General Assembly, and the Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI), as well as bilateral consultations. Moreover, Japan intends to continue maintaining and strengthening the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) regime through cumulative efforts that include promoting the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and encouraging states to commence negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT), and building up realistic efforts that nuclear-weapon states can also participate in, such as discussions and exercises toward the realization of effective nuclear disarmament verification.

The TPNW is an important treaty that could be regarded as a final passage to a world without nuclear weapons. However, not a single nuclear-weapon state has not joined the TPNW, even though the engagement of nuclear-weapon states is indispensable to change the reality. Therefore, instead of addressing the situation through signing and ratifying the TPNW, Japan, as the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings during wartime, must make efforts to involve nuclear-weapon states. To that end, Japan first intends to advance realistic measures toward the realization of a world without nuclear weapons, based on the foundation of trust built with its only ally, the U.S.

#### **A Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)**

Japan places great importance on maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime, which is the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. NPT Review Conferences have been held once every five years with the aim of achieving the goals of the NPT and ensuring compliance with its provisions, and

discussions that reflect the international situation of the time have been held since the NPT entered into force in 1970. However, at the 9th Review Conference held in 2015, discussions failed to arrive at a consensus regarding the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction and other issues, and the Conference ended without a consensus document.

2020 is a milestone year, marking 50 years since the NPT entered into force and 75 years since the use of nuclear weapons in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A Statement by the Foreign Minister was released on March 5 to coincide with the entering into force of the NPT. In the statement, Foreign Minister Motegi expressed appreciation for the NPT's invaluable contribution to the consolidation and maintenance of international peace and security as the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, and spoke about the need to uphold and strengthen the NPT regime. Although the 10th NPT Review Conference was scheduled for April 2020, it has been postponed four times due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

### **B** Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament and the Track 1.5 Meeting for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament

The “Group of Eminent Persons for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament” (EPG; consisting of 17 experts from countries of different positions, including Japan) was launched by Japan in 2017 with the goals of rebuilding trust among countries with divergent views on how to proceed with nuclear disarmament and of obtaining recommendations that will contribute to the substantive advancement of nuclear disarmament. The Group held a total of five meetings leading up to July 2019, and the concrete outcomes were submitted to the second and third sessions of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference. In



Prime Minister Kishida delivering the opening remarks at the Third Track 1.5 Meeting for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament (December, Tokyo. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

October 2019, the Chair's Report, summarizing discussions at all five meetings of the Group held to date, was published.

Thereafter, Japan established “The Track 1.5 Meeting for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament” with the participation of experts and government officials from both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states, for the purpose of following up with, and further developing, the discussions of the EPG. At the Third Track 1.5 Meeting for Substantive Advancement of Nuclear Disarmament, held online in December 2021, Prime Minister Kishida attended the meeting as Prime Minister for the first time, and delivered the opening remarks. At this meeting, discussions were held on the possible outcomes of the 10th NPT Review Conference, and in particular, the approach to producing outcomes that strike a balance between the three pillars of the NPT (disarmament, non-proliferation, peaceful uses), and the approach to making progress in nuclear disarmament based on Article 6 of the NPT.

### **C** The Non-proliferation and Disarmament Initiative (NPDI)

The NPDI, a group of 12 non-nuclear-weapon states from various regions established under the leadership of Japan and Australia in 2010 has served as a bridge between nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states. It leads efforts in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation

through its realistic and practical proposals with the involvement of the foreign ministers of its member states. At the 10th NPDI Ministerial Meeting, co-organized by Japan and Australia and held during the G20 Aichi-Nagoya Foreign Ministers' Meeting in November 2019, an NPDI Joint Ministerial Statement was issued concerning the importance of maintaining and strengthening the NPT regime.

The NPDI has actively contributed to the NPT review process through realistic and practical proposals, including the submission of 19 working papers to the 9th NPT Review process and 16 to the 10th NPT Review process. For example, with a view to the 10th NPT Review Conference, the NPDI submitted a working paper ("Landing-zone Paper") that proposes the elements that should be incorporated into the final document concerning the three pillars of the NPT—nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

#### **D Initiatives Through the United Nations (Resolution on Nuclear Disarmament)**

Since 1994, Japan has submitted draft resolutions on the elimination of nuclear weapons to the UN General Assembly. They incorporate issues of the time related to nuclear disarmament, and are aimed at presenting a realistic and concrete nuclear disarmament approach proposed by Japan to the international community. As a means to facilitate the building of a common ground between nuclear-weapon states and non-nuclear-weapon states, the 2021 resolution focused on joint courses of action to be taken immediately by the international community toward nuclear disarmament as well as the importance of future-oriented dialogues. The resolution was adopted with the broad support of 152 countries at the First Committee of the UN General Assembly in October and of 158 countries at the Plenary Meeting of the UN General Assembly in December. The states supporting the resolution have divergent views, and include

nuclear-weapon states such as the U.S., the UK, and France as well as many non-nuclear-weapon states. While other resolutions that comprehensively addressed nuclear disarmament were submitted to the General Assembly in addition to Japan's draft resolution on the total elimination of nuclear weapons, Japan has enjoyed support among a larger number of states. For more than 20 years, Japan's resolutions have continued to enjoy the broad support of states with divergent views in the international community.

#### **E Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)**

Japan attaches great importance to promoting the entry into force of the CTBT as a realistic measure of nuclear disarmament where both nuclear-weapon and non-nuclear-weapon states can participate. Japan also has continued diplomatic efforts to call on all countries that have not yet signed or ratified the CTBT, including those countries whose ratification is necessary for its entry-into-force, to do so. In 2021, during the UN High-Level Meetings held in September, the 12th Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT was convened in hybrid format. Video messages from UN Secretary-General António Guterres and Dr. Robert Floyd, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization (CTBTO), as well as from the government representatives of various countries, were broadcast at the meeting. In his video statement issued to the Conference, Foreign Minister Motegi welcomed the progress in the universalization of the CTBT and the remarkable development of the verification regime over the 25 years since it opened for signatures. At the same time, he expressed Japan's commitments toward the entering into force of the treaty, and stated that it is vital to realize the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges by North Korea. The aforementioned Resolution on

Nuclear Disarmament also incorporates a recommendation for the CTBT to be signed and ratified by countries whose ratification is necessary for its entry-into-force.

**F Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty<sup>10</sup> (FMCT)**

A Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT) has great significance for both disarmament and non-proliferation as it would prevent the emergence of new states possessing nuclear-weapons by banning the production of fissile materials such as highly-enriched uranium and plutonium for nuclear weapons. At the same time, it limits the production of nuclear weapons by nuclear-weapon states. For many years, however, no agreement has been reached on commencing negotiations for the treaty in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). Consequently, it was decided at the 71st UN General Assembly in December 2016 to establish the FMCT High-Level Experts Preparatory Group, and Japan actively participated in the Group's discussions. Through discussions at the first meeting (August 2017) and second meeting (June 2018), a report was adopted that includes possible options for the outline of a future treaty and contents to consider in negotiations. The report was submitted to the 73rd UN General Assembly in 2018. The aforementioned Resolution on Nuclear Disarmament also incorporates a recommendation for all countries to put every effort into immediate commencement of negotiations on the FMCT. Japan will actively continue to contribute to FMCT discussions.

**G Disarmament and Non-proliferation Education**

As the only country to have ever suffered atomic bombings, Japan places great importance

on education in disarmament and non-proliferation. Specifically, Japan has been actively engaged in efforts to convey the realities of the devastation caused by the use of nuclear weapons to people both within Japan and overseas, through activities such as translating the testimonies of atomic bomb survivors into other languages, invitations for young diplomats from other countries to go to Hiroshima and Nagasaki through the UN Programme of Fellowships on Disarmament<sup>11</sup> (in 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, an online event was held to convey the realities of atomic bombing), providing assistance for holding atomic bomb exhibitions overseas,<sup>12</sup> and designating atomic bomb survivors who have given testimonies of their atomic bomb experiences as "Special Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons." The aforementioned Resolution on Nuclear Disarmament also incorporates a recommendation for all countries to put effort into nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation education.

Additionally, as the atomic bomb survivors age, it is becoming increasingly important to pass on the realities of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings across generations and borders. To this end, from 2013 to 2021, Japan conferred the designation of "Youth Communicators for a World without Nuclear Weapons" for more than 400 youths in Japan and overseas.

**H Initiatives Toward Future Arms Control**

In the area of nuclear disarmament, in addition to initiatives through multilateral frameworks such as the NPT, the U.S. and Russia have also concluded and maintained a bilateral arms control treaty. On February 3, 2021, the two countries agreed on an extension to the Treaty between

<sup>10</sup> A treaty concept that aims to prevent the increase in the number of nuclear weapons by prohibiting the production of fissile materials (such as enriched uranium and plutonium) that are used as materials to produce nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices.

<sup>11</sup> Implemented since 1983 by the UN to nurture nuclear disarmament experts. Program participants are invited to Hiroshima and Nagasaki to promote understanding of the realities of atomic bombing through such means as museum tours and talks by victims about their experiences in the atomic bombings.

<sup>12</sup> Opened as a permanent exhibition about the atomic bomb in New York, U.S.; Geneva, Switzerland; and Vienna, Austria, in cooperation with Hiroshima City and Nagasaki City.

the United States of America and the Russian Federation on Measures for the Further Reduction and Limitation of Strategic Offensive Arms (New START Treaty). The New START Treaty demonstrates important progress in nuclear disarmament between the U.S. and Russia, and Japan welcomed this extension. The U.S. and Russia also set up a dialogue on strategic stability after the extension of the treaty, and are continuing to hold dialogues that also cover the topic of arms control.

On the other hand, in view of the recent situation surrounding nuclear weapons, it is important to establish a new arms control mechanism that encompasses a wider range of countries beyond the U.S. and Russia, while also including a broader range of weapon systems. From this perspective, Japan has been communicating with China on this issue at various levels. For example, at the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) Ministerial Meeting held in August, Foreign Minister Motegi, joining hands with other countries, expressed his desire to encourage China to continue its efforts to fulfil its responsibility as a nuclear weapon state and an important player in the international community, and engage in the bilateral dialogue between the U.S. and China on arms control in accordance with the obligation to negotiate in good faith under the NPT.

Furthermore, the aforementioned Resolution on Nuclear Disarmament also stresses the importance of concrete actions for transparency among nuclear-weapon states, and reaffirms the special responsibility of nuclear-weapon states to initiate arms control dialogues on effective measures to prevent nuclear arms racing.

## **(2) Non-proliferation and Nuclear Security**

### **A Japan's Efforts Toward Non-proliferation**

To ensure Japan's security and to maintain peace and security of the international community, Japan has been making efforts concerning

non-proliferation policy. The goal of such a policy is to prevent the proliferation of weapons that could threaten Japan and the international community (weapons of mass destruction such as nuclear weapons and biological/chemical weapons, as well as missiles with the ability to deliver those weapons and conventional weapons) and of related materials and technologies used to develop such weapons. In today's international community, economic growth in emerging countries has enabled a growing capacity to produce and supply weapons in those countries as well as materials that could be diverted to the development of such weapons. Meanwhile, methods for procuring these materials are becoming more sophisticated, due in part to increasing complexity in means of distribution. Furthermore, the emergence of new technologies is spurring a growing potential for private sector technologies to be diverted to uses for military purposes, and increasing the proliferation risk of weapons that could pose a threat and of related materials and technologies. Under these circumstances, Japan has been implementing its non-proliferation policies, focusing on maintaining and strengthening international non-proliferation regimes and rules, taking appropriate non-proliferation measures domestically, and promoting close coordination with and capacity building support for other nations.

Japan's three main measures of preventing proliferation are (1) IAEA safeguards, (2) export control, and (3) the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).

Safeguards refer to verification activities conducted in accordance with safeguards agreements between states and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and aim to ensure that nuclear energy will not be diverted from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. As a designated member of

the IAEA Board of Governors,<sup>13</sup> Japan has made various efforts, including supporting the IAEA. For example, based on the view that the IAEA safeguards are at the core of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime, Japan enhances the understanding and implementation capabilities of safeguards of other countries. Japan also encourages other countries to conclude the Additional Protocol (AP)<sup>14</sup> to the IAEA safeguards agreements. Japan will continue providing utmost support at the IAEA General Conference, Board of Governors meetings, and other fora to Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi, who has extensive knowledge and experience, and will continue to work with other member countries to strengthen the role of the IAEA.

Export control is a useful measure in the so-called supply-side regulation toward countries of proliferation concern, terrorist organizations, and other entities attempting to acquire or distribute weapons or related materials or technologies. There are currently four export control frameworks (international export control regimes) in the international community. Japan has participated in all of them since their inception, engaging in international coordination and practicing strict export control. Each of the four regimes, namely the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) for nuclear weapons, the Australia Group (AG) for chemical

and biological weapons, the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) for missiles,<sup>15</sup> and the Wassenaar Arrangement (WA) for conventional weapons, establishes a list of dual-use items and technologies which contribute to weapons development. To ensure the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and conventional weapons, participating countries to the regimes implement export control measures on the listed items and technologies in accordance with their domestic laws. The export control regimes also exchange information concerning trends in countries of proliferation concern and are engaged in outreach activities to non-participating countries to the regimes in order to strengthen their export control. Japan actively engages in such international rule-making and application of rules, and makes various contributions. Additionally, in terms of international contributions in nuclear non-proliferation, the Permanent Mission of Japan to the International Organizations in Vienna serves as the Point of Contact of the NSG.

Furthermore, Japan seeks to complement the activities of the international export control regimes by actively participating in the activities of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI).<sup>16</sup> Through efforts such as hosting the maritime interdiction exercise “Pacific Shield 18”<sup>17</sup> in July 2018, Japan is working to enhance coordination among

**13** 13 countries are designated by the IAEA Board of Governors. The designated member states include Japan and other G7 countries with advanced nuclear energy capabilities.

**14** In addition to a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA) that is applied on all nuclear materials pertaining to the peaceful nuclear activities in that country, and that non-nuclear-weapon NPT States Parties must conclude with the IAEA pursuant to Article 3 Paragraph 1 of the NPT, an Additional Protocol is concluded between IAEA and the respective State Parties. The conclusion of the Additional Protocol expands the scope of nuclear activity information that should be declared to the IAEA, and gives the IAEA strengthened measures to verify the absence of undeclared nuclear materials and activities. As of December 2021, 138 countries have concluded the Additional Protocol.

**15** Apart from export control regimes, the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation (HCCOC), which includes the principle of exercising restraint in their development and deployment, addresses the issue of ballistic missiles. As of December 2021, 143 countries subscribe to the HCCOC.

**16** An initiative launched in 2003 for the purpose of implementing and considering possible measures consistent with relevant international laws and national legal authorities in order to interdict the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and missiles, along with related materials. 107 countries participate in and support the PSI as of December 2021. Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the ROK, Singapore and the U.S. have agreed to conduct a yearly rotation exercise in the Asia-Pacific region since 2014. Through the cooperation of agencies including MOFA, the National Police Agency, Ministry of Finance, Japan Coast Guard and Ministry of Defense, Japan has hosted PSI maritime interdiction exercises in 2004, 2007, and 2018. PSI air interdiction exercises in 2012, and an Operational Experts Group (OEG) meeting in 2010. Japan has also actively participated in training and related meetings hosted by other countries.

**17** Japan, Australia, New Zealand, the ROK, Singapore, and the U.S. contributed assets and personnel to the exercise, which was held in Yokosuka City, in the sea and airspace off the Boso Peninsula, and in the airspace off the Izu Peninsula, and 19 countries from Indo-Pacific region and other countries sent observers.



countries and concerned institutions. In October 2021, Japan participated in an exercise hosted by Singapore (conducted in hybrid format).

Japan also holds Asia Senior-level Talks on Non-Proliferation (ASTOP)<sup>18</sup> and Asian Export Control Seminar<sup>19</sup> every year in order to promote a better understanding of the non-proliferation regimes and strengthen regional efforts, mainly in Asian countries.

Furthermore, with regards to the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540,<sup>20</sup> which was adopted in 2004 with the aim of preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery (missiles) to non-state actors, Japan contributes to maintaining and strengthening international non-proliferation frameworks through Japan's contributions to support the implementation of the resolution by Asian nations.

### **B Regional Non-proliferation Issues**

North Korea has not carried out the dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner in accordance with a series of relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

North Korea launched ballistic missiles twice in March 2021, and thereafter, repeatedly launched missiles, including ballistic missiles, over September and October, suggesting that its missile technology is improving steadily. The IAEA Director General's report in August pointed out that North Korea's nuclear activities continue to give rise to serious concerns. In particular, it pointed out that new

indications of the operation of a 5MW nuclear reactor and the Radiochemical Laboratory (reprocessing facility) in Yongbyon are deeply troubling, and that the continuation of North Korea's nuclear programme is a clear violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and is deeply regrettable. Moreover, at the IAEA General Conference in September, a resolution based on the report was adopted by consensus, demonstrating the united position of IAEA member states toward the denuclearization of North Korea. Regardless of such efforts by the international community, North Korea has repeatedly launched ballistic missiles with extremely high frequency and in new ways since the beginning of 2022.

It is crucial that the international community makes concerted efforts to fully implement the UN Security Council resolutions for dismantlement of all weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missiles of all ranges, in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner by North Korea. To that end, Japan will continue to coordinate closely with related countries, including the U.S. and the ROK, as well as international organizations such as the IAEA. At the same time, from the viewpoint of the full implementation of the UN Security Council resolutions, Japan will work on capacity building for export control particularly in Asia. Japan will also continue to contribute actively to discussions on North Korea's nuclear and missile activities in international export control regimes such as the NSG and MTCR.

Since the withdrawal of the former U.S. administration of Trump from the Joint Comprehensive

**18** A multilateral Director-General-level meeting launched in 2003 and hosted by Japan to discuss various issues related to the strengthening of the nonproliferation regime in Asia among the 10 ASEAN Member States, China, India, the ROK, as well as the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, Canada, France, and the EU, which have common interests in Asian regional security. Most recently, the 16th meeting was held online in December 2020, and discussions were held on topics such as North Korea's nuclear and missile issues and the strengthening of export control.

**19** A seminar hosted by Japan to exchange views and information toward strengthening export controls in Asia, with the participation of export control officials from Asian countries and regions. It has been organized annually in Tokyo since 1993.

**20** Adopted in April 2004, UN Security Council Resolution 1540 obliges all countries to: (1) refrain from providing support to terrorists and other non-state actors attempting to develop weapons of mass destruction; (2) adopt and enforce laws prohibiting the development of weapons of mass destruction by terrorists and other non-state actors; and (3) implement domestic controls (protective measures, border control, export controls, etc.) to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The resolution also establishes, under the UN Security Council, the 1540 Committee, which comprises Security Council members and has a mandate to review and report to the Security Council the level of resolution 1540 implementation by member states.

Plan of Action (JCPOA)<sup>21</sup> in 2018, Iran has continued with actions to reduce its commitments under the JCPOA. In January 2020, Iran announced that it would not be bound by the limit on the enrichment of uranium set forth in the JCPOA. Since the start of 2021, it has produced 20% enriched uranium in January, suspended the implementation of transparency measures under the JCPOA including the AP in February, and produced 60% enriched uranium in April. By August, it was confirmed that Iran had produced uranium metal enriched at up to 20%.

Japan has consistently supported the JCPOA, which contributes to the international non-proliferation regime, and is paying close attention to efforts by the relevant countries toward the return of both the U.S. and Iran to the JCPOA. Japan, being deeply concerned about Iran's continued reduction of its commitments under the JCPOA, has repeatedly urged Iran to refrain from further measures that may undermine the JCPOA and to return fully to its commitments under the JCPOA.

In February, September, and November, IAEA Director General Grossi visited Iran to discuss these issues related to compliance with the JCPOA and the series of problems with safeguards (in which nuclear materials that had not been declared to the IAEA were found in Iran). During his visits in February and September, Iran and the IAEA issued joint statements and affirmed their mutual spirit of cooperation. However, the two parties failed to reach a final agreement during the visit in November, and a joint statement was not issued. In response, European and American countries expressed their concern. Thereafter, Iran and the IAEA affirmed a certain degree of cooperation in December.

In March 2022, Director General Grossi visited Iran again. The two parties issued a joint statement and agreed to set the aim to reporting the conclusions on the safeguards issue by the IAEA Board of Governors in June 2022. Japan supports the IAEA's efforts on Iran matters so far and will continue to call strongly upon Iran to fully cooperate with the IAEA. Japan is also contributing to discussions on Iran's nuclear and missile activities in international export control regimes such as the NSG and MTCR.

As for Syria, the IAEA Board of Governors in 2011 found that activities such as Syria's undeclared construction of a nuclear reactor would constitute non-compliance with its safeguards agreement with the IAEA. To address this outstanding issue, Japan is calling upon Syria to cooperate fully with the IAEA. It is important for Syria to sign, ratify and implement the AP.

### **Nuclear Security**

International cooperation is advancing in nuclear security to prevent acts of terrorism such as those involving the use of nuclear and other radioactive materials. These include the entering into force of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) in 2007 and of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material in 2015 respectively. In addition, the Nuclear Security Summit was held four times between 2010 and 2016. At the International Conference on Nuclear Security held by the IAEA in 2020, Mr. Wakamiya Kenji, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs participated in the ministerial conference as a representative of the Government of Japan and delivered a speech to share the view

**21** Sets forth detailed procedures for imposing constraints on Iran's nuclear activities while ensuring that they serve peaceful purposes, and for lifting the imposed sanctions.

<Main measures undertaken by Iran>

● Constraints on enriched uranium-related activities

- Limit on the number of centrifuges in operation to 5,060 units
- Upper limit on enriched uranium at 3.67%, and limit on the amount of stored enriched uranium at 300kg, etc.

● Constraints on the Arak heavy-water nuclear reactor, and reprocessing

- Redesign / remodeling of the Arak heavy-water nuclear reactor so that it is not able to produce weapon-grade plutonium and to transfer spent fuel out of the country
- No reprocessing including for research purposes, no construction of reprocessing facilities, etc.

of Japan with other participants. Japan continues to actively participate in and contribute to these efforts.

In October 2019, relevant Japanese ministries and organizations conducted a table-top exercise on nuclear security measures for major public events with the participation of experts from the IAEA and the U.S.

On March 2 and 3, 2022, the IAEA Board of Governors convened an emergency meeting in Vienna to discuss the implications of Russia's aggression against Ukraine on nuclear safety, nuclear security, and safeguards. At the meeting, participating countries condemned and expressed their concerns regarding Russia's attacks on the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant and other nuclear facilities in Ukraine from the perspective of nuclear safety, nuclear security, and safeguards. The resolution adopted by a majority at the meeting deplores Russia's actions in Ukraine, which are posing serious and direct threats to the safety and security of nuclear facilities and civilian personnel. It also calls upon Russia to immediately cease all actions in order for Ukraine to preserve or promptly regain full control over nuclear facilities. Japan also strongly condemned the aggression by Russia, including seizing control of nuclear facilities, and will continue to respond appropriately while monitoring the relevant situation closely in cooperation with the IAEA and other parties.

### (3) Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

#### A Multilateral Efforts

Along with nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, the peaceful use of nuclear energy is one of the three pillars of the NPT. According to the treaty, it is the “inalienable right” for any country that meets its obligations to non-proliferation to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Reflecting

the increase in international energy demand, many countries use or are planning to use nuclear power.<sup>22</sup>

On the other hand, these nuclear materials, equipment, and technologies used for nuclear power generation can be diverted to uses for military purposes, and a nuclear accident in one country may have significant impacts on neighboring countries. For these reasons, with regard to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, it is vital to ensure the “3S”:<sup>23</sup> that is, (1) Safeguards, (2) Nuclear Safety (e.g. measures to ensure safety to prevent nuclear accidents), and (3) Nuclear Security. As the country that experienced the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident, it is Japan's responsibility to share its experiences and lessons learned from the accident with other countries and to contribute to strengthening global nuclear safety. In this regard, in 2013, the IAEA, in collaboration with Japan, designated the IAEA Response and Assistance Network (RANET) Capacity Building Centre (CBC) in Fukushima Prefecture. By December, they had conducted 26 workshops for Japanese and foreign officials to strengthen their capacity in the field of emergency preparedness and response. In November 2021, the IAEA held the International Conference on Strengthening Nuclear Safety, marking 10 years since the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident, to reflect on the lessons and experiences drawn from the actions taken by participating countries and international organizations, and to identify pathways for further strengthening nuclear safety in the future.

The difficult work of decommissioning, contaminated water management, decontamination and environmental remediation has been progressing steadily at the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station by leveraging the collective technologies and knowledge of the world, and in

<sup>22</sup> According to the IAEA, as of January 2022, 439 nuclear reactors are in operation worldwide and 50 reactors are under construction.

<sup>23</sup> “3S” is used to refer to the IAEA's efforts toward nuclear safety, nuclear security, and nuclear safeguards, which are typical measures for non-proliferation.

cooperation with the IAEA, the expert organization in the field of nuclear energy. The Government of Japan announced its Basic Policy on the handling of the ALPS treated water<sup>24</sup> in April, and signed a Terms of Reference (TOR) on Reviews of Safety Aspects of Handling ALPS treated Water with the IAEA in July. Under this TOR, Japan is cooperating with the IAEA to implement the IAEA reviews on the safety and regulatory aspects of ALPS treated water. This cooperation is facilitated by a task force established within the IAEA, which also includes experts identified by the IAEA from its member states. In November, experts from the IAEA and analytical agencies of the Republic of Korea (ROK), Germany and France conducted Marine Monitoring in Japan.

The UN Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) published a revised report in March on the levels and the impact of radiation from the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident, based on the latest information.

In order to make progress in the decommissioning works and in recovery with a support and correct understanding of the international community, the Government of Japan periodically releases comprehensive reports through the IAEA that cover matters such as progress in decommissioning and contaminated water management at the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, results of the monitoring of air dose rate and seawater radioactivity concentration, and food safety. In addition, Japan submits reports on the current situation to the Diplomatic Missions in Tokyo and to the IAEA basically every month. Furthermore, Japan has organized more than 100 briefing sessions to the Diplomatic Missions in Tokyo since the accident (held in April, August, September, November, and December in 2021), and provided information through Japanese diplomatic missions overseas.

The Government of Japan continues to provide an information thoroughly to the international community in a transparent manner, based on scientific evidence, and to provide firm explanations for claims that may cause reputational damage.

Nuclear energy is applied not only to the field of power generation, but also to other areas including human health, food and agriculture, environment, and industrial uses. Promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in such non-power applications and contributing to development issues are becoming increasingly important as developing countries make up the majority of NPT States Parties. The IAEA also contributes to technical cooperation for developing countries and to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

In this context, Japan has been actively supporting the IAEA's activities, with its technical cooperation based on the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development, and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (RCA) and with its contribution to the Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI). In FY2020, Japan contributed 11 million euros toward measures to combat infectious diseases including COVID-19, and in FY2021 toward projects to address the problem of marine plastic pollution among others.

### **B** Bilateral Nuclear Cooperation Agreement

Bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements are concluded to establish a legal framework for securing a legal assurance from the recipient country on nuclear non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear-related material and equipment that are transferred between the two countries, so as to realize cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy between the two countries. Under such bilateral agreements, cooperation in areas such as the strengthening of nuclear safety can be promoted. Japan makes its decision on whether

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<sup>24</sup> "ALPS treated water" refers to water purified using multiple purification systems, including Advanced Liquid Processing Systems (ALPS).

or not to conclude a nuclear cooperation agreement framework with another country, taking into account a wide range of factors such as non-proliferation efforts and nuclear energy policy of that country, its trust in and expectations for Japan, and the bilateral relationship between the two countries among others. As of the end of 2021, Japan has concluded bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements with Canada, Australia, China, the U.S., France, the UK, the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), Kazakhstan, the ROK, Viet Nam, Jordan, Russia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, and India. As for the UK, following the changes of safeguards applicable to the UK as a result of its withdrawal from EURATOM, Japan engaged in negotiations with the Government of the UK from June 2019 on the Protocol Amending the Japan-UK Nuclear Cooperation Agreement. This Protocol was signed in December 2020 and entered into force in September 2021.

#### (4) Biological and Chemical Weapons

##### A Biological Weapons

The Biological Weapons Convention (BWC)<sup>25</sup> is the only multilateral legal framework imposing a comprehensive ban on the development, production and possession of biological weapons. However, the question of how to reinforce the Convention is a challenge as there are neither provisions governing the means of verifying compliance with the BWC nor an implementing organization for the Convention.

Since 2006, decisions have been made to establish the Implementation Support Unit (fulfilling the functions of a Secretariat) and to hold inter-sessional meetings twice a year in between the Review Conferences held every five years. During this time, progress has been made with respect to initiatives aimed at strengthening the regime of the BWC.

At the inter-sessional meetings up until the 9th

Review Conference scheduled to be held in 2022, discussions were held on the five topics, namely international cooperation, reviews of developments in the field of science and technology, national implementation, assistance for preparedness and response, and institutional strengthening of the Convention.

##### B Chemical Weapons

The Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC)<sup>26</sup> imposes a comprehensive ban on the development, production, stockpiling, and use of chemical weapons, and stipulates that all existing chemical weapons must be destroyed. Compliance is ensured through a verification system consisting of declarations and inspections, making this Convention a groundbreaking international agreement on the disarmament and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The implementing body of the CWC is the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), which is based in the Hague, the Netherlands. Along with the UN, the OPCW has played a key role in the destruction of Syria's chemical weapons. Its extensive efforts toward the realization of a world without chemical weapons were highly acclaimed, and the organization was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2013.

Japan, which has a highly developed chemicals industry and numerous chemicals factories, also accepts many OPCW inspections. Japan also actively cooperates with the OPCW in many other concrete ways, including measures to increase the number of member states and strengthening national implementation measures by States Parties with the aim of increasing the effectiveness of the Convention. Moreover, under the CWC, Japan aims to complete, as soon as possible, the destruction of chemical weapons of the former Japanese Army abandoned in Chinese territory by working in cooperation with China.

<sup>25</sup> Entered into force in March 1975. Total number of state parties is 183 (as of December 2021).

<sup>26</sup> Entered into force in April 1997. Total number of state parties is 193 (as of December 2021).

### **(5) Conventional Weapons**

Conventional weapons generally refer to arms other than weapons of mass destruction and include a wide variety of weapons ranging from large weapons such as landmines, tanks, and artillery to small arms such as handguns. The problem of conventional weapons, which are used in actual wars and cause injury and death to civilians, is a serious one for both national security and humanitarian concerns. The disarmament agenda presented in 2018 by UN Secretary-General Guterres categorizes disarmament of conventional weapons as one of the three pillars, “Disarmament that Saves Lives.” Japan is making active efforts involving cooperation and support based on international standards and principles concerning conventional weapons.

#### **A Small Arms**

Described as “the real weapons of mass destruction” due to the many human lives they take, small arms continue to proliferate due to the ease with which they can be obtained and used. They contribute to conflict prolongation and escalation, hindering the restoration of public security and post-conflict reconstruction and development. Since 1995, Japan has been working with other countries to submit a resolution on the illicit trade of small arms to the UN General Assembly, and the resolution has been adopted every year. In areas around the world, Japan has also provided support for projects to address the issue of small arms, including training and the collection and destruction of weapons. In 2019, Japan contributed two million US dollars to a mechanism for preventing small arms established under UN Secretary-General Guterres’ disarmament agenda.

#### **B The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)<sup>27</sup>**

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), which seeks to establish common standards to regulate

international trade in and prevent the illicit trade of conventional arms, entered into force in December 2014. As one of the original co-authors of the UN General Assembly resolution that initiated a consideration of the treaty, Japan has taken the lead in discussions and negotiations in the UN and contributed significantly to the establishment of the treaty. Even after the treaty entered into force, Japan has actively participated in discussions at Conferences of States Parties and other opportunities. Japan has continued to contribute in ways such as hosting the 4th Conference of States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty in Tokyo as the first chair country elected from the Asia-Pacific region in August 2018. Japan also places importance on the universal application of the ATT. To that end, it has been encouraging countries, in particular Asian countries, to participate in the ATT.

#### **C Convention on Prohibition or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May Be Deemed to Be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects (Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons, CCW)<sup>28</sup>**

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) prohibits or restricts the use of conventional weapons that are deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects. It comprises a framework convention that sets forth procedural and other matters, as well as five annexed protocols that regulate individual conventional arms. The framework convention entered into force in 1983. Japan has ratified the framework convention and annexed Protocols I to IV, including the amended Protocol II. Prompted by concerns in the international community about the rapidly advancing military applications of science and technology, meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous

<sup>27</sup> As of December 2021, there are 110 states and regions that are parties to the ATT. Japan signed the Treaty on the day that it was released for signing and became a State Party in May 2014.

<sup>28</sup> As of December 2021, 125 countries and regions are parties to the CCW.



Weapons Systems (LAWS) have been held under the CCW framework since 2017. Meetings of the Group were held in March and August 2019, and the High Contracting Parties reached consensus on 11 guiding principles on LAWS. It was decided that discussions on matters including the guiding principles will be used as a basis for the clarification, consideration and development of normative and operational framework for the future. The 11 guiding principles were officially reached consensus at the Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the CCW held in November 2019. In 2021, too, active discussions took place at the meetings of the Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) convened in August, September and December, and at the Sixth Review Conference of the CCW held in December. Japan continued to participate actively and constructively in the international rule-making, and contributed to discussions.

#### **D Anti-Personnel Mines**

Since the conclusion of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Use, Stockpiling, Production and Transfer of Anti-Personnel Mines and on Their Destruction (Ottawa Treaty)<sup>29</sup> in 1998, Japan has continued to promote comprehensive measures with a focus on the effective prohibition of anti-personnel mines and strengthening of support for mine-affected countries. Along with calling on countries in the Asia-Pacific region to ratify or accede to the Convention, Japan has also been steadily engaged in international cooperation through landmine clearance, victim assistance and other activities in the international community, from the viewpoint of the “Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus.”

At the 19th Meeting of the States Parties of the Ottawa Treaty held in Geneva in November 2021, Japan presented its initiatives and achievements in supporting mine action, and also expressed its continued resolve toward playing an active role in achieving a mine-free world.

#### **E Cluster Munitions<sup>30</sup>**

The international community takes seriously the humanitarian consequences brought about by cluster munitions. Japan is therefore taking steps to address this issue via victim assistance and unexploded ordnance clearance,<sup>31</sup> while also continuing its efforts to increase the number of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM).<sup>32</sup> At the Second Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions held in 2021, Japan participated in discussions concerning these issues and shared its proactive efforts.

### **5 Japan's Efforts at the United Nations**

#### **(1) Japan-UN Relationship**

The UN is an international organization that nearly all the countries in the world are currently members of (193 countries as of December 2021). It addresses various challenges in diverse areas such as conflict resolution and peacebuilding, counter-terrorism, disarmament and non-proliferation, poverty and development, human rights, refugee issues, environment and climate change issues, disaster risk reduction and infectious diseases.

Since joining the UN in 1956, Japan has leveraged on both universality and expertise to realize

<sup>29</sup> The Convention, which entered into force in March 1999, bans the use and production of anti-personnel mines while mandating the destruction of stockpiled mines and the clearance of buried mines. As of December 2021, there are 164 states and regions that are parties to the Convention, including Japan.

<sup>30</sup> Generally speaking, it refers to bombs or shells in the form of large containers that open midair and release submunitions that spread over a wide area. They are said to be highly likely to not explode on impact, leading to the problem of civilians being accidentally killed or injured.

<sup>31</sup> See the White Paper on Development Cooperation for specific efforts on international cooperation regarding cluster munitions and anti-personnel mines.

<sup>32</sup> Entered into force in August 2010, it prohibits the use, possession, or production of cluster munitions, while mandating the clearance of cluster munitions in contaminated areas and the destruction of stockpiled cluster munitions. As of December 2021, there are 110 states and regions that are parties to the Convention, including Japan.

policy aims through multilateral cooperation in a wide range of areas, including the three pillars of the UN—peace and security, development and human rights. An important example of this is the key role that Japan has fulfilled in the maintenance of international peace and security, such as having served as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council more frequently than any other UN Member State. In order to support such activities, the Government of Japan contributes financially to the UN while also actively engaging in the organizational aspects (management) of the UN. Japan also supports Japanese staff who intend to continue working in the UN, and puts effort into helping them gain appointment to important posts (see Chapter 4, Section 1, 2(1)). Since we face the pressing challenge of making the UN efficient, effective and suitable for the 21st century, Japan continues to proactively engage in UN reform, including UN Security Council reform.

## **(2) Major Events in 2021**

Due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the High-Level Week of the 76th UN General Assembly was convened in September in a hybrid format, through the screening of pre-recorded speeches and in-person participation. Prime Minister Suga sent a pre-recorded speech, while Foreign Minister Motegi attended the meeting in person.

In his address at the General Debate of the UN General Assembly, Prime Minister Suga spoke about Japan's vision and contributions toward overcoming the COVID-19 crisis and guiding the world toward a better future. He introduced Japan's efforts to overcome the COVID-19 crisis, and identified four priority areas in order for Japan to guide the world toward a better future: global health systems, decarbonization, building a free and open international order, and peace and security. He expressed that Japan will put active efforts into each area. Last but not least, referring to the 10-year mark after the Great East Japan Earthquake, he reaffirmed the importance

of international coordination and emphasized Japan's resolve to further promote multilateralism.

Prime Minister Suga also participated in four conferences through video messages. At the Major Economies Forum on Energy and Climate (MEF) hosted by the U.S., he stated Japan's commitments to reach net-zero by 2050, and expressed that Japan will exert its leadership in addressing climate change. At the SDG Moment 2021, Prime Minister Suga emphasized that Japan will do its utmost toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 and creating a hopeful future. Furthermore, at the Global COVID-19 Summit hosted by the U.S., he introduced Japan's financial contributions to the COVAX facility and vaccine donations, including new pledges. At the same time, he expressed Japan's resolve to lead international efforts toward achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC). At the UN Food Systems Summit, Prime Minister Suga stated that Japan will work toward establishing better global "food systems," and expressed Japan's determination to host the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 in December with the participation of a wide range of stakeholders, and to lead international efforts to improve nutrition for people in the world, which has deteriorated as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In addition to hosting the Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 Countries on UN Security Council Reform and participating in the G20 Foreign Ministers' Extraordinary Meeting on Afghanistan, Foreign Minister Motegi also held foreign ministers' meetings with the U.S., ROK, UK, France, Russia, Indonesia, Qatar, and Pakistan, and a Japan-U.S.-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting. Based on the personal relationships built with his counterparts, Foreign Minister Motegi engaged in diplomacy that strengthens the vision for a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" and Japan's footing in the international community, and confirmed close cooperation with the international community regarding regional affairs, including North Korea and Afghanistan. Foreign

Minister Motegi also conveyed Japan's policies and standpoint to the international community, issuing video messages for the Ministerial Meeting of the Alliance for Multilateralism and the 12th Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), and co-hosting the High-level Side Event on UHC.

Foreign Minister Motegi also held a meeting with UN Secretary-General António Guterres. They exchanged views on addressing emerging challenges in the report issued by Secretary-General Guterres in September, titled "Our Common Agenda" (this report contains recommendations on how to address various issues that the international community is confronted by), and concurred on the importance of ensuring that efforts are tied in with the strengthening of human security. With regard to North Korea, Secretary-General Guterres expressed his renewed support for understanding and cooperation toward the early resolution of the abductions issue.

In August, Foreign Minister Abdulla Shahid of the Maldives visited Japan ahead of his appointment as the President of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly. He paid a courtesy call to Prime Minister Suga, and exchanged opinions with Foreign Minister Motegi on COVID-19, climate change, issues concerning North Korea, and UN Security Council reform, inter alia.

In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022 and the exercise of its veto at the UN Security Council, the Emergency Special Session of the UN General Assembly was convened in March, and the resolution on "Aggression against Ukraine" was adopted with 141 countries voting in favor, including Japan. Japan co-sponsored this resolution, and after its adoption, stated that Japan called on Russia to heed the overwhelming voice of the international community and implement the resolution.

### (3) United Nations Security Council and its Reform

#### A United Nations Security Council

The UN Security Council holds the primary responsibility within the UN for maintaining international peace and security. It is composed of five permanent members and 10 non-permanent members that are elected by UN Member States (for two-year terms). Its agenda covers a wide range of areas, such as settlement of disputes, addressing new threats including proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and terrorism, peacebuilding and women, peace and security (see the Special Feature on page 233). Along with this, the scope of its activities, such as UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO) and UN Special Political Missions (SPM), is also growing in diversity.

Japan has been elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council 11 times, more frequently than any other UN Member State, and has contributed proactively to discussions in the Security Council. During its previous term on the Council from January 2016 to the end of December 2017, Japan made every effort to resolve North Korea's nuclear and missile issues, including contributions to drafting the six UN Security Council resolutions adopted in response to North Korea's repeated ballistic missile launches and three nuclear tests conducted in January and September 2016 and September 2017. In addition to working proactively to respond to regional situations including in Africa and the Middle East, Japan has also led discussions toward improving the working methods of the UN Security Council. Furthermore, during its term, Japan contributed to discussions based on the concepts of human security and sustaining peace, to ensure that the UN Security Council addresses issues effectively from the perspectives of international peace and security. At the UN Security Council Briefing on Non-proliferation/Democratic People's Republic of Korea in December 2019, Japan was fully engaged in discussions related to maintaining international

peace and security by stating that North Korea's ballistic missile launches were in violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and posed a serious challenge not only for Japan but also for the international community as a whole, as well as calling for the importance of the full implementation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions. Japan will continue to contribute to the maintenance of international peace and security by seeking to become a non-permanent member of the Council as frequently as possible, until such time as reform, including the admission of Japan as a permanent member of the Council, is achieved. From this point of view, Japan is running for the Security Council non-permanent membership at the elections to be held in 2022.

### **B Reform of the UN Security Council**

75 years have passed since the UN was established, and the structure of the international community has changed significantly while the UN's functions have grown increasingly diverse. Despite this, the composition of the UN Security Council has largely remained unchanged to this day. In response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine in February 2022, a resolution that deplores in the strongest terms the aggression by Russia was put to a vote in the UN Security Council. However, it was not adopted as Russia exercised its veto. Consequently, the UN Security Council was unable to take a coordinated response. This clearly shows that the UN Security Council cannot adequately fulfill the functions expected by the international community today. There is broad recognition among the international community of the necessity for promptly reforming the UN Security Council in a way that improves its legitimacy, effectiveness and representativeness. In particular, in the Declaration on the Commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, all the leaders of the world committed to "instill new life in the discussions on the reform of the Security Council."

To play an even more proactive role toward the

realization of world peace and security through the UN, Japan has been making efforts to convince other countries to pursue the early realization of UN Security Council reform, with the expansion of both permanent and non-permanent seats and Japan's admission as a permanent member.

### **C Recent Activities Regarding UN Security Council Reform**

Since 2009, in the UN General Assembly, Member States have been engaging in the Intergovernmental Negotiations on UN Security Council reform. In 2021, the Intergovernmental Negotiations were held once a month from January till May. At the end of June, the decision for the 76th session to role over the work of the 75th session was adopted by consensus at the UN General Assembly, including the content "instill new life in the discussions on the reform of the Security Council." In November, President Shahid of the 76th session of the UN General Assembly reappointed the Permanent Representative of Qatar to the UN, and newly appointed the Permanent Representative of Denmark to the UN as co-chairs of the Intergovernmental Negotiations. The spotlight will be placed on how future discussions will progress under the new system.

Japan also places great importance on its initiatives as a member of the G4 (Japan, India, Germany and Brazil), a group that cooperates on promoting UN Security Council reform. Foreign Minister Motegi hosted the Meeting of the Foreign



Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the G4 Countries (Japan, India, Germany and Brazil) on UN Security Council Reform (September 22, New York, U.S.)

## UN Security Council – Issues covered by the Security Council, and their Changes

In the United Nations, there is widespread recognition that the global spread of COVID-19 is not only a global health issue, but also a problem that could have an implication on security. Some are also of the view that climate change exacerbates threats to security. Thus, adding to traditional UN security issues such as regional conflicts, disarmament and terrorism, a growing number of problems in recent years have been newly regarded as security issues. In line with this, issues covered by the UN Security Council (UNSC) are also changing. In other words, the UNSC is seeing changes to the scope of “Maintenance of international peace and security,” which is its primary responsibility set out in the United Nations Charter.

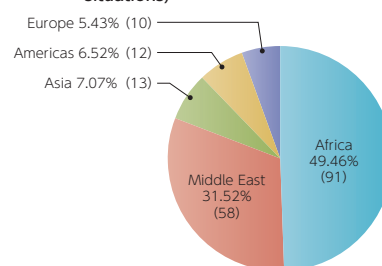
Traditional agenda items considered by the UNSC, firstly, include region-specific agenda. Matters related to Africa and the Middle East, including situations in Afghanistan, Syria, Libya, Somalia, Mali, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo make up approximately 80% of the agenda. There are also thematic agenda items, which include UN Peacekeeping Operations (PKO), the threat of terrorism, and peacebuilding. Furthermore, when discussing new issues that extend beyond such existing agenda, Members of the UNSC consult on the agenda items to be covered, considering the situation at the time.

Looking at the recent trends for the number of agenda items, while eight to 23 new agenda items were added every year from the 1990s to 2007, since 2008, just less than three agenda items have been added every year.

This is considered to result from a tendency for the UNSC since the 2010s to respond to new issues by adding new sub-items under existing agenda, rather than by increasing the number of new agenda items.

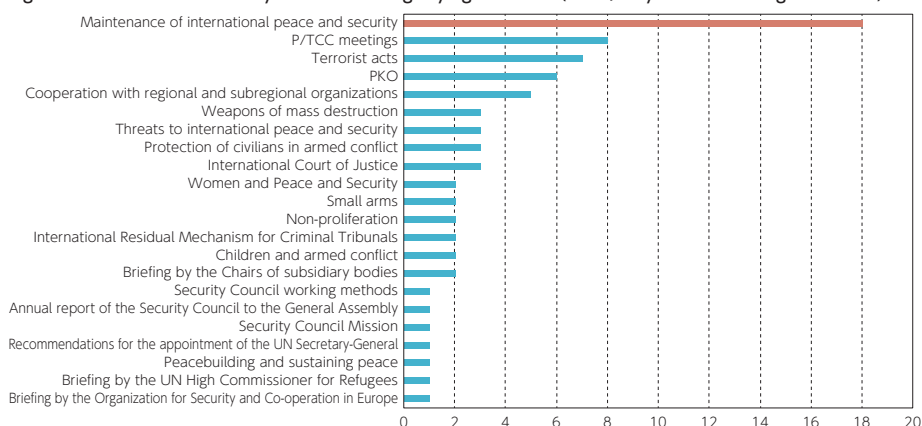
For example, the UNSC has responded to new issues in line with international trends by adding sub-items, such as “Transnational organized crime at sea,” “Climate and security,” and “Implications of COVID-19,” under “Maintenance of international peace and security,” which is one of its thematic agenda items.

**Figure 1 Percentage of the agenda of Security Council meetings by geographic region (2021, meetings on regional situations)**



Reference: HIGHLIGHTS OF SECURITY COUNCIL PRACTICE 2021, UN official website  
Note: Meetings refer to formal meetings and open VCTs. Number of meetings indicated in brackets.

**Figure 2 Number of UN Security Council meetings by agenda item (2021, only for thematic agenda items)**



Reference: HIGHLIGHTS OF SECURITY COUNCIL PRACTICE 2021, UN official website  
Note: Meetings refer to formal meetings and open VCTs.

At the same time, this trend can also be regarded as the result of adjustments within the UNSC in relation to the addition of new agenda items. For example, climate change is covered in the UNSC as a sub-item, "Climate and security," under the agenda of "Maintenance of international peace and security." In reality, however, Member States have different views; while some are of the view that climate change itself should be treated as an official agenda item of the UNSC (and not as a sub-item) under the recognition that climate change is a factor that increases the risk of conflicts, others are of the view that the UNSC is not a place for addressing climate change issues. Against the backdrop of such differences in the standpoints of Member States, there is still no UNSC Resolution that deals with climate and security as a main theme.

In cases where Members of the UNSC are unable to reach an accord on the agenda items covered at formal meetings of the Council, procedural vote is undertaken in the UNSC Chamber. Decisions on procedural matters are made by affirmative vote of nine members, regardless of whether they are permanent or non-permanent members. There is a growing number of examples whereby matters that are not official agenda items of the UNSC are addressed in informal fora (such as the Arria-formula Meeting) rather than at formal fora.

From the perspective that it is important for the UNSC to effectively address a wide range of complex contemporary challenges such as climate change, famine, and infectious diseases, Japan took the initiative to hold an Open Debate (official meeting) on "Addressing Complex Contemporary Challenges to International Peace and Security" during its previous term as a member of the UNSC from 2017 to 2018.

Japan is currently running for the election of non-permanent members of the UNSC in 2022. When elected, Japan will further contribute to the maintenance of peace and security as a member of the UNSC, while paying close attention to trends in the international community.



Ministers of the G4 countries in September in conjunction with the High-Level Week of the UN General Assembly. At the meeting, the G4 Foreign Ministers shared their current understanding on the reform of the UN security Council, exchanged views on their collective efforts to bring about concrete progress on the reform, and reaffirmed their solidarity and resolve as the G4. The G4 Foreign Ministers also agreed to support the President of the General Assembly so as to see progress in the Intergovernmental Negotiations. The G4 Foreign Ministers expressed support to the Common African Position and agreed to cooperate to push forward the reform process such as the early commencement of text-based negotiations, while working in cooperation with Africa and other relevant countries. Japan will continue to engage proactively in the process for realizing UN Security Council reform, in close cooperation with reform-oriented countries.

#### (4) Organizational Aspects of the United Nations (Management)

##### A Management

In June, when he was reappointed for a second term, UN Secretary-General Guterres demonstrated his recognition of the need for continuous efforts toward reforms in the areas of peace and development, as well as the management of the UN, and stated that he will strengthen the reforms that he has been working on to date. In September, he issued a report titled “Our Common Agenda,” which proposed concrete measures for the UN to adapt to a new era. Through dialogues with member states and the UN Secretariat, Japan is supporting the objectives of the reform with the hope that these efforts will produce concrete results and that the UN will fulfill its mission more effectively and efficiently.

#### UN regular budget scale of assessments of top contributors (%)

Ranking	Country	2019 - 2021	2022 - 2024
1	U.S.	22.000	22.000
2	China	12.005	15.254
3	Japan	8.564	8.033
4	Germany	6.090	6.111
5	UK	4.567	4.375
6	France	4.427	4.318
7	Italy	3.307	3.189
8	Canada	2.734	2.628
9	ROK	2.267	2.574
10	Spain	2.146	2.134

#### UN PKO budget scale of assessments of top contributors (%)

Ranking	Country	2021	2022	2023 - 24
1	U.S.	27.8908	26.9493	26.9493
2	China	15.2195	18.6857	18.6857
3	Japan	8.5640	8.0330	8.0330
4	Germany	6.0900	6.1110	6.1110
5	UK	5.7899	5.3592	5.3592
6	France	5.6124	5.2894	5.2894
7	Italy	3.3070	3.1890	3.1890
8	Canada	2.7340	2.6280	2.6280
9	ROK	2.2670	2.5740	2.5740
10	Russia	3.0490	2.2858	2.2858

## B Budget

The UN budget is mainly composed of the regular budget for general activities (a biennial budget for the period from January to December of the next year; an annual budget from January to December of the same year has been implemented on a trial basis from 2020 to 2022), and the peacekeeping budget related to peacekeeping operations (an annual budget for the period from July to the following June).

With regard to the regular budget, a budget for 2022 amounting to approximately 3.12 billion US dollars was approved in December 2021 at the UN General Assembly. The budget for peacekeeping operations for the period of 2021-2022 amounting to approximately 6.38 billion US dollars in total was approved in June 2021 (a decrease of approximately 3.0% from the final budget of the previous period).<sup>33</sup>

The budget to support the UN activities is composed of assessed contributions paid by Member States and voluntary contributions provided in accordance with Member States' policy needs. With regard to assessed contributions, Japan currently ranks third after the U.S. and China. Japan contributed approximately 247.72 million US dollars to the UN regular budget for 2021, and approximately 529.26 million US dollars to the peacekeeping budget for 2021/22. As a major financial contributor, Japan has been encouraging the UN to make more efficient and effective use of its financial resources. The scale of assessments, which provides the basis for calculating the amount of assessed contributions, is revised every three years based on the capacities to pay of the Member States. Japan's scale of assessment, revised at the end of 2021, is 8.033% (2022-2024), just behind the U.S. and China.

Key bodies that address administrative and budgetary matters of the UN are the Advisory

Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the Committee on Contributions. These are standing subsidiary committees of the General Assembly and are comprised of members serving in their personal capacities. The ACABQ reviews the overall administrative and budgetary issues of the UN and makes recommendations to the General Assembly, while the Committee on Contributions submits a proposal on the scale of assessments of the regular budget for a decision to be made by all Member States at the General Assembly. Hence, both committees play an important role. Members from Japan have served continuously on both of these committees.

## 6 The Rule of Law in the International Community

The rule of law is, generally, the concept that recognizes the superiority of the law over all forms of power. It is the basis of the international order that consists of friendly and equitable relations between states, as well as an essential cornerstone of a fair and just society within a country. The rule of law is also an important factor in ensuring peaceful settlement of disputes between states and in promoting "good governance" in each state. Based on this view, Japan promotes bilateral and multilateral rule-making and the proper implementation of these rules in various fields that include security, economic and social affairs and criminal justice. Furthermore, in order to promote the peaceful settlement of disputes and the maintenance of international legal order, Japan actively cooperates with international judicial organizations such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) to strengthen their functions

<sup>33</sup> Information on the changes in the UN regular budget and on the changes in the PKO budget and the number of missions are available on the MOFA website (Japanese only):  
Changes in the UN regular budget (<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/100091314.pdf>)  
Changes in the PKO budget and the number of missions (<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/100091315.pdf>)



via both human and financial resource contributions. In addition, Japan has been working to enhance the rule of law in the international community, including Asian countries, through supporting the improvement of legal systems, participating in international conferences, exchanging views with various countries, and hosting events on international law.

### **(1) Japan's Diplomacy to Strengthen the Rule of Law**

Strengthening the rule of law is one of the pillars of Japan's foreign policy. Japan opposes unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force, and strives to maintain its territorial integrity, secure its maritime and economic interests, and protect its citizens. Examples of Japan's efforts in this regard include the consistent affirmation of, and initiatives to promote, the maintenance and enhancement of a free and open international order based on the rule of law at various fora, including international conferences such as the UN General Assembly and meetings with relevant states. With a view to promoting the rule of law in the international community, Japan has been contributing to the peaceful settlement of inter-state disputes based on international law, the formation and development of a new international legal order, and the development of legal systems and human resources in various countries.

#### **A Peaceful Settlement of Disputes**

In order to encourage peaceful settlement of disputes via international judicial institutions while striving to comply faithfully with international law, Japan accepts the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ,<sup>34</sup> the principal judicial organ of the UN, and constructively contributes to establishing the rule of law in the international community via cooperation in providing human and financial resources to numerous international courts.

For example, Japan is the largest financial contributor to the ICC and the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA). In terms of human resources, there have been a number of Japanese judges serving on international judicial bodies, including ICJ Judge Iwasawa Yuji (incumbent since 2018, ICJ's fourth Japanese judge to date), Judge Yanai Shunji to the ITLOS (incumbent since 2005, the President of the ITLOS from October 2011 to September 2014), and Judge Akane Tomoko to the ICC (incumbent since March 2018). Through these contributions, Japan strives to enhance the effectiveness and universality of international courts and tribunals. In 2020, the Support Program for Internships at International Courts and other International Organizations was launched with the aim of developing human resources who can play an active role in international litigations in the future. Through this project, active support is provided to Japanese interns at international judicial organizations.

To further strengthen the capability of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in dealing with international litigations, efforts are ongoing to enhance expertise on international judicial proceedings as well as to build up strengthened networks with lawyers in and outside Japan, especially by the International Judicial Proceedings Division (established in 2015) and the Economic Dispute Settlement Division (established in 2020). To win in an international litigation, it is vital to have full knowledge of the context of the trial and its specific legal proceedings. The procedural laws that are applicable to trials in courts such as the ICJ, the ITLOS, and the PCA are not necessarily stipulated clearly in writing, and there are also norms that have been accumulated through judicial precedents. In addition, procedural laws are also developing alongside the growing complexity of the facts that are disputed in international trials. The International Judicial Proceedings Division

<sup>34</sup> A declaration that States Parties to the Statute of the ICJ recognize the jurisdiction of the ICJ as compulsory ipso facto and without special agreement, in relation to any other state accepting the same obligation, in accordance with Article 36, paragraph 2 of its Statute. Only 73 countries, including Japan, have made such declaration to date.

captures information on the trends and developments in law firms and among lawyers who are active in major international trials, and also works together with these lawyers to create an organization that can perform well in international trials. When it comes to addressing disputes of economic nature, the increasing importance of dispute settlements based on international agreements (the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements, Economic Partnership Agreements (EPA) and investment agreements) has resulted in growing demand for strengthening MOFA's capability to achieve more strategic and effective resolution of the disputes. To this end, with the view to consolidating the legal experts versed in economic dispute settlement, the Economic Dispute Settlement Division was established in August 2020. In the handling of dispute settlements under the WTO agreements and other agreements, the division engages in litigation work (preparation of written submissions, handling of evidence, preparation and participation in oral proceedings, etc.), analysis of case law and academic theories, and also engages in dispute prevention. All those works are carried out in close collaboration with the relevant ministries and agencies, as well as with private law firms and academic experts and practitioners specializing in international economic law both in Japan and abroad.

### **B** International Rule-making

International rule-making to respond to issues the global community faces is one of the important efforts toward strengthening the rule of law. Along with actively promoting the conclusion of bilateral and multilateral treaties aimed at building a legal foundation for achieving goals it shares with other countries, Japan is demonstrating initiative starting at the planning phase in creating rules for developing international laws that reflect its ideals and positions in cross-sectoral efforts in the framework of the UN and other fora. Specifically, Japan has been actively involved in the rule-making processes within various

international frameworks that include codification work in the field of public international law at the International Law Commission (ILC) and the sixth Committee of the UN General Assembly, as well as the preparation of conventions and model laws in the field of private international law at fora such as the Hague Conference on Private International Law (HCCH), the UN Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL), and the International Institute for the Unification of Private Law (UNIDROIT). In the ILC, Dr. Murase Shinya (Professor Emeritus of Sophia University, whose term is from 2009 to 2022), serves as a Special Rapporteur on the topic of "Protection of the Atmosphere," contributing to the development of international law through the deliberations in the ILC, especially those on the draft guidelines of the said topic (see Column on page 239). At the ILC elections held in November, Professor Asada Masahiko, Professor of Doshisha University and Professor Emeritus of Kyoto University, was elected (for the term from 2023 to 2027, making him the sixth Japanese member of the ILC to date). Japan also sends Government representatives to various meetings of the HCCH, UNCITRAL and UNIDROIT, taking an active lead in the discussions. In addition, Dr. Kanda Hideki, Professor of Gakushuin University, chairs the Digital Assets and Private Law working group in UNIDROIT, and contributes to leading-edge discussions on digital finance. Japan has also been showing its presence as a member state of UNCITRAL since the founding of the commission, such as by leading discussions and realizing the enlargement of the membership of UNCITRAL, and proposing new projects in the field of dispute settlement.

### **C** Development of Domestic Legislation and Other Matters

Japan not only takes steps to appropriately improve its own national laws so as to comply with international law, but also actively supports the development of legal systems, especially in Asian countries, while cooperating internationally

## Involvement in International Lawmaking in the United Nations

**Murase Shinya, Emeritus Professor of Sophia University and Member/  
Special Rapporteur of the UN International Law Commission**

The International Law Commission (ILC) of the United Nations was established in 1947 with the mission of promoting the codification and the progressive development of international law. It is a unique commission in the United Nations in that its members (34 members) sit in their individual capacity, and the members are not to take instructions from any States.

When I decided to specialize in international law at graduate school in 1967, I became interested in the activities of the ILC. Later, I started teaching at university, and I participated in the International Law Seminar organized by the ILC in 1975, and became involved in the work of the ILC as a Legal Officer of the UN Secretariat from 1980 to 1982. I continued to receive ILC documents from the Secretariat after that. I was elected as a member of the ILC in 2009, and my term will finally end at the end of 2022. Thus, I have been watching the ILC, from outside and inside, for more than half a century.

Shortly after I assumed office as an ILC member, I proposed that the ILC should work on the topic “Protection of the atmosphere,” with a view to developing international law on air pollution and climate change, and this proposal was adopted. Initially, I faced strong opposition from the members of the five major powers, and I felt indignant that I had never been more humiliated in my life. However, my effort and perseverance were rewarded, and the guidelines were adopted in the 2021 session. Although it may take years, I hope that a comprehensive “Convention on the Protection of the atmosphere” comparable to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea will be enacted based on these guidelines.

As members sit on the Commission in their individual capacity, intense clashes of egos sometimes occur among the members at the ILC. It is said that once the members from the United Kingdom and France became so aggravated that they nearly came to blows. As such a reserved person, I did not feel equal to the task; however, I think I have become considerably well-trained as I continue to serve on the Commission. Apart from “Protection of the atmosphere,” the ILC also has seven to eight items on its programme of work, and I always make myself be the first to speak. While it takes much preparation and courage to be the first to speak, I do so because it can have a certain impact on the flow of discussions in the Commission. When other members make unreasonable arguments, I exercise my right of reply and criticize immediately and severely. Having learned how to engage in legal arguments in seminars at Harvard Law School when I was young is helping me tremendously.

The most important thing in the international community is the establishment of “the rule of law.” In order to establish this, it is first of all necessary to clearly formulate laws of the international community, that is, international law. International law before the Second World War mostly consisted of unwritten customary international law and often lacked certainty, which frequently led them to be a source of dispute between States. The role of the ILC has been to codify this customary law and systematize it into multilateral treaties as clear written law. At the same time, it is also necessary to promote the “progressive development” of international law based on the direction in which the international community should be heading. Thus, the ILC has adopted numerous multilateral conventions to date.

The international community still needs international law-making in various areas, and Japan’s contribution is highly expected. To meet these expectations, it is desirable that not only the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japanese Society of International Law, but Japan as a whole makes a collective effort to develop human resources who can take on the role.



The author



Meeting at the ILC; the author is second from the left in the front (center of the front screen)

on efforts related to further developing the rule of law. For example, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japanese Society of International Law, supported by the Nippon Foundation, co-organize the Asia Cup. The Asia Cup is an international law moot court competition for students in Asia including Japan, which aims to raise awareness about the importance of the peaceful settlement of disputes, nurture future generations in the field of international law, and strengthen exchange and communication among them (the 22nd Asia Cup was held in 2021). Japan is also engaging in cooperation concerning human resources and finances with the Asian-African Legal Consultative Organization (AALCO), the only inter-governmental organization in the Asia/Africa region that is engaged in international law.

## **(2) Initiatives in the Maritime Sector**

For Japan, as a maritime nation, maintaining and strengthening maritime order based on the rule of law is an issue of the utmost importance. In his keynote address at the 13th Asia Security Summit (Shangri-La Dialogue) in May 2014, Prime Minister Abe proposed the “Three Principles of the Rule of Law at Sea” to be followed by every nation: (1) making and clarifying claims based on international law; (2) not using force or coercion in trying to drive their claims; and (3) seeking to settle disputes by peaceful means. Ever since then, Japan has consistently advocated these principles. For example, at the 15th East Asia Summit (EAS), held in November 2020, Prime Minister Suga emphasized that a free and open maritime order based on the rule of law forms the cornerstone of peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region.

The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) serves as a foundation for the rule of law at sea. The Convention has been ratified by 167 countries, including Japan (including some regions not officially recognized as nations by Japan), and the EU. The Convention comprehensively provides for principles governing the sea, including the freedom of navigation

and overflight of the high seas. It also stipulates rights and obligations under international law on the development and regulation of marine resources, among other things. The provisions of the Convention that concern areas such as territorial sea and exclusive economic zones are widely accepted as established customary international law. In addition, the recognition that activities conducted on the seas ought to be carried out according to the provisions of the Convention is widely shared among the international community. As problems concerning the oceans and seas grow more complex and diverse, it is important to preserve and strengthen the maritime order based on the Convention, which serves as a comprehensive and universal legal framework.

Under the UNCLOS, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) was established in 1996 in Hamburg, Germany for the peaceful settlement of maritime disputes and the preservation and advancement of law and order at sea. The ITLOS deals with a wide range of cases, including the delimitation of maritime boundaries in recent years in particular, and the importance of the Tribunal has been growing. Japan attaches importance to the role played by the ITLOS and has successively dispatched two Japanese judges to the tribunal since its establishment (currently Judge Yanai Shunji (as of December 31, 2021)).

The Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS) established pursuant to the UNCLOS also plays an important role in the operation of the system for delineating the outer limits of the continental shelf. Since the establishment of CLCS, Japan has continued to cooperate with the Commission in terms of both human and financial resources through means such as continuously producing members (Japan’s current member of the Commission is Professor Yamazaki Toshitsugu from the University of Tokyo (as of December 31, 2021)). In the International Seabed Authority (ISA), which was established pursuant to the UNCLOS for the primary purpose of managing deep sea-bed mineral resources, work such



as the formulation of the relevant standards and guidelines concerning the exploitation of deep sea-bed mineral resources progressed even during the COVID-19 pandemic. Japan works actively to ensure that its standpoint is reflected in these documents, and has been taking the lead in the creation of rules governing the deep sea-bed.

The decision was made to convene an inter-governmental conference (IGC) to formulate a new international agreement under the UNCLOS on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction (BBNJ), which was adopted by resolution 72/249 of the UN General Assembly in December 2017. Three meetings of the IGC were held by August 2019. Although the fourth meeting had been scheduled for March 2020, it was postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The Government of Japan actively takes part in discussions in order to ensure that Japan's perspective is reflected in the new international agreement by putting its emphasis on striking a balance between the dual aspects of conservation and sustainable use of the BBNJ.

### **(3) Initiatives in the Political and Security Fields**

In order to strengthen its legal basis for diplomatic activities, Japan is actively engaged in concluding international agreements in the political and security fields. In the field of security, Japan advanced efforts to conclude Acquisition and Cross-Servicing Agreements (ACSA), which set out the settlement procedures and other matters on the mutual provision of supplies and services between the JSDF and foreign armed forces, Agreements concerning the Transfer of Defence Equipment and Technology, which set out provisions on the handling of defence equipment and technologies to be transferred, and Agreements on the Security of Information, which serve as the basis for the sharing of classified information on security with the relevant countries. Japan's ACSA with India entered into force in July,

while Japan signed Agreements concerning the Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology with Indonesia in March and with Viet Nam in September (entered into force on the same day). Japan also signed an Agreement on the Security of Information with Germany in March (entered into force on the same day). In the area of nuclear energy, the Protocol Amending the Japan-UK Nuclear Cooperation Agreement signed between Japan and the UK in December 2020 in light of the UK's withdrawal from the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM), entered into force in September.

### **(4) Initiatives in the Fields of the Economy and Society**

The conclusion and implementation of international agreements that bring legal discipline to cooperative relationships with other countries in the economic sphere is becoming increasingly important for promoting the liberalization of trade and investment, as well as people-to-people exchanges, and for strengthening the foundations for the overseas activities of Japanese citizens and companies. The agreements that Japan negotiated and signed or concluded in 2021 include tax conventions, investment treaties, and social security agreements with various countries and regions. Furthermore, Japan also engaged actively in negotiations on EPAs and other agreements, with the aim of expanding free and fair economic spheres and strengthening wide-ranging economic relationships.

The Japan-UK Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (Japan-UK EPA), signed in October 2020, entered into force in January 2021. The Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement, signed in November 2020, entered into force in January 2022.

Furthermore, with a view to protecting and enhancing the livelihoods and activities of Japanese citizens and companies, Japan is working on the proper implementation of existing

international agreements as well as utilizing the dispute settlement system of the WTO.

In social areas such as human rights, the environment, fisheries, maritime affairs, aviation, labor and social security, which are closely linked to the daily lives of the people, Japan actively participates in negotiations of international agreements to ensure that Japan's positions are reflected and also concludes such agreements. For example, in the aviation sector, Japan signed the Agreement on Civil Aviation Safety between Japan and the European Union in June. In the field of maritime affairs, Japan concluded the Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation in July. In the fisheries sector, Japan concluded the Protocol to amend the International Convention for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas in July.

### **(5) Initiatives in the Field of Criminal Justice**

The ICC is the first-ever permanent international criminal court to prosecute and punish, in accordance with international law, individuals who have committed the most serious crimes of concern to the international community. Since becoming a State Party to the ICC Rome Statute in October 2007, Japan has consistently supported the ICC's activities and cooperated with the Court in various ways. Fiscally, Japan is the largest contributor to the ICC, accounting for approximately 16% of the entire assessed contributions to the Court as of 2021. With regard to human resources, Japan has consistently produced judges since its accession to the ICC. The current judge, Ms. Akane Tomoko, former Ambassador for International Judicial Cooperation at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Public Prosecutor at the Supreme Public Prosecutors Office of Japan, began serving her nine-year term in March 2018. In addition,

Japan has cooperated with activities of the ICC from various positions, with Ms. Harimoto Yukiko serving on the Committee on Budget and Finance, among others. As the ICC evolves into a full-fledged international criminal justice institution, it is imperative to secure cooperation with the ICC, establish the principle of complementarity, and to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in its judicial procedures. Japan actively engages in addressing these challenges, such as through its participation in the working groups of the Assembly of States Parties.

Along with these efforts, in the face of an increase of cross-border crimes in recent years, Japan is further working on ensuring judicial cooperation, such as the mutual submission of necessary evidence. Specifically, as efforts to improve legal frameworks for promoting international cooperation in the field of criminal justice, Japan has been working on negotiations toward concluding international agreements such as the Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters (MLAT),<sup>35</sup> the Treaty on Extradition,<sup>36</sup> and the Treaty on the Transfer of Sentenced Persons.<sup>37</sup> In November, Japan and Viet Nam signed a Treaty on Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters.

## **7 Human Rights**

There is growing international concern about the human rights situations in various parts of the world. The protection and promotion of human rights provide the foundation for peace and stability in the international community. Japan recognizes that the protection of human rights, which is a universal value, is the basic responsibility of all countries, regardless of differences in the method of achieving this goal and their cultures. While

<sup>35</sup> A legal framework that allows for efficient and prompt cooperation with legal authorities of other countries in investigations, prosecution, and other criminal procedures.

<sup>36</sup> A legal framework having comprehensive and detailed provisions regarding the extradition of criminals to enable more effective cooperation for repressing crime.

<sup>37</sup> A legal framework aiming to facilitate the social rehabilitation of sentenced persons by giving them the opportunity to serve their sentences in their own countries.

speaking out firmly against any serious violation of human rights, Japan considers, under the basic principle of “dialogue” and “cooperation,” that it is important to promote voluntary efforts through bilateral dialogues and cooperation between countries that are working toward democratization and the protection of human rights. In addition, in the area of human rights, with the standpoint of bridge-building in Asia and protection of the socially vulnerable people, Japan puts effort into improving the global human rights situation through bilateral dialogues, proactive participation in multilateral forums such as the UN, and constructive dialogues with the UN human rights mechanisms. (See the Special Feature on page 247 for Japan’s basic stance on human rights diplomacy and specific examples of its efforts.)

### (1) Initiatives within the UN

#### **A** UN Human Rights Council

The UN Human Rights Council was established in 2006 as a restructured version of the UN Commission on Human Rights in order to strengthen the UN’s ability to address human rights issues as part of a movement toward mainstreaming human rights in the UN. The Human Rights Council holds sessions throughout the year in Geneva (three regular sessions per year, lasting about 10 weeks in total) to discuss issues and make recommendations concerning the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. Japan served as a member of the Council from June 2006 to June 2011 (the first and the second terms), January 2013 to December 2015 (the third term), and January 2017 to December 2019 (fourth term). Most recently, Japan was elected in the election held in October 2019, and currently serves as a member of the Council from January 2020 to December 2022 (fifth term).

At the high-level segment (meeting of the main representatives of each country) of the 46th Session in February and March, Foreign Minister Motegi delivered a statement through a video message. In the statement, he spoke about Japan’s

continued dedication to contribute to the protection and promotion of human rights in Asia and the world, stressed the importance of early resolution of the abductions issue, expressed Japan’s serious concerns over the situation in China including Hong Kong and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and urged China to take concrete actions. He also introduced Japan’s latest initiatives in the fields of business and human rights, eradication of violence against children, elimination of discrimination against leprosy, the realization of a society where the dignity of the indigenous Ainu people is respected, women’s empowerment, and the protection and promotion of women’s human rights. The resolution on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK), submitted by the EU and co-sponsored by Japan, was adopted without a vote at the same session (adopted for 14 consecutive years). This resolution refers to the urgency and importance of the abductions issue and of the immediate return of all abductees, the long years of suffering experienced by abductees and their families, the realization of the immediate return of all abductees of Japan as well as the faithful provision of accurate and detailed information to the families of victims on the fates and whereabouts of their missing relatives.

At the 48th session from September to October, Japan, as the main sponsor, submitted a resolution on the human rights situation in Cambodia. This resolution was adopted without a vote. The resolution reflects the international community’s concerns over the human rights situation in Cambodia, and encourages the Government of Cambodia to put effort into improving the human rights situation. In addition, it also decided the extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia for two years.

#### **B** The Third Committee of the UN General Assembly

The Third Committee of the UN General Assembly is, along with the Human Rights

Council, the UN's main forum focused on human rights. Generally, in October and November, the Committee discusses a wide range of issues, including those concerning social development, women, children, racial discrimination, refugees, crime prevention and criminal justice, as well as the human rights situations in North Korea, Syria and Iran, among others. Resolutions adopted by the Third Committee are then adopted by a plenary session of the general assembly, contributing to the development of international norms.

At the 76th session of the General Assembly, the resolution on the situation of human rights in the DPRK, submitted by the EU and co-sponsored by Japan, was adopted without a vote at a session of the Third Committee in November and a plenary session of the UN General Assembly in December (adopted for the 17th consecutive year). The resolution refers to the urgency and importance of the abductions issue, which involves a serious violation of human rights, and of the immediate return of all abductees, the long years of suffering experienced by abductees and their families, grave concern over the lack of any concrete or positive actions by DPRK, the realization of the immediate return of all abductees of Japan as well as the faithful provision of accurate and detailed information to the families of the victims on the fates and whereabouts of their missing relatives.

In addition, Japan participated actively in discussions in the international community toward protecting and promoting human rights, including discussions on the human rights situations in some countries such as Syria, Iran, and Myanmar, as well as discussions on various human rights issues that include social development and the rights of the child.

### Ending Violence Against Children

Since 2018, when Japan participated in the Global Partnership to End Violence Against

Children (GPeVAC), Japan has been actively involved in Partnership activities as a “pathfinding country,” engaging in ending violence against children. As part of this effort, the National Action Plan to End Violence Against Children was formulated in August. This Action Plan aims to contribute to the achievement of Target 16.2 of the SDGs, which is to “End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children.” Japan will continue promoting efforts to end violence against children at home and abroad, in collaboration with the international community.

### Promoting the Introduction of Human Rights Due Diligence<sup>38</sup> Through the Implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights

Japan is actively engaged in efforts toward the implementation of the “Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs)” that was endorsed by the UN Human Rights Council. As a part of these efforts, Japan has been conducting awareness-raising activities including the introduction of human rights due diligence with a view to raising awareness of human rights among business enterprises, through the steady implementation of the NAP on Business and Human Rights formulated by the Government of Japan in October 2020. Awareness-raising activities have been carried out, alongside the promotion of the concept of respect for human rights in the context of business activities through efforts such as the establishment of a portal site on the MOFA website to post videos introducing the NAP and other information, and to publish “A Compilation of Case Studies on Business and Human Rights.” In March, an Inter-Ministerial Committee was established to promote cooperation among the relevant ministries and agencies on the necessary reviews and decisions with regard to following the

<sup>38</sup> Human rights due diligence:

To identify, prevent, mitigate, and address, as well as to provide information on, the impact of corporate activities on human rights.

progress of the implementation status of the NAP. At the same time, the first roundtable meeting was held in July to facilitate dialogues among a wide range of stakeholders. As a part of the follow-up of the NAP, the “Questionnaire Survey on the Status of Efforts on Human Rights in the Supply Chains of Japanese Companies” was conducted from September to October jointly with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). In addition, the abovementioned Inter-Ministerial Committee was reorganized in December, and the first meeting of the Inter-Ministerial Committee on Policy Promotion for the Implementation of Japan’s National Plan on Business and Human Rights was convened. Going forward, Japan will continue to steadily implement the NAP.

### **E The Summit for Democracy**

In December, the U.S. hosted the virtual Summit for Democracy. Prime Minister Kishida took part in a session. He shared and explained Japan’s stance and initiatives on protecting democracy and promoting human rights around the world from the viewpoint of attaching great importance to universal values, including democracy.

## **(2) Initiatives Concerning International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law**

### **A International Human Rights Law**

In November, at the elections of members of the Committee against Torture held at the 18th Meeting of States parties to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment at the UN Headquarters in New York, Professor Maeda Naoko (Faculty of Law, Kyoto Women’s University), Japan’s candidate, was elected to the Committee with the largest number of votes. Furthermore, with respect to the human rights treaties that Japan has concluded, Japan has faithfully responded to periodic reviews of government reports on the implementation status of the treaties in Japan, pursuant to the rules set forth in those treaties.

### **B International Humanitarian Law**

Japan has actively been engaged in efforts for strengthening the national implementation of international humanitarian law (IHL). In May, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Uto Takashi issued a video message on the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the adoption of UN Security Council resolution 2286 on the protection of the wounded and sick, medical personnel and humanitarian personnel in armed conflict (2016). In his message, he urged the international community to cooperate further on healthcare in armed conflict, including ensuring access to medical services during the COVID-19 pandemic and protecting medical personnel. In October, Japan participated in a regional meeting of the national IHL committees of Asia-Pacific countries, and from November to December, Japan participated in the Fifth Universal Meeting of National Committees and Similar Entities on International Humanitarian Law (IHL). Furthermore, as it does every year, Japan dispatched an instructor to play the part of the jury to the IHL Moot Court and Role Play Competitions, organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), as part of awareness-raising efforts for IHL.

### **(3) Initiatives Undertaken via Bilateral Dialogue**

In addition to initiatives within the UN and other multilateral frameworks, Japan recognizes the importance of bilateral dialogues in order to protect and promote human rights. The 25th Japan-EU Human Rights Dialogue was held in June (via videoconference), and the 11th Japan-Cambodia Human Rights Dialogue was held in September (via videoconference). While sharing information on their respective initiatives in the field of human rights, the parties to these dialogues exchanged opinions concerning cooperation in multilateral fora such as the UN. Japan also attended a workshop on the Universal Periodic Review (UPR), hosted by Viet Nam, via videoconference and shared its experiences in the UPR.

#### **(4) Contribution to Refugee Issues**

From the perspective of international contribution and humanitarian aid, Japan started accepting refugees from Myanmar who were temporarily residing in Thailand, under a resettlement program that ran from FY2010 to FY2014 (the transfer of refugees from an asylum country to a third country that agrees to accept them for long-term settlement).

In addition to accepting refugees from Myanmar who had been residing temporarily in Malaysia since FY2015, the Government of Japan allowed accepting eligible family members of those who already resettled in Japan on the condition that mutual aid be provided with those remaining in Thailand. From FY2010 to FY2019, a total of 194 people from 50 families came to Japan under this program.

Refugees arriving in Japan live independently in their respective areas of resettlement following the completion of a six-month training program. Initially, local governments in the Tokyo metropolitan region played a central role in operations concerning the resettlement destinations for refugees. However, from the perspective of promoting a better national understanding of the refugee

issue, active efforts have been made to resettle refugees in municipalities outside the Tokyo Metropolitan area since 2018.

The international situation surrounding refugees is undergoing dramatic change. In light of this movement among the international community and to better balance the burden for the refugee problem among the international community, Japan made the decision in June 2019 to accept more refugees resettling from third countries under part of a new framework. Specifically, beginning in FY2020, Japan will now accept up to 60 refugees temporarily residing in Asia once or twice a year without restriction on their birthplace or region of residence, and any of the family members of the refugees who have already been accepted in Japan under a resettlement program. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic situation in Japan and abroad, the acceptance of refugees for FY2020 was postponed, and the appropriate time for accepting refugees is currently under consideration.

While the acceptance of resettled refugees has been done primarily by Western countries, Japan is the first country in Asia to accept resettled refugees.



## Japan's Human Rights Diplomacy Efforts

This Special Feature sets out once again the aspects that Japan places particular focus on in addressing human rights issues in the international community, and introduces some of the concrete efforts that Japan has taken based on this stance.

### ■ 1. Japan's Basic Stance on Human Rights Diplomacy

Human rights and fundamental freedom are universal values, and the human rights situation in each country is a legitimate interest of the international community.

While there are differences in the method and speed at which the protection of human rights is achieved, Japan takes the stance that human rights should be respected regardless of culture, traditions, political and economic systems, and stage of socioeconomic development, and that the protection of human rights is the most basic responsibility of all countries. Based on this stance, while speaking out firmly against any serious violation of human rights, Japan takes the basic principle of "dialogue" and "cooperation" between countries that are working toward democratization and the protection of human rights. Through bilateral dialogues and multinational fora such as the UN, Japan calls for improvements to human rights issues that Japan and the international community are concerned about. At the same time, Japan also engages in necessary and feasible forms of cooperation through technical cooperation and other means, and urges such countries to make voluntary efforts.

While applying such unique contributions to the best of its ability, Japan makes no compromise on universal values and will proactively and positively promote human rights diplomacy of its own, in light of the current international situation.

### ■ 2. Concrete Efforts Toward Improving the Human Rights Situation

#### (1) Resolution on the human rights situation in Cambodia, Japan-Cambodia Human Rights Dialogue

Cambodia is experiencing rapid economic development recently after suffering through a prolonged turmoil period. However, the international community remains concerned about its human rights situation.

At the 48th Human Rights Council session in the UN, convened from September to October, Japan drafted and submitted a resolution on the human rights situation in Cambodia. This resolution reflects the voice of the international community with regard to the human rights situation in Cambodia, and in particular, expresses deep concern over the deterioration of the civil and political environment while touching on examples such as the arrests of the members of political parties and civil society. At the same time, this resolution encourages the Government of Cambodia to put effort into improving the human rights situation, and decides the extension of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Cambodia for two years.

Japan has continued to submit this resolution since 1999, and the resolution has always been adopted by consensus (adopted without a vote).

In drafting the resolution, Japan considers that in order to improve the human rights situation in Cambodia, specific concerns need to be clearly pointed out in the resolution, and also at the same time, there must be an effort to improve the situation by Cambodia themselves. From this perspective, Japan has done its utmost to consult and coordinate with Cambodia, the EU, and other relevant countries to ensure that the resolution strikes a balance between encouraging Cambodia's efforts to improve its human rights situation based on its own conviction and consent, and monitoring and promotion of these efforts by the international community through activities in the field by the Special Rapporteur and the provision of opportunities to report to the Human Rights Council.

Meanwhile, in September, the 11th Japan-Cambodia Human Rights Dialogue was held online. During the dialogue, discussions were held on efforts and issues in the area of human rights, including freedom of

political activities, freedom of expression, assembly and association, and the independence of the judiciary. The Japanese side spoke candidly about the issues related to the environment for free and fair elections in Cambodia as well as the approach to activities in the civil society, and exchanged views on the cooperation in the field of human rights in the international arena.

Japan's coordination efforts in this area have been highly appraised by Cambodia and the international community, including Europe and the U.S. At the Human Rights Council session held in October, the resolution on the human rights situation in Cambodia was adopted by consensus.

Japan pays close attention to the human rights situation in Cambodia, and has provided support for electoral reforms and invited young politicians to Japan, among other efforts. In FY2020, Japan allocated a part of its contributions to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) toward expenditures for activities related to improving the human rights situation undertaken by the OHCHR Cambodia country office. Along with the adoption of the resolution, Japan's efforts are expected to support and promote the Government of Cambodia to put effort into improving the human rights situation, and to bring about improvements to the human rights situation in Cambodia.

## **(2) Examples of Japan making its voice heard (Joint Statement – Human Rights Situation in China)**

Japan is also speaking out firmly with regard to the human rights situation in China. For example, Prime Minister Kishida raised the issues of the Hong Kong situation and the human rights situation in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region to President Xi Jinping at the Japan-China Summit telephone call in October. Similarly, Foreign Minister Motegi and Foreign Minister Hayashi expressed serious concerns at the Japan-China Foreign Ministers' telephone calls held in April and November respectively.

In addition to such bilateral efforts, Japan also expresses its concerns through individual statements issued at the UN and other fora. At the high-level Segment of the 46th Session of the Human Rights Council held in February, Foreign Minister Motegi delivered a statement through a video message. In the statement, he expressed serious concerns over the situation in China, including Hong Kong and the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and urged China to take concrete actions.

At the 47th Human Rights Council session convened in June, Canada delivered a joint statement on the human rights situation in China including the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region on behalf of 44 countries, and Japan was the only participating country from Asia. This statement shares concerns expressed by UN Special Procedures in their statement on the alleged detention, forced labor, and transfers of Uyghurs and others. At the same time, it urges China to allow immediate, meaningful and unfettered access to Xinjiang for independent observers, including the High Commissioner. Furthermore, it states that the countries delivering the statement continue to be deeply concerned about the deterioration of fundamental freedoms in Hong Kong under the National Security Law and about the human rights situation in Tibet.

At the Third Committee of the 76th session of UN General Assembly convened in October, France delivered a joint statement on the human rights situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region on behalf of 43 countries, and Japan was the only participating country from Asia. <sup>(Note1)</sup> This statement expresses particular concerns about the situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, and calls on China to allow meaningful access to Xinjiang for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. In addition, at the 16th East Asia Summit held in October and the 13th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Summit held in November, both of which China also participated in, Japan expressed serious concerns about the Hong Kong situation and the human rights situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region.

It is important for all countries, including China, to provide guarantees for fundamental human rights. Hence, it is important for the international community to continue cooperating closely and appealing to China in this regard.

## **(3) Examples of ODA that contribute to human rights**

With a view to improving the human rights situation for people living in developing countries and regions, Japan provides support in the area of governance, including support for the development of legal systems

and the strengthening of media and journalism, as well as assistance to vulnerable persons, including women, children, and persons with disabilities.

A. Developing countries have faced challenges such as under-developed legal systems, inadequate implementation and enforcement of laws, and barriers to information access. Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), in cooperation with the Supreme Court, Ministry of Justice, Japan Federation of Bar Associations, and the relevant universities, has been providing support to countries in Asia and Africa since the latter half of the 1990s, with a focus on the development and implementation of legal systems, and improvement of access to justice.

Japan began providing support to Laos for the development of its legal system in 1998. Under the "Project for Promoting Development and Strengthening of the Rule of Law in the Legal Sector of Lao PDR" (2018 to 2023), Japan is cooperating with Laos on improvements to the research and analysis of legal theories in civil laws and criminal laws, to legal education, and to training of prospective and in-service legal professionals. This Project has long provided support for the development of the first Civil Code in Laos, which was enforced in May 2020. In 2021, the Project conducted activities such as the preparation of research papers that explain the objectives and background of the civil code, and reference materials concerning law on criminal evidence. In addition, the Project conducted online seminars on topics such as sentencing and development of legal human resources to contribute to improving court practices and the thereby the protection of citizens' rights.

B. Amidst the increasing movement of people accompanying the rapid globalization of the economy and information, human trafficking is becoming a serious, cross-border human rights issue common to many countries. In particular, there are concerns over the rise in trafficking in persons in the Mekong region alongside ASEAN integration. In this regard, Japan has cooperated with Thailand, Myanmar, and other relevant countries. The "Project for Strengthening the Operation of Hotline for Counseling and Supporting Trafficked Survivors" (2018 to 2022) was also implemented in Viet Nam. The objective of this Project was to further strengthen the cooperative system between the relevant organizations. To this end, efforts have been made by operating a hotline that can serve an even larger number of people and strengthening the operation of a call center whose objective is to prevent victimization from trafficking in persons and support women and girls who are victims of trafficking in persons. In 2021, activities including holding workshops aimed at amending government ordinances and external evaluation to improve the quality of counselling were conducted. An agreement was also concluded for greater cooperation between the relevant ministries and agencies. Publicity activities were also carried out through the media. In 2021, the number of calls to the call center reached approximately 3,100 (as of the end of November), and 131 personnel (telephone counsellors, social workers, NGO officers, etc.) were nurtured under this Project.

C. In addition to the abovementioned, as of December 2021, Japan has provided support to more than 74 countries around the world, with a particular focus on Asia, in the areas of human resource development, strengthening freedom of the media, and the building and development of various systems including electoral and judicial systems.



Training conducted under the "Project for Promoting Development and Strengthening of the Rule of Law in the Legal Sector of Lao PDR" (Photo: JICA)



At a call center in Viet Nam operated under the "Project for Strengthening the Operation of Hotline for Counseling and Supporting Trafficked Survivors" (Photo: JICA)

(Examples of Japan's support)

- Strengthen capacity of the national police: Indonesia, Democratic Republic of Congo, and others.
- Improve legal and judicial system and its operation: Viet Nam, Indonesia, Laos, Cambodia, Nepal, Bangladesh, and others.
- Improve election management capacity (including dispatch of advisors as well as training of members of electoral commissions and staff personnel at voting stations): Cambodia, Pakistan, and others.
- Provide equipment to support elections (including ballot boxes or servers to register biometrics): Pakistan, Libya, and others.
- Support capacity building of both staff and institutions for media freedom and media protection measures: South Sudan, Kosovo, Ukraine, and others.

### ■ 3. Business and Human Rights (Note2)

With the globalization of supply chains today, attention is increasingly being placed on respect for human rights in corporate activities. Business enterprises themselves face an urgent need to identify human rights risks and put in place the necessary countermeasures. There are also growing moves in Europe and the U.S. toward making it mandatory for companies to take initiatives in the area of human rights. Given that the recognition of "business and human rights" in Japan is not necessarily as widespread, Japan has been steadily implementing the National Action Plan (NAP) on Business and Human Rights formulated in October 2020, and putting efforts into raising awareness to promote the introduction of human rights due diligence (identifying, preventing and mitigating, and addressing the impact of corporate activities on human rights, as well as the provision of such information) through understanding the status of initiatives by companies.

In the international arena, Japan is putting effort into strengthening peer learning (learning through mutual cooperation) in Asia through the introduction of Japan's initiatives at UN seminars and regional meetings hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia. Furthermore, with the aim of addressing human rights violations in the global supply chain, Japan will work closely with the governments of a wide range of developing countries, including Asia, to promote initiatives toward the realization of responsible business conduct through means such as developing legal systems, policymaking, and improving practices. Through such activities, Japan aims to establish a more desirable international environment for the expansion of Japanese corporations overseas in an appropriate manner.

Japan considers that spreading widely across the world the movement of not engaging in business practices that could lead to the violation of human rights contributes to preventing human rights violation worldwide and to strengthening the international competitiveness of business enterprises that respect human rights.

#### Note1: Key points of the Statement

(1) We are particularly concerned about the situation in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region. Credible-based reports indicate the existence of a large network of "political re-education" camps where over a million people have been arbitrarily detained. We have seen an increasing number of reports of widespread and systematic human rights violations, including reports documenting torture or cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment, forced sterilization, sexual and gender-based violence, and forced separation of children. There are severe restrictions on freedom of religion or belief and the freedoms of movement, association and expression as well as on Uyghur culture. There is also widespread surveillance targeting Uyghurs.

(2) We also share the concerns expressed by UN Special Procedures and UN experts describing collective repression of religious and ethnic minorities.

(3) We thus call on China to allow immediate, meaningful and unfettered access to Xinjiang for independent observers, including the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and her Office, and relevant special procedure mandate holders, as well as to urgently implement CERD's eight recommendations related to Xinjiang. We welcome the High Commissioner's announcement to present her findings to date and encourage publication as soon as possible.

(4) In view of our concerns about the human rights situation in Xinjiang, we call on all countries to respect the principle of non-refoulement [(in principle, not repatriating foreigners to the countries or regions where they are persecuted)]. We also call on China to ratify without delay the ICCPR.

(5) We urge China to ensure full respect for the rule of law and to comply with its obligations under national and international law with regard to the protection of human rights.

#### Note2: MOFA website on "business and human rights":

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/bhr/index.html>



## 8 Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated the existing gender inequalities. For this reason, the realization of gender equality and the promotion of women's empowerment have been prioritized as one of the most important issues in Japan and abroad, and it is vital to focus on various policies and measures for women and girls in building back better from the COVID-19 pandemic. In light of the vulnerable position that women are placed in situations of conflict, it is also important for Japan to contribute actively to international efforts to prevent the use of sexual violence as a weapon in conflict, and to protect the human rights of women and promote the provision of relief and assistance to women. Against this backdrop, as clearly stated in the Fifth Basic Plan for Gender Equality, Japan will continue to contribute to the realization of gender equality and the promotion of women's empowerment while hosting international conferences on women and vigorously promoting assistance to developing countries through cooperation with other countries and international organizations.

### (1) G7

Gender equality is positioned at the heart of an open, inclusive, and just society within the G7 process under the UK's Presidency, which sets out three priority items in this area: educating girls, empowering women, and ending violence against women and girls. The Carbis Bay G7 Summit Communique, issued by the G7 Cornwall Summit held in June, included, inter alia, the G7's pledge to allocate a total of 2.75 billion US dollars over the next five years to the Global Partnership for Education (GPE).

### (2) G20

Under Italy's Presidency, the first G20 Conference on Women's Empowerment was held at Santa Margherita Ligure in August. Japan's

Minister in charge of Women's Empowerment, Marukawa Tamayo, participated in the opening session online. In the Leaders' Declaration issued at the G20 Rome Summit in October, the leaders reaffirmed initiatives toward the resolution of various issues of women and girls being impacted disproportionately by the COVID-19 pandemic, including gender-based violence and unpaid care work, as well as actions and sharing of annual progress toward the Brisbane Goal.

### (3) International Cooperation for the Empowerment of Women in Developing Countries

Through JICA and international organizations, Japan is engaged in educational support and human resource development, as well as efforts toward the economic empowerment of women and the elimination of gender-based violence in developing countries.

#### A Educational Support and Human Resource Development

At the G7 Charlevoix Summit held in 2018, Japan announced that it would be allocating 200 million US dollars to provide quality education and human resource development support to women and girls, and this has been implemented. At the 5th World Assembly for Women (WAW!), held in March 2019, Prime Minister Abe affirmed his pledge to provide high-quality education and career development opportunities to at least 4 million women and girls over the three years between 2018 and 2020 as a means to expand educational opportunities for women in developing countries. This is being steadily implemented. At the Global Education Summit held in July 2021, Japan also pledged to provide support for girls' education and human resource development to at least 7.5 million people in developing countries.

#### B Supporting Women Through JICA

To promote the economic empowerment of women, Japan has provided support to improve

the lives of home-based workers in Pakistan, the majority of whom are low-income and female, and promoted the provision of financial services that meet the needs of women in Viet Nam. To promote peace and security for women, it also provides support to strengthen coordination as well as the capacity of organizations involved in addressing human trafficking in the Mekong region. At the same time, Japan has also launched cooperation aimed at protecting the survivors of gender-based violence, and providing support for them to gain independence in South Sudan and Pakistan.

### **C** Dealing with Sexual Violence in Conflict

Sexual violence is used as a tactic of war, which cannot be overlooked. It is vital to put an end to impunity and to support victims of violence. Japan has been actively working to ensure that women do not suffer human rights violations in the 21st century. Japan prioritizes cooperation with international organizations such as the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict (SRSG-SVC), and participating in discussions at the international fora.

In 2021, Japan provided financial support of approximately 0.9 million US dollars to the Office of the SRSG-SVC, supporting female victims of sexual violence in conflict and gender-based violence in the Middle East, where COVID-19 was spreading widely, including Lebanon, Jordan and Iraq. In 2021, as in 2020, Japan contributed 2 million Euros to the Global Survivors Fund (GSF), founded by 2018 Nobel Peace Prize laureates Dr. Denis Mukwege and Ms. Nadia Murad and participates actively in the operation of GSF as a member of the Board. Furthermore, Japan continues to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund for Victims of the International Criminal Court (ICC), earmarking contributions for victims of sexual violence and putting efforts into protecting victims of such violence.

In addition, Japan also provides support through UN Women.

## **(4) Initiatives in the UN**

### **A** Cooperation with UN Women

Japan has increased its contribution to UN Women from approximately 2 million US dollars in 2013 to 21 million US dollars in 2021 and strengthened cooperation with the entity. In particular, through UN Women, Japan supported awareness-raising activities among women and girls in developing countries on the prevention of COVID-19 infections, economic empowerment of women such as livelihood and entrepreneurship support during the COVID-19 pandemic, and measures against gender-based violence, including online violence. Japan also provides support for women's economic empowerment through job creation and vocational training, awareness-raising of women's rights and eliminating violence against women, and psychological and social support. To prevent violent extremism, Japan is engaging in resilient community-building by empowering women in South and Southeast Asia.



Vocational training for women in Turkey (Photo : UN Women)

### **B** Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Since 1987, Japan has continued to provide members for the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which comprises 23 independent experts. In September, Japan submitted its Ninth Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention.



**C United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)**

The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women downsized and shortened its 64th session (CSW64) in March, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. While relevant parties presented opening statements and the Commission adopted political declarations and resolutions, member states did not have opportunities to make remarks.

**D Women, Peace and Security (WPS)**

Japan continues to contribute to WPS in the

Middle East, Africa and Asia through its financial contributions to international organizations, primarily UN Women and SRSG-SVC Office, in line with the second National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security (action plan toward the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 and related resolutions on women, peace, and security). In addition, Japan conducts monitoring of the implementation status and compiles evaluation reports. In March, Japan hosted a webinar to commemorate International Women's Day, during which WPS was raised as one of the themes for discussion.

## Section 2

# Japan's International Cooperation (Development Cooperation and Response to Global Issues)

## 1 Development Cooperation

### (1) Development Cooperation Charter and Japan's ODA Performance

More than 65 years have passed since Japan started its Official Development Assistance (ODA)<sup>1</sup> in 1954. Japan's development cooperation policy including ODA has greatly contributed to securing peace, stability and prosperity of the international community and consequently the national interests of Japan for many years.

In recent years, the situation surrounding development is transforming, as indicated by the growing diversity and complexity of the issues facing developing countries and the growing roles of non-ODA funds and support. In response to the transformation, in February 2015, the Development Cooperation Charter was decided by the Cabinet to replace its previous ODA Charter. Under the Development Cooperation Charter, taking into account its philosophy toward development cooperation cultivated over many years and from

the perspective of further evolving this philosophy, Japan has established the basic policies of (1) contributing to peace and prosperity through cooperation for non-military purposes; (2) promoting human security; and (3) cooperation aimed at self-reliant development through assistance for self-help efforts as well as dialogue and collaboration based on Japan's experience and expertise. Japan promotes development cooperation under these basic policies, with (1) "quality growth" and poverty eradication through such growth; (2) sharing universal values and realizing a peaceful and secure society; and (3) building a sustainable and resilient international community through efforts to address global challenges.

Under this Development Cooperation Charter, in 2020, Japan provided approximately 16.26 billion US dollars (+4.3% year on year) in ODA<sup>2</sup>, based on the grant equivalent system (GE system)<sup>3</sup>. Japan ranks fourth among the member states of the DAC, following the U.S., Germany, and the UK (a provisional value for 2020 is used

<sup>1</sup> Official Development Assistance (ODA): For details on Japan's international cooperation, refer to "White Paper on Development Cooperation: Japan's International Cooperation." <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/shiryo/hakusyo.html>

<sup>2</sup> The main modalities of ODA from Japan are: grant aid, loan aid, namely, loan for development in developing regions; technical cooperation; and contributions and subscriptions to multilateral institutions. Of these, loan aid accounts for the largest share. Loan aid is typically repaid with interest.

<sup>3</sup> Grant Equivalent System (GE system) was introduced by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee (OECD/DAC) in 2018 as the standard method for calculating ODA loans. The grant equivalent of the loan aid is calculated as ODA flows. The grant equivalent is calculated by applying the terms of the loan, such as amount disbursed, interest rate and maturity, to a formula. The softer the terms of the loan are, the larger the amount will be. Compared to the net flow system (the full amount of loan disbursement is included, but the amount repaid is calculated as a negative figure) that has conventionally been used as the standard method of the OECD/DAC, the GE system reflects Japan's loan aid more accurately. (<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/oda/files/100053766.pdf>).



for countries other than Japan). The ODA/GNI ratio based on the GE system was 0.31%, placing Japan in 13th place among member states of the DAC (a provisional value for 2020 is used for countries other than Japan).

## (2) Development Cooperation in 2021

In 2021, Japan engaged mainly in the following (A to D below) in order to promote strategic and effective development cooperation, with the Development Cooperation Charter positioned at the core of these actions.

### A Countermeasures against COVID-19

First, combating the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) has continued to be a major challenge for the international community in 2021. Countermeasures were conducted with the cooperation of the international community to combat the pandemic, which crossed national borders and became a global crisis. Specifically, Japan has provided health and medical equipment as well as vaccine-related assistance. Japan has also offered technical cooperation for reinforcing capacities in the health and medical fields at an unprecedented speed in order to build a resilient medical and health system from a medium-to long-term standpoint in developing countries with vulnerable medical systems, through bilateral cooperation and international organizations. In particular, as part of the efforts to ensure equitable access to vaccines, the Government of Japan co-hosted the COVAX AMC Summit in June, in which Prime Minister Suga as a co-chair called for further solidarity and commitments from the international community in the fight against COVID-19. As a result, we were able to secure funding well beyond the target. Furthermore, Japan has been providing the COVID-19 Crisis Response Emergency Support Loan up to 700 billion yen over two years to contribute to maintaining and revitalizing economic activities in developing countries. Japan's assistance has been highly appreciated by recipient countries.

Japan will continue to provide vaccines, treatments and diagnostics related assistance for overcoming the current COVID-19 pandemic. At the same time, Japan will also offer assistance for health security in a broad range of fields including water and sanitation and for improving health and medical systems in developing countries in preparation for future health crises.

### B Achievement of a Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)

Second, Japan is promoting concrete initiatives utilizing ODA strategically in order to achieve a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” (FOIP) in the Indo-Pacific region which is a focal point of the world's vitality.

Over the years, Japan has developed “quality infrastructure” for building regional connectivity, assisted in legal system development, offered training on public debt and risk management for ensuring debt sustainability, and capacity building for debt management and macroeconomic policy, and for maritime law enforcement agencies for securing safety at sea (provision of patrol vessels and coastal monitoring radars as well as human resources development, etc.). Japan will continue to offer these in the future.

The development of quality infrastructure is an important foundation for achieving FOIP and is particularly necessary in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. From this standpoint, it is important to continue to disseminate and implement the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment, endorsed at the G20 Osaka Summit of 2019 as an international standard, including such principles as openness, transparency, economic efficiency in view of life-cycle costs, and debt sustainability.

### C Addressing Global Issues

Third, Japan is working to address global challenges such as achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including combating COVID-19, based on the concept of human security.

Japan will continue to actively promote development cooperation in fields such as health, food, nutrition, women (gender), education, disaster risk reduction, water and hygiene, climate change and global environmental issues. In doing so, Japan will promote visible development cooperation while utilizing collaboration with NGOs working on international cooperation. In addition, Japan will continue to promote humanitarian assistance including support for refugees, peace building and nation building assistance based on the concept of “humanitarian-development-peace (HDP) nexus” to reinforce responses to fundamental causes of conflict, in addition to humanitarian assistance and development.

#### **D Diplomatic Efforts in Support of Japan's Economy**

Fourth, Japan seeks to revitalize its own economy through the development of developing countries and Japan is promoting initiatives for achieving the growth of both. The “Infrastructure System Overseas Promotion Strategy 2025” approved in December 2020 and “Follow-up on the Growth Strategy” approved in July 2021 call for utilizing ODA strategically to further encourage the overseas expansion of Japanese companies.

Specifically, in order to have Japan's leading technologies utilized for development in developing countries, Japan will promote the acquisition of business rights and operation rights of Japanese corporations through means such as the provision of grant aid for public projects implemented through public-private partnership and offer technical cooperation that contributes to quality infrastructure investment, such as trade facilitation and securing debt sustainability. Additionally, to encourage the overseas expansion of private companies including SMEs and local governments, Japan will increase the visibility of products and equipment that can help resolve issues in developing countries through Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)'s private sector partnership in conducting surveys and verification

on business models as well as continuously generate demand for these, and promote overseas expansion assistance for micro-, small-and medium-sized enterprises in the construction industry, including in local regions. Through human resource development, Japan will also contribute to advancing the improvement of the business environment, thereby promoting investment and overseas expansion by corporations.

#### **(3) Safety Measures for Personnel Engaged in International Cooperation Projects**

In March 2020, many of the personnel engaged in international cooperation projects were temporarily returned home due to the spread of COVID-19. However, since mid-July of the same year, JICA-related personnel have been resuming their travel in order from countries where conditions were met. As of March 2022, the number of JICA-related personnel staying overseas had recovered to 70% of that before the repatriation (except JICA Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers).

Japan will continue to strengthen safety measures for personnel engaged in international cooperation projects to prevent the spread of COVID-19 infections. Japan will also further strengthen safety measures for international cooperation projects while implementing measures based on the final report of the Council on Safety Measures for International Cooperation Projects (August 2016) which have been done against terrorism.

#### **(4) Initiatives in Major Regions**

##### **A East and Southeast Asia**

The achievement of peace, stability, and prosperity in the East and Southeast Asia regions is important to Japan, which has a close relationship with the region. Through development cooperation, Japan has helped these regions to resolve various development issues including poverty reduction, by promoting economic growth and human security and contributed to the development of these regions.

Above all, as member states of the Association

of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are keys to achieving a Free and Open Indo-Pacific. Japan not only provides support for overcoming the issues faced by ASEAN and to further promote integration, but also places a strong emphasis on cooperation on development of quality infrastructure and training of industrial human resources to strengthen regional connectivity and develop industrial foundation. Since there is the large number of Japanese companies doing business and a large resident population of Japanese nationals in the East and Southeast Asian regions, Japan has provided intensive support against COVID-19 in the region. Specifically, Japan provided a total of approximately 38 billion yen in health- and medical-related equipment to 11 countries and provided support for improving health and medical systems in these countries through technical cooperation. Additionally, Japan has provided COVID-19 emergency financial support yen loans totaling approximately 220 billion yen to five countries to offset the economic impacts of the pandemic. Furthermore, as part of its support to ASEAN during the pandemic, Japan is also conducting training for public health officers of ASEAN countries geared toward the operation of the ASEAN Centre for Public Health Emergencies and Emerging Diseases, which Japan is fully supporting.

Furthermore, Japan is actively providing support for capacity building for maritime law enforcement to ASEAN countries positioned along Japan's sea lanes such as the Philippines and Viet Nam, with the aim of building the free and open international order. Such efforts include providing equipment such as patrol vessels and coastal monitoring radars, as well as human resource development through the dispatch of experts. In addition, Japan is providing consistent support to eradicate domestic and regional disparity, and support for the creation of a sustainable society in areas such as disaster risk reduction, environment and climate change, and energy. At the Japan-ASEAN Summit Meeting held in November 2020,



"Last One Mile Support" Handover Ceremony in collaboration with UNICEF (November, Philippines)

the Joint Statement of the ASEAN-Japan Summit on Cooperation on the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific (AOIP) was announced. Based on the fact that it was confirmed that the principles of the AOIP and FOIP match one another, Japan plans to continue strengthening Japan-ASEAN cooperation going forward in terms of maritime cooperation, connectivity, the SDGs and economy, which are priority fields of the AOIP. In 2021, Japan has conducted countermeasures against infectious diseases, as well as training on topics such as logistics, marine waste, and treatment of offenders based on the Japan-ASEAN Technical Cooperation Agreement concluded in 2019.

With regard to Myanmar, in response to the worsened humanitarian condition following the coup d'état in February, Japan has been providing humanitarian assistance (food, medical supplies, etc.) directly benefitting the people in Myanmar through international organizations.

In the Mekong region, steady progress has been made with cooperation under the "Tokyo Strategy 2018," a set of guidelines for Japan-Mekong cooperation. At the Mekong-Japan Foreign Ministers' Meeting held in August, Foreign Minister Motegi discussed the support Japan has provided thus far against COVID-19, including 5.6 million doses of vaccine, approximately 750 million yen in support of the cold chain, and supply of oxygen concentrator, and stated Japan will support the Mekong region in combating the COVID-19 pandemic. The Mekong region is located at the core of the Indo-Pacific region. Japan will continue its assistance to aid the development of each Mekong

country through the Japan-Mekong cooperation framework.

With regard to China, Japan's ODA to China that first began in 1979 ceased adopting new projects in FY2018, and all current projects are to end in March 2022.

### **B** Southwest Asia

Southwest Asia holds strategic importance as a marine transportation hub that connects East Asia with the Middle East, and is also a region with immense economic potential, such as India, where economic growth and massive infrastructure demand are anticipated in the future. On the other hand, the region still faces many unresolved challenges such as undeveloped infrastructure, poverty and natural disasters. Japan provides a range of assistance through ODA to assist the region in overcoming these challenges, bearing in mind the improvement of the investment environment for Japanese companies, and ensuring human security. The worldwide COVID-19 pandemic has also had a substantial impact on Southwest Asia due to its social and economic vulnerabilities along with an underdeveloped medical system. As a measure against COVID-19 in Southwest Asian countries, Japan has provided a total of 160 billion yen in fiscal assistance yen loans to three countries, as well as health-and medical-related equipment to seven countries, totaling over 8.6 billion yen. In addition, Japan has provided 2.5 billion yen to six countries in support of the development of a cold chain system as part of the Last One Mile Support, an initiative to establish vaccination system. Japan has also provided support for improving health and medical systems through technical cooperation.

Japan has been providing support to India, which has the largest population in Southwest Asia. As part of its support for the development of economic and social infrastructure including electricity and transportation infrastructure that contribute to enhancing connectivity and strengthening industrial competitiveness, Japan has assisted



Train set for Dhaka Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) Line 6 procured from Japan. The cars carry a motif featuring the Japanese and Bangladesh flags. (November 16, Dhaka, Bangladesh)

with the construction of high-speed railways, subways in a number of cities and road construction in India's northeast. In addition, Japan has supported India's sustainable and inclusive growth through such projects as those in the forestry sector including afforestation activities as well as those in the health sector that help strengthen the medical system including measures against infectious diseases. With regard to Bangladesh, Japan, under the Bay of Bengal Industrial Growth Belt (BIG-B) initiative, is providing support that contributes to strengthening domestic and regional connectivity, developing infrastructure, and improving the investment environment. Since August 2017, a large-scale influx of displaced persons from northern Rakhine State, Myanmar, and prolonged evacuation have resulted in the deterioration of humanitarian situations in camps for displaced persons and has also had a severe impact on the living environment of the surrounding host communities. In response to this situation, Japan provided support through international organizations and NGOs in the areas of water and hygiene, health and medical care, food security, livelihood assistance, etc.

### **C** Pacific Island Countries

Not only being Japan's "neighbors" connected by the Pacific, but also the Pacific Island countries have deep historical connections with Japan. Moreover, as these countries possess a vast



exclusive economic zone (EEZ, or areas where a country's economic right reaches), they are a key region for maritime transportation for Japan, and also provide vital fishing grounds for Japan's distant-water bonito and tuna fisheries. Therefore, the stability and prosperity of the Pacific Island countries are of great importance to Japan.

The Pacific Island countries have common issues that are unique to small island states, such as smaller economies, scattered territories in a wide sea area, difficulty in breaking into the international market, and vulnerability to damages by natural disasters. In light of these circumstances, Japan, as a good partner of the Pacific Island countries, is providing support to boost their autonomous and sustainable development.

At the Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) held via video conference in July, discussions were held focused on the five priority areas, which are, (1) COVID-19 Response and Recovery, (2) Sustainable Oceans based on the Rule of Law, (3) Climate Change and Disaster Resilience, (4) Strengthening Foundation for Sustainable and Resilient Economic Development, and (5) People-to-People Exchanges and Human Resource Development. Japan announced its commitment to promote people-to-people exchanges and human resource development for more than 5,500 people and summarized the specific initiatives for the next three years in the annexed document of the "The Ninth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM9) Leaders Declaration" under the title Joint Action Plan. The Joint Action Plan outlines specific initiatives based on the five priority areas such as provision, management and support for the administration of vaccines, supply of high quality medical equipment and development of medical facilities, provision of quality infrastructure such as ports and airports, surveillance to eradicate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing, disaster prevention, waste management that also includes marine plastic waste, and climate change. The Pacific Island countries stated their strong praise to PALM for the role



Port Vila Lapetasi International Wharf constructed with assistance from Japan (Vanuatu)



Hon. Hu'akavameiliku, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Tonga, welcoming the arrival of the Self-Defense Forces transport aircraft carrying emergency relief supplies (January 22, 2022, Tonga)

it has played thus far and deep appreciation to Japan for implementation under the commitment at PALM8 as well as for new commitment based on the five priority areas.

In response to the damages caused by the volcanic eruption and tsunami that occurred on January 15, 2022, Japan has provided emergency relief supplies through JICA for Tonga, which was delivered by the Japan Disaster Relief Team (Self-Defense Forces) in light of humanitarian perspective and its amicable relations with the Kingdom of Tonga. Furthermore, Japan is providing Emergency Grant Aid of approximately 2.44 million US dollars for Tonga.

### ▣ Latin America and the Caribbean

Latin America and the Caribbean is a region with which Japan has enjoyed friendly relations for a long time. The region also has deep historical ties with Japan, as demonstrated by the fact that around 2.13 million Japanese immigrants and



Last One Mile Support Equipment Delivery Ceremony  
(November 8, Asunción, Paraguay)

their descendants, known as “Nikkei,” reside in the region. The region is a major supplier of resources and food, as well as a potential emerging market with gross regional production of around 5 trillion US dollars. On the other hand, as many countries in the region are facing challenges such as rectification of income inequality within country, response to natural disasters, and achievement of the SDGs, Japan is engaged in various cooperative efforts while also taking into account the circumstances of each country in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Japan has provided fiscal loans to two countries in Latin America, totaling 30 billion yen, and health-and medical-related equipment to 25 countries, totaling 9.1 billion yen, to help combat the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, Japan has provided approximately 1.5 billion yen to seven countries in support of the development of a cold chain system as part of the Last One Mile Support initiative. Moreover, Japan has also provided assistance to 17 countries through JICA’s technical cooperation for the improvement of health and medical systems in those countries.

Additionally, in response to the hurricane-related damages in November 2020, Japan provided emergency relief supplies (tents, sleeping pads, blankets, etc.) and equipment needed for recovery (excavators, bulldozers, etc.) to Colombia, Nicaragua, Honduras and Guatemala. Japan also provided support based on the needs of each country; for example, Japan offered El Salvador

opportunities to send its young public servants to study specialized knowledge and obtain graduate degrees in Japan for the development and growth of their home country. In recent years, there have been concerns over the increase in the number of migrants from Central American countries to the U.S. Japan is providing support to address issues such as poverty, public security and natural disasters in Central America, which are some of the root causes for migration.

In addition, recent deterioration in social and economic conditions in Venezuela has resulted in approximately six million refugees fleeing to neighboring countries, which has affected the whole surrounding region. As stated by Uto Takashi, State Minister for Foreign Affairs at the International Donors’ Conference in Solidarity with Venezuelan Refugees and Migrants in June 2021, Japan has continued its support on civil welfare of Venezuelan citizens, including refugees and migrants, and support for affected neighboring countries. In 2021, Japan provided assistance to Venezuelan refugees and migrants and host communities in Peru and Colombia through international organizations and NGOs.

### **E** Central Asia and Caucasus

Central Asia and Caucasus are surrounded by Russia, China, South Asia, the Middle East and Europe. The stability and development of this region are also important for the development and stability of the whole of Eurasia, including Japan. Japan supports nation building in a free and open Central Asia and the Caucasus region that allows international orders based on the rule of law to take root and improve, and also sustainable development to progress, while also taking into account broad-based views covering neighboring regions including Afghanistan and Iran.

Japan is providing health-and medical-related equipment to eight countries, totaling 3.2 billion yen, as a measure against COVID-19 in Central Asia and Caucasus. In addition, Japan is providing support for enhancing border control capabilities



JICA experts providing instruction on handicrafts to female farmers (July 20, Bishkek, Kyrgyz; Photo: JICA/Suzuki Kaku)

in the region where countries share a border with Afghanistan through international organizations.

### **F The Middle East and North Africa**

Middle East and North Africa regions are geopolitically key areas as the crossroads of Europe, sub-Saharan Africa and Asia, and securing peace and stability in those areas is crucial not only for the energy security of Japan but also for the stability of the world. From this point of view, Japan has provided support to achieve peace and stability in the regions.

In 2021, Japan provided COVID-19-related support to the Middle East and North Africa regions by using ODA. Specifically, Japan earmarked a total of around 29.1 billion yen for support through international organizations, and provided health-and medical-related equipment as bilateral assistance.

With regard to Syria, where civil war has been prolonged, Japan has provided more than 2.9 billion US dollars and neighboring countries since 2012 based on the policy of providing humanitarian assistance to all Syrians facing difficulties. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio Eiichiro participated in Supporting the future of Syria and the region, Brussels V Conference, co-organized by the EU and UN in March. He stated that Japan decided to provide an additional contribution of about 200 million US dollars for assistance in 2021 and will continue to fulfill the role in improving the humanitarian situation in Syria. Furthermore,



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki attending the International Ministerial Conference on UNRWA (November 16, Tokyo)

in order to foster human resources who could contribute to Syria's future reconstruction, 111 Syrian students have been accepted in Japan since 2017.

In regard to Palestine, based on the Corridor for Peace and Prosperity initiative with the aim of promoting economic and social development for Palestine promoted through cooperation between Japan, Israel, Palestine and Jordan, Japan assists the development of Jericho Agro-Industrial Park (JAIP). On the visit to Palestine by Foreign Minister Motegi in August, the opening ceremonies of the Palestinian Business Prosperity Center at JAIP and Protective Shelter of the Great Bath at Hisham's Palace were held. Furthermore, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki Takako attended the International Ministerial Conference on UNRWA in November, where she stated the importance of support activities for Palestinian refugees and their fiscal stabilization, and Japan's consistent support.

In Yemen, where a severe humanitarian crisis is still ongoing, Japan has provided more than 300 million US dollars in support since 2015. At the High-Level Pledging Event for the Humanitarian Crisis in Yemen held in March, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio stated that Japan decided to provide a total of approximately 49 million US dollars at least for assistance in 2021, and would continuously make efforts to realize peace and stability in Yemen. In 2021, Japan offered humanitarian assistance in the field of mental healthcare, livelihood support for small fishery households,



Lecture on safety and risk management at E-JUST  
(January, Egypt; Photo: JICA)

capacity building, and education in collaboration with international organizations.

Since the Taliban took over Kabul in August, the humanitarian conditions have worsened in Afghanistan, where nearly half of the population are in need of humanitarian assistance such as food items, and new refugee influx to its neighboring countries is concerned. Given this situation, Foreign Minister Motegi announced at the virtual Foreign Minister's Meeting on Afghanistan in September that Japan is prepared to provide a total of approximately 200 million US dollars (around 22 billion yen) in 2021, including 65 million US dollars (about 7.1 billion yen) in new assistance in areas such as shelter, health care, water and sanitation, food, agriculture, and education through international organizations.

Human resource development is vital to realize stability in the Middle East in the medium-to long-term. As an example, through the technical cooperation project "Egypt-Japan University of Science and Technology (E-JUST) Project Phase 3," Japan is providing support for the human resource development in the field of industry, science and technology in Egypt, the Middle East and the Africa region. In addition, Japan has supported school management and teaching staff's capacity building by providing the yen loan "Egypt-Japan School Support Program (Egypt-Japan Education Partnership)." As of October 2021, 48 schools following the Japanese education model opened.

## **G** Africa

Africa has been gradually recovering from the economic depression caused by the rapid drop in natural resource prices around 2014, and continues to attract the attention and anticipation from the international community for its potential, backed by its abundant natural resources and a rapidly growing population. On the other hand, the COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on Africa's fragilities in various areas including healthcare and medical sectors. In these circumstances, Japan has provided healthcare and medical equipment totaling 6.8 billion yen to African countries through bilateral arrangements and collaborations with international organizations. Japan has also conducted technical cooperation to strengthen the healthcare and medical systems in Africa. Through the longstanding process of the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), Japan has actively implemented programs to support the healthcare and medical system in Africa from medium-and long-term perspectives. These efforts have been recognized anew amidst the spread of COVID-19 in Africa. For example, the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research in Ghana for which Japan has supported the establishment and the development of laboratory technicians, plays a major role in carrying out the PCR tests in the country. Likewise, other healthcare and medical research institutes that Japan has supported such as the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI), play the role of the centers for countermeasures against COVID-19 throughout Africa.

COVID-19 also has a widespread impact on the African society and economy. Japan is implementing measures under each of the three pillars of TICAD 7 held in August 2019: economy, society, and peace and stability, making contributions to respond to the various social and economic issues in Africa.

In the pillar of Economy, Japan has promoted industrial human resource development through the African Business Education Initiative for





Ceremony of PCR Test Kits Donation to Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) (June, Kenya)



The Third Country Training Program at KEMRI (November, Kenya; Photo: JICA)

Youth (ABE initiative) 3.0 and other means, in order to promote African businesses. Since TICAD V (2013), JICA has provided opportunities to study at graduate schools in Japan, to take part in internships at Japanese companies, Japanese language training and business programs including entrepreneur cultivation training for 1,600 youths under the initiative. Furthermore, with a view to strengthening connectivity, Japan will also promote investment in quality infrastructure with a focus on the three priority regions (Northern Corridor (East Africa), Nacala Corridor and West Africa Growth Ring). In September, Exchange of Notes on the Project for Improvement of the Tema Motorway Roundabout (Phase 2) and The Project for Rehabilitation of National Trunk Road N8 (Phase 2) was conducted in Ghana.

Under the pillar of Society, Japan is further promoting initiatives toward promoting universal health coverage (UHC). In addition, Japan

is providing assistance for developing science and mathematics education and improving the learning environment, in order to help provide high-quality education.

Under the pillar of Peace and Stability, Japan is providing support to Africa-led efforts aimed at establishing peace and stability via support for provision of security equipment and human resource development, under the New Approach for Peace and Stability in Africa (NAPSA) (see Chapter 3, Section 1 3 (6) (b) b on page 210).

### (5) Approaches to Appropriate and Effective Implementation of ODA

#### A Approaches to Appropriate Implementation of ODA

In the implementation of ODA, efforts are made to enhance transparency and quality by listening to the views of external experts at each phase and formulating projects based on these opinions. In the phase prior to preliminary studies for the implementation of ODA, MOFA holds the Development Project Accountability Committee in public, exchanges views with independent committee members that have knowledge of the relevant field, and affirms the validity of the project. Furthermore, JICA publishes ex-post evaluation results for all projects valued at 200 million yen or more (2,795 projects published as of the end of December 2021) on the “ODA Mieru-ka Site” after the implementation of the projects in view of enhancing the transparency of the projects. Ex-post evaluations for projects valued at 1 billion yen or more are conducted by third parties. MOFA conducts third party evaluations at the policy level (such as country assistance evaluations, thematic evaluations and aid modality evaluations) and ex-post evaluations on grant aid projects implemented by MOFA to improve ODA management and ensure accountability. Efforts are made to utilize the lessons drawn from the evaluation results for the policy formulation and project implementation of future ODA. MOFA also publishes the evaluation results on its website.

As part of its effort to ensure the appropriateness of development cooperation, JICA has adopted the JICA Guidelines for Environmental and Social Considerations and strives to implement ODA projects with due consideration for human rights, the environment and social impacts.

### **B Approaches to Effective Implementation of ODA**

ODA is implemented through three frameworks corresponding to the needs of the partner country and the scale of the project: grant aid, loan aid and technical cooperation. In order to utilize the limited budget efficiently and achieve a high level of development effectiveness, MOFA formulates a development cooperation policy for each country that defines the priority areas and policies of ODA, taking into account comprehensively the development plans and development challenges of respective partner countries. Moreover, the Rolling Plan is formulated as an appendix to the Country Development Cooperation Policy, with a summary for quick reference on how each individual ODA project is associated with a specific priority area. Through these efforts, the policy of development cooperation in each country is clearly identified, enabling more strategic projects to be formed across the confines of each framework.

### **C Efforts with regard to International Discussions on ODA**

Japan also contributes actively to international discussions on ODA. At OECD/DAC, discussions are underway on the revision of measurement methods for the appropriate assessment of each country's ODA disbursement, approaches to utilize ODA as a catalyst for mobilization of development finance from the private sector, responses to COVID-19, and assistance for climate change related issues. In addition, OECD/DAC is working to provide opportunities for mutual learning such that development assistance provided by emerging donors will be accountable and transparent in

a manner consistent with international standards and practices.

### **D Efforts toward Promoting Understanding of ODA**

It is vital to have the understanding and support of the people in implementing development cooperation. To that end, efforts are made to promote understanding among the citizens through the effective dissemination of information. MOFA has enhanced the ODA website contents with brand new information, as well as aims to disseminate information on Japan's development cooperation activities among a wider range of targets in an easy-to-understand manner through the ODA Twitter account, e-mail subscriptions, and other tools. In addition, MOFA has expanded on the short animation series "Go! ODA-Man" based on the popular anime "Eagle Talon," and created new videos on the introduction of ODA, a documentary on development cooperation, etc. It also hosted the international cooperation event, Earth Camp, which welcomes general participation, virtually for the first time. Furthermore, with this year marking the 30th anniversary of the event, Global Festa Japan was held both online and in person as a hybrid event, which attracted more than 10,000 participants in person and online in two days. In FY2021, MOFA has continued actively to conduct "ODA Delivery Lectures" by ministry officials as a part of its efforts to promote understanding of development cooperation via virtual lectures



Videos featuring famous and highly influential persons have been published.





online. In addition, MOFA makes active efforts in overseas publicity, including site-visit tours with the aim of developing local media coverage of Japan's development cooperation, and issues PR pamphlets and materials in English and local languages.

## 2 Response to Global Issues

### (1) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

The “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (the 2030 Agenda)” is a set of international development goals to be achieved by 2030, which was adopted at the UN Summit in September 2015 as a successor to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) formulated in 2001. The 2030 Agenda sets out international development goals for realizing a society that is sustainable, diverse and inclusive, and where “no one is left behind,” by 2030.

The 2030 Agenda lists the “Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)” consisting of 17 goals and 169 targets that are interrelated and closely linked to each other, and which serve as development goals for the whole of the international community including developed countries.

After the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, Japan first built a foundation for the implementation of the SDGs by establishing the SDGs Promotion Headquarters headed by the Prime Minister, with the Chief Cabinet Secretary and Foreign Minister as the Deputy Chiefs and composed of all cabinet ministers as members, and formulating the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles that set out Japan's medium-to long-term strategy toward the achievement of the SDGs and eight priority areas that Japan will place particular focus on. Furthermore, Japan puts great importance on public-private partnership for the implementation of the SDGs, and established the SDGs Promotion Round Table Meeting, bringing together stakeholders from a wide range of fields including the private sector, civil society, experts, and international organizations. It also engages in

the exchange of views on initiatives by local governments and businesses toward the promotion of the SDGs, measures for the empowerment of women and the next generation, and strengthening cooperation with the international community among others.

At the 11th meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters held in December 2021, key initiatives of relevant ministries and agencies toward the achievement of the SDGs were decided as the “SDGs Action Plan 2022.” This Action Plan sets out the intent to further promote efforts toward the achievement of the SDGs in both the aspects of domestic implementation and international cooperation based on the 5Ps described in the 2030 Agenda: People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnership as well as the eight priority areas listed in the SDGs Implementation Guiding Principles.

On the same day as the 11th meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters, a conferment ceremony for the fifth Japan SDGs Award was held to commend companies and organizations that have put in place outstanding efforts toward the realization of the SDGs. This year, Euglena Co., Ltd. (Minato Ward, Tokyo Prefecture) received the SDGs Promotion Headquarters Chief's (Prime Minister's) Award for its efforts to deliver impact through its sustainable management, create employment and achieve increased income for farmers living in poverty, and provide food support to refugees in Bangladesh.

In terms of international activities, at the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in July, Japan's Voluntary National Review (VNR), which reports on Japan's implementation of the SDGs was presented for the second time in four years, and Foreign Minister Motegi participated via a video message. In the message, he stated that in deciding the VNR, the discussion has deepened between ministers on what efforts Japan needs to make within the Decade of Action, in particular to realize the vision of “building back better”

from COVID-19. In addition, he also stated that Japan will be placing particular emphasis on initiatives in the healthcare and medical field to achieve universal health coverage (UHC), as well as realization of a green society and responding to climate change issues through digital transformation. Moreover, Prime Minister Suga attended the SDG Moment 2021 held in conjunction with the UN General Assembly High Level Week in September via a video message. In the message, he made statements based on Japan's VNR compiled by taking into account the valuable opinions of various organizations, associations and civil society. Prime Minister Suga acknowledged that the SDGs are an important compass to overcome unprecedented crises and lead the world to a better future. He stated that Japan will do its utmost toward achieving the SDGs by 2030 and creating a hopeful future through international conferences to be held within the year, such as the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) and the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021.

### **A Human Security**

Human security is a concept that pursues the right of individuals to live happily and in dignity, free from fear and want, through their protection and empowerment. Japan positions human security as a guiding principle that lies at the roots of Japan's development cooperation in the Development Cooperation Charter approved in 2015. Japan has led discussions on human security in the UN, and supported the dissemination and implementation of the concept of human security by UN organizations through the contribution of a cumulative total of about 48.4 billion yen by the end of 2020 to the UN Trust Fund for Human Security, established in 1999 by Japan's initiative. Furthermore, in the area of bilateral cooperation, Japan has also put effort into the dissemination and implementation of this concept through support for Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human

Security Projects. The SDGs, which advocate a people-centered approach and the vision of leaving no one behind, also position human security at its core. At the General Debate of the 75th session of the UN General Assembly held in September 2020, in response to the proposal made by Prime Minister Suga, Japan cooperated with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in conducting discussions toward compiling a special report on human security, which was published in February 2022. In addition, proactive efforts are being made toward revitalizing human security, such as the first meeting of the Group of Friends of Human Security held online in June 2021 with UN Secretary-General António Guterres in attendance, and the second meeting held again virtually in December of the same year.

### **B Approaches in the Area of Disaster Risk Reduction**

200 million people around the world are affected by disasters every year (90% of the victims are citizens of developing countries) and the annual average loss incurred by natural hazards extends to approximately 140 billion US dollars according to estimates by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNDRR). As natural disasters have become more frequent and intensified due to climate change, disaster risk reduction is essential for realizing poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Japan makes the most of its expertise in disaster risk reduction, built up through numerous experiences with disasters, to actively promote international cooperation. At the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction held in Sendai in March 2015, Japan took the lead in the adoption of the "Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030," a guideline for efforts by the international community. Japan also announced the "Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction" as its independent contribution, which includes provision of 4 billion US dollars toward cooperation and training

of 40,000 people in the four years from 2015 to 2018. With the achievement of these goals, Japan has been providing ongoing support for disaster risk reduction, including launching the Sendai Cooperation Initiative for Disaster Risk Reduction Phase 2 in June 2019, under which Japan plans to provide support to at least 5 million people from 2019 to 2022, in areas such as flood measures.

Coinciding with World Tsunami Awareness Day (November 5), proposed by Japan and enacted unanimously at the 70th UN General Assembly held in December 2015, Japan has hosted the High School Students Summit on “World Tsunami Awareness Day” four times since 2016. High school students from countries around the world are invited to this event, and through practical learning about Japan’s history of tsunami, recovery from earthquake disasters, and preparations for a possible Nankai Trough earthquake, the participants make proposals for future challenges and implementation in their home countries. In 2021, in light of the spread of COVID-19, Japan co-hosted the event online, with the aim of improving awareness of tsunami preparedness with UNDRR, as well as a tsunami-related training program for female administrative officers and tsunami evacuation drills for schools in the Asia-Pacific region. Japan will continue to share the experiences and lessons drawn from past disasters with the world, and to promote the “mainstreaming of disaster risk reduction” that incorporates the perspectives of disaster risk reduction in the policies of every country.

### **C Education**

In the area of education, Japan is engaged in various forms of educational support around the world under the “Learning Strategy for Peace and Growth,” announced by Japan in line with the timing for the adoption of the 2030 Agenda. At the World Assembly for Women (WAW!) held in March 2019, Japan announced that it will continue its efforts to provide opportunities for quality education and training to at least 4 million women

in developing countries by 2020. Furthermore, at the meeting of the SDGs Promotion Headquarters held in June of the same year, Japan announced its commitment to the “Education × Innovation” initiative, which aims to provide education for innovation, and education through innovation to at least 9 million children and youths. At the G20 Osaka Summit (2019) chaired by Japan, an agreement was reached on the “G20 Initiative on Human Capital Investment for Sustainable Development,” which places the focus on education, and the commitment to invest in human capital and promote access to inclusive, equitable and quality education for all people was affirmed in the Initiative.

Since the beginning of 2020, schools were shut down due to the spread of COVID-19, resulting in the rapid increase of children in various parts of the world whose education opportunities were taken away. In light of this situation, Japan has committed to support education and human resource development for 7.5 million girls in developing countries, in addition to providing assistance worth over 1.5 billion US dollars to the education sector over the next five years at the Global Education Summit held in July 2021.

### **D Approaches in Agricultural Areas**

In coordination with the relevant countries, such as G7 or G20 member states and international organizations, Japan has delivered assistance for agriculture and rural development in developing countries. The G20 Niigata Agriculture Ministers’ Meeting was held in May 2019, during which the participants affirmed the importance of sharing knowledge among countries on various issues related to agriculture and food, such as human resources development and new technology, food value chains, and the SDGs. The “G20 Niigata Agriculture Ministers’ Declaration 2019” was also adopted. Since 2020, through the support via international organizations and others, Japan has been addressing issues of deterioration of the food system due to the stagnation of

distribution of agricultural products as a result of travel restrictions due to the spread of COVID-19.

In terms of global initiatives, Prime Minister Suga delivered a video message at the UN Food Systems Summit, which was held in a virtual format in September 2021. In his video message, Prime Minister Suga stated that Japan will work toward establishing better global “food systems,” focusing on the following three points: (1) to achieve both productivity improvement and sustainability by driving innovation, digitalization and the utilization of science and technology; (2) to maintain and strengthen free and fair trade, including the restraint of import and export restrictions based on arbitrary measures without scientific evidence; and (3) to take an approach considering each country and region’s climate and nature, as well as their food culture.

### **E Approaches in the Area of Water and Sanitation**

Japan has continuously been the largest donor country in the area of water and sanitation since the 1990s and has implemented high quality assistance utilizing Japan’s experiences, expertise, and technologies. Japan proactively participates in discussions in the international community, and tackles global issues in the area building upon its contributions to date. In particular, since the outbreak of COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020, Japan has been providing support through coordination with international organizations and agencies on the promotion of hand washing among other measures from the standpoint of preventing the further spread of COVID-19. The 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit, which had been originally scheduled to be held in Kumamoto in October 2020, was postponed until April 2022 due to the COVID-19 outbreak.

### **(2) Global Health**

Japan advocates human security, which is the basis of its Development Cooperation Charter, while promoting various activities in support of that principle. Japan emphasizes cooperation in the area of health as a priority issue. Even amidst the global fight against COVID-19, Japan is promoting international cooperation focusing on the three pillars of 1) Overcoming the current pandemic, 2) Strengthening health systems to prepare for future health crises, and 3) Generating an enabling international environment for health security across broader sectors based on the idea of human security and its conviction of “leaving no one’s health behind,” while also keeping in mind the goal of achieving UHC<sup>4</sup>.

As Covid-19 vaccines have become more available in 2021, Japan is working with the COVAX facility and through cooperation and collaboration with multinational initiatives, including the Quad Vaccine Partnership to ensure equitable access to COVID-19 vaccines for countries around the world, including developing countries. In June, Japan co-hosted the COVAX AMC Summit<sup>5</sup> with the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI), and secured more than enough funding necessary (8.3 billion US dollars) to ensure 1.8 billion doses of vaccine are available for 30% of the population in developing countries by the end of 2021. On this occasion, Japan announced its plan to provide a financial contribution of 1 billion US dollars to the COVAX facility’s Advance Market Commitment (AMC) as well as its commitment to donate 30 million doses of vaccine including through COVAX. In addition, Prime Minister Suga announced at the 76th Session of the UN General Assembly held in September that Japan will provide up to 60 million vaccine doses in total to each country and region. Since June and until the end of February, Japan has provided 26 countries and regions with

<sup>4</sup> Universal health coverage (UHC) refers to everyone receiving quality health services at an affordable cost and being protected from financial risks.

<sup>5</sup> COVAX AMC Summit: Gavi COVAX Advance Market Commitment Summit

approximately 42 million doses of vaccines. At the same time, Japan has steadily implemented the “Last One Mile Support” to ensure the delivery of vaccines to vaccination centers in each country and region. Japan has earmarked and provided a total of 13.7 billion yen in support to 59 countries and regions.

In addition to addressing current COVID-19, in order to strengthen preparedness and response for future health crises, Japan is promoting cooperation among health and financial authorities keeping in mind the goal of achieving UHC, while contributing to discussions at international conferences, including G7/G20 and WHO, given its conviction that it is important to strengthen the global health architecture including WHO. In May, the World Health Assembly decided to establish a Member States Working Group on Strengthening WHO Preparedness and Response to Health Emergencies. Japan actively engaged in the Working Group, which examined recommendations to strengthen WHO's preparedness and response to health emergencies, as well as considered the benefits of developing a WHO convention, agreement or other international instrument on pandemic preparedness and response during the months from July to November. The Working Group's work was presented to the Special Session of the World Health Assembly held in December, and the establishment of an intergovernmental negotiating body to strengthen pandemic prevention, preparedness and response was unanimously decided.

From the standpoint of developing an environment that ensures health and safety in a wide range of fields, Japan regards “nutrition,” which forms the foundation of human health, as indispensable for the achievement of the SDGs and an issue related to human security. As such, Japan hosted the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 in a hybrid format in December. With endorsement received from 215 different stakeholders at the Summit, the Tokyo Compact on Global Nutrition for Growth, which indicates a concrete direction



COVAX AMC Summit co-hosted by the Government of Japan and Gavi (June, Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

for international society to improve nutrition was issued, while commitments from as many as 181 stakeholders for nutrition improvement were submitted and a financial contribution amounting to over 27 billion US dollars was announced. This achievement exceeds the outcome from the previous Nutrition for Growth Summits. Appreciation for Japan's active contribution to address the issue of global nutrition was shown.

To further contribute to global health with the private and public sectors working together, given the experience with the COVID-19 pandemic, four sessions of the global health strategy promotion council have been held since July. The council is conducting deliberations with the goal of formulating a new strategy at the earliest stage possible by June 2022. (See the Special Feature at the beginning of page 2 for initiatives related to COVID-19).

### (3) Labor and Employment

It is important to raise income levels through employment, in order to raise the living standards of those living in poverty. Against the background of an expanding supply-chain worldwide, it is necessary to put effort into developing the labor environment, and to realize “decent work” (work that is of an acceptable quality for motivated human beings) around the world. The realization of “decent work” has been positioned as a primary objective of the activities of the International

Labour Organization (ILO), which marks its centenary year in 2019.

In view of this, Japan is also engaged in sustainable development cooperation in the field of labor. In 2021, Japan provided development assistance to developing countries in the Asia Pacific region, including Southeast Asia, South Asia and the African region (Sudan and Ethiopia), which includes assistance for urgent employment creation to address the impacts of natural disasters and COVID-19, the development of labor laws and social insurance systems, and improvement of the standards of occupational safety and health, by providing voluntary contributions to the ILO and support to networks of international workers' and employers' organizations.

#### **(4) Environmental Issues and Climate Change**

##### **A Global Environmental Issues**

Awareness is building worldwide on the importance of addressing global environmental issues, as exemplified by the 2030 Agenda, which embeds environmental goals. Japan is actively involved in conserving the natural environment and realizing sustainable development through negotiations and engagements in various multilateral environmental conventions and relevant international organizations. As the largest donor to the World Bank Group's Global Environment Facility, a financing mechanism for the major environmental conventions, Japan also contributes to projects that address global environmental issues such as biodiversity and chemical pollution, etc.

##### **(A) Conservation of the Marine Environment**

Addressing the problem of marine plastic litter is growing in importance in recent years, given its potential adverse impact on marine ecology, tourism, fisheries, and human health. The problem is caused by factors such as the illegal dumping of waste and incomplete waste disposal. In order to achieve "the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision" that was launched at the G20 Osaka Summit in

2019, which aims to reduce additional pollution by marine plastic litter to zero by 2050, Japan is working with international organizations, including the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in areas such as compiling scientific knowledge and providing assistance on building models necessary for measures against marine plastic litter contamination, in providing environmentally appropriate plastic waste management and disposal support in the Asian region.

In recent years, there has been a growing momentum for formulating a new international legally binding instrument to address marine plastic pollution. Taking into account the establishment of an intergovernmental negotiating committee at the Resumed Fifth Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly held from February to March in 2022, Japan will be playing a leading role in supporting rule formulation.

The Third Leaders Meeting of the High-Level Panel for a Sustainable Ocean Economy was held on November 2. The Panel is composed of leaders of maritime nations and was established to discuss matters such as conservation of marine environments, fisheries and utilization of marine resources. A message from Prime Minister Kishida was read at the meeting that discussed Japan's initiatives to tackle climate change and marine plastic litter, indicating Japan's intent to advance efforts toward realizing a sustainable ocean economy. Leaders of 15 member countries, including the U.S., which newly announced its participation in the Panel, issued a joint statement to urge all actors to join the efforts of the six ocean-based climate actions, and achieve a sustainable ocean economy.

##### **(B) Conservation of Biodiversity**

The 15th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) was held in two parts, with the first part being held both online and in person in Kunming, China from October 11 to 15. Approximately 2,500 participants representing



## Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021

Nutrition is vital to human life. Undernutrition such as hunger, caused by poverty and the impact of climate change continues to pose significant challenges. Currently, more than 140 million children around the world suffer from stunted growth as a result of undernutrition, while nutritional deficiency causes about half the deaths of children under five. At the same time, the number of people who are overweight and obese reaches record levels regardless of high-income or resource-limited countries, and it is said that approximately 2 billion people in the world suffer from diseases related to their dietary habits, such as diabetes.

On December 7 and 8, the Government of Japan hosted the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021.<sup>(Note)</sup> This Summit was attended by a wide range of participants including from governments, international organizations, private sectors, civil society, and the academia. The Summit covered the subject of “the double burden of malnutrition” whereby undernutrition coexists with overnutrition, and discussions were held with a focus on five thematic areas such as (1) Health; (2) Food; (3) Resilience; (4) Accountability; and, (5) Financing, to address the deterioration of nutrition worldwide as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

At the Summit, “the Tokyo Compact on Global Nutrition for Growth” was issued as the outcome document endorsed by more than 210 stakeholders including governments, international organizations, private sectors, and civil society, indicating a direction for the international society to improve nutrition. Moreover, more than 180 stakeholders, including 66 countries and 26 companies, submitted over 390 commitments, and over 27 billion US dollars of financial commitment were announced. These results exceeded the outcomes of past Nutrition for Growth Summits. Prime Minister Kishida announced that Japan will provide nutrition-related assistance that will amount to over 300 billion yen (2.8 billion US dollars) over the next three years, to contribute to achieving universal health coverage (UHC) among others. He also stated that Japan would improve domestic nutritional status by promoting nutritional and environment-friendly dietary life, balanced diets, and health and productivity management.

In the preparatory process, Japan worked closely with non-governmental international civil society and experts, and their engagement and cooperation contributed greatly to the success of the Summit.

Improving nutrition is related not only to the second goal of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but also to a wide range of sectors such as health, agriculture, logistics, water, sanitation and hygiene, and gender equality. Therefore, advancing initiatives through cooperation between the various sectors can bring us closer toward achieving the SDGs.

Based on the concept of human security, the Government of Japan is determined to promote initiatives to ensure that no one's health is left behind. This includes the achievement of UHC. Going forward, it will continue to contribute to the achievement of the SDGs, including improving nutrition worldwide.

**Note:** The first Nutrition for Growth Summit was held in London in 2013, and the second Summit was held in Rio de Janeiro in 2016.



Prime Minister Kishida listening to the speech by UN Secretary-General António Guterres (December 7, Tokyo. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



Prime Minister Kishida delivering a speech at the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 (December 7, Tokyo. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)



Foreign Minister Hayashi delivering a speech at the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 (December 7, Tokyo)

Parties/regions, related organizations, citizen groups, and others joined online, while 2,900 attended in person. The Government of Japan was represented by a delegation consisting of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA), Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and Ministry of the Environment.

A high-level segment was held from October 12 to 13, which was attended by the leaders and ministers of each country. Minister of the Environment Yamaguchi Michael Tsuyoshi represented the Government of Japan through online attendance. During the high-level segment, each country presented its initiative toward the 2050 Vision of “Living in harmony with nature,” while Japan pledged to provide a total of 17 million US dollars of international support through the Japan Biodiversity Fund (JBF 2). The Kunming Declaration was adopted to enhance the momentum for the adoption of the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework during the second part of COP15 (scheduled to be held in Kunming, China from April 25 to May 8, 2022).

In recent years, the illegal wildlife trade has been exacerbated, drawing international attention as one of the key sources of funding for international terrorist organizations. As a follow-up to its provision of elephant anti-poaching operation facilities in Uganda and Mozambique in 2019, Japan decided to provide the same monitoring facilities in Zambia in 2020, and in Rwanda in 2021, underscoring Japan’s intention to seriously address this issue.

Japan is also contributing to international discussions on the strategy to mobilize funds for promoting conservation and sustainable uses of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, with a view to enhancing sustainable agriculture and food security. At the 3rd and 4th meetings of the Standing Committee on the Funding Strategy and Resource Mobilization of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture held in February and September 2021,

Japan, as a regional representative, provided advice on funding strategy and resource mobilization dealing with support and monitoring to monetary and non-monetary benefit sharing and access to genetic resources. At the 57th Session of the Council of the International Tropical Timber Organization (ITTO), held online in November, Japan participated in discussions on the formulation of a new strategic plan and enhancing cooperation with other relevant organizations to enable efficient implementation of sustainable forest management and trading of legally harvested timber in the Tropics.

### **(C) International Management of Chemicals and Hazardous Waste**

The 12th Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Vienna Convention for the Protection of the Ozone Layer Part II and the 33rd Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer were held online in October. At the meetings, matters such as the efficient and effective operation of the protocol were discussed.

The Conference of the Parties to the Basel Convention, which regulates the movement of hazardous waste across national borders, the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade were held, in which the 2022 activity plan and provisional budget were approved, and a review on external funding related to the support for development countries was discussed.

The 4th meeting of the Conference of the Parties for the Minamata Convention on Mercury was held online in November, in which matters such as the budget and activity plan for 2022 were discussed. Furthermore, the second part of the Conference was held in Indonesia in March 2022, in which matters such as a framework for evaluating the effectiveness of the Convention were decided. Japan is playing an active role in

its contribution to the Convention's implementation, including representing a member of the Implementation and Compliance Committee to conduct the implementation of the Convention and verify the status of compliance by the Parties to the Convention even during the intersessional periode.

## **B Climate Change**

### **(A) Initiatives to Achieve Net-zero Emissions by 2050**

In October 2020, Prime Minister Suga declared that Japan would aim to realize carbon neutrality with net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. At the Leaders Summit on Climate, hosted by the U.S. in April 2021, Prime Minister Suga declared that Japan aims to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46% in fiscal year 2030 from its fiscal year 2013 levels, setting an ambitious target which is aligned with the long-term goal of net-zero by 2050. Furthermore, he stressed that Japan would continue strenuous efforts in its challenge to meet the lofty goal of cutting its emission by 50%. In October, the Cabinet decided the updated Plan for the Global Warming Countermeasures and the Strategic Energy Plan. In addition, Japan has submitted its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) that reflects the new reduction target and the Long-term Strategy under the Paris Agreement that reflects initiatives aimed at achieving net-zero emissions by 2050 to the UNFCCC Secretariat.

### **(B) The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the Paris Agreement**

Global efforts are essential in reducing greenhouse gas emissions that cause climate change; however, the Kyoto Protocol adopted at the third session of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP3) in 1997 required only developed countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Paris Agreement was adopted at COP21 held in Paris in December 2015. The Paris Agreement is a fair and effective framework that requires the

Parties to submit their nationally determined contributions NDCs to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and undertake efforts toward the achievement of such goals regardless of whether they are developed or developing countries. The Agreement entered into force in November 2016, and has been ratified by more than 190 countries including Japan (as of November 2021).

Upon the adoption of the Paris Agreement, negotiations commenced on the implementation guidelines of the Agreement toward its full implementation after 2020, and except for the implementation guidelines for market mechanisms, they were adopted at COP24 held in Katowice, Poland in December 2018. At COP26, which was postponed from November 2020 to October 31 to November 13, 2021 due to the impact of the spread of COVID-19, significant progress was made in the steady implementation of the Paris Agreement and the promotion of climate change countermeasures worldwide, including a decision on the implementation guidelines for market mechanisms, which had been negotiated at COP24 and COP25 without a decision, based on the breakthrough proposal made by Japan.

### **(C) Efforts in Supporting Developing Countries**

Developed countries including Japan have provided various supports including financial support, capacity building, and technology transfer for developing countries to implement sufficient climate change countermeasures. Japan announced in June 2021 at the G7 Cornwall Summit that it would provide climate finance, both private and public, totaling 6.5 trillion yen over the 5 years from 2021 to 2025. In the Carbis Bay G7 Summit Communiqué, the leaders of the G7 committed to an end to new direct government support for unabated international thermal coal power generation by the end of 2021. At the World Leaders Summit held during COP26 on November 1 and 2, Prime Minister Kishida announced in his statement that Japan would make an additional contribution of up to 10 billion US dollars, both public

and private in the coming 5 years, as well as doubling its support for adaptation from the previous commitment made (ACE2.0) to 1.6 trillion yen, in the coming five years, both in public and private finance.

From such perspectives, the Green Climate Fund (GCF) also plays an important role as a multilateral fund that provides support for developing countries to address climate change. In addition to its initial contribution of 1.5 billion US dollars (2015 to 2018), Japan committed that it would contribute up to 1.5 billion US dollars for the first replenishment (2020 to 2030). Moreover, Japan has actively participated in its management as well as policy-making as a member of the GCF Board. By December, the GCF Board had approved 190 projects, which are projected to prevent 2 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions and increase the resilience of 600 million people.

#### **(D) Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM)**

The JCM is a mechanism for quantitatively evaluating the contributions of Japan to greenhouse gas emission reductions and removals which are achieved through the diffusion of, among others, leading decarbonizing technologies as well as through the implementation of measures in developing countries and others, and for using such contributions to achieve Japan's NDC.

As of November 2021, Japan has established the JCM with 17 partner countries, and implemented more than 200 projects related to the reduction or removal of greenhouse gases. In 2021, the initiative has steadily produced results, such as through the issuance of credits from projects in Kenya.

#### **(E) Japan's efforts in Climate Change and Fragility Risk**

In response to suggestions at the Roundtable Seminar on "Climate Change and Fragility Implications on International Security" held by

MOFA in January 2017 and other fora, that Japan will focus on the Asia Pacific and conduct studies and engage in discussions on climate change and fragility, Japan has been convening the International Conference on Climate Change and Fragility in the Asia-Pacific Region since FY2018. In FY2021, in response to the publication of the second part of the IPCC 6th Assessment Report, Climate Change 2022: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability, the Working Group II contribution, in February 2022, a conference for discussing the theme of the impact on animals due to climate change was held in March 2022.

#### **(F) Climate Change Measures by Non-State Actors**

Measures by non-state actors such as private corporations, local governments, and NGOs are also important in tackling climate change. In Japan as well, non-state actors have made further progress in their efforts, as demonstrated by keen activities of the network of non-state actors, including Zero Carbon Cities in Japan, comprising local municipalities that have declared the goal to reach Net-zero carbon emissions by 2050, Japan Climate Initiative (JCI), which aims to take proactive action in the area of climate change, the Japan Climate Leaders' Partnership (JCLP), a corporate group with the same goal, and "RE Action-Declaring 100% Renewable," a corporate group whose members have established the goal of procuring 100% renewable energy for the electricity required in the operation of their businesses, as well as the increase in the number of Japanese corporations participating in the international initiative "RE100" and the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)<sup>6</sup>. Japan intends to promote diplomacy in the area of climate change while collaborating with such non-state actor driven initiatives.

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<sup>6</sup> The TCFD was established by the Financial Stability Board (FSB) as a task force on the disclosure of financial information related to climate change, led by the private sector. In its final report, it presented a framework on voluntary information disclosure by corporations pertaining to climate-related risks and opportunities.

## Japan's Initiatives to Contribute to Global Decarbonization

Maeda Yudai, Decarbonization Consultant

There is growing interest in climate change in Japan, as damages from heavy rains and floods, extreme heat in summer, and other phenomena related to climate change have increased in frequency in recent years. Today, climate change is one of the most frequently discussed agenda in international fora. From the past to the present, Japan has consistently played a leading part in these international debates and development of countermeasures to climate change at various levels in both public and private sectors. It was in 1992 that a treaty on climate change was signed under the United Nations' framework, based on the recognition that climate change is a global issue that needs to be discussed on a global scale. However, Japan had already unveiled its Action Program to Arrest Global Warming ahead of the treaty in 1990. This Action Plan clearly sets out Japan's responsibilities in the global community in the context of addressing climate change, as stated that Japan must actively fulfill a role commensurate to its international status, by harnessing its economic and technological prowess to provide support and assistance to developing countries. In fact, Japan has continuously and proactively provided support in various ways to date through its official development assistance (ODA) programs, broadly contributing to global climate change actions. This includes support for "mitigation" to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions, as well as support toward "adaptation" to the effects of climate change already happening. Japan has also led global discussions on climate change from an early stage, as exemplified by its initiative in leading discussions on the Kyoto Protocol in 1997, which sets out the specific numerical targets for greenhouse gas reductions by developed countries with the schedule to achieve the targets. Japan has continued its role by leading the discussions on the current global trend toward decarbonization based on the Paris Agreement. Today, even after the Paris Agreement has come into effect and global efforts toward decarbonization have taken a great leap forward, Japan has continued to make responsible commitments toward decarbonization. For example, Japan has announced a goal to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 46% in FY2030 from its FY2013 levels, which followed the announcement of the long-term target to realize net-zero by 2050.



Declaration of carbon neutrality in the Prime Minister's Policy Speech (October 26, 2020, Tokyo. Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

Not surprisingly, Japan's contributions are not limited to the aspect of policy making and diplomacy. While solar power has now become a driving force toward global decarbonization, it is Japanese companies that had played a key role in improving the performance of solar cells and contributing to their practical deployment in a way that reconciles cost aspects as well. This took place at about the same time that international discussions on climate change countermeasures began to move forward. In 1999, Japan came first place in the production amount of solar cells. Even though China makes up the largest share of solar cell production today, Japan is still expected to make great contributions in the field. For example, Japanese researchers were the ones who had developed thin-film solar cells, rooftop solar cells, and mega solar cells, as well as perovskite solar cells that can be applied to surfaces such as walls. Japanese manufacturers such as Toshiba are the global leaders in the development of such products. In addition to renewable energy, efforts in the fields of storage batteries and hydrogen are also important toward decarbonization. Companies such as Panasonic and Toyota possess world-class technologies in these fields and are working on accelerating decarbonization initiatives. We look forward to such initiatives from Japan, and their future contributions to climate action on a global scale.



Thin-film perovskite solar cell (Photo: Toshiba Corporation)  
(Note) This achievement is the fruit of work commissioned by the New Energy and Industrial Technology Development Organization (NEDO).

## **(5) Arctic and Antarctic**

### **A Arctic**

#### **(A) Current State of the Arctic**

There is a risk that rapid changes in the Arctic environment caused by global warming will have a drastic and irreversible impact on the ecology and the lives of the residents. At the same time, as the decreasing amount of sea ice is expected to expand the navigable area, there have been growing economic opportunities such as the use of the Northern Sea Route and the development of resources.

Alongside this, Russia announced the Basic Principles of Russian Federation State Policy in the Arctic to 2035 and the Strategy for Developing the Russian Arctic Zone and Ensuring National Security until 2035 in 2020. It is also promoting military facility maintenance, resource exploitation and freight shipping on the Northern Sea Route. At the Ministerial Meeting of the Arctic Council (AC)<sup>7</sup> held in May, Russia took over the chairmanship of the Council from Iceland (two-year term).

China, in recent years, has positioned itself as an “important stakeholder in Arctic affairs” and is observed to be proactively advancing into the Arctic with its participation in resource development, commercial use of shipping routes, governance development, and scientific research.

Against this backdrop, the U.S. is also enhancing its engagement in light of changes in the situation of the Arctic, including announcing an over 12 million US dollar economic aid policy for Greenland (Denmark) in 2020, and reopening the U.S. Consulate in Nuuk in June after nearly seven decades. The U.S. announced new Arctic strategies from each of the Department of Defense, Air Force, Navy and Coast Guard between 2019

and 2021 in response to changes in the security situation.

In the meanwhile, the European External Action Service and the European Commission issued a joint communication to announce a new Arctic strategy plan in October. This includes, for example, a policy of seeking to encourage multilateral legal obligations that would prohibit further hydrocarbon reserve development in the Arctic and contiguous regions and the purchase of resources produced by these deposits, which shows the growing interest in balancing climate change and environmental protection measures with economic activity in the Arctic.

#### **(B) Japan’s Arctic Policy and International Activities**

As for Japan, it is aiming to contribute to the global society as a major player in addressing the Arctic issues with an emphasis on the three areas of research and development, international cooperation, and sustainable use, based on the “Japan’s Arctic Policy” approved in 2015.

Taking the opportunity of the AC Ministerial Meeting held in Iceland in May, Japan’s ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs made a statement on Japan’s international contribution. At the 8th Arctic Circle Assembly<sup>8</sup> held in October, the Ambassador to Iceland shared the results from the 3rd Arctic Science Ministerial (ASM3) meeting. At ASM3 co-hosted by Japan and Iceland (AC Chair at the time) in May, which was the one to be held for the first time in Asia, the ministers concurred that international cooperation and data-sharing in observational research, collaboration with indigenous peoples and capacity building, and education for the youth in the field of international scientific cooperation and so on should

<sup>7</sup> An intergovernmental forum established in 1996 with the aim of promoting cooperation, coordination, and interaction among the eight Arctic countries (Canada, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and the U.S.), while gaining the involvement of indigenous communities on common issues related to the Arctic region (in particular, sustainable development, environmental protection, etc.). (It does not address military and security issues.) Japan acquired an observer status in 2013.

<sup>8</sup> An international conference established by Mr. Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, former President of Iceland and others in 2013, and attended by about 2,000 participants including government representatives, researchers, and business people. Japan has been participating in it since the first assembly with the attendance of the Ambassador in charge of Arctic Affairs and other delegates.



be promoted. In addition, Japan also declared its intent to further promote international cooperation such as through the operation of the Arctic research vessel as an international platform.

Through the Arctic Challenge for Sustainability II (ArCSII) launched in FY2020, Japan promotes international cooperation for research and human resource development at research and observation stations in the U.S., Canada, Russia, Norway, and Greenland (Denmark) among other locations. Japan has also sent its researchers to the AC working groups. As for the Arctic research vessel proposed in ASM3 for use as an international platform, it has been under construction since 2021.

Moreover, Japanese experts from various fields and Ministry of Foreign Affairs officials attended the International Symposium on Plastics in the Arctic and the Sub-Arctic Region hosted by Iceland as AC chair (March), the Icelandic Chairmanship's Observer online event on Arctic Governance (April), and the Second meeting on the Implementation of the Arctic Science Agreement (April), where they presented Japan's initiatives, research results and cooperation policy

## **B Antarctic**

### **(A) Japan and the Antarctic**

Japan has been conducting Antarctic observation surveys utilizing its advanced technology at Syowa Station established in 1957, thereby contributing to global environment conservation and international development of science and technology. Moreover, as one of the original signatories of the Antarctic Treaty adopted in 1959, Japan strives to maintain and strengthen the Antarctic Treaty System, which is essential to the peaceful use of the Antarctic, while contributing to the promotion of environmental preservation and international cooperation in the Antarctic.

### **(B) The Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM) and the Protection of Antarctic Environment**

At the 43rd Antarctic Treaty Consultative

Meeting (ATCM 43) held virtually in June, discussions were held on issues such as response to the rapid increase in the number of visitors to the Antarctic environment for tourism and other purposes, as well as response to climate change issues in the Antarctic.

### **(C) Japan's Antarctic Observation**

As for Japan's Antarctic observation activities, based on the ninth six-year plan of the Japanese Antarctic Research program (2016 to 2021), Japan is undertaking efforts to elucidate the role and impact of the Antarctic region on the global system, and in particular, to elucidate the actual conditions of global warming and its mechanisms. To that end, in addition to long-term continuous observation, it is also implementing various research and observation activities, including observations using a large aperture atmospheric radar, which is the only one of its kind in the Antarctic.

## **3 Science and Technology Diplomacy**

Science and technology constitute the foundational elements for peace and prosperity that support socioeconomic development, and play a vital role in ensuring safety and security. By harnessing its own advanced science and technology, Japan promotes Science and Technology Diplomacy, thereby contributing to the development of science and technology at home and abroad, the promotion of relations with other countries, the peace and stability of the international community, and the resolution of global challenges. As part of this effort, Japan places emphasis on initiatives implemented through the activities of the Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In September 2015, MOFA established the post of Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and appointed Prof. Kishi Teruo, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo, as the first Science and Technology

Advisor. Following the end of his term, Prof. Kishi was replaced by Prof. Matsumoto Yoichiro, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo as the new advisor in April. Moreover, since April 2019, Prof. Kano Mitsunobu has assumed the post of the Science and Technology Co-Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs to support the work of the Science and Technology Advisor. Prof. Matsumoto supports the activities of the Foreign Minister from the perspective of science and technology, and provides advice on the utilization of science, technology and innovation (STI) in the planning and coordination of various foreign policies to the Minister and relevant divisions.

In 2021, meetings of the Advisory Board for Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy, chaired by Prof. Matsumoto were held in January and July. In the July meeting, recommendations for the Food Systems Summit (held from September 23 to September 25) and the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 (held on December 7 and 8) as well as the STI Showcase on food systems transformation and nutrition improvement were summarized, which were submitted to State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio by Prof. Matsumoto and Prof. Kano in September.

Prof. Matsumoto and Prof. Kano endeavor to exchange views with other countries' government science and technology advisors, such as the U.S., UK, and New Zealand in developing and strengthening a network. Online meetings of the Foreign Ministries Science and Technology Advisors Network (FMSTAN) were held, in which in-depth discussion was conducted, including response to COVID-19. On the occasion of the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 held in December, Japan took the lead with like-minded international Science and Technology Advisors in releasing a joint statement on "Promoting Global Utilization of Science, Technology and Innovation



Prof. Matsumoto, Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, participated in the panel discussion at the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference (September, Tokyo)

for Food Systems Transformation to Ensure the Health of People and the Planet (STEPP)" in enhancing cooperation.

At the 24th Session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development (CSTD) held in May, Prof. Matsumoto emphasized the importance of conducting research and development in non-medical fields including technologies of deactivating viruses through Deep-UV LEDs as a role of STI against the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, at the 2021 OSCE Asian Conference held in September, Prof. Matsumoto introduced Japan's efforts and examples including activities on disaster prevention and environmental protection utilizing satellite data by JAXA, and joint research programs between Japan and developing countries called SATREPS that aim to find solutions to global issues.

Furthermore, Prof. Matsumoto regularly hosts science and technology diplomacy seminars to raise the level of knowledge within MOFA.

Japan has concluded 32 science and technology cooperation agreements, and these are now in force with 46 countries and the EU.<sup>9</sup> Based on these agreements, regular joint committee meetings are organized with these countries to engage in intergovernmental dialogue. In 2021,

<sup>9</sup> For the breakdown, see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website: <https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/technology/nikoku/framework.html>



joint committee meetings were held with the U.S., Spain, the UK, Norway, and the EU, respectively. Attended by delegates from the relevant ministries and agencies, consultations were held on the current status of cooperation in diverse sectors, and on the future direction of cooperation.

With regard to multilateral cooperation, as a member of the Board of the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC), which was established to support research for peaceful purposes

conducted by researchers on weapons of mass destruction from the former Soviet Union, and now involved in a wide range of research and development such as chemistry, biology, radioactive materials and nuclear power, Japan works to provide support mainly to countries of Central Asia. Japan also participates in the ITER project to demonstrate the scientific and technological feasibility of nuclear fusion energy.

## Responding to the Largest Postwar Humanitarian Crisis

Currently, the number of refugees and internally displaced persons has risen to the highest level since World War II, to approximately 82.4 million, and the humanitarian crisis that is arising as a result of conflicts and natural disasters is becoming increasingly complex and prolonged. Moreover, the spread of COVID-19 has further exacerbated the difficulty of providing humanitarian aid. Under such circumstances, Japan, in cooperation with international organizations, has been providing efficient and sustainable assistance to meet the growing needs for humanitarian aid.

### ■ Continued support for the health of displaced persons and local residents

#### – Supporting displaced persons in Bangladesh

Sugawara Naoko, Health Officer, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC), Bangladesh Country Office

August 2021 marks four years since the mass influx of displaced persons from Myanmar's Rakhine State into neighboring Bangladesh reached its peak in August 2017. Today, the number of displaced persons exceeds 900,000 (of whom 51% are children), and they continue to have to depend on assistance for most aspects of their lives. This is putting pressure on the lives of the local residents in Bangladesh where poverty rates are high.

The IFRC, along with the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies of 11 countries around the world including Japan, is providing various forms of support to 34 camps for displaced persons as well as to local residents through the Bangladesh Red Crescent Society (BDRCS). This support includes ensuring the hygiene of water supplies, provision of shelter, and health and medical care.

Among these, with regard to support for health and medical care, five Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, including IFRC, are providing assistance to establish and operate 14 BDRCS health and medical facilities at 13 camps for displaced persons. In addition, they have also been engaging in activities to promote health and hygiene, and to train health volunteers among displaced persons and local residents who have undergone training in maternal and child health, infectious disease response, nutrition, first-aid, and psychological first aid. Through cooperation between the health and medical facilities and health volunteers, they are contributing to disease prevention as well as early detection and treatment. Furthermore, IFRC is also providing support to BDRCS in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic by setting up a COVID-19 isolation



Door-to-door visits by health volunteers (July. Photo: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society)



Activities for the Global Handwashing Day campaign (October. Photo: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society)



Emergency outpatient service at a Bangladesh Red Crescent Society field hospital (September. Photo: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society)

and treatment center equipped with 50 beds. Health volunteers serve as a bridge between the displaced persons and the health and medical facilities by visiting each household they are in charge of in the camp and conveying accurate information, thereby ensuring that residents with COVID-19 symptoms undergo testing and receive treatment.

Although the issue of displaced persons is becoming a protracted problem with no solutions in sight, global interest in the issue is fading and it is becoming increasingly difficult to secure funding. Regardless of this, IFRC is providing support to BDRCS with other Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies in establishing one new in-camp health and medical facility and two facilities in areas where local residents live, and expanding the regions where health volunteers conduct activities. Through these efforts, IFRC will continue to support health and medical needs within and outside camps for displaced persons in the future.



Hospital ward of the COVID-19 isolation and treatment center (July. Photo: Bangladesh Red Crescent Society)

### ■ Support activities to protect people from the COVID-19 pandemic and the adverse impact of climate change

Tsumura Yasuhiro, World Food Programme (WFP)<sup>(Note)</sup>  
Representative and Country Director in the Republic of The Gambia

In the Republic of The Gambia, located on the western end of the African Continent, poverty and food security have been exacerbated since COVID-19 reached its shores in March 2020, due to restrictions imposed on social and economic activities to contain the virus, and the stagnation of domestic and foreign logistics activities. Furthermore, the prohibition of travel into the country from Europe has greatly impacted the lives of those working in the tourism industry, which makes up 20% of The Gambia's gross national product (GNP), and of those engaged in other industries that are reliant on the tourism industry. Adding to these problems, the prices of main food products rose further year-on-year in 2021.

The Gambia is also experiencing a growing incidence of various adverse effects of climate change every year. In addition to an increasing number of disasters in recent years such as fires, storms, and droughts accompanying temperature rise and decline in rainfall, such disasters are also growing in scale. As much of the country's territory is on lowlands along The Gambia River and there is very little difference in elevation, the land becomes inundated by salt water for more than 200 km up from the estuary, causing extensive salt damage to well water, cultivated fields, and crops. This situation not only leads to a decline in agricultural productivity, but also results in an outflow of people from farming villages and social instability due to conflicts over water and land. In 2021, a storm with a level of intensity not seen in recent years swept across a large part of The Gambia, and many of the people who had already experienced social and economic losses from the COVID-19 pandemic saw their houses destroyed and suffered crop and livestock losses.



The author (left) guiding the Ambassador of Japan to Senegal around the WFP warehouse (Photo: WFP)



A storm victim who has received emergency food rations, and the author (right) (Photo: WFP)

<sup>(Note)</sup> WFP: United Nations World Food Programme

Under these circumstances, a survey on the food situation and vulnerability conducted in 2021 revealed that The Gambia is going through its worst food situation in the past 10 years, based on the results of the same survey conducted in 2011, 2016, 2021.

In view of this situation, in the first half of 2021, the World Food Programme (WFP) provided food assistance to approximately 340,000 people living in a serious state of poverty. In the event of storms, which occur during the rainy season, the WFP acted as the leader of the UN Disaster Management Team to coordinate support activities undertaken by various UN organizations, while cooperating and collaborating with the government's disaster management agency to distribute food and cash to 31,000 disaster victims. Furthermore, thanks to the FY2020 supplementary budget contribution from the Government of Japan, we were able to provide support for improving nutrition for 40,000 of the most vulnerable and malnourished expectant mothers and young children.

The WFP not only offers swift humanitarian assistance, but also provides support to strengthen resilience and sustainability at the community, municipal, and national levels for addressing disaster risks arising from climate change. Some examples of such support include building dams and waterways to prevent salt damage, supporting farming groups to prevent the loss of harvested food and secure sales channels, and developing disaster readiness plans and early warning systems within municipal governments and disaster management agencies.



A mother and child who have received support to improve nutrition, through Japan's ODA contribution (Photo: WFP)



## Protecting the Global Environment Now, More than Ever, in the Wake of the COVID-19 Pandemic

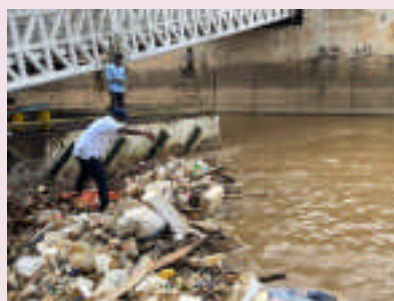
Yoshida Kakuko, Global Chemicals and Pollution Action Coordinator, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)

The COVID-19 pandemic left marked changes on our lifestyles, but no change is in sight about the crisis of environmental degradation. Although movement restrictions during the lockdowns led to some recoveries in the natural ecosystem, other positive signs on the environment, such as reduction in air pollutants such as PM2.5, were short-lived. Meanwhile, some progress made prior to the COVID-19 pandemic on issues, such as waste management and plastic pollution reduction, suffered a setback during the pandemic, making it a challenging period for us who are in the field of environmental protection.

For the past 20 years, I have worked on environmental assessment and pollution control in Asia and the Pacific and Latin America and the Caribbean as part of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). UNEP is the UN organization that sets the global environmental agenda, provides support for policymakers, and serves as an authoritative advocate for the conservation of the global environment. As the "global environment authority," UNEP also promotes environmental measures within the UN system.

According to UNEP, Asia has nine of the ten countries that top the ranking for plastic pollution, along with 43 of the 50 rivers with the highest estimated plastic waste discharge. Although plastic pollution has captured public attention as a household but global issue, few are aware about the causes of the problem, with some voicing skepticism about the effectiveness of the measures being proposed. Due to widespread perceptions that plastic pollution was a subset of marine pollution, networking among experts and information exchange to counter plastic leakage through rivers had been quite limited until recently. With the support of the Government of Japan, UNEP is implementing a project (CounterMEASURE II project<sup>(Note1)</sup>) that seeks to monitor/analyze the volume and types of plastics flowing into the rivers via images using artificial intelligence (AI), in collaboration with Google and other partners such as the Asian Institute of Technology. According to a survey conducted in the Mekong River basin in November, large quantities of products related to COVID-19 were found<sup>(Note2)</sup>, including disposable masks, gloves, and rapid used test kits. This latest information from Japanese partner organizations and experts from other parts of Asia has helped inform the Government of India's drafting of the *Plastic Waste Management Amendment Rules* (amended in August 2021)<sup>(Note3)</sup> as well as the *Regulations on the Long-term and Cost-Effective Monitoring of Plastic Waste* of the Mekong River Commission.

On combatting air pollution in Asia, a science and policy dialogue and a ceremony were held to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the Acid Deposition



Large quantities of waste, including plastics, reaching the Mekong River basin (in the northern part of Thailand)



Since 2020, there has been a dramatic increase in the quantity of waste believed to have been used in the fight against COVID-19



CCTV camera installed with Japan's assistance and the cooperation of the local government. Images are analyzed using artificial intelligence (AI).

Monitoring Network in East Asia (EANET), an intergovernmental initiative supported by UNEP and countries including Japan. At the Twenty-third Session of the Intergovernmental Meeting (IG23) convened in November, EANET's operating regulations (Annex) in its Instrument were amended, with a view to expanding the scope of cooperation on air pollution.<sup>(Note4)</sup> Air pollution, among all pollution types, causes the greatest and most direct damage to human health, particularly for children. On the International Day of Clean Air for blue skies (September 7), UNEP called on each country to take further actions to protect our rights to clean air.<sup>(Note5)</sup>

The core of UNEP's Medium Term Strategy (2022–2025) is to tackle the three planetary crises of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. To avoid a global environmental catastrophe, there is no other way than for all households, and all regions - including developing countries - to work together in their own capacities to achieve the SDGs and to build financial and investment incentive systems to reduce pressures on the environment, prompting transformative changes in the economy and society. To ensure that “no one is left behind,” we are all pressed to contribute to the implementation of multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), while reflecting the views of youth and strengthening the use of digital technologies.

**Note1** Official project website: <https://countermeasure.asia> (English only)

**Note2** See below for details on surveys conducted using monitoring cameras  
<https://countermeasure.asia/tackling-the-plastic-pandemic-by-closed-circuit-television-monitoring/> (English only)

**Note3** Announcement of the amendment on the Government of India's official website: <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleaselframePage.aspx?PRID=1745433> (English and local languages only)

**Note4** Official website of the network: <https://www.eanet.asia/> (English only)

**Note5** Official event website: <https://cleanairweek.org/> (English only)



**Note1**



**Note2**



**Note3**



**Note4**



**Note5**

## Recommendations toward Realizing Food Systems Transformation and Improvement in Nutrition through Science and Technology – STEP Initiative by STI<sup>(Note)</sup> (Systems Transformation to Ensure Planetary health)

Kano Mitsunobu, Science and Technology Co-Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs

After being appointed as Science and Technology Co-Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs in 2019, I have been advising on diplomacy activities alongside Professor Matsumoto Yoichiro, Science and Technology Advisor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs and members of the Advisory Board for Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy.

We are currently confronted by various global issues, such as hunger and malnutrition, climate change, and the deterioration of the environment. These problems cannot be resolved by any one country alone; instead, the world needs to work as one to address the issues. In 2021, despite the COVID-19 pandemic, the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), UN Food Systems Summit, and Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 were convened, highlighting the urgent nature of these issues.

In September, the Advisory Board for Promoting Science and Technology Diplomacy submitted to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs its recommendations on the utilization of science, technology and innovation (STI) to contribute to improving hunger and malnutrition as well as to food systems transformation that pays good attention to the Earth's natural systems. These recommendations were presented in a document titled "STEP Initiative by STI" (Systems Transformation to Ensure Planetary health). The Advisory Board has also compiled an STI showcase (collection of case studies) that feature the strengths of Japan's STI.

The utilization of STI proposed in the STEP recommendations should be promoted on a global scale. In December, based on the recommendations, Professor Matsumoto and I presented a joint statement, "Promoting Global Utilization of Science, Technology and Innovation for Food Systems Transformation to Ensure the Health of People and the Planet" (STEPP), along with science and technology advisors from various countries and regions on the occasion of the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021. This joint statement sets out the following scientific advice activities to be carried out by foreign ministries and diplomatic agencies as well as governmental science and technology advisors from countries and regions around the world, taking the opportunity of the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021: (1) Promoting the active utilization of STI in international cooperation programs by each government on food security and nutrition for all, climate change mitigation and adaptation, and inclusive and equitable food systems that address the needs of vulnerable communities; (2) Promoting bilateral and multilateral STI cooperation while examining and integrating traditional and indigenous knowledge and while utilizing STI to meet economic and social conditions of each country/region, through close dialogues, with a view to leveraging STI in relevant sectors; and (3)



The author  
(Photo: Okayama University)



Joint Statement on Promoting Global Utilization of Science, Technology and Innovation for Food Systems Transformation to Ensure the Health of People and the Planet (STEPP)

Promoting interdisciplinary human resources development and personnel exchange for utilizing STI effectively and efficiently. It also sets out the expectation for all stakeholders to take steps forward together for food systems transformation to ensure the health of people and the planet.

Going forward, there is a need for each country to put these recommendations into practice in concrete projects. It is our hope that our recommendations and joint statement will be beneficial for advancing international cooperation.

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**(Note)** STI: Science, Technology and Innovation

## Section 3

# Japan's Economic Diplomacy to Promote National and Global Interests

### 1 Overview of Economic Diplomacy

In the international community, as competition among nations arises in the fields of politics, economy, and the military, the balance of power in the international arena is changing in an increasingly rapid and complex manner, while uncertainty over the existing international order is growing. Amid a protracted COVID-19 pandemic, a dire global economy is showing signs of an overall recovery from an extremely severe situation. However, uncertainties remain due to inflation risks posed by such factors as a variance among countries' economic situations owing to a "vaccine equity gap," ballooning governmental debt arising from COVID-19 countermeasures, rising maritime transport and other logistics costs, increasing energy and commodity prices, and a semiconductor shortage.

Amid these circumstances, Japan has continued its efforts for rule-making and further trade liberalization through economic partnerships. The Japan-UK Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (Japan-UK CEPA) and the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement entered into force in 2021 and 2022, respectively. With regard to the World Trade Organization (WTO), which is central to the multilateral trading system, the 12th Ministerial Conference was once again postponed, this time from 2021 to 2022. However, discussions on

important themes such as the COVID-19 response and fisheries subsidies negotiations are becoming increasingly active, and Japan must continue to guide reforms in coordination with the countries concerned. Furthermore, with respect to efforts by like-minded countries in areas such as e-commerce and services domestic regulation, Japan will continue to make achievements regardless of when the 12th Ministerial Conference is held.

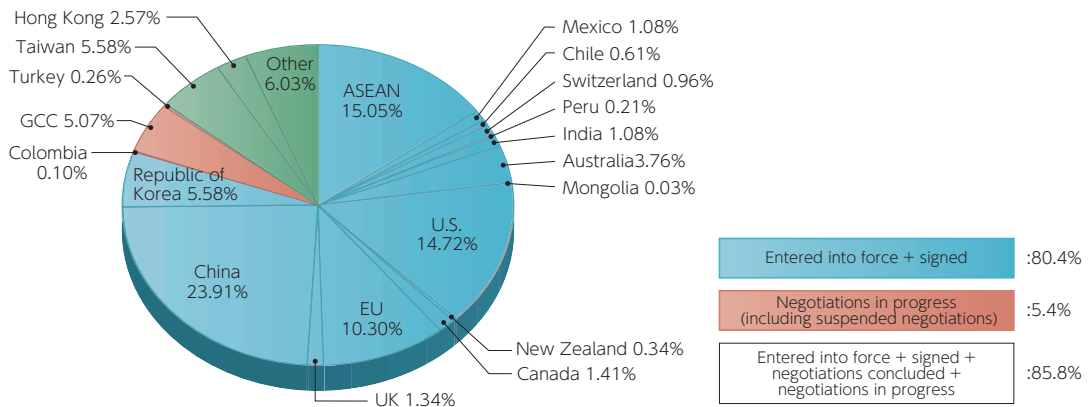
Based on the above assessment, Japan has advanced initiatives with the aim of accelerating the promotion of economic diplomacy as one of the priority areas of its diplomacy, centered around the following three areas: (1) rule-making and initiatives through international organizations to bolster free and open global economic systems by promoting economic partnership agreements, while maintaining and strengthening the multilateral trading system; (2) supporting the overseas business expansion of Japanese companies through promotion of public-private partnerships; and (3) promoting resource diplomacy along with inbound tourism toward Japan.

### 2 Promotion of Rule-Making to Bolster Free and Open Global Economic Systems

#### (1) Promotion of Economic Partnerships

In recent years, despite the advancement of economic globalism, there have been clear

**Percentages of Japan's economic partnership agreement partner countries and regions within Japan's total trade**



Source: Trade Statistics of Japan by the Ministry of Finance (released in March 2021)  
(Percentages of each country's trade value are rounded to the nearest hundredth)

developments toward protectionism as COVID-19 infections spread. In such circumstances, Japan has emphasized and steadily promoted Economic Partnership Agreements (EPAs) and Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), which help capture the vitality of the growing market overseas and strengthen the basis of the Japanese economy through measures such as the reduction or elimination of tariffs on goods as well as barriers on trade in services, and through rule-making for trade and investment. The Japan-UK CEPA entered into force on January 1, 2021, followed by the entry into force of the RCEP Agreement on January 1, 2022 for Japan, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, China, Australia, and New Zealand. This brought the EPA/FTA ratio in Japan's trade (the ratio of trade value with countries that have EPAs/FTAs already signed or entered into force with Japan, to Japan's total trade value) to around 80.4% (source: Trade Statistics, Ministry of Finance, 2021).

To advance a free and fair economic order, the basis for its own peace and prosperity, Japan will proactively continue its endeavors, including maintaining the high standards of the CPTPP, ensuring the full implementation of the RCEP Agreement, and negotiating other economic partnership agreements.

### A Multilateral Agreements and Other Matters

#### (A) Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP)

The CPTPP is an agreement that promotes efforts to establish new economic integration rules for the 21st century in a wide range of areas such as tariffs, services, investments, e-commerce, intellectual property, and state-owned enterprises. It also provides opportunities for Japanese companies to better thrive in overseas markets, giving it important economic significance as a major driving force for the country's economic growth. Furthermore, the CPTPP has great strategic significance in that it facilitates the building of a free and fair economic order together with countries that share fundamental values such as freedom, democracy, fundamental human rights, and the rule of law, contributing to Japan's security and stability in the Indo-Pacific region as well as leading to peace and prosperity in the region and the world at large. The 12 countries of Japan, Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Peru, Singapore, the U.S., and Viet Nam signed the Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement (TPP12 Agreement) in February 2016. However, due to the U.S.'s announcement of its withdrawal from the TPP12 Agreement in 2017, Japan proactively led discussions among the 11 countries for the early realization of the TPP.



Agreement in principle was reached at the TPP Ministerial Meeting in November 2017, and the CPTPP was signed in Chile in March 2018. The six countries (Mexico, Japan, Singapore, New Zealand, Canada, and Australia) completed necessary domestic procedures and the Agreement entered into force on December 30, 2018. Viet Nam became the seventh Party to conclude the Agreement in January 2019, followed by Peru as the eighth in September 2021.

Since the CPTPP entered into force, five TPP Commission meetings have been held mostly at the ministerial level. Japan served as the chair in 2021, holding the Fourth and Fifth Commission meetings online in June and September, respectively. At the Fourth Commission meeting, it was decided to commence the accession process with the UK, which formally submitted its accession request on February 1, 2021, and to establish an Accession Working Group (AWG) for the UK. Amid an increasingly uncertain global economic situation and more pronounced protectionism as the COVID-19 pandemic spreads, the commencement of the accession process with the UK presents a powerful message to the world that the CPTPP will drive forward free trade. It also provides important momentum for expanding free and fair trade and investment rules for the 21st century. To ensure that the UK's accession process proceeds smoothly while maintaining the high level of the CPTPP, Japan will hold substantial discussions in the AWG as its chair.

Formal accession requests were submitted by China on September 16, Taiwan on September 22, and Ecuador on December 17, 2021. While carefully assessing whether the aspirant economies that submitted accession requests are prepared to fully meet the high standards of the CPTPP in terms of its market access and rules, Japan will respond to this matter while taking into account strategic perspectives and public understanding.

### (B) Japan-EU Economic Partnership Agreement (Japan-EU EPA)

The Japan-EU EPA entered into force in February 2019. The EU is an important partner for Japan as Japan's third largest export partner (9.2% of total exports) and its second-largest import partner (11.4%) (as of 2020 for both figures). The combined GDP of the EU and Japan is 20.3 trillion US dollars, with total trade of 11.9 trillion US dollars. With the entry into force of the Japan-EU EPA, Japan and the EU compose a free and progressive economic sphere that accounts for one fourth of global GDP and one third of world trade.

After its entry into force, Japan has steadily implemented this agreement through joint committees and specialized committees in 12 areas under the agreement. At the second joint committee meeting, held in February 2021, Japan and the EU discussed how to ensure the proper and effective implementation of the Japan-EU EPA, as well as had an exchange of views on topics such as the ideal situation for Japan-EU collaboration, including COVID-19 countermeasures, the green and digital industries, and WTO reforms.

Through implementation of the EPA, Japan will continue to address a range of issues together with the EU, with which it shares fundamental values.

### (C) Japan-UK Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (Japan-UK CEPA)

The Japan-UK CEPA, which entered into force in January 2021, is a key foundation for further strengthening Japan-UK relations.

The Japan-UK CEPA is based on the Japan-EU EPA and comprises 24 chapters in total. It is an agreement within the scope of the Japan-EU EPA that establishes tariff rates on goods Japan exports to the UK, as well as tariffs for agricultural and fishery products from the UK. However, it includes rules that are more advanced and high-level than those of the Japan-EU EPA in such areas as electronic commerce and financial services. Additionally, the Japan-UK CEPA is Japan's

first EPA that includes an independent chapter on gender, which was created to ensure that women can fully benefit from the profits of trade.

Japan is now working to seamlessly implement the Japan-UK CEPA through 13 specialized committees and working groups, and will continue to engage in close collaboration toward further strengthening economic relations between Japan and the UK.

#### **(D) Japan-China-ROK FTA**

The Japan-China-ROK FTA is the one with Japan's major trading partners: China and the ROK. Negotiations began in March 2013 and a total of 16 rounds of negotiations had been held as of December 2021.

#### **(E) Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) Agreement**

The RCEP Agreement is an economic partnership agreement with a total of 15 member states, namely the ASEAN member states, Japan, Australia, China, the ROK, and New Zealand. RCEP participating countries account for roughly 30% of the world's total GDP, total trade, and population. The entry into force of the Agreement is expected to further strengthen Japan's ties with the regions serving as the world's growth center, thus contributing to the economic growth of Japan. Following a ceremony to launch RCEP negotiations during the ASEAN-related summit meeting held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in November 2012, there were eight years of negotiations that included four summit meetings, 19 ministerial meetings, and 31 rounds of negotiations. The Agreement was signed on the occasion of the fourth RCEP Summit on November 15, 2020.

Although India had participated from the start of negotiations, at the third Summit in November 2019, India declared that it would not participate in further negotiations and did not sign the RCEP Agreement. However, at the signing, Signatory States issued a "Ministers' Declaration on India's Participation in the RCEP," which clarified that

the Agreement would be open for India, and stipulated a facilitation of India's future accession and allowed it to participate in related meetings as an observer. Due to the significant economic and strategic importance of India's participation in the RCEP, Japan will continue to play a leading role for the future participation of India to the RCEP Agreement.

The RCEP Agreement is stipulated to enter into force for signatory States that have deposited their instrument of ratification, etc., to the depositary, the Secretary-General of ASEAN, 60 days after the deposit by at least six signatory States that are Member States of ASEAN and at least three signatory States that are not ASEAN member states. As Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, Australia, China, and New Zealand deposited, in addition to Japan, by November 2, 2021, the RCEP Agreement entered into force for these countries. It entered into force on February 1, 2022 for the ROK, which deposited on December 3, 2021. Japan will coordinate closely with countries involved to enforce economic activity that is based on free and fair rules in the region by ensuring the full implementation of the Agreement.

#### **(F) Free Trade Area of the Asia-Pacific (FTAAP) Concept**

The Lima Declaration on the FTAAP adopted at the 2016 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) summit meeting confirmed mainly the following two points: (1) that the FTAAP would be high quality and comprehensive, and address next-generation trade and investment issues, being built in accordance with the TPP Agreement and the RCEP Agreement; (2) efforts would begin on implementing work plans supporting related capacity building. In a progress report presented to leaders in 2020, the need was expressed for further efforts. Since 2017, Japan has been continuously providing capacity building support through workshops and policy dialogues concerning the "competition chapters" in

FTAs and EPAs and investment policies. From the viewpoint of achieving a comprehensive and high-quality FTAAP, the entry into force of the CPTPP and RCEP Agreements are highly significant developments.

## **B** Bilateral Agreements

### **(A)** Japan-Turkey EPA

As an important country that serves as a hub among Europe, the Middle East, the Central Asia and Caucasus region, and Africa, Turkey has considerable economic potential and is attracting attention as a production base for exports to surrounding regions. Turkey has signed FTAs with over 20 countries and regions, and the need has been recognized for Japan to develop conditions of competition for Japanese companies through the conclusion of an EPA.

Furthermore, business communities in both countries have high expectations for an early conclusion of an EPA between the two countries. At the Japan-Turkey Summit Meeting in January 2014, the leaders agreed to launch negotiations, and 17 rounds of negotiations had been held as of the end of 2021.

### **(B)** Japan-Colombia EPA

Japan began EPA negotiations in December 2012 with Colombia, a country with rich natural resources and high economic growth. Since Colombia has concluded FTAs with a number of countries (including the U.S., Canada, the EU and the ROK), it has been increasingly necessary for Japan to establish a competitive environment in the country. The strengthening of bilateral relations through an EPA is also expected to lead to improved cooperation in the international arena and promote cooperation among Japan and the Pacific Alliance (Mexico, Colombia, Peru, and Chile). Negotiations are currently ongoing.

## **C** Other Existing EPAs

The existing EPAs contain provisions concerning

the joint committee, which is a body that discusses the implementation of the agreements, and a process to review the agreements after a certain period of time following their entry into force. In addition, a variety of consultations are being held in order to smoothly implement EPAs after their entry into force.

In accordance with the EPAs, Japan has been accepting candidates for nurses and certified care workers from Indonesia, the Philippines, and Viet Nam. In total, 3,346 (as of FY2021) candidates have been accepted from Indonesia (since 2008), 3,147 (as of FY2021) from the Philippines (since 2009), and 1,543 (as of FY2021) from Viet Nam (since 2014). The total number of nurses and certified care workers who have passed national exams is 529 and 1,762 individuals, respectively, as of FY2020.

## **D** Investment-related Treaties

Investment-related treaties constitute an important legal basis to improve predictability for investors and promote investment by establishing common rules for the protection of investors and their investment property, enhancement of transparency in regulations, expansion of investment opportunities, procedures for investment dispute settlement, and other matters. Japan has actively engaged in concluding investment treaties, as these treaties are considered to improve the investment environment for Japanese companies overseas and to attract foreign investment to the Japanese market.

The Japan-Cote d'Ivoire Investment Agreement and the Japan-Georgia Investment Agreement entered into force in March and July, respectively. As of the end of January 2022, there are currently 51 investment-related treaties that have entered into force (34 investment treaties and 17 EPAs), and three (two investment treaties and one EPA) that have been signed but not yet entered into force, bringing the total to 54, covering 79 economies. Combining these with investment-related treaties currently under negotiation, treaties cover

94 economies and around 93% of Japan's foreign direct investments.<sup>1</sup>

## **E Tax Conventions/Agreements on Social Security**

### **(A) Tax Conventions**

Tax conventions are intended to eliminate international double taxation in cross-border economic activities (e.g. to reduce or exempt withholding taxes imposed on investment income such as dividends), or to prevent tax evasion or avoidance, and provide an important legal basis for promoting sound investment and economic exchange between two countries. To support the sound overseas business expansion of Japanese companies, the Government of Japan is working to expand the necessary tax treaty networks, both in terms of quality and quantity.

Entering into force in 2021 were a tax treaty with Peru in January, a new (completely revised) tax treaty with Spain in May, a tax treaty with Uruguay in July, a new (completely revised) tax treaty with Georgia in July, and a tax treaty with Serbia in December. A revised protocol for a tax treaty with Switzerland was also signed in July. In addition, negotiations started for new (completely revised) tax treaties with Ukraine in March and Azerbaijan in May. As of the end of December 2021, Japan has signed 82 tax treaties applied to 148 economies.

### **(B) Agreements on Social Security**

Agreements on social security aim to resolve the issues of the double payment of social security insurance premiums and annuity insurance non-refunds. They are expected to facilitate interpersonal exchange and strengthen further bilateral relations, including economic exchange, by reducing the burden on Japanese companies and citizens working overseas. The total number of countries that have concluded or signed such

agreements with Japan now stands at 23 as of the end of December 2021.

## **(2) Initiatives with International Organizations**

### **A World Trade Organization (WTO)**

#### **(A) Appointment of New Director-General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala**

The WTO is currently confronting new issues that include efforts to combat COVID-19, in addition to changes such as the rise of emerging countries and the advancement of the digital economy. Amid these circumstances, Dr. Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala was appointed as the Director-General in February, becoming the first woman and African to serve in the position. As someone who has held a number of important positions inside and outside of Nigeria, Director-General Okonjo-Iweala is expected to address WTO issues by leveraging the extensive knowledge and experience that she has gained throughout her career. Japan also welcomes this appointment, and Foreign Minister Motegi held a telephone call with her in March just after her appointment during which the two sides affirmed their intent to cooperate on advancing WTO reforms.

#### **(B) The WTO's COVID-19 Response**

Amid the spread of COVID-19 infections, the WTO Secretariat has prepared and published various reports concerning trade and COVID-19. In its 2021 edition of the World Trade Report, the WTO indicated the need for further international cooperation on boosting economic resilience.

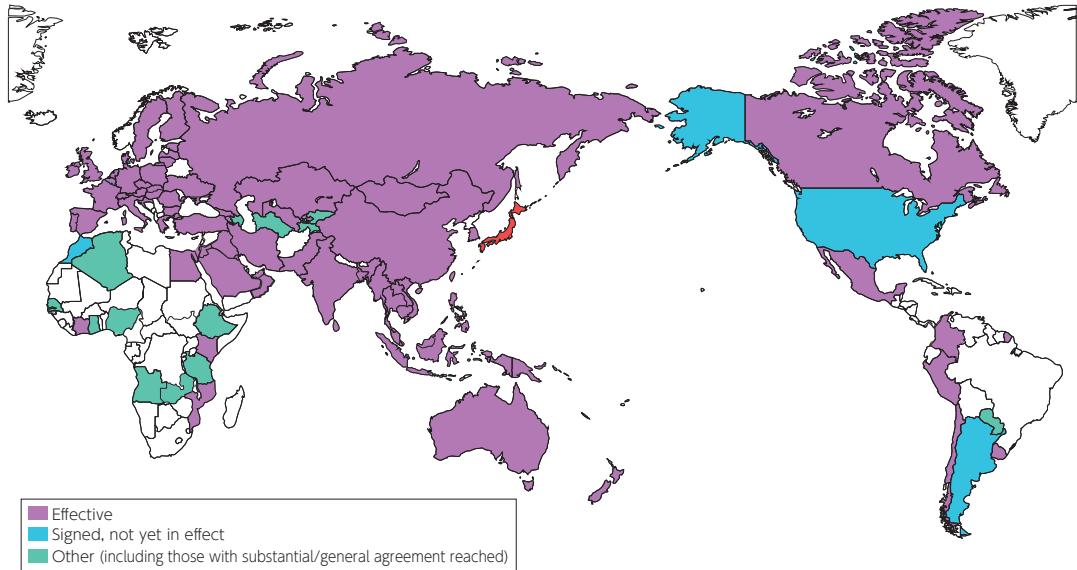
Furthermore, with regard to COVID-19, the WTO is holding discussions on export restrictions and transparency for medical goods that include vaccines and their inputs, as well as discussions surrounding intellectual property rights for products such as vaccines. Of particular interest are discussions on a waiver concerning the Agreement

<sup>1</sup> "Regional balance of Direct Investment (Assets)," Ministry of Finance (All regions) (As of the end of 2020)

## Current investment-related agreements (as of the end of January 2022)

**Negotiation status<sup>(note1)</sup> of investment-related agreements** (note1) EPA/FTA including investment agreements and investment section

- Effective: 51 (34 investment agreements, 17 EPA)
  - Signed, not yet in effect: 3 (2 investment agreements, 1 EPA)
  - Under negotiation: 19 agreements (16 investment agreements, 3 EPA) — Covering 94 countries / regions once those under negotiation take effect
- } Covering 79 countries / regions


**■ Effective (terminated agreements excluded)** ( ) : effective year  
 (Note2) denotes "liberalization" agreement
**Investment agreement**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Egypt (1978)                                | 18 Japan, China and Republic of Korea (2014) |
| 2 Sri Lanka (1982)                            | 19 Myanmar (2014) <sup>(Note2)</sup>         |
| 3 China (1989)                                | 20 Mozambique (2014) <sup>(Note2)</sup>      |
| 4 Turkey (1993)                               | 21 Colombia (2015) <sup>(Note2)</sup>        |
| 5 Hong Kong (1997)                            | 22 Kazakhstan (2015)                         |
| 6 Pakistan (2002)                             | 23 Ukraine (2015)                            |
| 7 Bangladesh (1999)                           | 24 Saudi Arabia (2017)                       |
| 8 Russia (2000)                               | 25 Uruguay (2017) <sup>(Note2)</sup>         |
| 9 Republic of Korea (2003) <sup>(Note2)</sup> | 26 Iran (2017)                               |
| 10 Vietnam (2004) <sup>(Note2)</sup>          | 27 Oman (2017)                               |
| 11 Cambodia (2008) <sup>(Note2)</sup>         | 28 Kenya (2017)                              |
| 12 Laos (2008) <sup>(Note2)</sup>             | 29 Israel (2017) <sup>(Note2)</sup>          |
| 13 Uzbekistan (2009) <sup>(Note2)</sup>       | 30 Armenia (2019) <sup>(Note2)</sup>         |
| 14 Peru (2009) <sup>(Note2)</sup>             | 31 Jordan (2020)                             |
| 15 Papua New Guinea (2014)                    | 32 United Arab Emirates (2020)               |
| 16 Kuwait (2014) <sup>(Note2)</sup>           | 33 Cote d'Ivoire (2021) <sup>(Note2)</sup>   |
| 17 Iraq (2014)                                | 34 Georgia (2021) <sup>(Note2)</sup>         |

Note: A private investment arrangement was made between Japan and Taiwan in 2011 (liberalization type).

**EPA including investment section**

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 1 Singapore (2002) <sup>(Note2)</sup>   | 12 Mongolia (2016) <sup>(Note2)</sup>  |
| 2 Mexico (2005) <sup>(Note2)</sup>      | 13 CPTPP (Note3) (2018) <sup>(Note2)</sup>   |
| 3 Malaysia (2006) <sup>(Note2)</sup>    | 14 EU (2019) <sup>(Note2)</sup>  |
| 4 Chile (2007) <sup>(Note2)</sup>       | 15 ASEAN (2020) <sup>(Note4)</sup> (Note2)   |
| 5 Thailand (2007) <sup>(Note2)</sup>    | 16 UK (2021) <sup>(Note2)</sup>  |
| 6 Brunei (2008) <sup>(Note2)</sup>      | 17 RCEP Agreement (Note5) (2022) <sup>(Note2)</sup>                                  |
| 7 Indonesia (2008) <sup>(Note2)</sup>   |  |
| 8 Philippines (2008) <sup>(Note2)</sup> | (Note3) CPTPP: Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership |
| 9 Switzerland (2009) <sup>(Note2)</sup> | (Note4) Effective year of the revised protocol                                       |
| 10 India (2011) <sup>(Note2)</sup>      | (Note5) RCEP Agreement: Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement        |
| 11 Australia (2015) <sup>(Note2)</sup>  |  |

**■ Under negotiation****Investment agreement**

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1 Angola       | 9 Kyrgyzstan  |
| 2 Algeria      | 10 Nigeria    |
| 3 Qatar        | 11 Zambia     |
| 4 Ghana        | 12 Ethiopia   |
| 5 Tanzania     | 13 Tajikistan |
| 6 Bahrain      | 14 EU         |
| 7 Turkmenistan | 15 Paraguay   |
| 8 Senegal      | 16 Azerbaijan |

**EPA/FTA including investment section**

- |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Canada                              |
| 2 Japan, China, and Republic of Korea |
| 3 Turkey                              |

**■ Signed / not effective**

- TPP agreement<sup>(Note6)</sup> (signed February 2016, approved) (EPA)<sup>(Note2)</sup>
- Argentina (signed December 2018, approved)<sup>(Note2)</sup>
- Morocco (signed January 2020, approved)

(Note6) TPP agreement: Trans-Pacific Partnership Agreement

on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS)<sup>2</sup>. These discussions began with an October 2020 proposal from India and South Africa to broadly waive obligations in the TRIPS Agreement with regard to COVID-19 response measures. The U.S. then announced in May 2021 that it would support waiving intellectual property protection on COVID-19 vaccines, which was followed by a proposal from the EU in June relating to an agreement on the use of the provisions in the TRIPS Agreement relating to compulsory licensing. Director-General Okonjo-Iweala is actively involved in building such an agreement and discussions are ongoing, but there is no prospect of the agreement being reached (as of February 1, 2022).

#### **(C) Postponement of the 12th WTO Ministerial Conference (MC12)**

WTO Members, including Japan, had engaged in lively discussions toward achieving results at MC12, which was scheduled to be held at the end of November 2021. While fisheries subsidies negotiations have been ongoing for 20 years, they have become particularly active following the inauguration of Director-General Okonjo-Iweala. The Ministerial Meeting on the Fisheries Subsidies Negotiations of the Trade Negotiation Committee was held online in July. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio Eiichiro from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) attended the meeting and committed to the early conclusion of the negotiations. On November 24, Foreign Minister Hayashi held an online meeting with Director-General Okonjo-Iweala where the two sides affirmed their intention to work closely together toward MC12. However, the growing COVID-19 (omicron variant) pandemic led to the postponement of MC12, which was originally scheduled for the end of November. This is the third postponement of MC12, which had already been postponed twice.

It was later decided that MC12 would be held in June 2022.

#### **(D) Progress with Efforts Among Like-minded Countries**

Although MC12 was postponed, some progress has been made in the efforts among like-minded members in December following the decision to postpone MC12. First, 67 WTO Members, including Japan, issued a Declaration announcing the successful conclusion of negotiations on WTO services domestic regulation. The disciplines that were agreed upon provide guidelines for each member's domestic regulations such as the publication of laws and regulations on licensing and qualification requirements. The conclusion of the negotiations on WTO services domestic regulation will enhance convenience for companies which are operating overseas and is an important example of successful plurilateral negotiations. Furthermore, with regard to negotiations related to e-commerce, concerned ministers from Japan, Australia, and Singapore, co-conveners of the WTO Joint Statement Initiative on E-commerce, issued a joint statement that confirms progress made so far and highlights the way forward toward the conclusion of the negotiation. At the WTO, e-commerce negotiations are one of the most important themes, and it is crucial to accumulate results, aiming to further advance negotiations. As a co-convenor for e-commerce negotiations, Japan continues to include numerous participating countries and accelerate negotiations with the goal of creating high-level rules that include the free flow of data.

With regard to trade and environment, 70 WTO Members including Japan released the Ministerial Statement on Trade and Environmental Sustainability in December.

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<sup>2</sup> Entry into force of the protocol to revise the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) | Ministry of Foreign Affairs ([mofa.go.jp](https://mofa.go.jp))



**(E) Dispute Settlement<sup>3</sup>**

The WTO dispute settlement system is a system that settles disputes among WTO Members under the covered agreements according to the dispute settlement procedures. It serves as a pillar that imparts security and predictability to the WTO system. The Appellate Body serves as the Second Instance (final instance), and although it has ceased to function due to a lack of members needed for deliberation, members are still able to refer disputes to the WTO's Dispute Settlement Body (panel). Nine disputes were referred in 2021.

With respect to a case concerning China's measure imposing anti-dumping duties on stainless steel products originating from Japan, Japan requested bilateral consultations based on the WTO Agreements in June 2021, followed by another request to establish a panel in August (established in September). This brought the number of cases that directly involve Japan and that were referred for WTO's dispute settlement procedures to six (the other five are: India-safeguard measure on iron and steel products; the ROK-anti-dumping duties on stainless steel bars; the ROK-support measures for the ROK's shipbuilding industry; India-measures concerning tariff increases on ICT products; and Japan-update of export control procedures for Korea).

**B Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)****(A) Features**

The OECD researches and analyzes a broad range of economic and social fields and makes specific policy recommendations to its members. Through discussions held by approximately 30 committees, it has formed international standards and rules. Since its accession to the OECD in 1964, Japan has been actively engaged in OECD initiatives through discussions at various committees as well as financial and human resources contributions.

**(B) 2021 OECD Ministerial Council Meeting**

The OECD Ministerial Council Meeting in 2021 was held in two parts, and the Secretary-General handover ceremony was held during the first part (May 31 and June 1). Under the leadership of the U.S. as Chair and the ROK and Luxembourg as Vice-Chairs, discussions were held online on the topic of "Shared Values: Building a Green and Inclusive Future." Minister of State for Economic and Fiscal Policy Nishimura Yasutoshi and State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio attended from Japan. State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio communicated Japan's expectations for OECD's role in creating rules and standards and emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation with the G20 and other institutions, as well as strengthening outreach to Southeast Asia.

The second part was held in person (online format for some participants) on October 5-6 at the OECD Headquarters in Paris, for the first time in two years. Continuing on from the first part, lively discussions were held on the theme of "Shared Values: Building a Green and Inclusive Future" concerning shared economics-related issues facing the international community that included climate change, international taxation, digitalization, and trade. Permanent Representative of Japan to the OECD Okamura Yoshifumi was among those in attendance from Japan. The 60th Anniversary Vision Statement and Ministerial Council Statement were adopted during the second part of the meeting. The Vision Statement commemorates 60 years of the OECD in 2021, at a time when the OECD is facing issues that require global cooperation and action, and describes the OECD's principles for the next 10 years. This includes a new commitment among OECD members to achieve sustainable development for the global economy with a renewed emphasis on having shared values such as the protection of individual freedoms, democracy and the rule of law, and sharing the same intentions. The Ministerial

<sup>3</sup> Related article: "Individual Dispute Settlement Cases," pg. 187-188, Diplomatic Bluebook 2021

Council Statement was adopted as a result of the discussions at the Ministerial Council Meeting and reflects many of Japan's viewpoints, including a commitment to furthering the digital economy by promoting Data Free Flow with Trust (DFFT, i.e. promoting the formulation of high-level rules concerning governments' access to personal data), support for high quality infrastructure investment according to the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment and other guidelines, an emphasis on the importance of WTO reforms and the revision of the G20/OECD Principles of Corporate Governance.

### **(C) Initiatives in Various Sectors**

The OECD is strengthening its cooperation with the G20, G7, APEC, and other international fora, and is undertaking initiatives that include leading discussions on international taxation system reform, disseminating and implementing the G20 Principles for Quality Infrastructure Investment, addressing the issue of excess production capacity involving steel and shipbuilding, and revising principles concerning corporate governance.

### **(D) Outreach to Southeast Asia**

Due to the growing importance of Southeast Asia as a center for global economic growth, the OECD is working to bolster relations with the region through the Southeast Asia Regional Programme (SEARP). In 2021, policy talks and other events were held that included the SEARP Regional Forum in May. Japan will continue to utilize the Tokyo Centre of the OECD to encourage future accession from Southeast Asian countries to the OECD.

### **(E) Contributions in Terms of Financial and Human Resources**

As of 2021, Japan was the second largest financial contributor to the OECD, covering 9.1% of the OECD's mandatory contributions (the U.S. is first, covering 20.2%). Moreover, Japanese nationals have successively served as the Deputy Secretary

General (there are four positions in total; currently Deputy Secretary General Takeuchi Yoshiki), and about 90 Japanese staff currently work at the OECD Secretariat.

## **(3) Intellectual Property Protection**

Strengthening intellectual property protections is extremely important for the promotion of technological innovation and eventually for economic development. Japan has actively participated in multilateral consultations such as APEC, the WTO (TRIPS), and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), and is working to improve an environment for ensuring that Japanese intellectual property is appropriately protected and utilized overseas. During bilateral talks, Japan also calls on other countries to proactively strengthen intellectual property protections. For EPAs as well, Japan strives to establish regulations on intellectual property rights to ensure the adequate and effective protection of intellectual property. Following the CPTPP Agreement and the Japan-EU EPA, both the Japan-UK CEPA and the RCEP Agreement have incorporated contents on further promotion of the protection and use of intellectual property. Moreover, for the purpose of rapidly and efficiently providing assistance for Japanese companies that are facing problems such as counterfeit and pirated goods, MOFA appoints Intellectual Property Officers at almost all of Japan's diplomatic missions overseas so that they can advise Japanese companies and make inquiries with or requests to their counterpart governments. Furthermore, every year, Meetings of Intellectual Property Officers are held to assess the damage in each country and the response status by diplomatic missions overseas, exchange opinions and share best practices on building appropriate systems, and strengthen efforts to combat intellectual property right infringements. In 2021, the meetings were held with a focus on Southeast Asia in March and Latin America in November.

### 3 Leading Discussions at International Conferences

#### (1) G7 and G20

##### A G7

The G7 holds frank discussions among countries that share fundamental values, and makes a concerted effort to address the wide-ranging issues faced by the international community.

On February 19, soon after the inauguration of the G7 chair, the UK held the G7 leaders' video conference, and the leaders agreed to make the most of their strengths and values as democratic, open economies and societies.

The G7 Summit 2021 in Cornwall, held from June 11 to 13, attracted international attention as the first in-person G7 summit in two years. Under the overall theme of "Build Back Better," leaders held frank discussions on the global economy and trade, as well as diplomacy and security. International organizations as well as outreach countries outside of the G7 (Australia, India, the ROK, and South Africa) also attended parts of the summit.

Prime Minister Suga emphasized the importance of promoting the multilateral trading system and addressing supply chain vulnerabilities in order to achieve "Build Back Better," as well as promoting DFFT as a means to achieve an open society. With regard to international health, Prime Minister Suga presented initiatives being undertaken by Japan to propagate vaccines and strengthen health systems. On climate change, he announced Japan's intention to provide assistance amounting to 6.5 trillion

Japanese yen through the public and private sectors over the five years from 2021 to 2025, including further enhancement of assistance for adaption.

During the discussion, some members including Japan mentioned China, and the G7 confirmed to continue discussions on collective approaches to non-market policies and practices that undermine the fairness and transparency of the global economy. The G7 also confirmed to call on China to respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, especially in Xinjiang and in Hong Kong, and to cooperate on global issues such as climate change and biodiversity. The G7 leaders remained seriously concerned about the situations in the East and South China Seas, and concurred that they strongly opposed any unilateral attempts to change the status quo and increase tensions, underscored the importance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait, and encouraged the peaceful resolution of cross-Strait issues.

Following their discussions, G7 leaders agreed to collaborate to beat COVID-19, build back better, and promote democratic and open economies and societies based on international cooperation and multilateralism. The G7 Leaders' Communiqué and other documents were issued as deliverables.

Many ministerial meetings were also held in addition to the summit meeting. At the G7 Foreign and Development Ministers Meeting that was held in person twice, from May 3 to 5 in London, and on December 11 and 12 in Liverpool, ministers engaged in lively discussions concerning regional affairs including North Korea, China, Russia, and the Middle East, and affirmed an intention to cooperate at the G7 on issues such as the COVID-19 response, girl's education, climate change, and humanitarian crises. Freedom of media, cyber governance, and freedom of religion and belief were among other issues discussed. Foreign ministers from ASEAN countries were invited to take part in the meeting in December and participated in person or online, and discussed cooperation between the G7 and ASEAN.



G7 Cornwall Summit  
(June 11, Cornwall, UK; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

**B G20**

The G20 is the first forum for international economic cooperation participated in by both major developed countries and emerging countries.

At the G20 Rome Summit, held on October 30 and 31, the G20 leaders discussed important issues such as global health, climate change, and development based on the three pillars of action “People, Planet, and Prosperity” under the Italian Presidency. At the end of the meeting, the G20 Rome Leaders’ Declaration was adopted. Prime Minister Kishida pointed out the importance of improving access to vaccines and preparing for a future health crisis. In addition, he explained Japan’s stance on DFFT, high-quality infrastructure investment, and fairness and transparency in development finance, while also emphasizing the importance of climate finance from developed countries and contributing to discussions among the leaders.

Furthermore, Foreign Minister Motegi attended the G20 Foreign and Development Ministers’ Meeting, which was held in Italy on from June 28 to 30, and engaged in discussions concerning such issues as multilateralism, Africa, food security, development, and humanitarian assistance.



G20 Rome Summit  
(October 30, Rome, Italy; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

**(2) Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation  
(APEC)**

APEC is a framework of economic cooperation in which 21 economies (countries and regions) 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 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 a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific” that Japan has been promoting. Japan’s active involvement in and promotion of cooperation with APEC is of great significance to the effort to support our own economic growth and the overseas expansion of Japanese companies.

For APEC 2021, chaired by New Zealand, discussions were held at a variety of meetings throughout the year, all conducted online. The discussions revolved around an overarching theme-“Join, Work, Grow. Together”-as well as three priority areas: (1) economic and trade policies that strengthen recovery, (2) increasing inclusion and sustainability for recovery, and (3) pursuing innovation and a digitally enabled recovery. Specifically, amid an exploration of the role that trade could play in facilitating the trade of essential goods and services during the COVID-19 pandemic and responding to climate change, discussions were held on technically updating the List of Environmental Goods and the potential for its expansion in the future, creating a reference list of environmental services and future updates, and reducing inefficient fossil fuel subsidies.

At the APEC Economic Leaders’ Meeting held online on November 12, the 2021 APEC Economic Leaders’ Declaration was adopted as well as the Aotearoa Plan of Action as an annex for implementing APEC Putrajaya Vision 2040. The Aotearoa Plan of Action comprises chapters on “trade and investment,” “innovation and digitalization,” “strong, balanced, secure, sustainable and inclusive growth,” and “continuous



APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting  
(November 12, Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

improvement of APEC as an institution,” and lays out specific issues and directions that each economy should work on individually and that APEC should address across the entire organization.

At the Leaders' Meeting, Prime Minister Kishida announced that he would put Japan's economy on a new growth track by realizing the idea of a “New Form of Capitalism,” which also contributes to Asia-Pacific growth. He also called for a number of measures necessary for post-COVID-19 growth. These included realizing a free and fair trade and investment environment and building a resilient supply chain to boost the economic recovery, maintaining a high standard for the CPTPP Agreement, continued contributions to building a free and fair economic order in the region, promoting DFFT in the digital age, pursuing zero emissions across Asia through support for decarbonization, and stabilizing the international crude oil market.

Thailand will host APEC 2022.

#### 4 Communicating Japan's Economic Strengths (Including the Promotion of Japanese Agriculture, Forestry, Fishery and Food Exports)

##### (1) Promotion of Japanese Companies' Overseas Business Expansion by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Accompanying Diplomatic Missions Overseas

The number of overseas branches operated

by Japanese companies with branches overseas is over 80,000 as of October 2020. One of the reasons behind this is that many Japanese companies, which underpin Japan's economic development, have embarked more actively than ever before on overseas expansion with the aim of further cultivating foreign markets. There is considerable momentum behind economic growth abroad, mainly in Asia. To capture this for the Japanese economy, it is becoming increasingly important for the Government to support Japanese companies.

In light of the situation, MOFA, in coordination with diplomatic missions overseas, has been engaged in supporting Japanese companies in their efforts to expand their businesses overseas. At the diplomatic missions overseas, all staff, including those responsible for Japanese business support, provide Japanese companies with information while lobbying foreign governments under the leadership of ambassadors and consuls-general. Under the motto of being “open and responsive government offices,” these missions aim to provide specific support that corresponds with the conditions in that respective region. They also offer seminars about local legal systems, various information and legal consultations. In FY2021, these were provided at 19 diplomatic missions in 13 countries, with a focus on Asia.

In addition to consultations about business problems, another important function performed by diplomatic missions overseas for Japanese companies is promotion and publicity of the “Japan Brand” for products, technologies and services, as well as for agricultural, forestry and fishery products from Japanese companies at receptions to celebrate the Emperor's birthday and various other events and exhibitions. These missions actively offer the embassies and official residences of the ambassadors for use as publicity and advertising spaces for Japanese companies to hold product exhibitions, or for local governments to hold local product exhibitions and food-tasting events. These spaces can be used for conducting seminars on business expansion, or for exchange

with local companies and concerned organizations. In addition, diplomatic missions overseas conducted projects utilizing online methods in response to the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic.

From the perspective of public-private cooperation and support for companies, it is important not only to support Japanese enterprises seeking to expand their businesses overseas, but also to support those already operating overseas. Following a June 2016 national referendum in the UK on whether to remain in or leave the EU, the UK left the EU on January 31, 2020 and the transition period ended on December 31. As Japanese businesses could be significantly impacted by the actions taken by the UK and the EU, as well as their negotiations, the Government of Japan took necessary measures across sectors of the Government through seminars at the diplomatic missions overseas and the Government Task-force regarding the Withdrawal of the UK from the EU, chaired by the Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary launched in July 2016 (convened 15 times as of January 30, 2020). The Government of Japan will continue to closely observe relevant trends while taking necessary steps, including properly administering the Japan-UK CEPA, and providing information to Japanese companies.

### **(2) Promotion of the Japanese Infrastructure System in Overseas Business Expansion**

In order to capture infrastructure demand mainly in emerging countries and promote the overseas deployment of infrastructure systems by Japanese companies, the “Ministerial Meeting on Strategy relating to Infrastructure Export and Economic Cooperation,” comprising relevant cabinet ministers and the Chief Cabinet Secretary serving as chair, was established in 2013. A total of 52 meetings have been held as of December 2021. The Meeting had discussed annual revisions to and follow-ups for the Infrastructure System Export Strategy, which was formulated in 2013. In December 2020, the Meeting formulated the “Infrastructure System Overseas Promotion

Strategy 2025” (hereinafter “the New Strategy”) based on recent changes in the relevant situations. The New Strategy aims to garner 34 trillion Japanese yen in infrastructure system orders in 2025 by promoting the achievement of three goals, namely (1) achieving economic growth, (2) contributing to achieving the SDGs, and (3) realizing the “Free and Open Indo-Pacific.” Japan is taking specific measures to achieve the goals of the New Strategy. These include finalizing the “Policy toward steady implementation of the new strategy looking at the Post-COVID-19 pandemic,” formulating “thematic action plans” on five areas that include utility, mobility/transportation, digital, construction/urban development, and agriculture/healthcare/postal services, as well as establishing policy targets (key performance indicators, or KPI) for such things as trade promotion by high-ranking ministry officials to complement the prime minister’s trade promotion efforts.

With regard to diplomatic missions overseas, MOFA has been appointing “Officers in charge of Infrastructure Projects” to gather and consolidate information on infrastructure projects (approx. 200 personnel at 97 diplomatic missions overseas in 75 countries as of the end of February 2022). This initiative has also shown results.

### **(3) Promotion of the Export of Agricultural, Forestry and Fishery Products and Food (Import Restrictions on Japanese Food Products after the Great East Japan Earthquake)**

Expanding exports of Japan’s agricultural, forestry, fishery and food products is a major objective of the Government of Japan. The Strategy to Realize Export Expansion of Agricultural, Forestry, Fishery and Food Products was formulated in December 2022 to further promote concerted efforts by the Government of Japan. The strategy calls for developing exporting regions and business operators in order to achieve two trillion yen by 2025 and five trillion yen by 2030 of agricultural, forestry, fishery, and food product exports.



As part of efforts to accelerate initiatives to further expand exports, the strategy will be revised at the end of 2020, the year in which exports exceeded one trillion yen, and Export Promotion Organizations will be organized for each food item. MOFA enthusiastically promotes the attractiveness of Japanese agricultural, forestry, fishery and food products by collaborating with the relevant ministries and agencies, as well as Japanese companies and local governments, utilizing the networks of organizations such as diplomatic missions overseas as well as social media and other tools. In particular, Japanese business support officers (in charge of the food industry) have been assigned to 59 diplomatic missions overseas in 55 countries and regions to strengthen initiatives to promote the export of agricultural, forestry, and fishery products and food. Japan has made energetic efforts toward such promotion at numerous opportunities such as receptions and cultural events to which dignitaries have been invited from countries and regions around the world. Furthermore, in major exporting destinations and regions, Japan Food Export Platforms will be established primarily staffed by personnel from diplomatic missions overseas and Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO)'s overseas offices, and provide ongoing, comprehensive, and expert support to local export businesses.

One of the biggest barriers to increasing exports is import restrictions on Japanese agricultural, forestry and fishery products and food by countries and regions following the Great East Japan Earthquake and TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident. Although 10 years have passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake, the fact is that 14 countries and regions out of 55 (as of December 2021) continue to impose import restrictions on agricultural, forestry, fishery and food products from Japan, and it remains a serious problem. As eliminating these restrictions and addressing Japan's reputational damage are top priorities for the Government of Japan, MOFA has been making efforts in

collaboration with relevant ministries and agencies to have these restrictions lifted as quickly as possible.

As a result of these efforts, in 2021, import restrictions were lifted in Israel (January), Singapore (May), and the United States (September). So far, 41 countries and regions have removed their import restrictions: Canada, Myanmar, Serbia, Chile, Mexico, Peru, Guinea, New Zealand, Colombia, Malaysia, Ecuador, Viet Nam, Iraq, Australia, Thailand, Bolivia, India, Kuwait, Nepal, Iran, Mauritius, Qatar, Ukraine, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Argentina, Turkey, New Caledonia (territory of France), Brazil, Oman, Bahrain, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Brunei, the Philippines, Morocco, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, and the three above-mentioned countries. Furthermore, due to the relaxation of restrictions by Hong Kong (January), French Polynesia (March), and the EU (October), the number of regions with import restrictions and the number of products restricted have decreased (as of December 31, 2021).

Working closely with the relevant ministries, agencies, local governments and international organizations, MOFA will continue taking every opportunity and making every effort to provide further explanations and appeal to countries and regions that maintain import restrictions, with the goal of having restrictions promptly removed and reputational damage repaired based on scientific evidence.

## 5 Promoting Resource Diplomacy along with Foreign Direct Investment in Japan

### (1) Securing a Stable Supply of Energy and Mineral Resources at Reasonable Prices

#### A Current Situation Concerning Energy and Mineral Resources in Japan and Abroad

##### (A) Situation in the World

Structural changes in recent years have been seen in the international energy market with

respect to three areas: (1) demand (consumption), (2) supply (production), and (3) resource selection. Regarding (1) demand, global demand for primary energy has shifted toward non-OECD member countries, primarily China and India. With respect to (2) supply, the U.S. became the world's largest producer of both oil and natural gas due to the "Shale Revolution," and liberalization of export controls on crude oil in December 2015. The U.S. is promoting energy export policies such as further exports of U.S. liquefied natural gas (LNG). As for (3) resource selection, based on the fact that production and usage on energy account for about two-thirds of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, the transitions to cleaner energy resources such as renewable energy are accelerating. In addition, since the Paris Agreement on climate change was adopted in December 2015, companies have made their efforts to further advance toward low-carbonization. In 2021, numerous countries have announced goals to achieve carbon neutrality in the second half of the century, an indication of increasing momentum for decarbonization worldwide.

In oil markets, oil demand and prices have gradually declined since around February 2020 due to reduced movement of people and sluggish economic activity owing to the spread of COVID-19. In addition, a coordinated production cut by Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Plus broke down in March, sending oil prices dramatically lower, and in April the WTI futures price turned negative for the first time in history. Afterwards, OPEC Plus agreed to a coordinated production cut starting in May. Crude oil prices also gradually rose as excess supply abated, reaching their pre-COVID-19 level by February 2021. However, supply shortages appeared in the subsequent economic recovery from the pandemic, and oil prices exceeded their pre-pandemic levels to hit a three-year high in October.

Moreover, energy prices have shown signs of further increases following Russia's aggression against of Ukraine, which will have an

unpredictable effect on energy market stability going forward.

### **(B) Situation in Japan**

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake, the percentage of fossil fuels out of power generation in Japan has reached about 90% in 2012, up from about 60% before the earthquake, due to the shutdown of nuclear power plants. Japan's primary energy self-sufficiency ratio (including nuclear power), which relies on imports from overseas for almost all of its oil, natural gas, coal and other energy resources, dropped sharply from 20% before the 2011 earthquake to 6.3% in 2014. It remains at a low level compared to other OECD countries despite a recovery to 12.1% in FY2019. Furthermore, nearly 90% of crude oil imported by Japan comes from the Middle East. With regard to LNG and coal, Japan depends less on the Middle East for oil but almost completely on Asia and Oceania. Under the circumstances, efforts to secure a stable supply of energy at reasonable prices are becoming increasingly important.

At the same time, climate change response measures are also important. In October 2020, the Government of Japan announced its intention to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050, and in April 2021 pledged to achieve a 46% emissions reduction by FY2030 and announced its new reduction goal to continue making further efforts to realize a 50% reduction.

Against this backdrop, the Sixth Strategic Energy Plan, approved by the Cabinet in October 2021, lays out specific measures to be taken by 2030 with a continued focus on the principle of "3E+S," which emphasizes energy source safety (Safety), ensuring of a stable energy supply (Energy Security), the economic efficiency of energy costs (Economic Efficiency), and environmental suitability from the point of view of climate and other elements (Environment).

## **B Diplomatic Efforts to Secure a Stable Supply of Energy and Mineral Resources at Reasonable Prices**

Securing a stable supply of energy and mineral resources at reasonable prices are the foundation for a vital Japanese economy and the livelihoods of its people. MOFA has been strengthening diplomatic efforts with a focus on the following activities.

### **(A) Gathering and Analysis of Resource-Related Information at Diplomatic Missions overseas**

“Special Assistants for Natural Resources” have been appointed to 60 diplomatic missions overseas in a total of 53 countries to work intensively on the acquisition and stable supply of energy and mineral resources with a view to strengthening the function of diplomatic missions overseas, as of September 2021. MOFA also calls for “Strategy Meetings on Natural Resources” every year, which bring together officials working at diplomatic missions in countries central to ensuring a stable supply of energy and mineral resources. In 2021, the meeting was held online on February 19 due to COVID-19 (see C (B) on page 305). In addition, MOFA has also been holding Regional Meetings on Energy and Mineral Resources for certain regions since 2017. At the 2019 meeting, held in Egypt, which was focused on the Middle Eastern region, participants discussed the importance of strengthening collaboration among MOFA, diplomatic missions overseas, and government-affiliated organizations, as well as Japan’s policy for promoting energy and mineral resources, and renewable energy diplomacy effectively.

### **(B) Initiatives Prompted by Rising Oil Prices**

With oil prices hitting a seven-year high in October 2021 and concerns that rising prices will hamper economic recovery from the pandemic, MOFA, at various levels, encouraged oil-producing countries to increase their supply and strengthened cooperation with consumer countries and international organizations.

More specifically, the Government of Japan has called on oil-producing nations for cooperation through talks between Foreign Minister Motegi and Foreign Minister Ahmad Nasser Al-Mohamed Al-Sabah of Kuwait on October 18, as well as during talks between Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Honda Taro and Ambassador of Kazakhstan to Japan Sabr Yessimbekov on November 8, while also requesting through diplomatic missions overseas and relevant ministries and agencies.

Furthermore, leaders have used multilateral frameworks such as ASEAN Plus Three and G20 Summits to coordinate with oil producing and consuming countries, while affirming the importance of energy market stabilization in outcome documents. In addition, relevant Director-Generals from MOFA held discussions with International Energy Agency (IEA) Executive Director Fatih Birol on November 9 and with International Energy Forum (IEF) Secretary General Joseph Moench on November 22 and strengthened coordination with these international organizations. Furthermore, in step with the U.S. and other relevant countries, the decision was made to sell a portion of state oil reserves to an extent that will not infringe on the current Oil Stockpiling Act.

### **(C) Making Use of International Fora and Rules**

Japan makes active use of international fora and rules to coordinate and collaborate internationally toward achieving a stable energy supply. To achieve a realistic energy mix transformation amid an increasing momentum toward decarbonization around the world, Japan is communicating to the international community the importance of ensuring stability with critical mineral resources essential for both energy security and energy transformation.

In May, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio attended a webinar hosted by the International Energy Agency (IEA) on critical mineral resources and emphasized that achieving the goals of the Paris Agreement would require ensuring a stable

supply of mineral resources necessary to support an accelerating energy mix transformation. He also stressed the necessity of rules based on universal values, in addition to the expansion of investment and promotion of innovation.

A G20 Energy and Climate Ministerial Meeting was held in-person in July, chaired by Italy, with State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio in attendance from MOFA. At the meeting, ministers discussed issues such as cities and climate change, achieving a sustainable recovery, transitioning to clean energy, and energy poverty, and a Ministers' Communiqué was issued as an outcome document. In response to the destabilization of the global energy market caused by the spread of COVID-19, the Ministers' Communiqué affirmed the importance of international cooperation toward strengthening the energy system, and of achieving safe, affordable and sustainable energy access. Ministers also reaffirmed the importance of transforming the energy mix toward achieving 3E+S, which was established at the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019.

In September, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio attended the UN High-level Dialogue on Energy, an online meeting, aimed at promoting the achievement of energy-related targets (SDG 7) for the UN's 2030 goals (SDGs). This year, Japan served as a Global Theme Champion for “energy access,”<sup>4</sup> one of the Dialogue's five themes. At the Dialogue, Mr. Washio spoke on how the spread of COVID-19 has brought to light many issues involving the stable supply of social services, including energy, and how it risked pushing back SDGs achievement. He also stated the importance of ensuring energy access as described in SDG 7, both for achieving sustainable development and economic growth amid the COVID-19 pandemic and for achieving human security. Later, he emphasized the essential nature of bespoke response measures due to energy situations

differing for each country and region.

In September, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio attended a ministerial dialogue co-organized by the IEA and the Government of Oman concerning the energy mix transformation in the Middle East and North Africa. Along with talking about the good cooperative relationship that Japan has had for many years with the Middle East and North African nations in the energy field, he spoke on the importance of “promoting innovation” and “strengthening collaborative relations between countries” in achieving decarbonization and energy security as the world accelerates its efforts toward decarbonization.

### **C Major Efforts Concerning Energy and Resource Diplomacy in 2021**

#### **(A) Consideration and Launch of New Energy and Resource Foreign Policy**

In January, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio attended the 11th Session of the Assembly of the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), where he gave a speech about a path to carbon neutrality and issues involved in the mass deployment of renewable energy, as well as about Japan's initiatives. In the speech, he pointed out that every country has a different pathway to achieving carbon neutrality, and talked on the necessity of exploiting all available technologies and innovation, while deploying renewable energy to the fullest extent. He also emphasized the importance of helping developing countries decarbonize.

Mr. Washio also touched on the necessity of focusing not only on the benefits but also on the problems in the mass deployment of renewables. In particular, he noted the issues below to be addressed going forward: ensuring flexibility and evaluating overall power system costs, procuring mineral resources used in products such as batteries and motors, and addressing the mass disposal

<sup>4</sup> Global Champions: Representatives from Member States in each of the themes are expected to be actively involved in activities such as spearheading discussions on themes and convening related meetings as part of the dialogue preparatory process.



State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio as chair of the 21st Meeting of the IRENA Council (online meeting) (May, Tokyo)

of disused solar panels and other equipment that will begin around 2030. He also expressed his expectation that IRENA members would utilize the Agency and collaborate on addressing these issues.

In May, Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio attended the 21st Meeting of the IRENA Council (online format) as chair. This meeting was an important gathering to discuss the direction of IRENA's projects, and more than 300 representatives from 97 countries and regions were in attendance.

#### (B) Strategy Meeting on Diplomatic Missions Overseas Concerning Energy and Mineral Resources

Every year since FY2009, MOFA has held meetings attended by Embassies and Consulates-General established in major resource-producing countries, relevant ministries, agencies and organizations, experts, and representatives from companies. These meetings have provided opportunities to discuss diplomatic initiatives for ensuring a stable supply of energy and mineral resources in Japan, formulate policy, and strengthen cooperation. This year's Strategy Meeting on Natural Resources was held on February 19, 2021, one day after MOFA held a webinar as part the FY2020 Seminar on Energy Security in Asia, entitled "Free, Open Indo-Pacific and the Current Situation on Energy and Mineral Resources" (see (C) below). Discussions at the Strategy Meeting were built on

discussions during the seminar and saw participants exchange views on how to procure energy and mineral resources in Japan in response to the change of situations such as the spread of COVID-19 in the U.S., the inception of the new political administration in the U.S., and procurement methods of energy and mineral resources in Japan, in response to the changes in the state of affairs. The Strategy Meeting was attended by officials from more than 40 diplomatic missions and the Agency for Natural Resources and Energy in countries where Special Assistants for Natural Resources were appointed. Through the discussions, participants shared the recognition for the increasing importance of achieving a stable supply of critical mineral resources amid a transition period for the energy mix among the international community, as well as issues such as the importance of further strengthening mutual cooperation, accurately analyzing the environment surrounding energy and mineral resources in each country and region, and implementing related measures.

#### (C) Seminar on Energy Security in Asia

On February 18, 2021, with support provided by the Japan Business Federation (*Keidanren*), MOFA held a webinar entitled "Free, Open Indo-Pacific and the Current Situation on Energy and Mineral Resources" as part of the FY2020 Seminar on Energy Security in Asia. In addition to State Minister for Foreign Affairs Washio, Mr. Obayashi Takeo, Co-Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of *Keidanren* and the Chairman and Representative Director of Obayashi Corporation, also attended the meeting as a representative of *Keidanren*. Giving talks during the seminar were experts, representatives from international organizations, companies, and the press that work in the field of energy and mineral resources. Roughly 500 people registered and attended the seminar online from Japan and abroad. The seminar opened with Mr. Washio stating that the stable supply of mineral resources used for renewable energy would be key for the future as the international

community rapidly transitions toward renewable energy. To accomplish this, he noted that it would be essential to collaborate and cooperate with all countries that believe in spreading universal values, namely fair markets, human rights protection, and transparent labor standards, guided by the concept of a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific.” He also spoke on the importance of addressing problems concerning mineral resources through public-private cooperation. After a video message on the subject of “The U.S. Presidential Election and the U.S. Policy on Energy and Mineral Resources” by Acting Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs Peter Haas and Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Energy Resources Anna Shpitsberg, both at the U.S. Department of State, a panel discussion was held among experts and company representatives. Following this, Tim Gould, Head of the Division for Energy Supply and Investment Outlooks at the IEA, explained the role of critical minerals for the clean energy transformation during a talk on the “Energy Mix Transformation in the Indo-Pacific Region.” Experts and representatives from companies and the press then held lively discussions on the energy and mineral resources supporting the energy mix transformation, as well as future possibilities for coordination in the Indo-Pacific region.

#### **(D) Start of Negotiations Concerning the**

##### **Modernization of the Energy Charter Treaty**

The Energy Charter Treaty (ECT), a multilateral treaty that entered into force in April 1998 (signed in 1995 and entered into force with Japan in 2002), was established as a legal framework for implementing the European Energy Charter, which called for promoting improvements based on market principles in the energy sector in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe following the collapse of the Soviet Union, as well as promoting trade and investment activities in the global energy sector. This treaty was signed by 52 countries and organizations mostly located in Europe and central Asia.

The ECT prescribes the liberalization of the trade and transit of energy source materials and commodities, the protection of investments in the energy sector, and other matters. It ensures a stable supply of energy from supply countries to demand countries, contributes to improving energy security for Japan, which largely relies on other countries for energy resources, and provides an important legal foundation for further improving the investment environment for Japanese companies overseas.

For this treaty, which entered into force more than 20 years ago in 1998, discussions have been held on making revisions to modernize the treaty considering factors such as the recent energy situation and current state of investment agreements. Full-scale negotiations, in which Japan also actively engaged, began in 2020, with discussions held on such wide-ranging issues as investment protection, dispute settlement and commodity transit. Japan has also contributed to the development of the ECT as the largest contributor of assessed donations. This includes serving as chair for the first Meeting of the Energy Charter Conference in East Asia, which was held in 2016, and hosting the 27th Meeting in Tokyo. In September 2021, Ms. Hirose Atsuko became the first Japanese national to become the Deputy Secretary General of the Energy Charter Secretariat, the administrative body for the ECT. She now contributes to strengthening the Secretariat’s operations. (See the Column on page 307.)

#### **(2) Ensuring Food Security**

The global population in 2021 is estimated to be about 7.88 billion (prospects released by the UN FPA), and this is expected to increase mainly in Africa and Asia. Changes in the dietary habits of people in developing countries will require a rapid increase in the production of feed grains. In Japan, while the country’s food self-sufficiency rate (calorie basis (published by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries)) has been on a downward trend in the long-term, it has



## Appointment of Hirose Atsuko as Deputy Secretary General of the Energy Charter Secretariat

### ■Message from Kikuchi Nobuyuki, Director, Resource Security Division

The “battle” to secure an executive post in an international organization started with one resume that was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Amidst efforts by the Government of Japan to increase the number of Japanese staff in executive posts in international organizations, Ms. Hirose’s resume reached the Ministry of Foreign Affairs just as the recruitment for the position of Deputy Secretary General (the number two position) for the Energy Charter Secretariat was announced.

The most important thing to do was to find a strong candidate. Ms. Hirose’s resume, submitted in response to staff recruitment for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, happened to catch my eyes by chance. She was more than qualified to meet the requirements for the position of Deputy Secretary General, with her management experience in numerous international organizations, her track record of involvement in energy-related projects, as well as her qualifications as a lawyer and experience in international arbitration. I contacted her to find out more, and eventually supported her as a candidate for the office.

The Deputy Secretary General occupies a key position in the Energy Charter Secretariat, responsible for the management of budget and personnel affairs, and it is a highly independent position directly appointed by the Energy Charter Conference, the highest decision-making authority of the Energy Charter Treaty. This multilateral treaty addresses matters such as the liberalization of trade and transit of energy materials and products, and the protection of investments in the energy sector. Of course, there were also applications from strong candidates from other countries. The selection process for executive positions in international organizations is not only a battle of candidates’ qualifications, but also an intense competition between the governments supporting the candidates. Resolving to do everything possible, a letter was first sent out under the name of the Minister for Foreign Affairs to impress upon the other member states the strong backing that Ms. Hirose had from the Government of Japan. Furthermore, we actively approached all the member states through Japanese diplomatic missions in these states. I personally requested senior officers of major governments for their support through video conferences, and actively appealed to the key countries by meeting their Ambassadors to Japan in person.

Our efforts were rewarded, and Ms. Hirose was appointed as the Deputy Secretary General by a unanimous vote. Currently, negotiations toward the amendment of the Treaty are ongoing, as is the formulation of new international rules in the energy sector. As many of the parties to this Treaty are European countries, it is significant that the second highest position in the Secretariat is occupied by someone who clearly understands the position of Japan and Asia.

### ■Message from Deputy Secretary General Hirose

I was appointed as the Deputy Secretary General of the Energy Charter Secretariat in 2021 and assumed office in September. Although it has not been long since I took up the post, I am already involved in the transitional period on various matters including the extensive amendment to the Energy Charter Treaty. My days are busy but very fulfilling.

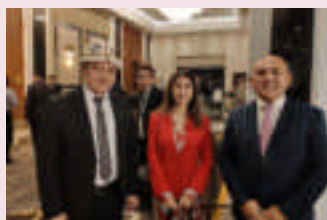
The Energy Charter Treaty is not widely known among the general public, but it is the only multilateral treaty focused on the energy sector. It is a highly valuable treaty, and investment-related arbitration based on the Treaty has produced successful results for Japanese companies.

The Energy Charter Secretariat is responsible for the practical implementation of the Treaty, and it works with

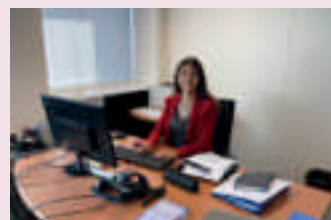
other international and regional organizations to promote international and regional cooperation in energy-related matters. Although the Energy Charter Secretariat is a small international organization, its staff come from Europe, Central Asia, and Africa, creating a workplace that offers the opportunity to

be exposed to diverse cultures and languages. This, for me, is one of the attractions of the organization. I would like to be part of the effort to ensure that the Treaty contributes further to energy transformation and the promotion of renewable energy-related investments.

I have had the opportunity to work in various international organizations to date, and I cherish the countless encounters I have had with wonderful colleagues from countries around the world. I would like others to have similar experiences as I have had, and sincerely hope that an increasing number of people will aim to work in international organizations in the future.



At a forum on energy cooperation with member states (the author is in the center)



At the office of the Energy Charter Secretariat

been leveling out in recent years, reaching 37% in FY2020. Japan relies on imports for much of its food, and to ensure a stable food supply for its people, the country needs to achieve the optimal ratio of importing to stockpiling, primarily by increasing domestic agricultural production.

Amid expectations of a growth in food supply and demand in the medium- to long-term worldwide, Japan must work to increase the food supply globally to continue securing stable food imports. For this purpose, ensuring sustainable approaches is also required for increasing production while reducing environmental impact. Japan must also establish robust food security through efforts that include the creation of a stable agricultural produce market and trading system to protect against food price instability caused by poor harvest conditions, natural disasters, etc.

The spread of COVID-19 has had an impact on global food security. Supply chain disruptions have occurred as Russia and several other exporting countries have put export controls on grains and other products for reasons that include rising food prices in their countries, while logistics have been disrupted due to lockdowns in certain regions. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO), the number of

people suffering from malnutrition worldwide increased by more than 100 million people in 2020 compared to one year prior as food access worsens due to economic decline and supply chain disruptions, and it is feared that there are now more than 800 million people suffering from malnutrition. The effects have been particularly stark on economically vulnerable regions, with the global prevalence of undernourishment reportedly having risen from 8.4% to 9.9%. Although the production of the world's staple grains and other produce is expected to be sufficient to satisfy demand, the importance of making the food supply chain more resilient has been noted in light of concerns over prolonged COVID-19 effects.

Furthermore, as Russia and Ukraine have been some of the world's largest exporters of grains and other products, Russia's aggression against Ukraine since February 24, 2022 has had a serious impact on the stable supply of grains to countries that heavily rely on grains from Russia and Ukraine, particularly developing nations in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Fears of grain supply shortages around the world have fueled trading price increases that have led to increased food prices. Russia's aggression against Ukraine has therefore exposed the vulnerabilities to food

security posed by global supply chain disruptions and illuminated new problems.

### **A Cooperation in International Frameworks Concerning Food Security**

Based on the situations involving food export controls, supply chain disruptions, and the growing starving population due to the impact of COVID-19, 2021 saw international interest in food security grow. This has also been reflected in international frameworks. With the goal of achieving SDG 2 (ending hunger, achieving food security and improve nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture), one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, discussions were held concerning changes to "food systems," which consist of a series of processes related to the production, processing, transport, and consumption of foods.

In June 2021, a G20 Foreign and Development Ministers' Meeting was held in Italy in which food security was set up as a single theme for discussions. Foreign Minister Motegi emphasized the importance of promoting agricultural innovation, building a resilient distribution network, and achieving seamless international trade in food in order to realize a world without hunger. The meeting also saw the adoption of the Matera Declaration on Food Security, Nutrition and Food Systems, which calls for cooperation among all G20 members toward "Building Back Better" from the pandemic.

In September, under the leadership of UN Secretary-General António Guterres, the UN Food Systems Summit was held for the first time. The meeting was attended by leaders, ministers, and representatives from international organizations, private enterprises, and civil society of more than 150 countries. From Japan, Prime Minister Suga released a video message that emphasized the importance of an approach focused on improving food productivity while maintaining sustainability,

maintaining and strengthening free and fair trade, and adapting measures for the different climate, natural features, and culinary culture of each country and region. Meanwhile, Japan hosted the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit 2021 (see the Special Feature on page 271) in December and announced its intention to play a leading role in international efforts to improve nutrition worldwide, including eliminating hunger, as an issue faced by the international community.

### **B Cooperation with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO)**

As a responsible member of the international community, Japan supports the activities of the FAO, a specialized agency of the UN in the fields of food and agriculture. Japan, a major donor to the FAO and the third largest contributor of assessed contributions, significantly contributes to strengthening global food security through efforts such as providing development assistance in the areas of food and agriculture, and creating international rules that include food safety standards. Japan also works to strengthen its relationship with the FAO, holding Annual Strategic Consultations and conducting seminars aimed at raising awareness for the FAO domestically.

### **(3) Fisheries (Tuna, Whaling, etc.)**

As one of the major fishing countries and consumers of fishery products in the world, Japan, through relevant international organizations, actively contributes to the sustainable use of marine living resources.

Japan advocates the view that cetaceans are a part of marine living resources that should be utilized in a sustainable manner based on scientific evidence. Since the enactment of the moratorium<sup>5</sup> on commercial whaling by the International Whaling Commission (IWC) in 1982, Japan had provided scientific evidence that certain whale

<sup>5</sup> Moratorium on commercial whaling (approved by the IWC General Assembly in 1982): Suspended the lethal take of whales for commercial purposes. It directs to, no later than 1990, comprehensively evaluate the impact of the moratorium on whale resources, as well as to consider revisions to the moratorium and establish catch limits other than zero.

## Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing as a Diplomatic Issue

Illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing refers to illicit fishing activities that violate national laws of coastal countries and international rules of operation. Putting an end to IUU fishing is also included under Target 14.4<sup>(Note1)</sup> of the SDGs, and there is growing awareness that it is an issue that must be tackled by the international community as a whole. Damage caused by the recent IUU fishing of the Japanese common squid in the Sea of Japan not only causes significant problems for those engaged in Japan's fishery industry, but is also an issue that is directly related to our lives. There are various forms of IUU fishing, including unauthorized, unreported or misreported fishing, and fishing by vessels without nationality or vessels of non-members of Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs) within RFMO waters.

IUU fishing not only threatens the sustainable use of marine living resources, but is also related to various problems at sea and in coastal countries. For example, there have been many reports of human rights violation and abuse of crew working under harsh conditions on IUU fishing vessels. It has also been pointed out that overfishing by IUU fishing vessels in South America and Africa is putting pressure on the economies of coastal countries. It is also reported that IUU fishing vessels are becoming a hotbed for crimes such as drug smuggling and stowaways. To resolve these issues, taking measures to prevent IUU fishing is needed.

Against the backdrop of this situation, international cooperation on new initiatives to combat IUU fishing has been developing in RFMOs that Japan participates in, such as the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT), Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), and North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC), as well as in the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO). For example, within the RFMO framework, efforts to introduce position monitoring systems for fishing vessels through the use of satellites are ongoing, and to create the lists of IUU fishing vessels. Japan is also contributing actively to these efforts including through the provision of information on illegal fishing vessels, which is collected from patrol boats and other sources.

With regard to IUU fishing around Japan, including that of Japanese common squid in the Sea of Japan, Japan has made use of various opportunities to call upon the relevant countries and regions in order to resolve the issue.

In the context of bilateral cooperation, Japan has been providing developing countries with fishery control ships or patrol boats to combat illegal operations, as well as training on IUU fishery countermeasures through ODA. From the perspective of international rule-making, the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA) was concluded in 2017, and Japan has been encouraging non-contracting parties to join the Agreement. At international conferences held in 2021, through Japan's tenacious appealing to the relevant parties, the importance of addressing IUU fishing was included in the outcome documents of leaders' level meetings including the G20, G7, and APEC, etc. The recognition of the importance of combatting IUU fishing has been noted not only in political documents, but also expanded to economic partnership agreements. For example, measures to address IUU fishing have also been clearly specified in international agreements such as the CPTPP, Japan-EU EPA, and Japan-UK EPA. The abolition of subsidies that may contribute to IUU fishing has also been recognized as one of the



An example of a fishing vessel reported as an IUU fishing vessel. Some signs that have been pointed out include the lack of a national flag and displays of the necessary ship identification information.

SDGs goals.<sup>(Note2)</sup> With a view to prohibiting such subsidies, Japan is participating actively in fishery subsidy negotiations that are currently taking place in the WTO. In these ways, Japan is leading discussions in various international frameworks toward addressing IUU fishing.

Awareness among individual citizens is also important in promoting such diplomatic initiatives. It has been pointed out that fishery products derived from IUU fishing may circulate in the market and be consumed unconsciously by consumers. Therefore, consumption activities by individuals that pay attention to the sustainability of marine living resources can also help to deter IUU fishing. For example, individual consumers can check that the origin of the seafood they purchase is displayed appropriately, and consider purchasing seafood with marine eco labels that show the seafood has been caught in an ecologically-friendly manner.

**(Note1)** Target 14.4: By 2020, effectively regulate harvesting and end overfishing, IUU fishing and destructive fishing practices and implement science-based management plans, in order to restore fish stocks in the shortest time feasible, at least to levels that can produce maximum sustainable yield as determined by their biological characteristics.

**(Note2)** Target 14.6: By 2020, prohibit certain forms of fisheries subsidies which contribute to overcapacity and overfishing, eliminate subsidies that contribute to IUU fishing and refrain from introducing new such subsidies, recognizing that appropriate and effective special and differential treatment for developing and least developed countries should be an integral part of the WTO fisheries subsidies negotiation.

species can be used sustainably, and had provided data obtained through scientific research and held dialogues aimed at resuming sustainable whaling operations. However, as it became evident that there was a considerable divide between countries that promote sustainable use of whale resources and those that oppose any form of whaling, and that there was no possibility at all of different views and standpoints on whale species coexisting within the IWC, Japan withdrew from the International Convention for the Regulation of whaling (ICRW) at the end of June 2019.

In July 2019, Japan resumed commercial whaling targeting large whales whose abundance had been confirmed. Whaling operations are currently restricted to Japan's territorial waters and its exclusive economic zone (EEZ), and are proceeding within the catch limits calculated in line with the method adopted by the IWC, which is based on the latest discussions by the IWC's Scientific Committee. Japan has been cooperating on the international management of whale resources in line with scientific knowledge, which includes providing data obtained from scientific research and whaling operations. Going forward, Japan will continue to coordinate with countries that support the sustainable use of fishery resources while steadily carrying out initiatives such as establishing objective catch limits based

on scientific evidence and cooperating with international organizations.

The international community is strongly required to take urgent actions against illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing, which is also an objective of the SDGs. As a responsible fishing country, along with creating lists of IUU fishing vessels and designating conservation and management measures through Regional Fisheries Management Organizations (RFMOs), Japan has been actively working to combat IUU fishing by offering capacity building to developing countries, among other measures. (See the Special Feature on page 310.)

To effectively combat IUU fishing, Japan has been working to express its political commitment at various leaders' and ministerial level meetings and other opportunities to take action through coordination with the international community. Japan played a role in incorporating the importance of combating IUU fishing in the Leaders' Declaration of the G20 Osaka Summit in 2019, which Japan chaired. In 2021, the importance of tackling IUU fishing was confirmed in summit-level outcome documents of the G7, G20, APEC, and East Asia Summits, as well as in the Joint Statement of the 27th Japan-EU Summit. Japan emphasizes the Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal,

Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (PSMA), which stipulates rules for port states to take measures against IUU fishing vessels, including denial of port entry. To strengthen the effectiveness of the agreement, Japan has been encouraging Non-Contracting Parties to join the agreement at international conferences, including during the adoption of a resolution on “sustainable fisheries” at the 76th session of the UN General Assembly.

In the Central Arctic Ocean, it is necessary to prevent unregulated fishing in case fishing becomes viable in the future as ice coverage in that area has diminished due to global warming. 10 states and organizations, including Japan and five Arctic Ocean coastal states, signed the Agreement to Prevent Unregulated High Seas Fisheries in the Central Arctic Ocean in October 2018, and it entered into force in June 2021. Measures that include adopting the Joint Program of Scientific Research and Monitoring are expected to be adopted at meetings of the parties and other opportunities.

As one of the largest tuna consumer countries, Japan has joined RFMOs for tuna, and leads discussions on strengthening conservation and management measures (CMMs) at annual meetings and other occasions. Concerning the Pacific bluefin tuna, at the annual meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) in 2021, Japan proposed an increased catch limit to the extent that the resource rebuilding target would be achieved to a certain level based on scientific evidence. A catch limit increase of 15% was thereafter adopted for large fish, and the results of active efforts through international resource management are being shown. For Atlantic bluefin tuna, in light of the recovery of resource levels in recent years, the total allowable catch (TAC) for Atlantic bluefin tuna was increased in 2022 at the annual meeting of the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas (ICCAT),

held in November.

With respect to Pacific saury, due to a decline in resources, an agreement was reached at a February 2021 annual meeting of the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) to reduce the catch limit by 40%. Under such conditions, there was the lowest ever catch of Pacific saury, creating a need for more robust resource management at future meetings of the NPFC.

For Japanese eel, as in 2020, at an informal consultation on international cooperation in July led by Japan, Japan, the ROK, and Chinese Taipei agreed to establish limits on glass eel stocking in aquaculture ponds, and to hold regular meetings of scientists.

#### **(4) Foreign Direct Investment in Japan**

The “Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan,” which has been held since 2014, is spearheading initiatives to promote activities for discovering and attracting investments while gathering opinions from foreign company managers. At the same time, Japan continues to respond to the needs of foreign companies by making further progress in implementing additional measures such as regulatory and institutional reforms and support measures that help improve the investment environment in Japan. Based on the “Five Promises for Attracting Foreign Businesses to Japan,” decided at the second meeting of the Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan, held in March 2015, foreign companies have utilized the Investment Advisor Assignment System<sup>6</sup> since April 2016 to meet with the relevant State Ministers in charge. As a result of efforts to achieve the target of “doubling (compared to 2012) the inward foreign direct investment stocks to 35 trillion Japanese yen in 2020,” as laid out in the Japan Revitalization Strategy approved by the Cabinet in June 2013, foreign direct investment stocks in Japan stood

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<sup>6</sup> A system that seeks to prepare an environment in which foreign companies who have made important investments in Japan can easily consult with the Government of Japan through State Ministers and other officials from the ministries that oversee the main industries in which these companies engage.



at 39.7 trillion Japanese yen as of December 31, 2020. However, the inward foreign direct investment stocks in Japan account for 7.4% of GDP (as of December 31, 2020), a level that remains low internationally when compared to the average for OECD countries, which is over 50%. Amid these circumstances, at the ninth meeting of the Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan, held in June 2021, a new Strategy for Promoting Foreign Direct Investment in Japan was adopted as a medium- to long-term strategy to promote foreign direct investment in Japan, and a decision was made to aim to double the inward foreign direct investment stocks to 80 trillion yen by 2030 and reach 12% of GDP.

MOFA, along with implementing various measures adopted by the Council for Promotion of Foreign Direct Investment in Japan, has utilized diplomatic resources to engage in initiatives through diplomatic missions overseas and trade promotion by key government officials. MOFA has also strategically implemented various initiatives toward promoting foreign direct investment in Japan. The “Contact Points for Direct Investment toward Japan,” established at 126 diplomatic missions overseas in April 2016, have been collaborating with JETRO to conduct surveys of requests for improvements to Japanese regulations and systems, call for investments in Japan by making use of networks of contacts at diplomatic missions overseas, and hold events for promoting foreign direct investment in Japan, among other initiatives. Diplomatic missions conducted more than 570 cases of these activities in FY2020.

In Japan, MOFA held a Global Business Seminar in March 2021 (co-hosted with METI and supported by the Cabinet Office and JETRO) that focused on the possibilities of investment in the digital age and attracting investment into rural Japan. Lively discussions were held by approximately 190 participants that included experts and representatives from diplomatic missions in Tokyo, business groups and the chambers of commerce

in Japan, ministries and local governments, and Asian, American, and European companies with a presence in Japan. The discussions centered on trends concerning the digital economy in Europe, India, and the U.S., the prospects for expanding investment through further digital innovation business, and the appeal of Japan and its rural areas for digital innovation business investment.

### **(5) The Road to 2025 World Expo Osaka (Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan)**

Following the approval of a registration application for Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan at the General Assembly of the Bureau International des Expositions (BIE) held in December 2020, Japan began activities to officially invite other countries and international organizations to participate in Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan. MOFA is currently engaged in invitation activities to drive significant participation by other countries and organizations.

The “Division for the 2025 World Exposition in Japan” was created under the Economic Affairs Bureau of MOFA on September 28, 2021. The Division will be in charge of operations concerning Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, including invitation activities. On the same day, former Japanese ambassador to the Philippines Haneda Koji was appointed the Commissioner General of the 2025 World Exposition in Japan.

Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, is an event expected to draw many visitors from Japan and abroad and serve as an opportunity to broadly disseminate information about Japan's appeal. With the theme of “Designing Future Society for Our Lives,” it also aims to offer an important opportunity to further initiatives aimed at achieving the SDGs, which are all to be achieved by 2030. Japan will continue making a concerted national effort aimed at ensuring that the Expo inspires and surprises people around the world, while also energizing Japan as a whole.

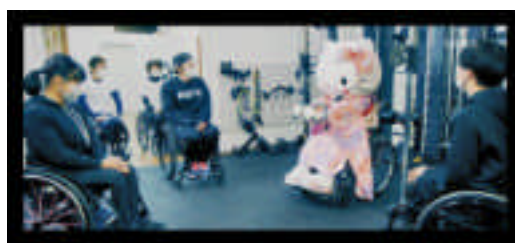
## Section 4

# Efforts to Promote Understanding and Trust in Japan

### 1 Strategic Communications

#### (1) Initiatives in Strategic Communications

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) is implementing strategic communications based on the three-pillar approach of (1) making further efforts to disseminate Japan's policies, initiatives and positions, (2) sharing Japan's rich and diverse attractions, and (3) expanding the circle of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan, while enhancing the capabilities of its overseas missions, which are on the frontlines of public diplomacy. Regarding pillar (1), MOFA focuses mainly on promoting public understanding of Japan's contributions to peace, stability and prosperity in the international community, and the maintenance and strengthening of the international order based on the rule of law, as well as on enhancing public awareness of issues concerning the recognition of history and territory/sovereignty. In particular, MOFA is actively communicating Japan's positions and viewpoints through opportunities such as daily press conferences, interviews, contributions of articles, and speeches at official visits to foreign countries and international conferences by the Prime Minister, the Foreign Minister, and other government officials. Japan's diplomatic missions overseas are also actively communicating to the governments of assigned countries, their citizens and the media on Japan's positions and viewpoints on



Policy promotion video, "Hello Kitty presents harmonious and inclusive society amidst the pandemic" (Posted on MOFA's YouTube channel from March 21, 2021)



a range of subjects including the recognition of history and territory/ sovereignty. When foreign media outlets publish reports that include factual errors, the headquarters and diplomatic missions abroad promptly lodge protests or post rebuttals, to ensure that media reports are made based on objective facts and understanding. In addition, MOFA actively communicates with the public through online tools such as social media and websites, while creating publicity materials such as videos on Japan's foreign policy and utilizing them in a variety of forms. Furthermore, in order to make Japan's basic positions and viewpoints on policy issues understood, it is also important to enhance coordination with experts and think tanks. From this perspective, MOFA invites influential experts and media personnel to Japan from abroad, and provides them with opportunities to exchange views with various people including Japanese government officials, as well as to visit various places around Japan for study tours and

to conduct interviews. MOFA dispatches Japanese experts abroad, while extending its support for Japan-related seminars conducted by overseas research institutions.

In 2021, as COVID-19 continued to spread, MOFA actively communicated with international society to gain an accurate understanding of the situation and efforts in Japan. It has also put effort into online initiatives with a view to overcoming restrictions under the COVID-19 situation. For collaborative projects with overseas research institutions and invitational/dispatch projects in particular, it has actively implemented feasible initiatives that do not involve physical interpersonal exchanges, such as online seminars (webinars) and exchange programs.

By taking advantage of various opportunities and utilizing various tools, Japan is also engaged in efforts to strategically communicate information about matters on the recognition of history, including the issue of the so-called “comfort women” and various issues on Japan’s territory and sovereignty. In addition, for baseless criticism of the Rising Sun Flag, accurate information about the flag is provided in a variety of forms, including making multi-language explanatory materials and videos available on MOFA’s website to gain understanding from the international community.<sup>1</sup>

Concerning pillar (2), “sharing Japan’s rich and diverse attractions,” a variety of efforts involving public relations and cultural projects are being made mainly through diplomatic missions to promote understanding and support for Japan, which will also lead to the promotion of inbound tourism in the post-COVID-19 world. Cultural projects have been conducted by diplomatic missions around the world and the Japan Foundation (JF), and the 15th Japan International MANGA Award was organized by MOFA. Also, the attractiveness

of all regions of Japan was communicated through various means including social media. While many projects have been postponed alongside the suspension of mass gatherings and the cross-border movement of people around the world in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, special programs have been conducted through online media with the aim of maintaining and further developing Japan’s ties with the world through culture. Moreover, Japan has worked on initiatives in cooperation with people in the country and abroad to preserve tangible and intangible cultural heritage throughout the world and to promote the inscription of Japan’s cultural and natural heritage on the World Heritage List and the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. Concerning pillar (3), “expanding the circle of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan,” MOFA has been making various efforts to promote people-to-people and intellectual exchanges, and Japanese language education. The efforts include youth exchange programs between Japan and other countries and regions under Japan’s Friendship Ties Programs. MOFA also provides support for Japanese studies at universities and research institutions in major countries around the world. MOFA will continue to make use of initiatives in accordance with the abovementioned three pillars strategically and effectively, in order to contribute to the realization of its foreign policy and national interests.

## (2) JAPAN HOUSE

MOFA has established JAPAN HOUSE overseas communication hubs in three cities, namely São Paulo (Brazil), London (UK) and Los Angeles (U.S.). The purpose is to attract a wide range of people, including those who were not necessarily interested in Japan previously, and to enlarge the

<sup>1</sup> Reference materials concerning the Rising Sun Flag are available on the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs here:

(1) [https://www.mofa.go.jp/a\\_o/rp/page22e\\_000892.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/rp/page22e_000892.html)

(2) Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9co0U5lcEOc>

“Rising Sun Flag as Japanese Longstanding Culture” (Posted on MOFA’s YouTube channel from October 8, 2021)

(1)



(2)



base of the people who are interested and well-versed in Japan by communicating Japan's rich and varied attractiveness as well as its policies, initiatives and views.

JAPAN HOUSE promotes effective communication by (1) communicating through "All-Japan" efforts by the central and local governments, private sectors and other actors, (2) promoting outreach that reflects the needs of local communities, and (3) providing a "one-stop-service" where various information related to Japan can be obtained from one location.

With the slogan "Mind-blowing Encounters with Japan across the Globe," each JAPAN HOUSE conducts locally designed exhibitions which are independently organized by each hub, as well as touring exhibitions that are selected by experts from public proposals in Japan and exhibited at all three hubs. In this way, JAPAN HOUSE works to provide high-quality exhibitions by leveraging the knowhow of experts both in those hub cities and in Japan. In addition to exhibitions, Japan's diverse attractions, including traditional culture and arts, advanced technology, nature, architecture, food and design, as well as its policies, initiatives and views, are also widely disseminated through other formats such as lectures, seminars, workshops, webinars, merchandise, food and beverages, books, websites and cafés. In 2021, the JAPAN HOUSE hubs were temporarily closed or operated with restrictions on admission numbers, etc. under the COVID-19 measures. However, in addition to physical exhibitions and other projects, they actively disseminated information online or through hybrid methods that combined the two means of communication. By the end of 2021, the total number of visitors for the three hubs had exceeded 3.8 million, indicating that the hubs are becoming firmly established as a major cultural facility in each city.

### **(3) Media Coverage of Japan in Other Countries and Regions, and Dissemination to Foreign Media**

In 2021, foreign media coverage of Japan was centered on diplomatic issues such as the Quad Leaders' Meeting, the 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26), Japan-U.S. relations, Japan-China relations, and the issues concerning North Korea, as well as Japan's domestic politics and economy including the inauguration of the new Cabinet, the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 (hereafter, "Tokyo 2020 Games"), Japan's response to COVID-19 including border measures.

MOFA promptly and proactively provides information and assistance to foreign media in order to gain the understanding and support of the international community on Japan's policies, initiatives and positions. Communication through foreign media includes interviews with the Prime Minister and the Foreign Minister, regular press conferences by the Foreign Minister (livestreaming in Japanese and English is also available online), and the provision of information and opportunities for press coverage to correspondents in Tokyo via briefings, press releases, press tours and other means. MOFA makes efforts to achieve strategic and effective communications by providing information in a timely manner based on the diplomatic schedule.

In 2021, as in the previous year, the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister had limited opportunities to make overseas visits due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, during his visit to the U.S. in April, Prime Minister Suga took the opportunity of a face-to-face interview with *Newsweek*, a leading American magazine, to stress the importance of the Japan-U.S. Alliance as well as the strengthening of Japan-U.S. cooperation toward the realization of a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)." During his visit to Central America and the Caribbean in July, Foreign Minister Motegi had an interview with *Agencia EFE*, a major news

agency in the Spanish-speaking countries. In the interview, he called for the promotion of “diplomacy with both tolerance and strength” with Latin American countries.

In 2021, the Prime Minister contributed articles and held interviews seven times, and the Foreign Minister contributed articles and held interviews for a total of 24 times. Additionally, MOFA provided information to foreign media through the Press Secretary and other means, and held press briefings to local media on the occasion of overseas visits by the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

Under our project to invite foreign media coverage, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, we provided opportunities for foreign journalists to cover Japan, mainly online, with the aim of disseminating the latest developments in Japan across a wide range of fields, including bilateral relations, politics, economy, and culture. In March, which marked 10 years after the Great East Japan Earthquake, we provided a number of opportunities for reporters in certain countries to hold online interviews with the disaster-hit municipalities that had received rescue teams as well as medical teams from those countries immediately after the disaster. In addition, the victims in Ishinomaki City of Miyagi Prefecture were reunited, through an avatar robot, with the leader of the Turkish rescue team who had engaged in rescue activities in the city. The scene was broadcast via Turkish national broadcasting company (see Special Feature 3 on page 334). We have also provided opportunities for pre-event publicity for the Tokyo 2020 Games and press coverage on host town exchanges, which were reported in the media around the world. From the end of October to November, as part of the measures to prevent reputational damage stemming from the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident as well as public relations for the 2025 World Expo Osaka, a journalist from the United Arab Emirates, the host country for the Expo 2020 Dubai, was invited to visit Japan for the first time in a year and seven months.

#### (4) Information Provision through the Internet

MOFA has been actively engaged in providing information through the Internet, such as the MOFA websites and social media, in order to gain better understanding and draw further support of people inside and outside Japan on Japan’s foreign policy.

As face-to-face diplomatic activities were significantly constrained in 2021, as in the previous year, efforts were made to provide information through the Internet, such as live streaming of the regular press conferences by the Foreign Minister, and posting of video messages delivered at international conferences on websites and social media.

Considering MOFA’s English website to be an important tool for public diplomacy, MOFA has been enhancing its efforts to provide information in English on Japan’s foreign policy concerning such subjects as territory and sovereignty, recognition of history, and security, as well as Japan’s position on international affairs and Japan’s various appeals together with attractive features of Japan’s diversity. MOFA has also been working to provide information in local languages through the social media and the websites of Japanese embassies, consulates, and permanent missions overseas.

## 2 Cultural, Sports, and Tourism Diplomacy

### (1) Overview

For a very large number of foreign nationals who have an interest in Japan, Japanese culture is a motive for their interests. MOFA and the JF carry out various projects ranging from introducing Japanese culture and sports to promoting inbound tourism, aimed at creating positive images of Japan abroad, boosting the overall Japanese brand, and encouraging a deeper understanding of Japan, as well as fostering the circle of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan and increasing the number of foreign visitors to Japan in the post-COVID-19 world. For example, “Cultural

Projects of Diplomatic Missions Overseas” introduce the wide-ranging attractions of Japan, from traditional culture such as tea ceremony, flower arrangement and martial arts, to aspects of modern culture such as anime, manga and fashion and Japanese food culture. As it continued to be difficult to implement programs with guests and participants in 2021 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the diplomatic missions overseas also used online media to organize and conduct many programs.

Under the “Japan Brand Program,” MOFA has dispatched experts of various fields overseas to establish a national brand and give Japan a stronger presence in the world. MOFA also holds seminars, workshops and demonstrations to share Japan’s outstanding cultural assets, which represent a culmination of Japan’s experience and wisdom. In light of the continued difficulty in sending experts overseas due to the spread of COVID-19, MOFA continued to share Japan’s charm by incorporating projects using online platforms. By harnessing tools such as online platforms and video-streaming, MOFA will continue to put effort into sharing Japan’s diverse charm and strengths.

Taking the opportunity of the Tokyo 2020 Games held in 2021 to further enhance Japan’s presence in the field of sports, MOFA engaged in initiatives as part of the “Sport for Tomorrow (SFT)” program, such as various sports exchanges and sports promotion support projects overseas, dispatching sports instructors through the JICA Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV) program, and the provision of sporting equipment and improvement of sporting facilities through Cultural Grant Assistance. In addition, MOFA provided information about these initiatives in Japan and abroad on MOFA’s “MofaJapan × SPORTS” Twitter account. MOFA also supports the Host Town Initiative that promotes mutual exchange with the countries and regions participating in the Tokyo 2020 Games.

MOFA conducts a range of activities through Japan’s diplomatic missions overseas to promote a deeper understanding of Japan by fostering the

circle of the next generation of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan and encouraging Japanese studies. These include providing information on studying in Japan; building alumni networks comprising foreign nationals who have studied in Japan; cooperating with the JET Program, which invites young foreign nationals to work for local governments in Japan; holding exchange programs for youth and adults from Asia and the U.S.; and providing support for Japanese studies.

Promoting Japanese language overseas fosters individuals who engage in exchange with Japan, deepens understanding of Japan, and creates foundations for friendship between Japan and other countries. Japanese language education is becoming increasingly important, as evidenced by the promulgation and entering into force of the Act on Promotion of Japanese Language Education in June 2019, and the formulation of the Basic Policy for the Comprehensive and Effective Implementation of Measures to Promote Japanese Language Education (Cabinet Decision) in June 2020. Through the JF, MOFA dispatches Japanese language specialists overseas, conducts training programs for overseas Japanese language teachers, and develops Japanese language education materials. To address the labor force shortage in Japan, Japan began accepting foreign workers under the “Specified Skilled Worker” residence status since April 2019. In this connection, MOFA has also been working to meet a new type of need by providing Japanese language education to foreigners interested in coming to Japan for work.

In cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), Japan has been actively engaged in preserving the world’s tangible and intangible cultural heritage. Moreover, Japan is actively taking part in the international framework of safeguarding heritage through conventions such as the World Heritage Convention and the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (see (7) on page 325).



By putting creative efforts into promoting such cultural and sports diplomacy during the COVID-19 pandemic, such as through online channels, and by sharing information on Japan's charms to the world, MOFA also contributes to bringing more foreign visitors to Japan in the future.

## (2) Cultural Programs

For Japan's foreign policy to be smoothly implemented in the international community, it is important to promote a better understanding of Japan among the individual foreign nationals who form the foundation of public opinion and policy making, and to make Japan's image even more positive. Based on this perception, MOFA engages in communicating information about the diverse attractions of Japan through diplomatic missions overseas and the JF. Diplomatic missions overseas carry out a range of cultural projects as part of efforts to promote a deeper understanding of Japan and expand the circle of people with a great affinity toward Japan in the areas under their jurisdiction. For example, they actively introduce Japanese lifestyles and culture such as workshops on tea ceremony, flower arrangement and *origami*, Japanese film screenings, Japanese music performances, martial arts demonstrations, exhibitions on traditional crafts and Japanese photography, popular culture such as anime and manga, as well as Japan's food culture. At the same time, they also plan and implement Japanese speech contests and essay contests.

In 2021, during the Olympic and Paralympic Month held in El Salvador from July to September, photograph exhibitions were held to introduce information regarding past Games with a focus on the Tokyo 2020 Games and the participating athletes and competitions. In addition, as part of the efforts to promote exchanges with the host town (Fujisawa City), a drawing contest and exhibition were held, based on the motif of the mascot characters. Furthermore, the videos and information regarding the Tokyo 2020 Games were shared on the Embassy's Facebook page, and cultural



Japanese instruments performance on Music Day (June 21, New York, U.S.)



Japan Week (October 6-23, Libreville, Gabon)

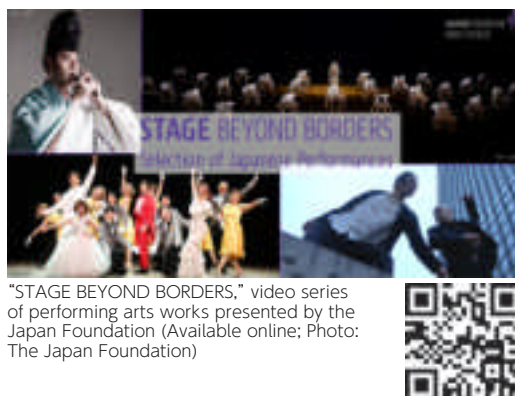
seminars were held by local Japanese cultural groups. The total reach of the posts during the event period exceeded 680,000.

In collaboration with MOFA and diplomatic missions overseas, the JF promotes and provides support for Japanese-language education and Japanese studies, as well as runs arts and cultural exchange projects to promote Japanese culture and arts in a variety of forms throughout the world. With regard to arts and cultural exchange projects, in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, cultural introduction and dialogues were conducted online by the JF headquarters and overseas offices such as "STAGE BEYOND BORDERS," which presents the videos of Japanese performing arts in multiple languages.

Under the "WA Project: Toward Interactive Asia through Fusion and Harmony" announced by Prime Minister Abe in December 2013, the Japan Foundation Asia Center has continued to implement and coordinate projects while taking



Goiás Bon-odori Festival (August 28, Goiás, Brazil)



"STAGE BEYOND BORDERS," video series of performing arts works presented by the Japan Foundation (Available online; Photo: The Japan Foundation)



National Soroban Competition (November 16, Tongatapu, Tonga)



Projects introducing Japanese culture (December, Thailand; Photo: The Japan Foundation)

into consideration the COVID-19 situation. In 2021, 75 people were dispatched to Thailand and Indonesia to participate in exchange programs that are facilitated through support for Japanese language education and introduction to Japanese culture. With regard to cultural and arts exchange projects, due to the spread of COVID-19, assistance was provided for exchange projects held through online channels that do not involve the physical movement of people, and exchanges between Japanese and Asian filmmakers were conducted in a hybrid format through the "Conversation Series at Asia Lounge" project, organized in collaboration with the Tokyo International Film Festival.

The Japan International MANGA Award was launched by MOFA in 2007 with the aim of rewarding manga creators who have contributed to the spread of manga culture overseas and the promotion of international cultural exchanges through manga. The 15th Japan International

MANGA Award, held in 2021, received a record-high 483 entries from 76 countries and regions, and the Gold Award was presented to a work from the Netherlands. This year, there were entries for the first time from Armenia, North Macedonia, Bahrain, Fiji, Botswana, Moldova, and Lebanon.

### (3) People-to-People Exchange and Exchanges in the Area of Education and Sports

To build personal relationships and promote a better understanding of Japan, MOFA carries out a number of programs that invite foreign nationals who have a significant influence on shaping public opinion and the policymaking process and who are expected to play a leading role in various fields. In the area of education and sports, MOFA conducts various activities to promote people-to-people exchanges. These programs not only promote mutual understanding and friendships but also enhance Japan's presence in the

international community, which considerably benefits Japan's national diplomatic interests.

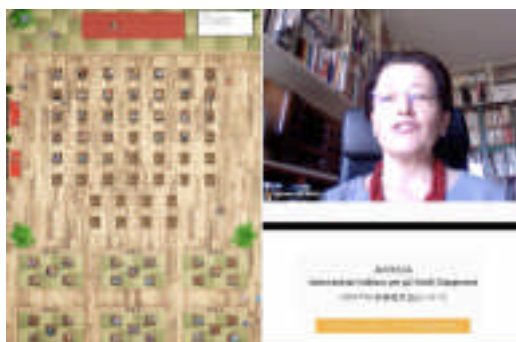
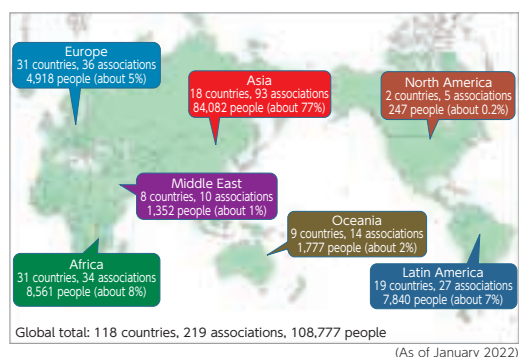
### A Student Exchange Programs

MOFA actively introduces the attractiveness and opportunities of studying in Japan to foreign students through Japanese diplomatic missions overseas, and implements application and screening procedures to grant the Japanese Government (MEXT) Scholarship to promising students abroad. It also makes efforts to network with former foreign students who have returned to their home countries through Japan Alumni Associations and to foster the circle of people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan. In March 2021, the first Japan Alumni Conference was held online, attended by 60 people from 43 countries. At the Conference, alumni from various countries shared best practices and strengthened their networks through the social gathering.

### B JET Programme (The Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme)

The JET Programme was launched in 1987 to improve foreign language education in Japan and promote international exchange with Japanese citizens in local areas. To date, about 70,000 people have taken part in the program and were dispatched all over Japan. This program is administered by local authorities and other organizations in cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications (MIC), MOFA, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), and the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR). Through the program, young foreign nationals are invited to Japan and appointed to posts in local governments and schools. MOFA is responsible for the application and screening process, pre-departure orientation, and support for the activities of the JET Alumni Association (JETAA), which operates in 18 countries and has about 25,000 members. JETAA conducts activities to introduce Japan in many countries. Many of those who went

### Alumni associations and members by region



Activity report at the Japan Alumni Conference (Online)

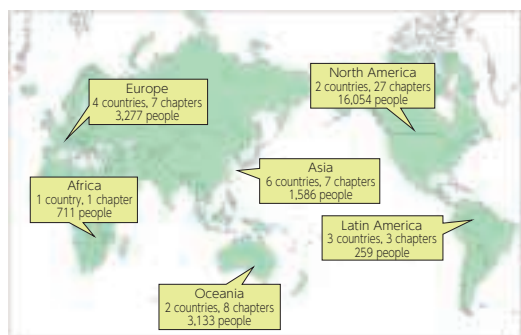
through the JET Programme are important human and diplomatic assets for Japan, as they go on to work in a variety of fields around the world as supporters for Japan and experts of Japan. In spite of the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, some of the accepted participants were able to come to Japan after taking the necessary measures.

### C Sports Exchange

Sports enable communication beyond language and can be an effective tool for promoting friendly relations and a better understanding of Japan. Amidst the growing interest in Japan in the world prior to the Tokyo 2020 Games, the Government of Japan implemented the "Sport for Tomorrow (SFT)" program. Under the "Projects for Sports Diplomacy Enhancement" scheme that has been ongoing since FY2015, MOFA implemented sports exchange projects such as dispatching and inviting athletes and instructors, supporting equipment



### JET Alumni Association Chapters and members



(As of December 2021)



Farewell reception for JET participants before they depart for Japan (November, Kingston, Jamaica; Photo: Jamaica Observer)



Donation ceremony for badminton rackets, provided through equipment transportation and support (October, Guatemala)

transportation as well as holding sports-related receptions at diplomatic missions overseas, thereby contributing to the development of bilateral relations. As the cross-border movement of people was restricted in 2021 due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus was placed on exchanges through equipment transportation and support. These projects enhance mutual

understanding internationally and contribute to international peace by promoting diplomacy through sports and by nurturing people with a great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan. At the same time, these programs also improved the standing of Japanese sportspeople in the international arena.

### **D** Japan's Friendship Ties Programs

With a view to developing bilateral and inter-regional relationships between Japan and countries and regions in the Asia-Pacific, North America, Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as expanding the basis for Japan's diplomacy, Japan's Friendship Ties Programs provide opportunities for people-to-people exchanges to youths from various countries and regions, through invitations, dispatches, and online exchanges. In addition to promoting understanding of Japan in fields such as politics, economy, society, culture, history, and foreign policy, these projects also work to find and nurture people who will have great affinity toward or knowledge of Japan in the future. With the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021, online exchange programs were promoted. Youths from the abovementioned regions participated in webinars on specialized subjects, exchanged opinions, and visited the relevant facilities. They also made virtual visits to host towns of the Tokyo 2020 Games and disaster-stricken areas, and experienced Japanese culture including homestays, to build networks with Japanese people. Furthermore, the sharing of experiences by youths from various countries and regions, such as what they have learnt through the programs and the places they have visited, on social media and other channels, also contributes to promoting understanding of Japan in the international society and to enhancing Japan's image.

### **(4) Exchange in the Intellectual Field**

#### **A** Japanese Studies

The JF comprehensively supports a range of overseas research activities related to the

politics, economy, society and culture of Japan. With regard to JF's Japanese Studies Fellowship Programme, due to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, projects that involve the global movement of people around the world had to be postponed. Nevertheless, starting from October 2021, visits to Japan by overseas Japanese researchers are resuming gradually while ensuring compliance with border measures.

The JF also expanded the collection of books on Japan, dispensed research grants, and provided support for organizing seminars and symposiums, including online events, to a total of 41 institutions of Japanese studies in 21 countries and regions. In addition, it provides support to academic societies with the goal of promoting network building among Japanese studies researchers and research institutions from various countries and regions.

### **B Intellectual Exchanges**

MOFA also conducts intellectual exchange programs through the JF. Specifically, it provides support and co-hosts seminars and symposiums on common international issues, and provides assistance on programs such as lectures to deepen understanding of modern Japan in major universities overseas. It also planned and provided support for exchange programs to strengthen relations and deepen mutual understanding through dialogues in various fields at various levels, such as by implementing the Japan Outreach



Japan Outreach Initiative (JOI) Program dispatching grassroots coordinators between Japan and the U.S. (September 28, Mayville State University, U.S.; Photo: Japan Foundation)

Initiative (JOI) Program, which dispatches grassroots exchange coordinators between Japan and the U.S. with the aim of deepening interest and understanding of Japan at the grassroots level in the U.S.

### **C Japan-United States Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON)**

CULCON is a panel where experts from the public and private sectors in Japan and the U.S. engage in discussions on culture, educational exchanges, and intellectual dialogues. In April, a final report about the trends in international students between Japan and the U.S., compiled by the Education Exchange Review Committee of CULCON, was submitted to Prime Minister Suga by the Chair of CULCON, Kato Ryoza. In October, the 29th Plenary Meeting of the CULCON was held in a hybrid format, and a joint statement was issued. This joint statement, submitted by Chair Kato to Prime Minister Kishida in November, affirmed that people-to-people exchanges constitute an important pillar of Japan-U.S. partnership.



Japan-United States Conference on Cultural and Educational Interchange (CULCON) (November 19, Prime Minister's Office; Photo: Cabinet Public Relations Office)

### **D Cooperation with the United Nations University (UNU)**

The UNU is the only UN organization based in Japan, and it contributes to the international community through study and research on global issues and human resource development. Japan has been providing various forms of cooperation and support to the organization. In October, Dr.

Shirahase Sawako was appointed as the Senior Vice-Rector and Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, succeeding Prof. Oki Taikan. Through collaboration with Japanese universities and research institutions, the UNU engages in studies on international issues of importance to Japan, including peace, development and the environment, and consequently helps to convey information on the policies of the Government of Japan. Since 2017, the SDG Corporate Strategy Forum has been conducted as an initiative to help the promotion of SDGs take root among corporations. Of the approximately 20 Japanese corporations participating in this Forum, six rank among the top 20 companies that have been highly rated for their SDGs initiatives, demonstrating the great importance and contributions of this Forum. The UNU has also established Master's and Doctoral programs in its graduate school, and is making efforts to improve the quality of its global human resource development programs.

### **(5) Promotion of the Japanese Language**

As the globalization of Japan's economy prompts more Japanese companies to do business overseas and Japanese pop culture finds increasing global popularity, interest in learning Japanese is growing around the world, especially among young people. A better understanding of the Japanese language overseas naturally leads to a more favorable international environment for Japanese people and companies. A survey conducted by the JF in FY2018 found that approximately 3.85 million people in 142 countries and regions overseas learn Japanese. In 2019, the number of applicants for the Japanese Language Proficiency Test offered by the JF (including those taking the test in Japan) reached a record high of about 1.37 million. The test has been conducted partially since 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the number of applicants in 2021 remained at approximately 810,000 people. However, it is clear that a shortage of Japanese language teachers is a major challenge in the

pursuit of satisfying the increasingly diverse interests in and needs concerning Japanese language learning in these many countries and regions.

Through the JF, MOFA works to address the diverse needs related to Japanese language education overseas. For example, MOFA dispatches Japanese language specialists abroad, carries out training programs for Japanese language teachers, foreign diplomats and civil servants overseas, conducts preparatory Japanese language pre-arrival training for nurse and care worker candidates based on the Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA) with Indonesia and the Philippines, encourages educational institutions in each country and region to introduce Japanese language education and supports Japanese language educational activities, develops teaching materials, runs e-learning programs, and promotes the "JF Standard for Japanese-Language Education," which corresponds with international standards for foreign language education.

To address labor force shortages in Japan brought about by aging and depopulation, Japan began accepting foreign workers under the new "Specified Skilled Worker" residence status since April 2019. Accordingly, MOFA is taking new measures that include conducting the Japan Foundation Test for Basic Japanese (JFT-Basic), which assesses the Japanese language ability of foreign nationals who come to Japan based on the "Comprehensive Measures for Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals" (decided upon at the December 25, 2018, Ministerial Conference on Acceptance and Coexistence of Foreign Nationals) (by 2021, a total of 47,012 people have taken the test in seven countries overseas and within Japan), as well as developing and disseminating learning materials and curriculum with the goal of fostering people's Japanese language ability effectively, and nurturing local Japanese language teachers who teach Japanese to those who wish to work in Japan.



## (6) Cultural Grant Assistance

To promote culture, sports, and higher education in developing countries, as well as provide support for the improvement of facilities and the purchase of equipment to be used in the conservation of cultural heritage, thereby enhancing mutual understanding and friendly relations between Japan and these countries, the Government of Japan provides Cultural Grant Assistance as part of the Official Development Assistance (ODA). The assistance implemented in 2021 consisted of two Cultural Grant Assistance projects (totaling around 219.6 million Japanese yen) and 12 Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects (totaling around 97.3 million Japanese yen). In 2021, Cultural Grant Assistance was implemented with an emphasis on the provision of equipment for the production of TV programs and the provision of exhibition equipment for natural and cultural heritage protection facilities, while Grant Assistance for Cultural Grassroots Projects centered on cooperation in promoting sports and Japanese language studies.

## (7) Cooperation through United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

UNESCO is the first international organization that Japan became a member state of after the war, in 1951. Japan is actively involved in a variety of UNESCO projects in the fields of education, science and culture. Since 1952, Japan has continued to serve as a member of the Executive Board of UNESCO, and it was reelected in the election of Executive Board members held in November 2021. Japan also cooperates with UNESCO to provide support to developing countries in areas such as education, science, and culture.

In the field of culture, Japan cooperates actively toward the preservation and promotion of the world's tangible and intangible cultural heritage, while providing support in the field of human resource development. Representative efforts in this area include the provision of continuous

support for the safeguarding and development of the Historic Site of Angkor in Cambodia since 1994, and the implementation of a series of projects in Afghanistan to preserve and restore the Bamiyan ruins since 2003. In these projects, Japanese experts play a leading role, while human resource development is undertaken to enable local people to protect such sites by themselves in the future. At the same time, Japan has also provided support for the formulation of conservation and management plans for heritage sites, and support toward preservation and restoration. In recent years, Japan has also been providing support for human resource development to African countries and small island developing states to help them strike a balance between protecting cultural heritage and sustainable development. As for the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage, support is provided to projects to pass on traditional performing arts such as music, dance, and traditional arts and crafts to the next generation in developing countries, as well as projects involving developing domestic institutions and capacity building for relevant parties to enhance countries' ability to protect intangible cultural heritage by themselves.

Filmmaker Kawase Naomi is the first Japanese woman to be designated as a UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador. In November 2021, the appointment ceremony was held at the UNESCO Headquarters. Ms. Kawase is expected to apply her previous experience in international cultural exchange through films to further the development of cultural and creative industries, and to engage in activities toward the realization of gender equality in the field.

In the field of social and human sciences, UNESCO's Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence, for which Japan participated in discussions, was adopted in November at the 41st session of the General Conference of UNESCO.

Director-General Audrey Azoulay, who was re-elected at the same session, has worked on

promoting “strategic transformation” including reforms toward de-politicization and organizational reforms, and Japan has consistently supported her in her efforts. Going forward, Japan will continue to contribute actively to UNESCO activities that are advanced under her leadership.

#### **A** World Heritage Convention

The World Heritage Convention aims to protect cultural heritage and natural heritage internationally as heritage belonging to all mankind. Japan became a party to the Convention in 1992 (194 parties are in the Convention as of December 2021). The sites listed on the “World Heritage List” are known as “World Heritage Sites.” They are classified into “Cultural Heritage Sites” (monuments and remains), “Natural Heritage Sites” (natural areas) and “Mixed Heritage Sites” (sites with both cultural and natural elements). As of December 2021, a total of 1,154 World Heritage Sites are inscribed on the World Heritage List.

At the Extended 44th session of the World Heritage Committee held in July, it was decided that the Jomon Prehistoric Sites in Northern Japan would be newly inscribed as a cultural heritage, while Amami-Oshima Island, Tokunoshima Island, Northern part of Okinawa Island, and Iriomote Island would be newly inscribed as a natural heritage. This takes the number of world heritage sites in Japan to 25, comprising 20 cultural heritage sites and 5 natural heritage sites. At the 23rd session of the General Assembly of States Parties to the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage held in November, Japan was elected to and assumed its position on the World Heritage Committee. At a meeting of the World Cultural Heritage Subcommittee of the Council for Cultural Affairs convened in December, Sado Island Gold Mines (the Sado complex of heritage mines, primarily gold mines) was selected as a candidate considered to be suitable for recommendation as a World Cultural Heritage site for FY2021. On February 1, 2022, with the acknowledgement of

the Cabinet, a recommendation for the inscription of Sado Island Gold Mines was submitted to UNESCO.

#### **B** Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage aims to develop an international system for safeguarding intangible cultural heritage such as traditional performing arts and traditional craftsmanship techniques (as of December 2021, the number of parties to the convention is 180). Japan, with abundant experience in safeguarding domestic intangible cultural properties, served as the chair of the intergovernmental working group reviewing the operational mechanism of this Convention, and led discussions by incorporating requests from developing countries. Currently, a total of 22 elements from Japan have been inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity formulated based on this Convention. In March, a proposal for the inscription of “*Furyu-odori*” in 2022 was submitted to UNESCO.

#### **C** UNESCO Memory of the World Programme

The UNESCO Memory of the World Programme was established in 1992 to promote the safeguarding of and access to, and raise awareness of valuable archival heritage. As of December 2021, 429 items have been inscribed under the international register.

The fact that member states could not be involved in the assessment process of the nominations under the previous mechanism, despite the possibility of there being clear discrepancies between the views of the concerned member states over a nominated documentary heritage, is not consistent with the founding principle of UNESCO: promoting friendly ties and mutual understanding among member states. Since 2017, a comprehensive review process has been undertaken while freezing new nominations. As a result, a new mechanism was approved by the UNESCO

Executive Board in April, under which nominations are submitted through the governments of member states. Additionally, a contestation system was newly established, which keeps on hold nominations over which member states have conflicting views until dialogues between the concerned countries have been concluded. With the completion of the review process, the call for new nominations resumed in July. In November,

Japan submitted two nominations to UNESCO: Three Comprehensive Printed Editions of the Buddhist Canon Held in Zojoji of the Jodo Shu, nominated by Religious Corporation Jodo Shu and Jodo Shu Principal Temple Zojoji, and the Monk Enchin Archives: A History of Japan-China Cultural Exchange, nominated by *Onjo-ji* Temple and Tokyo National Museum.

## Special Feature

## The Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020

– A Sports Event Symbolizing the Unity of People Around the World –

The Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 were held from July 23 to August 8, 2021, and the Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 were held from August 24 to September 5, 2021. Due to the rapid spread of COVID-19 around the world in the spring of 2020, Prime Minister Abe and President Thomas Bach of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) agreed to postpone the Games in a telephone call on March 24, 2020. Thereafter, the IOC Executive Board made the official decision to postpone the Games. The COVID-19 pandemic did not come to an end after that, and even until just before the opening of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 (the Tokyo 2020 Games), various opinions were put forth both in Japan and overseas concerning the holding of the Tokyo 2020 Games. However, those involved in the Tokyo 2020 Games felt a strong desire to convey Japan's message to the world: it is precisely at a time when the world is confronted by the immense challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic that it should stand united and overcome the difficult situation through the efforts and wisdom of humankind. With this in mind, the Tokyo 2020 Games were held as the first large-scale international sporting event to take place during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the Games, the world showed enthusiasm and fervor toward the activities by athletes from around the world, and many gave positive feedback about Japan's outstanding management of the Tokyo 2020 Games through the cooperation of the Japanese people, including the volunteers. During the duration of the Games, a total of 18 government leaders and other important personnel from 14 countries and two international organizations visited Japan regardless of the COVID-19 pandemic. They held talks with Prime Minister Suga and other key personnel from the Japan side. As such, the Tokyo 2020 Games also served as a stage for diplomatic exchanges.



Opening ceremony of the Olympic Games Tokyo 2020 (July 23, Tokyo. Photo: Tokyo Organizing Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games)

### ■Main feedback from the international community about the Tokyo 2020 Games

#### 1. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada

"I extend my thanks to the people of Japan for hosting a successful Olympic Games, in spite of the unprecedented hurdles presented by the global COVID-19 pandemic." (August 9, statement on the closing of the Tokyo 2020 Games)

**2. Caroline Kennedy, former Ambassador of the United States to Japan**

"Japan was the most suitable place to hold the Olympics in, and I am very happy that they did so well... they have done a great job." (August 2, interview on "TODAY" on the NBC Network)

**3. Julia Longbottom, British Ambassador to Japan**

"The Games are a most wonderful opportunity to showcase the human spirit and the ability of human beings to really excel in physical competition. [...] Japan has given the world, the people of the world, hope and optimism." (Source: "Initiatives and Legacies ~ TOKYO 2020" produced by the Headquarters for the Promotion of the Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games)

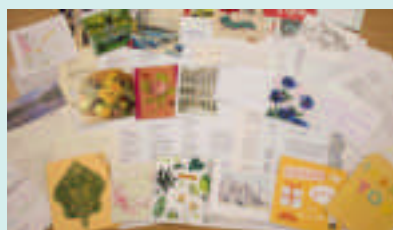
**4. British newspaper, The Guardian**

"[...] it is a mark of Tokyo's grace as a host that the experience for its guests has been marked by gentleness. [...] care and kindness will remain, a lesson in how to exist in such close proximity in these grueling times." (August 6, The Guardian online)

**5. The Associated Press**

"The Paralympics may leave a more tangible legacy in Japan than the Olympics, raising public awareness about people with disabilities and the provision of accessible public space." (September 5, AP News online)

The comments featured here are only some of the positive comments received. In addition, letters of appreciation for hosting the Games were also sent from leaders of various countries to the Prime Minister of Japan, and many messages were received from the citizens of various countries to Japanese diplomatic missions overseas to express their gratitude to Japan. Hence, the Tokyo 2020 Games became an event that symbolized the unity of people around the world in the face of an immense challenge to humankind.



Letter of appreciation for the Games sent from a British citizen to the Embassy of Japan in the UK

## Japan's new World Heritage: Natural heritage (Amami-Oshima Island, Tokunoshima Island, Northern part of Okinawa Island, and Iriomote Island) and cultural heritage (Jomon Prehistoric Sites in Northern Japan)

The southern islands, home to many unique plant and animal species.

The northern Jomon prehistoric sites, blessed with the bounty of nature.

These two regions, despite being far from each other in time and space, both gained global attention at the same time. That attention came from new inscription on the World Heritage List in July 2021. For Japan, it had been ten years since two properties were inscribed in one year.

After becoming a party to the World Heritage Convention in 1992, Japan has put significant effort together with other countries, organizations, and local residents in Japan to collaboratively preserving the cultural and natural heritage of countries around the world, including Japan, as the common heritage of all humankind.

This column introduces these two precious properties, whose inscription on the World Heritage List was the fruit of many years of effort by Japan.

The first property is the natural heritage of Amami-Oshima Island, Tokunoshima Island, Northern part of Okinawa Island, and Iriomote Island. These four islands separated from the Eurasian Continent between approximately 12 million to 2 million years ago, with terrestrial species unable to cross the ocean following a unique evolutionary path. Such isolation has meant that the islands feature many endemic species, such as the Amami Rabbit, the Iriomote Cat, and the flightless Okinawa Rail, which cannot be seen anywhere else in the world. The diversity of endemic species and endangered species that live on these four islands make them irreplaceable sites for the protection of global biodiversity, a value which was recognized by the inscription.

The second property is the cultural heritage of Jomon Prehistoric Sites in Northern Japan. This property consists of 17 archaeological sites spread across Hokkaido, Aomori Prefecture, Iwate Prefecture, and Akita Prefecture. During the era from approximately 13,000 BCE to 400 BCE, known as the Jomon Period, this region was inhabited by people who created a sedentary hunter-fisher-gatherer society. Through ceremonies and rituals that probably revered their ancestors and nature as well as offered prayers for plentiful harvests, they developed a complex spiritual culture. Maintaining a sedentary society for over 10,000 years without transitioning to agriculture is globally unusual, and the prehistoric sites which remain today have been assessed as precious evidence of it.

With Hokkaido in the north and Okinawa in the south, these two properties are located at each end of the long Japanese archipelago, forming a wonderful opportunity to showcase to the world how diverse and rich Japan's nature and culture is.

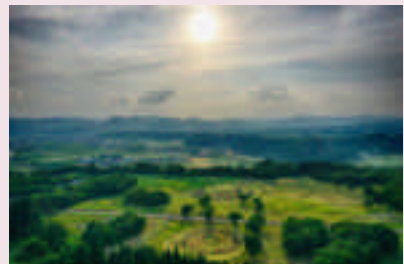
The challenges to inscription on the World Heritage List are by no means easy. We would like to take this opportunity to again thank all the stakeholders involved, including local residents and local governments, for their united efforts to overcome the challenges for inscription.

But we must also remember that inscription on the World Heritage List is not a goal in itself. Rather, it means that an even more rigorous approach to preservation and management is demanded. The World Heritage Committee holds that World Heritage properties must have "Outstanding Universal Value" and should also "be preserved by all the people of the world." The understanding and cooperation of every person in Japan is essential to passing on this legacy to the next generation.

We hope that the new World Heritage properties inscribed in 2021 will be loved by many and passed on to the future generation.



Okinawa Rail (Photo: Ministry of the Environment)



Oyu Stone Circles (Kazuno City, Akita Prefecture. Photo: the JOMON ARCHIVES)

# 10 Years Since the Great East Japan Earthquake

10 years ago on March 11, 2011, Japan was struck by an unprecedented disaster. In the Great East Japan Earthquake, more than 20,000 lives were lost from the earthquake and tsunami. The processing of the accident at the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO)'s Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station is still ongoing to this day.

Immediately after the earthquake struck, Japan received countless amounts of support and encouragement from all over the world. In addition to receiving relief supplies and monetary contributions from many countries and regions, people from around the world also rushed to the affected areas to help search for missing persons and provide support to those who were in need. Many Japanese people felt a strong bond ("kizuna") with countries and regions around the world.

10 years after, there are still residents who are living in evacuation shelters, and challenges remain in the path toward reconstruction. However, the affected areas are steadily moving forward through reconstruction support, and their bonds with the world are becoming stronger than ever before.

For example, import restrictions on Japanese food products, imposed by 55 countries and regions after the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident, have been removed by 41 countries and regions as of the end of 2021. The volume of agricultural, forestry, and fishery exports from Fukushima Prefecture returned to pre-earthquake levels in 2017 and has since recorded historical highs for three consecutive years. (See Chapter 3, Section 3, 4(3) on page 300 for details on the import restrictions placed by each country on Japanese food products.) It is extremely regrettable that there are still countries and regions maintaining import restrictions

on Japanese food products even a decade after the disaster. MOFA is requesting these countries and regions remove the restrictions as soon as possible based on scientific evidence, as well as working toward expanding the export of Japan's agricultural, forestry and fishery products.

Efforts are also ongoing to develop hubs for international intellectual exchanges and business, as well as hubs that can serve as the source for innovation. This includes the Fukushima Hydrogen Energy Research Field, a research and development center for hydrogen and renewable energy.

Furthermore, over the past 10 years, Japan has utilized the lessons drawn from the Great East Japan Earthquake toward further strengthening international cooperation on disaster risk reduction (DRR), which it had already placed great importance on since before the disaster. In 2015, Japan hosted the Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction\*<sup>1</sup> in Sendai where it advanced the concept of "build back better" as a commitment shared by the international community. Japan contributed to incorporating the vision of DRR into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Japan also took the initiative for the adoption of the UN General Assembly resolution on World Tsunami Awareness Day in the same year, thus endeavoring to promote DRR education internationally. In recent years, natural disasters have become more intense, with extreme weather events becoming more frequent due to climate change. In light of this, Japan is working to further strengthen international cooperation through DRR.

The following is an introduction to various initiatives implemented by MOFA in 2021 to mark the 10 years since the Great East Japan Earthquake.

## 1

### Statement by the Foreign Minister, and Commemorative Events Held in Countries/Regions Worldwide

On March 11, 2021, which marked 10 years after the Great East Japan Earthquake struck, the Foreign Minister issued a statement\*<sup>2</sup> to convey the status of steady reconstruction progress in the affected areas, as well as to express gratitude to countries and regions around the world. Commemorative events marking 10 years after

the earthquake were also held in 2021 in countries and regions that have sent their warm support and encouragement to Japan from the time immediately after the earthquake till the present day. (See the Column on pages 331, 332 or 333.)

1 Third UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/ic/gic/page3e\\_000305.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/ic/gic/page3e_000305.html)

2 Statement by the Foreign Minister  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press1e\\_000178.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/press/release/press1e_000178.html)





## COLUMN

## Commemorative Events to Convey Gratitude and Messages of Friendship to Countries/Regions Around the World

– A Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed

## (1) Report from Japanese Diplomatic Missions in the U.S.

In March, Japanese diplomatic missions in the U.S. came together as one to hold a series of events to express Japan's gratitude to the U.S., which has provided a lot of support toward reconstruction and recovery since the Great East Japan Earthquake.

The events adopted "Unshakable Friendship" as their common slogan. This slogan resonated with many people and was widely used across U.S. government agencies, renowned organizations, and the general public. Video messages expressing gratitude from those in the affected areas and embassy staff were played a total of about 2 million times and shared widely.<sup>Note1</sup> In addition, on March 11, marking 10 years

since the disaster, a full-page advertisement was published in U.S. paper, The New York Times, with a message of gratitude for the support, including "Operation Tomodachi," conducted by the U.S.

Furthermore, the Japanese Embassy in the U.S. produced cherry blossom sculptures in cooperation with local artists, so as to express gratitude to the U.S. once again in the milestone decade since the Great East Japan Earthquake. In March, the sculptures were set up in Washington D.C. to coincide with the National Cherry Blossom Festival held in the springtime every year. After the exhibition was concluded, the sculptures were donated to universities that have deep ties with Japan and other relevant organizations, and have now become a familiar symbol of Japan's gratitude and Japan-U.S. friendship to many citizens.

The series of events were mainly held online due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, Japan-U.S. friendship, which has continued throughout such difficult periods, truly embodies the saying "A friend in need is a friend indeed," and resonated with many people.



Logo for the common slogan



Social media postings by embassy staff expressing their gratitude to the U.S. (from the Instagram account of the Embassy of Japan in the United States of America)



Attendance by Ambassador Tomita (second from left in the photo) and others at the presentation ceremony of the cherry blossom sculpture to Randolph-Macon College in Virginia, the alma mater of Taylor Anderson who died in the tsunami. Ms. Anderson had been a teaching assistant at a school in Ishinomaki City, Miyagi Prefecture, when the disaster struck.

**Note1** See below for details on the "Unshakable Friendship" project  
<https://www.us.emb-japan.go.jp/jicc/events/unshakable-friendship.html>



## Commemorative Events to Convey Gratitude and Messages of Friendship to Countries/Regions Around the World

– A Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed

### (2) Report from the Embassy of Japan in Australia

10 years have passed since the day that is remembered so vividly by the Japanese. Following the disaster, Japan was very fortunate to receive support from all over the world. Australia was among the countries that moved extremely quickly to provide assistance, beginning with then-Prime Minister Julia Gillard's visit to the Tohoku region immediately after the earthquake struck, and extending to the transportation of food and high-pressure water pumps by the Australian Defence Force, and search and rescue efforts by the police, fire and ambulance services. Australia's assistance was not limited to just emergency support. Since 2012, it has also been conducting a homestay program, inviting junior and senior high school students who lost one or both parents in the disaster to stay with families in Australia. This program has been conducted every year since, but has been temporarily suspended as of March 2022 due to the impact of COVID-19.

In April, with the aim of conveying Japan's gratitude, the Embassy of Japan in Australia invited about 200 Australians who had engaged in recovery efforts, including members of rescue teams engaged in emergency support and host families who hosted Japanese students to the Ambassador's residence. In her video message for the event, then-Prime Minister Gillard emphasized the stoicism and resilience she had observed among the survivors in the disaster areas. Those who had participated in homestays in Australia (senior high school students at the time of their homestays) kindly thanked their host families, while one of them stated in a matter-of-fact way that he has no memory of the first couple of years following the disaster. Guests to the event enjoyed food produced in the affected areas as well as quality Japanese sake from the Tohoku region. Australia does not currently impose any import restrictions on Japanese food produce. Its continued support immediately after the earthquake and thereafter speaks of the maturity of mutual understanding and trust between the two countries. In the opening remarks delivered at the reception, Ambassador Yamagami repeatedly stated that Japan will never forget what Australia has done for Japan.



Visit by Prime Minister Gillard to Minamisanriku Town (April 2011) (Photo: Minamisanriku Town)

## 2

### Initiatives Implemented Through Diplomatic Missions Overseas

(Promoting the Attractions of Japan's Regions, Including the Disaster Areas, Promoting the Export of Products, Tourism Promotion, etc.)

MOFA has been implementing support initiatives through its diplomatic missions overseas, such as appealing countries and regions to lift import restrictions on Japanese food products, sharing the attractiveness of Japan's regions including the areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake, and promoting exports of prefectural products and tourism. In 2021, the appeal and characteristics of Japan's regions, including Fukushima Prefecture, were introduced overseas through initiatives such as the "Project to Support Overseas Presentations to Promote the Attractiveness of Regions" that was held mainly online in China (from December 2021 to February 2022), and an in-person reception that was held at the Consulate-General of Japan in Ho Chi Minh City, Viet Nam, in cooperation with Fukushima and other Prefectures (January 2021). The event booth at the Consulate-General of Japan in Ho Chi Minh City offered



Tasting booth for Japanese sake and whiskey produced in Fukushima Prefecture (Photo left center: Consul General Watanabe at Ho Chi Minh City) (January 29, official residence of the Consul General of Japan in Ho Chi Minh City)

## COLUMN

## Commemorative Events to Convey Gratitude and Messages of Friendship to Countries/Regions Around the World

- A Friend in Need is a Friend Indeed

## (3) Report from the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association

In the aftermath of the Great East Japan Earthquake, Japan received donations exceeding 20 billion yen and warm encouragement from our neighbor, Taiwan.

To convey Japan's gratitude once again at the milestone mark of 10 years after the earthquake, the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association held the Tohoku Friendship Special Exhibition in Taipei City in March for a 12-day period. About 20,000 people visited the exhibition, including President Tsai Ing-wen. The opening ceremony was attended by firefighters who engaged in rescue activities at the disaster areas soon after the earthquake struck, and they sent their cheers and encouragement to the areas affected by the disaster.

The exhibition included panels showing Ishinomaki Hibi Shimibun in the form of handwritten wall newspapers, produced on the day after the earthquake disaster, as well as displays of photographs showing scenes of reconstruction in Tohoku and colored paper with messages of thanks from many manga artists in Japan. Visitors looked intently video messages from people in the disaster areas speaking tearfully about how they would never forget the warm hands of Taiwanese volunteers who came to debris-filled towns even as everyone was trying to escape, and distributed relief supplies one by one to the people in need.

Over the past decade, Japan and Taiwan have helped each other whenever natural disasters have occurred. It was a heartwarming 12-day event that allowed both sides to reaffirm the deepening of the friendship between Japan and Taiwan through the circulation of goodwill.



Tohoku Friendship Special Exhibition (March, Taipei)

Japanese sake and whiskey produced in Fukushima Prefecture, which were well-received by the guests.

At Japan House London, which serves as a hub for strategic communications, an extra-large "Akabeko" (folk toy from Aizu region) was displayed within the premises

through cooperation with Fukushima Prefecture and the Fukushima Prefectural Association in London. "Akabeko" toys were also sold in the shop and featured on the website, and were well received (March 2021).

## 3

## Cooperation with Foreign Media

(Dissemination of Accurate Information on the Safety of Japanese Food Products and the Status of Reconstruction)

Through cooperation with foreign media, MOFA is making efforts to disseminate accurate information on the safety of Japanese food products and the status of reconstruction.

In 2021, through MOFA's cooperation with the media, Euronews (a European news network) produced a special program featuring efforts toward safety and security in the aftermath of the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident (such as progress in decontamination, decommissioning efforts including handling of ALPS treated water,<sup>\*3</sup> reviews by the IAEA). While focusing on recovery efforts targeted at the local economy, the program also looked at Fukushima Prefecture



Press tour for foreign media in Tokyo (November 1 and 2, tour of TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station)



as it continued to work hard toward recovery amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The program was broadcasted and distributed in 13 languages. MOFA also cooperated with the media from the countries and regions that deployed rescue teams immediately after the earthquake on the press coverage of local governments and other parties that accepted overseas rescue teams.

Furthermore, through press tours, briefing sessions for foreign media in Tokyo, as well as invitation programs of journalists and TV crews from overseas, MOFA provides

the latest information and cooperates with media on such matters as the current status of TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, decommissioning work, efforts related to the handling of ALPS treated water, the safety of Japanese food products, and the status of reconstruction. In 2021, MOFA cooperated with a Turkish national broadcaster on press coverage related to the 10th anniversary of the earthquake, and conducted on-line briefings to about 60 members of the press from the ROK on the progress of reconstruction and other topics.

- 3 ALPS treated water is water that is processed by devices such as ALPS (Advanced Liquid Processing System) to ensure that radioactive materials other than tritium surely meet the regulatory standards for safety.

## 4 Study Tour to Koriyama Area (Visit to Fukushima by Diplomatic Corps in Japan)

In November 2021, MOFA and Koriyama City in Fukushima Prefecture co-hosted a study tour to the Koriyama collaborative core urban area for diplomatic corps stationed in Japan. Diplomatic corps from 13 countries participated in the tour. Through sampling of food and visits to agricultural sites, they gained a real sense of the reconstruction of Fukushima Prefecture 10 years after the earthquake. They also experienced the attractions of the Koriyama collaborative core urban area as an agglomeration of cutting-edge medical technology, and deepened their understanding of the cur-

rent state of Fukushima Prefecture through interactions with the local residents. Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Uesugi Kentaro welcomed the diplomatic corps to Fukushima Prefecture, and expressed his hopes that the participants will actively communicate their experiences on the tour to their home countries and to the world. The Parliamentary Vice-Minister added that he looks forward to seeing Fukushima's attractiveness be conveyed widely across the world through the tour participants.



Participants visiting a strawberry farm in Fukushima Prefecture (November 26, Sukagawa City)



Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Uesugi exchanging greetings with participants on the tour of Fukushima Prefecture (November 25, Koriyama City)

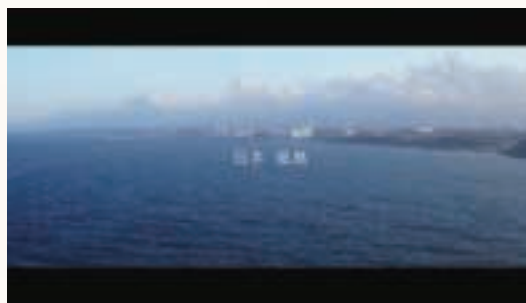
## 5 Production of Videos on Japan's Policies (Providing Accurate Information on the Situation in the Disaster-Affected Areas and the Initiatives by the Government of Japan)

MOFA is working to ensure that the international community gains a proper understanding of the earthquake disaster and the status of reconstruction by providing accurate information on the situation of the affected areas and the initiatives by the Government of Japan, thereby eliminating reputational damage as well as restoring and improving Japan's image. In 2021, MOFA has released a video showing Tohoku as it continues to

make progress toward recovery, featuring the interactions at the time and afterwards between people from the countries and regions that had provided support to the affected areas and people from the affected areas who had received support. MOFA has also released a video on the current situation in Fukushima as it moves forward on reconstruction, introducing its rich resources for tourism such as nature, food, culture, and local

industries. With regard to the progress on the decommissioning of the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, a video was released in July, featuring interviews with Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and another expert, to convey that Japan's handling of ALPS treated water is in line with international practices and it is safe and feasible.

The Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, held from July to September 2021, was regarded as the "Recovery and Reconstruction Games." MOFA communicated with the rest of the world about the attractions and exchanges of "Arigato" Host Towns for Supporting Reconstruction, through the production of videos featuring influencers to promote the attractiveness of Host Towns.



"Fukushima's progress on safety and reconstruction"  
(released on YouTube on July 28, 2021)  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ld3eliK\\_GH4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ld3eliK_GH4)  
(English version)



## 6 Strengthening Cooperation with the International Community in the Area of Nuclear Safety

In November, the IAEA held a five-day experts' conference (in hybrid format) in Vienna on the occasion of 10 years after the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident.

The purpose of this conference was to reflect on the lessons and experiences drawn from the actions taken by the respective countries and international organizations throughout the decade after the earthquake disaster, and to identify pathways for further strengthening nuclear safety in the future. It was attended by regulatory authorities, power utilities, nuclear experts, and academia from various countries, who engaged in lively exchanges of views.

Following opening remarks by IAEA Director General Grossi, Ambassador Hikihara Takeshi, Permanent Representative of Japan to the International Organizations in Vienna, delivered remarks in which he noted the importance of strengthening nuclear safety and introduced the status of nuclear safety initiatives in Japan. He also spoke about Japan's contributions toward strengthen-

ing global nuclear safety in cooperation with the IAEA, alongside Japan's continued efforts to realize nuclear safety.

At the special session of the conference on ALPS treated water, Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Hagiuda Koichi presented a video message in which he explained the Basic Policy on handling of ALPS treated water at the TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station, and stated that Japan will work to widely disseminate the results of reviews conducted by the IAEA on the safety of ALPS treated water.

In addition, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development/Nuclear Energy Agency (OECD/NEA) released a report in March, titled "Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant Accident, Ten Years On: Progress, Lessons and Challenges." This report introduces the activities that the OECD/NEA has been engaged in with the international community after the accident, and proposes future activities for the international cooperation program.

# Chapter 4

## Japan's Diplomacy Open to the Public

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## Section 1

# Japanese Society and People Deepening Their Ties with the World

### 1 Japan's Growth and Acceptance of Foreign Nationals

#### (1) Growth Strategy and Visa System

At the end of March 2016, the Government of Japan formulated the “Tourism Vision to Support the Future of Japan,” heading toward a new nation-building as an “advanced tourism nation.” It set new goals for the number of foreign visitors to 40 million in 2020 and 60 million in 2030. In the vision, it is stated that the Government will engage in strategic relaxation of visa requirements for the five countries whose nationals are currently required to obtain a visa to visit Japan (China, Russia, India, the Philippines and Viet Nam) out of 20 countries and regions that have big markets of potential tourists to Japan. Based on the above-mentioned vision, MOFA had thus far been implementing a relaxation of visa requirements with these countries, including simplification of application forms and expansion of target persons for visa issuance from the perspective of promoting people-to-people exchanges, strengthening bilateral relations, etc. However, in 2021, the number of foreign nationals visiting Japan fell due to the impact of tighter border measures mutually imposed by Japan and various foreign countries with the aim of halting the spread of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19), which subdued the total number of foreign visitors to approximately 250,000. Relaxing visa

requirements is effective to a certain extent for promoting people-to-people exchanges and Japan's economic growth. As such, the relaxation of visa requirements should be further promoted, while assessing the COVID-19 situation inside and outside Japan.

Meanwhile, intensifying visa control, as one part of border measures designed to prevent the entry of criminals and foreign visitors planning to work illegally, as well as those who could become victims of human trafficking, is also an important challenge. MOFA will keep considering the relaxation of visa requirements in order to increase the number of foreign visitors to Japan while maintaining “Japan as the safest country in the world,” and to contribute to making Japan a tourism-oriented country both in quality and quantity through attracting the wealthy, repeating and younger visitors. MOFA intends to consider this relaxation of visa requirements while taking into account bilateral relations, its diplomatic significance and other factors in a comprehensive manner, as well as considering their balance with border measures.

#### (2) Hosting Foreign Human Resources and Their Social Integration

With Japan's declining birthrate, aging population, and shrinking population, in order to address worsening labor shortages faced by various businesses including small- and medium-sized

businesses and small-scale enterprises, a “Specified Skilled Worker” system was established in April 2019 for accepting work-ready foreigners with certain expertise and skills into some industries, which continued to face difficulties in securing personnel despite efforts that were made to improve productivity and secure personnel domestically. MOFA, as one of the organizations related to this system alongside the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare and the National Police Agency, prepares Memorandums of Cooperation (MOCs) that set out the frameworks for information partnerships with the countries of origin, and participates in bilateral discussions based on those MOCs. MOFA also undertakes public relations efforts in the local languages of the main countries of origin.

Furthermore, a ministerial meeting on accepting and coexisting with foreign human resources was established to conduct a government-wide, comprehensive discussion on developing the environment for accepting new foreign human resources and realizing a society in which Japanese nationals coexist with foreign nationals living in Japan. In June, the “Comprehensive Measures for Accepting and Coexisting with Foreign Human Resources” (revised 2021) were decided upon. Furthermore, every year MOFA hosts the “International Forum

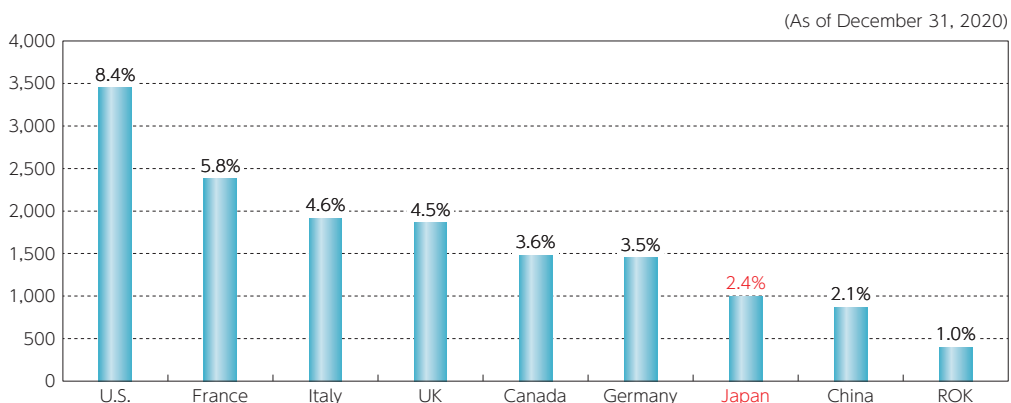
on Acceptance of Foreign Nationals and Their Integration into Japan,” aiming to encourage debate among the people by providing opportunities to discuss concrete challenges and measures. In March 2022, MOFA co-hosted the forum with the International Organization for Migration (IOM).

## 2 Japanese Continuing Working in the International Community

### (1) Japanese Continuing Working in International Organizations

International organizations are founded to serve the common interest of the international community. People of various nationalities join these international organizations, and draw on their skills and traits to create an environment where people of the world can live in peace and enjoy prosperity. There are many international organizations working to solve global issues that cannot be addressed by individual countries, including the global pandemic of COVID-19, the environment, climate change, sustainable development, disarmament/non-proliferation, conflict prevention/peacebuilding, food, energy, disaster prevention, education, labor, human rights/humanitarian issues and gender equality.

#### Number of Staff Members at UN-related Agencies by Nationality (professional or higher)



Note 1: This graph includes the number of professional staff members or higher with a term of one year or longer.

Note 2: The percentage represents the ratio against the total number of employees (41,270).

Note 3: Calculation method differs from that of MOFA.

Source: Created by MOFA from UN document (CEB/2021/HLCM/HR/4)

Talented individuals with specialized knowledge, passion and capabilities to contribute to the world's interests are needed so that international organizations can competently perform their duties and fulfill the roles expected of them. As a member country of these international organizations, Japan, in addition to policy contributions, makes assessed and voluntary contributions. Furthermore, it can be said that the activities and services of Japanese staff are, in a broad sense, also Japan's contributions. Additionally, a larger number of talented Japanese people continuing working in international organizations will further enhance Japan's presence in the international community more visibly. Japanese staff are involved in various fields and duties at different locations, but they share the same goal of solving various issues facing the international community (see the Columns on pages 341 and 342). Moreover, encouraging the employment of more Japanese nationals who have professional experience at international organizations and who can continue working in the international stage will in turn lead to enrichment of the human resources of Japan, contributing to the development of Japan as a whole.

Currently, Japanese nationals are serving in important posts at international organizations including the UN. Japanese nationals are actively performing leadership roles at organizations such as the Universal Postal Union (UPU), a specialized agency of the UN that Metoki Masahiko was appointed to head in August, the World Customs Organization (WCO), and Asian Development Bank (ADB) (see the Special Feature on page 344). In addition, for many years Japan has sent a succession of Japanese judges to international courts such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) and the International Criminal Court (ICC). In light of the importance of international organizations for addressing global challenges, securing important posts that contribute to strengthening ties between Japan and

international organizations, including as the heads of international organizations, is an important challenge. On the other hand, important posts, including as heads of international organizations, are not something that can be secured overnight. It is necessary to make a finely-tuned response by adopting a long-term perspective while cultivating appropriate personnel.

Currently, 918 Japanese nationals (as of the end of 2020; figures gathered by MOFA) are working as professional-level or higher-level staff in UN-related agencies around the world, which is a record figure. With the aim of further increasing such Japanese personnel, the Government of Japan has set a target of 1,000 Japanese working for UN-related agencies by 2025. To this end, in collaboration with universities, related ministries and agencies, and organizations, MOFA is actively recruiting, training and supporting Japanese nationals who can continue working in the international organizations and make a contribution on the global stage. As part of this effort, MOFA runs Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Programme that sends young Japanese nationals to positions in international organizations for a term of two years in principle with the aim of gaining regular staff positions in such organizations after the term. MOFA also runs a program to support the advance of Japanese nationals who can be future managerial candidates by offering them mid-career and higher professional experience. In addition to encouraging the employment of more Japanese nationals through these efforts, MOFA is also working to coordinate with international organizations and gather information for the employment and promotion of Japanese staff.

MOFA provides useful and timely information such as vacancy announcements to Japanese candidates seeking positions at international organizations through the website for MOFA's Recruitment Center for International Organizations, mailing lists, social media such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and video streaming, and provides support related to application procedures for such

positions. Public relations efforts include holding guidance seminars to enhance the attractiveness of working at international organizations and to deliver methods to apply for a job, and holding recruitment seminars online featuring senior officials or human resource experts from international organizations.

MOFA will continue to encourage the employment of more Japanese nationals working in international organizations and support their promotion, so that a larger number of competent Japanese nationals who have high aspirations and passion to contribute to solving global issues can take part in international organizations.

## Column

### Voices of People Who Have Been Supporting Activities of the United Nations The Allure of Working in UN Organizations: The importance of serving in the field

Ogawa Kazumi, Director of the Bureau of Human Resources Management, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

In the run-up to elections in Central African Republic in 2015, MINUSCA,<sup>(Note)</sup> the UN peacekeeping operation in the country, was concerned about the threat of violence. After all, some six weeks prior, there had been an attempted coup d'état, and for several weeks most UN staff were confined to their accommodation. Those who needed to be present in the Headquarters were transported there by armored vehicle, wearing personal protective equipment (PPE - helmets and bullet proof vests). Every leader of a political party believed he (they were all men) would take over from the interim government, so there was concern that if even one of them thought they might lose, they would readily destabilize the process.

In light of that, the Political Affairs Division where I was serving as deputy director sought to mitigate the potential for electoral violence by building capacity: holding seminars on the democratic process and election campaign techniques. We developed a code of conduct for heads of political parties, which was launched with media coverage and a public signing ceremony. Thanks to the combined efforts of the MINUSCA military, the police, and civilian components, the elections took place without major incident.

The appointment to MINUSCA was my 12th assignment since I began working for the United Nations in 1994, having been recruited through the National Competitive Recruitment Exam (now known as the Young Professionals Programme). It was my sixth country of residence. At that point, I had had the opportunity to work in the fields of politics, human resources, human rights, public relations and development.

Following MINUSCA, I moved to Nairobi with UN-Habitat, and in 2019 I was appointed as Director of UNESCO's Bureau of Human Resources Management. In that capacity, I am often asked for advice on the ideal profile for a successful UN career. As my colleagues working at the UN should undoubtedly know, there is no single answer. However, in my opinion probably the most important experience is to work both at the headquarters and in the field. Many staff who start working in New York, Geneva, Paris, Bangkok or other cities stay there until they reach retirement, and their careers come to an end without having had the chance to live among the beneficiaries the UN is entrusted with serving. The UN places an emphasis on diversity, and at the same time, the ability to encourage people to work together as one based on a common purpose is extremely important in order to perform effectively in the UN.

Japanese are particularly suited to working at organizations like the UN. From the time we first enter school, we are taught the importance of having a shared culture and of tackling problems using a common approach. This is an important mindset at the UN, where along with an emphasis on diversity, unity of



With Captain Martin Okada of the UN Military Observer Group (Central African Republic; author is shown on the left)

purpose is likewise viewed as important for our work to have an impact. Furthermore, Japanese people are also blessed with the good fortune of being citizens of a UN Member State that actively contributes to the international community both financially and in terms of programs.

In addition to this advantage, the ability to work in both English and French was one essential skill that awarded me greater opportunities. Language ability is important, and gives UN staff the flexibility to be considered for a wider range of positions, particularly as they become more senior. At UNESCO, which is headquartered in Paris, it is assumed that staff in management roles will have the ability to understand a minimum level of French, at the very least. Being Japanese and being able to work in another UN language is beneficial not just to our own careers, but also to UNESCO, which seeks diversity of its staff but where French language ability remains necessary.

The past 27 years have gone by in an instant. Some of my jobs have been difficult, others, less so. However, one thing has not changed in all the time since I began working at the UN: no other work brings as many challenges, or awards you so many opportunities. And amid that, I believe many of the experiences that have been the most fulfilling and have also proven useful in terms of career development have been the varied experiences centered on the front lines, such as the work with MINUSCA.

**Note** United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic



With members of the MINUSCA government affairs bureau (Central African Republic; author is shown in the center of the front row)

Column

### Voices of People Who Have Been Supporting Activities of the United Nations “Field First” — UNHCR’s Emergency Assistance Activities and its Support System

Shimozawa Shoko, Director, Division of Emergency, Security and Supply, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

I was assigned to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Mexico in 1991 under the auspices of the JPO program, which is administered by MOFA’s Recruitment Center for International Organizations. Since then, I have worked in various UNHCR offices including the Executive Office of the High Commissioner, UNHCR offices in Moscow, Kabul, Iraq, the Regional Bureau for the Middle East and North Africa, and the Global Service Centre in Budapest. In 2020, I assumed my current function as the Director of the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply based at the UNHCR Headquarters in Geneva.

As a frontline humanitarian organization of the United Nations, UNHCR currently protects as many as 82.4 million refugees and other forcibly displaced persons, and assists them until they find a sustainable solution. As the number of refugees in the world continues to soar, my main tasks are to oversee UNHCR’s emergency response, support all aspects of supply deliveries including critical relief items, and ensure the safety of UNHCR staff around the world, especially those in remote and high-risk field locations.



With Ethiopian refugee children at a refugee camp in East Sudan



The author (center) receiving a briefing from a partner organization at the Refugee Reception Center in Cúcuta, Colombia

UNHCR's emergency response system, which focuses on effectiveness and predictability, was developed in the early 1990s by the former UN High Commissioner for Refugees Ms. Ogata Sadako. Since then, UNHCR has maintained a robust emergency response mechanism, including a roster system where some 150 trained staff are on call for deployment within 72 hours at any given time during the year. In 2021 alone, close to 300 staff were deployed in countries such as Sudan, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, and Colombia, among others. It is worth noting that even though the choice of joining the roster system is voluntary, we receive an overwhelming number of applications every year from motivated staff around the world who are ready to support UNHCR's emergency operations. Such individual willingness and readiness maintain the UNHCR's operational responsiveness to new humanitarian crises.

During my field missions, I saw first-hand the hard work and dedication of our emergency response teams, often working under extremely harsh security and hygiene conditions. My work is to ensure that our personnel are trained and deployed rapidly and, once on the ground, are able to deliver support as effectively and safely as possible.

UNHCR's core relief supplies are strategically stockpiled in seven global warehouses, which have the capacity to respond to 600,000 people at any given time. In 2021, these relief items were emergency airlifted to Afghanistan, Yemen, Sudan, and other countries, providing vital lifelines to refugees and other forcibly displaced persons.

As the world is increasingly conscious of environmental issues, we have recently started to explore how our humanitarian assistance can also be more sustainable and environmentally friendly. As part of the multi-year strategy, and based on the studies conducted on the environmental impact of humanitarian relief items, UNHCR will gradually replace its current relief items with greener ones that can reduce its greenhouse gas emissions. It is hoped that through this new initiative, we can also make UNHCR's future emergency response measures more environmentally friendly.

Working for UNHCR has been a rewarding experience. Through my work with refugees, I have seen the challenges of forced displacement and its devastating consequences. At the same time, I also frequently witnessed the resilience of refugees in overcoming difficulties and trying to build new lives from scratch. These were truly humbling moments. Like the majority of staff in the organization, I learned through field operations. In my current function as the Director of the Division of Emergency, Security and Supply, I remain "field-first," and will continue supporting my colleagues working in the frontline operations.



## Election of Metoki Masahiko as Director General of the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union (UPU)

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) (Headquarters: Bern, Switzerland), established in 1874, is one of the world's oldest international organizations. Its role is to formulate rules on international postal services.

To ensure that postal items can be sent and received securely, reliably, and quickly everywhere in the world, it is necessary to develop an international postal network based on fair rules that are applied universally across the world. Particularly under the current COVID-19 pandemic situation, it is becoming increasingly important to have an international postal network that transports daily necessities and supports the global supply-chain. It is vital for the world to improve global postal services and further develop the international postal network through international cooperation within the UPU.

Japan became a member of the UPU in 1877, soon after postal services commenced in Japan in 1871. Japan is one of the biggest contributors to the UPU, and has for many years contributed through various aspects such as funding, personnel, and policies. Meanwhile, Japan has for several years faced the situation of having no top posts in the specialized agencies of the United Nations. That was exactly the time when Mr. Metoki Masahiko, one of Japan's leading experts in the postal field, came forward as a candidate for the Director General of the International Bureau of the UPU, with a view to further strengthening Japan's presence in the international arena of rulemaking through active contribution to the UPU, which harnesses the world-leading expertise of Japan in postal systems and services.

Mr. Metoki has a wide breadth of knowledge in both the postal and diplomacy fields, and has for many years demonstrated his problem-solving and coordination capabilities as the Chair of the Postal Operations Council of the UPU. His achievements have been highly appraised by each country. As a result, in the election of the Director General held in August 2021, he was elected from among three candidates with overwhelming support, and assumed office as the new Director General in January 2022.

Director General Metoki has upheld the following four key concepts toward the reform of the UPU, aimed at responding to a new era of rapid digitalization and maximizing the potential of the postal network: (1) Pioneering new business opportunities in the postal sector; (2) Contributing to the SDGs; (3) Ensuring transparency in decision-making; and, (4) Dialogues with member states and other international organizations. In international organizations, such as the UPU, the respective member states have different interests, so it is not an easy task to advance reforms and establish new rules. With that in mind, Director General Metoki has set out the initiative to encourage member states to be engaged in mutual dialogue.

Under the leadership of Director General Metoki, whose vision is backed by his extensive experience, Japan will continue to contribute proactively to the UPU's activities through applying Japan's experience, skills, and human resources in this field to steadily advance the formulation of new rules on international postal services.



Metoki Masahiko (Photo: Japan Post)



The moment when Metoki was elected (August 25, Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Photo: Japan Post)

## (2) Activities of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

### A Development Cooperation

In the interest of leveraging the capabilities of organizations outside of the Government of Japan to conduct all-Japan diplomacy, the role that NGOs play in development cooperation and humanitarian assistance is expanding significantly. Nowadays, Japanese NGOs provide support to various nations, including developing countries.

Through NGOs, MOFA actively provides Official Development Assistance (ODA) via financial cooperation in the form of grant assistance (Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects) for economic and social development projects implemented by Japanese NGOs in developing countries and regions. The projects cover a wide range of assistance, including health, medical and hygienic care (maternal and child health, counter-measures for tuberculosis, water/hygiene, etc.), rural development (improvement for agricultural environment/technology), support for people with disabilities (vocational training/job seeking assistance, etc.), education (building schools, etc.), disaster risk reduction, and the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnances (UXO). In FY2020, MOFA provided funding for 109 projects to Japanese NGOs (59 organizations) implementing Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects in 34 countries and one region, including Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Central and South America (see the Column on page 347). Moreover, the NGO Project Subsidies are provided to improve the project execution capabilities and expertise of

NGOs and to support activities that contribute to the promotion of NGO projects.

Additionally, Japan Platform (JPF) was established in 2000 with the aim of conducting emergency humanitarian assistance more effectively and promptly through cooperation and partnerships among the Government, NGOs, and business communities at the time of large-scale natural disasters or conflicts. As of the end of December 2021, 43 NGOs are members of JPF. In 2021, JPF launched Emergency Response to Locust Crisis in South Asia and Africa, Emergency Response to Cyclone Eloise in Mozambique, Emergency Response to Ethiopia Conflict, Emergency Response to Cox's Bazar Refugee Camp Fire, Emergency Response to Tropical Cyclone Seroja in Indonesia and Timor-Leste, Emergency Response to Sandstorms in Mongolia, Emergency Response to Delta Variant of COVID-19, Emergency Response for the Humanitarian Crisis in Gaza, Emergency Response to the Haiti Earthquake 2021, Humanitarian Response to Northern Mozambique Conflict, as well as implemented response programs for humanitarian crises in Bangladesh, South Sudan and their neighboring countries, and Uganda, Yemen, Venezuela, Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and their neighboring countries.

In this way, NGOs assume important roles in the area of development cooperation and humanitarian assistance. Identifying such NGOs as partners in international cooperation, MOFA and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provide indirect support for NGO activities through various policy measures aimed at enhancing their capability and expertise as well as developing human resources so that NGOs can strengthen the foundation for their activities and perform further tasks. In 2021, MOFA implemented four programs – namely, the “NGO Consultant Scheme,” “NGO Study Program,” “NGO Intern Program” and “NGO Study Group.”

The regular schedule for the NGO-MOFA Regular Consultation Meeting, the purpose of



Children drinking maize and cereal in a nutrition improvement project in Kenya  
(Photo: HANDS (specified non-profit corporation))



NGO consultants taking part in a panel discussion held for EARTH CAMP

which is to promote dialogue and coordination between NGOs and MOFA, was amended due to the impact of the spread of COVID-19, and an ad hoc meeting of the ODA Policy Council, where opinions are exchanged on general ODA policies, was held online in March, and the first meeting of the Partnership Promotion Committee to discuss support and cooperation measures for NGOs was held online in August. In addition, given that achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will require the coordination of all stakeholders, from September 2016, MOFA has been exchanging views with various stakeholders, including NGOs, at the SDGs Promotion Roundtable. Japan's Voluntary National Review (VNR), which was announced at the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) held in July 2021, was prepared based in part on the views of civil society, and it also included a progress assessment by private-sector members of the Promotion Roundtable. Furthermore, MOFA also partnered with civil society to hold side events at the HLPF.

Moreover, from October 6, 2020, to March 31, 2021, the EARTH CAMP online campaign was co-hosted by MOFA, JICA and the Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation (JANIC), as a substitute for Global Festa JAPAN, which was cancelled due to the impact of COVID-19.

#### **B Partnership in Other Major Diplomatic Areas**

The Government of Japan has also initiated dialogues with civil society including NGO representatives and experts on matters related to government reports to be submitted based on

various conventions on human rights, as well as the National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights, the National Action Plan to End Violence Against Children and the National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security, which is based on the UN Security Council (UNSC) resolution 1325 and related resolutions. These dialogues also cover the implementation of those documents.

In the area of conventional weapons, MOFA works in cooperation with NGOs in implementing clearance of mines and UXOs, and mine risk education projects, in countries affected by mines and UXOs.

Furthermore, in the area of nuclear disarmament, MOFA has been conducting dialogues with various NGOs and experts. The Government supports the activities of NGOs and others to convey atomic bomb survivors' testimonies regarding the realities of the devastation caused by the use of nuclear weapons to the international community, through the commissioned projects known as the "Special Communicator for a World without Nuclear Weapons" and the "Youth Communicator for a World without Nuclear Weapons." As of December 2021, a total of 299 Special Communicators on 101 occasions and a total of 483 Youth Communicators on 37 occasions have been dispatched to the world through these commission programs.

With regard to countermeasures to combat transnational organized crime, coordination with civil society, such as NGOs, is essential, especially in the field of trafficking in persons. With this respect, the Government actively exchanges opinions with NGOs and other stakeholders to identify recent trends of trafficking in persons and to examine effective measures to address this crime.

#### **(3) Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers, Experts and Others**

The Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteers (JOCV, JICA Volunteer Program) is JICA's program aimed at cooperation and assistance for the socio-economic development of the communities

## Improving Nutrition and Livelihoods Through Familiar Ingredients —Making “Furikake” in Timor-Leste

Ito Junko, PARC Interpeoples' Cooperation (PARCIC)

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste is located in the eastern half of Timor, a small island north of Australia and east of Indonesia. After more than 400 years under Portuguese colonial rule and 24 years under the rule of the Indonesian military, it attained independence in 2002, being the youngest country in Asia.

Since Timor-Leste attained independence, the death rate of children under five fell from 126 per 1,000 children to 64 per 1,000 children in ten years, thanks to the strong efforts of the health sector. On the other hand, more than half of the children under five suffer from maldevelopment, while every two in five women from the ages of 14 to 60 suffer from anemia. Hence, efforts to improve nutrition remains an important issue in Timor-Leste as its economy continues to develop.

The dietary habit in Timor-Leste tends to be concentrated on the intake of carbohydrates such as rice, corn, and potatoes. The rural areas in particular suffer from a severe lack of proteins, fats, and other nutrients. Timor-Leste is an agricultural country, with more than 70% of the population living in farming and fishing villages. While agriculture, forestry and fishing, along with tourism, are the pillars of the country's development, the current agricultural, forestry and fishery industries are primarily for self-sustenance and a domestic distribution network for agricultural and marine products has not been developed. Despite being an island state, the annual consumption of fish is 2.7 kg per capita on average (6 kg per capita if imports were included). This is an extremely low figure compared with the global average of 18 kg per capita.

Since 2002, PARCIC has been working to improve the livelihoods of those living in the rural areas by processing and distributing agricultural products harvested in various parts of Timor-Leste. Applying this experience, we came up with the idea of working with Timor-Leste's largest fishery association on Atauro Island in Dili, as well as its women's groups, to produce Japanese “furikake,” rice seasoning, by utilizing, for example, local fish and Moringa leaves, and introduce them into the general market and school meals and expand the production and distribution of “furikake.” By doing so, we aim to revitalize economic activities in fishing villages while contributing to the nutrition issue at the same time. Since 2019, we have been implementing the “Nutrition Improvement Project by Spreading ‘Furikake’ and Eating Habits Improvement” upon receiving ODA funds from the Government of Japan under the Grant Assistance for Japanese NGO Projects program.

At our “furikake” production base on Atauro Island, 194 women have participated in training to produce the ingredients for making “furikake.” Women from Atauro Island had the practice of drying and preserving the fish they captured, but the fish was too salty and processed under poor hygiene conditions. So at the training sessions, they learned how to produce the ingredients safely while ensuring the tastiness of the products. Moringa and sesame are familiar produce to the locals, and had previously been used as goat feed. However, having learnt the value of these as ingredients for making “furikake,” the women became very motivated in the cultivation and processing of these ingredients.

The “furikake” produced has been introduced in school meals in the capital city of Dili as well as the mountainous district of Ermera. In parallel with cooking classes for those who are in charge of preparing school meals and nutrition workshops for fourth graders in elementary schools, efforts are ongoing to encourage the local communities to use “furikake” in preparing meals at schools and homes. At the end of each activity, we can sense the strong desire of women in Timor-Leste to provide balanced and nutritious meals to their families. Although efforts have been hampered by unexpected factors due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, such as the mass suspension of school classes and school meals from March 2021, we aim to continue with the activities while sharing with the women that familiar ingredients close to them can also be a source of income and a way of improving nutrition at home.



“Furikake” produced in Timor-Leste



Women of Atauro Island producing “furikake” at the factory



Elementary school students enjoying “furikake” during a school meal



## Volunteer Activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Viet Nam

Omori Miwa, Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer (JOCV) (Specialty: Nursing), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

"I'm waiting for your return."

I was sent to Viet Nam on April 9, 2019. However, I returned temporarily to Japan in less than a year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I departed for Viet Nam again in early December 2020 after waiting in Japan for about eight months. My colleague in Viet Nam said the above mentioned words, and they supported me during my stay in Japan.

I was dispatched to Long An General Hospital in the southern part of Viet Nam to engage in nursing administration of the hospital, at its request. Before my temporary return to Japan, I had been conducting audits for nursing and other activities so that nurses could carry out their duties safely.

At the hospital, nurses were quite busy due to a shortage of nurses and the burden of accounting input work for drugs, etc. There were available manuals for nursing, however the nurses were not quite familiar with it. Therefore, we conducted study seminars on medical safety for all employees, published regular audit reports, and engaged in other activities to address the problem. I had a feeling that I was not fully accepted into the team at the beginning, but they gradually came to trust me as I interacted proactively with them to build up interpersonal relationships.

However, I had to return to Japan just as the activities finally began to get on track. I was encouraged by the messages I received from my colleagues although I felt anxious during my sojourn in Japan. Therefore, I worked hard to prepare materials for the activities.

I wanted to do everything I could and all the more because of the ongoing pandemic after resuming the assignment in Viet Nam. I cooperated with JICA members and other dispatched volunteers to produce a video to raise awareness on infection control. In this video, we incorporated a dance to spread handwashing that I performed with the other members to the tune of the COVID-19 educational song "Ghen Co Vy," produced through cooperation between a famous Vietnamese artist and the Ministry of Health of Viet Nam. In this way, we raised awareness of infection prevention measures that the Ministry was disseminating<sup>(Note)</sup>. These activities were effective in encouraging employees at my assigned hospital to review the handwashing procedures using the video.

I also focused on the "5S" activities ("sort" (*seiri*), "set" (*seiton*), "clean" (*seiso*), "cleanliness" (*seiketsu*), and "discipline" (*shit-suke*)) at Long An General Hospital. I believe keeping a workplace clean is important for infection control as it can prevent bacterial growth. This had not become sufficiently established as a common practice although the "5S" activities had already been introduced to the hospital several years ago. So, I made



During a "5S" study seminar (author on the right) (January 13, Long An, Viet Nam. Photo: Long An General Hospital)



Group photograph at the final audit (the author third from the right) (March 25, Long An, Viet Nam. Photo: Long An General Hospital)



Final activity report at the place of assignment (the author sixth from the right in the back row) (Note) Masks were removed for the photograph. (March 30, Long An, Viet Nam. Photo: Long An General Hospital)

posters to raise awareness and carried out “5S” activities to keep intravenous procedure trolleys, which nurses use constantly in their work, clean. As the head nurses in each hospital department understood the importance of the “5S” and initiated the implementation of activities, other staff also began to follow suit.

COVID-19 broke out again in Viet Nam after my return. Long An, which neighbors the major city of Ho Chi Minh City, was on high alert. I braced myself and gave my best in all the activities, despite carrying them out in a tense atmosphere.

Some JOCVs went back to their assigned countries, however, many volunteers are still waiting to return to their host countries. I am grateful that I was reposted under these circumstances. I will continue to do my best to utilize my experience gained through my volunteer activities to society. I am thankful to everyone who has supported me in my volunteer works.

**Note:** Published on the Facebook page of JICA's Viet Nam office  
<https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=872043003611018>



of developing countries, whereby Japanese nationals from 20 to 69 years of age with skills, knowledge, and experience live and work together with local people in these countries while fostering mutual understanding with these people. As of the end of March 2021, 54,428 JOCVs have been dispatched to 98 countries in total since the program's launch in 1965. The dispatched volunteers have been engaged in about 190 types of work in nine sectors: planning/administration, commerce/tourism, public utility works, human resources, agriculture/forestry/fishery, health/medical care, mining, social welfare and energy.

Ex-volunteers have been contributing to Japanese society through initiatives such as sharing their experiences in educational, regional and business activities. These unique participatory initiatives by Japan have been highly appreciated and expected both within and outside of Japan, including recipient countries.

Since November 2020, JOCVs have been redeployed to the countries where the conditions for deployment had been met, while the COVID-19 situation and other factors have been considered (See the Column on page 348). Some volunteers awaiting deployment opportunities are engaging in activities that contribute to resolving challenges faced by regions in Japan. In doing so, they are

endeavoring to obtain practical experience and knowledge required for their activities in the countries to which they will be dispatched, and participating in social contribution activities in Japan.

JICA experts with specialized knowledge, insights, skills, and experience are dispatched to governmental agencies and other sites in developing countries. The experts provide high-level policy advice and transfer necessary skills and knowledge to government officials and engineers. Furthermore, they work together with their counterparts to develop, promote and disseminate technologies and systems that are suitable to each country's context. The experts aim to enhance comprehensively the capacity of developing countries so that people in these countries can tackle their development challenges by themselves. The experts engage in their activities while considering elements of each developing country such as its regional characteristics, its historical background and its language. In addition, the experts actively engage in a wide range of sectors, including those addressing basic human needs such as health/medical care and water/sanitation, and those of socio-economic development such as legal system development and urban planning. The experts contribute to the social and economic development of developing countries



and to fostering mutual trust between Japan and developing countries through their activities.

In FY2020, due to the impact of the global spread of COVID-19, only 553 experts were newly dispatched, and only 86 countries/regions were covered by their activities. Experts who are on standby in Japan due to the difficulties in traveling to their destination are carrying out their duties while staying in touch with their counterparts remotely.

### 3 Cooperation with Local Governments

Regional revitalization is one of the priority issues of the Cabinet. MOFA also actively works on the issue and strives to deploy measures that strengthen comprehensive diplomatic capabilities through collaboration with regions.

In Japan, as part of efforts to support regional revitalization, the Foreign Minister and respective prefectural governor invite members of diplomatic corps, foreign chambers of commerce and industry, and tourism-related parties in Japan to the Iikura Guest House, co-hosting receptions and setting up booths as means of broadly promoting the various attractive qualities of regions to audiences both in Japan and abroad. However, due to the impact of COVID-19, MOFA postponed these events in 2021.

In addition, MOFA cooperated with local governments and others to host Regional Promotion Seminars in Tokyo, which have been held 27 times from 2008 to 2021. Conducted for members of diplomatic corps, foreign chambers of commerce and industry, tourism-related companies and other organizations, these seminars highlight the characteristics, advantages and attractions of regions for industry, tourism, investment and business promotion. These events have been received by attendees as valuable opportunities to directly experience the attractiveness of regional Japan while being in Tokyo. The seminars also promote networking among local governments and



Regional Promotion Seminar  
Presentations from various local governments etc. (October 28, Tokyo)

foreign organization members, including diplomatic corps. In 2021, due to the impact of COVID-19, a seminar was held in an online format for the first time in October, and it attracted around 150 participants. Kashihara City in Nara Prefecture, Kagoshima City, Amami City and Yakushima Town in Kagoshima Prefecture, Mie Prefecture and the Awaji Island Tourist Association showcased their respective tourist destinations and charms, including their history, culture and cuisine, and following that the diplomatic corps and other participants viewed the various organizations' presentations while sampling specialties they had been sent in advance, thus deepening their understanding of each region's charms with all five senses.

Furthermore, MOFA and Japanese local governments co-organize "Diplomats' Study Tours" for the diplomatic corps in Japan, with the goal of enabling them to directly experience the attractions of each region by actually visiting them. A total of 14 individuals from diplomatic corps in Japan participated in a tour to Kazuno City in Akita Prefecture, which was held on November 18 and 19. The diplomatic corps, including ambassadors,

visited historical and cultural facilities in the community, including the Jomon Prehistoric Sites in Northern Japan, which is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site, and were able to enjoy the region's abundant attractions by experiencing its traditional culture and crafts. Furthermore, a Study Tour to Koriyama collaborative core urban area in Fukushima Prefecture held on November 25 and 26 focused on the wide area of Koriyama as an assembly place of "Cutting-Edge Science and Technology" and "Revitalization of Fukushima observed in a wide area after the Great East Japan Earthquake and the nuclear disaster." On the tour dates, 14 participants visited sites related to medicine, energy, climate change and agriculture industry, and interacted with local residents while deepening their understanding of the current state of Fukushima, which continues to develop even in the wake of the Great East Japan Earthquake. Thus far, as a result of the tours, some local governments have started exchanges and collaborations with participating countries, while others have aimed to increase the number of visitors to such communities by utilizing connections with participating diplomatic corps.

Moreover, MOFA provides local governments with explanations of Japan's current diplomatic policies, etc., that relate closely to international exchange activities at the regional level, and opportunities to exchange views. As a part of such activities, MOFA held the "Local Partnership Cooperation Forum" in an online format in March. At the forum, a presentation by MOFA staff on the theme of "Recent Japan-China relations and the China situation" was held, and a lively panel discussion also took place on the theme of "Strategies for promoting regions' appeal overseas during the COVID-19 pandemic: What should be done now," with external experts presenting addresses on "Toward regional revitalization: What regions should be doing now," "What information should be presented for inbound tourism amid the



Diplomatic corps visiting the Oyu Stone Circles, a World Heritage Site in Kazuno City, Akita Prefecture, during a Diplomats' Study Tour (November 19, Kazuno City, Akita Prefecture)



Diplomatic corps listening to an explanation about the Great East Japan Earthquake while visiting Commutan Fukushima during a Diplomats' Study Tour (November 26, Miharu Town, Fukushima Prefecture)

COVID-19 pandemic: Looking at the examples of local governments/DMOs,"<sup>1</sup> and "Finding and generating regional PR points."

With regard to projects overseas, as a way to dispel international reputational damage stemming from the Great East Japan Earthquake, together with efforts to lift and ease import restrictions, MOFA conducted the comprehensive PR program called "Project to Support Overseas Presentations to Promote the Attractiveness of Regions" in China, which supports the promotion of the attractiveness of Japanese regions, the promotion of exports of products from various regions in Japan, and the promotion of tourism, as part of regional revitalization, in formats that included disseminating information online. With the aim of allowing Chinese consumers to better experience the charms of Japan's local regions, including tourism, culture and cuisine while in

<sup>1</sup> DMO: Destination Management/Marketing Organization



Local Partnership Cooperation Forum  
Experts taking part in a panel discussion (March 2, MOFA)

China, short movies shot in the various Japanese locations by the 67 participating local governments were posted on the account of the Embassy of Japan in China with Chinese social media platform Weibo during the period of this program. In addition, MOFA provided support, such as information dissemination for sales and promotional activities related to Japanese cuisine and specialties conducted by retailers, Japanese restaurants and wholesalers based in China.

“Regional Promotion Projects” were also conducted on a total of two occasions in Asia as measures to support local governments in promoting the development of local industries and regional economies through the attractiveness of each region by making use of Japan’s diplomatic facilities overseas. At a reception to promote the charms of Fukushima Prefecture, Yamanashi Prefecture and Oita Prefecture that was held at the official residence of the Consul-General of Japan in Ho Chi Minh City in January, the three prefectures introduced the attractiveness of their specialties and tourist destinations in a seminar format, and presented specialties such as Japanese sake and Shochu, Japanese amberjack, shiitake mushrooms and pears at sampling and tasting booths. This event was also covered by local media, and the attractiveness of the participating local regions was widely conveyed. In September the official residence of the Consul-General of Japan in Shenyang held a “live-streamed PR project for local specialties” with the cooperation of the Dalian Toyama Office and Iwate Prefecture Dalian Office, and used an online format to



Okayama Prefecture’s PR movie that was posted on the social media account of the Embassy of Japan in China during the Project to Support Overseas Presentations to Promote the Attractiveness of Regions

introduce traditional handicrafts such as Takaoka lacquerware from Toyama Prefecture and Nambu ironware from Iwate Prefecture, while also showcasing the tourism and culture of these regions. Two-way exchanges were also held, including a question-and-answer session with viewers, and in total, more than 11,000 viewers deepened their understanding of the two prefectures.

In addition, on the occasion of the receptions for celebrating the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor, which are held at diplomatic missions overseas every year, Japanese attractions such as local productions and events are presented. Due to the impact of COVID-19, in 2021, many diplomatic missions cancelled these receptions or switched to holding them online, a total of 50 local governments attended these occasions in 24 diplomatic facilities to offer information on their attractiveness.

Furthermore, MOFA has been supporting international exchanges between both Japanese and foreign local governments through various initiatives such as sister-city exchanges between Japanese local governments and their counterparts overseas and the Host Town Initiative for

the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020. Specifically, in order to support the international activities of local governments and municipal communities, Japanese diplomats visit sister cities of Japanese municipalities in their assigned countries or regions and share opinions with officials responsible for international and economic affairs. The heads of Japanese diplomatic missions also visit local municipalities in Japan to have dialogues on the activities related to the sister city or the Host Town Initiative or deliver lectures prior to their departure for new posts or when they temporarily return to Japan (see the Column on page 354). In cases where any foreign local governmental bodies wish to newly establish sister-city relationships with any Japanese municipal communities, MOFA supports them by providing the related information to the respective prefectures and ordinance-designated cities, and conducting indirect support by promoting the initiative on the website of “Local Partnership Cooperation” (named “Glocal (global and local) Diplomatic Network”<sup>2</sup>) on MOFA’s website.

In addition to the “Glocal Diplomatic Network,” as public relations media for showcasing regional cooperation initiatives, MOFA also distributes Monthly Glocal News,<sup>3</sup> a monthly e-mail newsletter, and posts information via Twitter.<sup>4</sup> Via these PR media, MOFA not only presents information on its regional cooperation projects, but also introduces sister-city exchanges and Host Town exchanges conducted by various local governments, regional revitalization from the perspective

of foreigners, and episodes concerned with various other international exchanges.

Additionally, as part of the overseas promotion activities for Japanese alcoholic beverages (Japanese sake, wine, shochu, awamori, etc.) produced in various parts of Japan, the diplomatic missions are actively engaged in promoting their charms, by offering tasting occasions at official dinners/lunches with government leaders of the assigned countries or foreign diplomatic corps, and by using Japanese sake on the occasion of making toasts at grand events such as the receptions for celebrating the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor.

MOFA is also working to respond to the growing demands for issues such as water treatment, waste disposal, urban transportation and anti-pollution measures caused as a result of rapid economic development in developing countries. These efforts involve making use of ODA and leveraging Japanese local governments’ experience and expertise, as well as conducting development cooperation using outstanding technologies and products from local SMEs. Through these efforts, MOFA provides support for matching these countries’ development needs with companies’ products and technologies. These efforts not only contribute to the global outreach of Japanese local companies and the development of globally competent human resources, but also to vitalizing regional economies and the Japanese economy as a whole.

- <sup>2</sup> “Glocal Diplomatic Network,” MOFA website:  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/ms/lpc/page25e\\_000167.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/ms/lpc/page25e_000167.html)
- <sup>3</sup> Local Partnership Cooperation Division’s e-mail newsletter “Monthly Glocal News”:  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/ms/lpc/page25e\\_000219.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/ms/lpc/page25e_000219.html)
- <sup>4</sup> Local Partnership Cooperation Division’s Twitter account:  
<https://twitter.com/localmofa>



## Emotional connections continue to resonate in Host Towns

- After the Tokyo 2020 Games -

At the opening ceremony for the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020 (the Tokyo 2020 Games), the delegation of the Republic of Moldova wore silk scarf handkerchiefs produced in Tsuruoka City, Yamagata Prefecture, which was one of its Host Towns. The delegation of the Republic of Rwanda likewise demonstrated the spirit of friendship by entering the stadium holding gentian flowers, which are a specialty of Hachimantai City, Iwate Prefecture, and were also what led it to being registered as a Host Town. Furthermore, when the Republic of Estonia's delegation entered the stadium, the television broadcast explained that a staff member of Estonian Embassy in Japan had by chance found a road sign for Saku City, Nagano Prefecture, on an expressway, and that an identically-named city exists in Estonia, which led to the establishment of the sister-city relations and Host Town registration. The broadcast also showed episodes about the visit of the former President of Estonia to Saku City during the Games.



Former President of Estonia Kersti Kaljulaid and Saku City Mayor Yanagida Seiji (Photo: Karli Saul)

Ultimately, 533 Japanese Host Towns were registered against 185 partner countries and regions. The COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult to undertake the exchanges that had initially been envisaged. Nevertheless, ongoing exchanges were realized as a result of each of the Japanese Host Towns racking its brains to assemble a variety of ideas that included holding online exchanges with athletes and sending them video messages of support, as well as providing welcoming dishes of partner country and local foods, which were conceived and arranged by locals.

These exchanges created emotional connections between people.

Shimabara City, Nagasaki Prefecture, hosted Germany's Paralympic track-and-field delegation. While it was not possible for residents to interact directly with the athletes, a resident nevertheless came up with the idea of performing the German national anthem on the flute trying to convey her city's heartfelt feelings of support, and the athletes who were about to complete their training at a sports field were deeply impressed by the beautiful tune. In Kota Town, Aichi Prefecture, during an online exchange event held just after the passing away of the President of Haiti the Host Town partner country, at that time,



A Shimabara City resident performing the German national anthem on the flute from outside a sports field (Photo: Shimabara City)

residents tried to encourage them by holding up messages saying "Go! Haiti! (Allez! Haïti!).". Furthermore, immediately following the major earthquake that struck Haiti in August, the town offered its assistance by setting up a collection box at its town hall in order to gather donations for the victims. Even though the Games ended, there has been a widening movement to cultivate ties with the people of partner countries and regions: Soja City, Okayama Prefecture, which hosted Guinea-Bissau's women's Judo representative athlete, collected unused stationery from residents aiming to present to children in Guinea-Bissau.

MOFA, seeking to boost momentum for exchanges and more effectively sharing the appeal of the Host Towns to the world including the partner countries and regions, also appointed influencers from the respective countries in order to create "Short movies about the charms of Host Towns"<sup>(Note)</sup> for 16 Host Towns nationwide. Furthermore, under MOFA's "Japan's Friendship Ties Programs," Caribbean Community (CARICOM)



young diplomats and government officials interacted online with a number of Host Towns in Kagoshima Prefecture, and exchanged views on coastal environmental conservation by visiting the respective Japanese local towns in a virtual tour format. Exchanges were also deepened as a result of interaction of Lao students with Ise City in Mie Prefecture, discussing the local charms and initiatives in the fields of agriculture and fisheries. Furthermore, diplomatic missions abroad also provided proactive support, such as contributing to the hosting of pre-Games training camps by providing accurate information on partner countries and undertaking careful coordination between Japanese Host Towns. Sometimes the heads of the missions himself/herself, in order to support Host Town relations, participated in human exchanges and, after the closing of the Games, had an exchange of views with partner country officials on developments going forward.

In this way, each of the Host Towns has its own stories of various exchanges, and those stories undoubtedly linger in the hearts of the athletes, residents and all involved.

Each closing ceremony for the Tokyo 2020 Games concluded with a magnificent fireworks display, and it seemed that the Host Town exchanges also appeared to blossom magnificently along with these fireworks. Before long, those flowers will undoubtedly bear seeds, and generate deeper colors by allowing new flowers to bloom at the next stages.

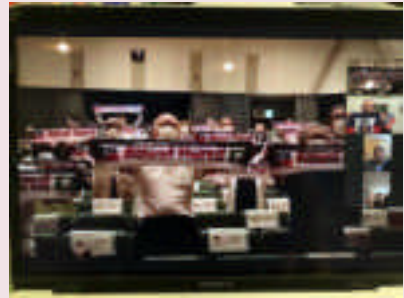
As if verifying that, moves are afoot among the Japanese Host Towns to seek out academic exchanges and sister-city relations with partner countries and regions in order to continue to deepen exchanges for years to come. Various ideas are emerging, including plans for the Japanese Host Towns to work together and jointly cheer on the athletes of their partner countries when they compete at international sports competitions. Such ongoing exchanges are sure to produce further connections between people's hearts, and usher in a warm future. If each and every person engages in exchanges, it will contribute to making them want to know more about their counterparts and to become more involved. This cumulative outcome is the very thing that will genuinely give rise to "All-Japan" diplomacy that is supported by each and every citizen.

**Note:** Short movies about the charms of Host Towns posted by high-profile influencers! (MOFA)  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/local/page23\\_003415.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/gaiko/local/page23_003415.html)

A total of 16 movies were made and posted: Kushiro City in Hokkaido and Vietnam; Nishimeya Village in Aomori Prefecture and Italy; Hachimantai City in Iwate Prefecture and Rwanda; Akita Prefecture, Odate City, Semboku City and Misato Town and Thailand; Murayama City in Yamagata Prefecture and Bulgaria; Katashina Village in Gunma Prefecture and Honduras; Tokamachi City in Niigata Prefecture and Croatia; Fujiyoshida City in Yamanashi Prefecture and France; Nagano Prefecture with six cities and towns in the Prefecture and China; Ama Town, Nishinoshima Town and Chibu Village<sup>(Note1)</sup> in Shimane Prefecture and Micronesia; Saga Prefecture, Saga City and Ureshino City and the Netherlands and Finland;<sup>(Note2)</sup> Kumamoto Prefecture and Indonesia; Okinawa City in Okinawa Prefecture and New Zealand; Iwanuma City in Miyagi Prefecture and South Africa; Yaizu City in Shizuoka Prefecture and Mongolia; and Ehime Prefecture, Matsuyama City, Tobe Town and Malaysia.

Note1: Okinoshima Town in Shimane Prefecture was added as a registered Host Town after the movies had been produced.

Note2: Saga Prefecture was the Host Town for the Netherlands, Fiji, New Zealand, Thailand and Finland, Saga City was the Host Town for the Netherlands, Fiji, New Zealand and Finland, and Ureshino City was the Host Town for the Netherlands, Fiji, and New Zealand.



Kota Town residents holding up "Allez! Haïti!" messages (Photo: Kota Town)





## Section 2

# Supporting Japanese Nationals Overseas

### 1 Risks and Safety of Japanese Nationals Overseas

#### (1) Incidents and Accidents in 2021 and Countermeasures

As of 2021, approximately 510,000 Japanese nationals<sup>1</sup> travelled overseas over the course of the year, and approximately 1.34 million Japanese nationals live abroad (as of October 2021). Hence, protecting the lives and health of Japanese nationals traveling and residing abroad, as well as promoting their interests, is one of the most important missions of MOFA.

No Japanese nationals have been victims of terrorism incidents since 2020. However, 2021 was another year in which a large number of terrorist attacks occurred in various regions. The main terrorism incidents included serial suicide attacks in Baghdad, Iraq<sup>2</sup> (January), attacks at massage parlors in Atlanta, the U.S. (March), an attack in Palma, Mozambique (March), a suicide attack in Makassar, Indonesia (March), an attack at a police station in a Paris suburb, France (April), a knife attack in Wurzburg, Germany (June), a suicide attack near the airport in Kabul, Afghanistan (August), an attack with a bow and arrow and other weapons in Kongsberg, Norway (October), a fatal knife attack against a House of Commons member

in Leigh-On-Sea, the UK (October), a taxi explosion in Liverpool, the UK (November), and serial suicide attacks in Kampala, Uganda (November).

In recent years, terrorist attacks have been occurring not only in the Middle East and Africa but also in Europe, the U.S. and Asia where many Japanese nationals travel and reside. There continues to be a large number of homegrown terrorist attacks perpetrated by those born in Western countries and indoctrinated through websites or other means by foreign Islamic extremists, lone-wolf terrorist attacks perpetrated by those acting on their own with little organizational background, and terrorist attacks that are aimed at “soft targets” – locations where unspecified numbers of the general public gather every day. Especially in the U.S., alarms are being sounded over hate crimes motivated by hatred toward a particular race or ethnic group, as well as domestic terrorism perpetrated by extremists and others with anti-government ideology.

In 2021, the number of people traveling overseas did not increase significantly due to the ongoing impact of the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19). While the number of incidents in which Japanese nationals fell victim to crimes declined compared to normal years, such incidents occurred worldwide.

<sup>1</sup> Source: Ministry of Justice, “Statistics on Legal Migrants”

<sup>2</sup> In addition to the incidents listed, several large-scale terrorist attacks occurred in 2021 in countries and regions for which Travel Advice and Warning levels 4 and 3 have been issued, such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Somalia.

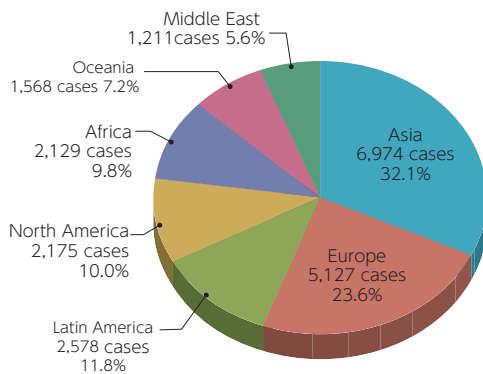
### Top 20 foreign diplomatic missions with a large number of support cases

Rank	Diplomatic mission	Number of cases
1	Embassy of Japan in the Philippines	1,355
2	Embassy of Japan in Thailand	1,268
3	Embassy of Japan in Korea	503
4	Consulate-General of Japan in Denpasar	449
5	Consulate-General of Japan in Vancouver	430
6	Embassy of Japan in the Republic of Kazakhstan	397
7	Embassy of Japan in the UK	387
8	Consulate-General of Japan in New York	352
9	Consulate-General of Japan in Shanghai	348
10	Embassy of Japan in Bulgaria	339

(Figures are shown for the 20 diplomatic missions with the largest number of support cases, including embassies, consulate-generals, and consular offices.)

Rank	Diplomatic mission	Number of cases
11	Consulate-General of Japan, Melbourne Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia	338
12	Embassy of Japan in Italy	305
13	Embassy of Japan in Germany	294
14	Embassy of Japan in France	283
15	Embassy of Japan in the State of Qatar	283
16	Embassy of Japan in Djibouti	279
17	Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney	271
18	Embassy of Japan in Croatia	269
19	Embassy of Japan in Norway	267
20	Embassy of Japan in Ecuador	266

### Breakdown of statistics for support to overseas Japanese nationals in 2020, by region



Natural disasters also occurred around the world and caused great damage. These included floods due to heavy rainfall mainly in western Germany and southern Belgium in July and a volcanic eruption in the Canary Islands in Spain in September.

In 2021, in response to the worsening security situation in various parts of the world due to political instability and other factors, MOFA warned Japanese residents through Travel Advice and Warning, Spot Safety Information, and consular e-mails. Amidst the deteriorating situation in Israel and Palestine, MOFA raised the risk level for the Gaza Strip and its border areas to evacuate and avoid all travel in May, but following the subsequent cease-fire, lowered it to the original level of avoid all travel in July. For Sudan, due to the detention of senior government officials by the

military and protests against the detention, MOFA issued Spot Safety Information and sent consular e-mails in September to advise against non-essential outings. For Ethiopia, where intense fighting broke out between government and rebel forces, MOFA raised the risk level to evacuate and avoid all travel for the entire country in November and strongly urged Japanese residents to evacuate from the country. Amidst heightened tensions with Russia since December, MOFA also raised the risk level for all of Ukraine to evacuate and avoid all travel, and has urged Japanese residents to return to Japan on commercial flights.

As was the case in 2020, there were continued reports of people falling ill during a trip abroad and dying at the hotels or other accommodations they were staying at. In some of these accidents and illnesses, victims faced difficulties in dealing with higher medical and transportation costs and receiving insufficient medical services compared to those in Japan, as well as differences in quarantine systems among countries.

Whenever necessary, MOFA issues overseas travel safety information on infectious diseases, air pollution and other risks in countries and regions where health and medical caution is required, in order to communicate the current outbreak situation and prevention measures, and highlight matters worth paying attention to when travelling and staying in the affected regions.

Since the end of 2019, new cases of COVID-19

infections decreased in some regions as the vaccination rollout progressed. Nevertheless, COVID-19 continued to spread across the world in 2021, following on from 2020, due to the emergence of mutant strains such as the highly infectious Delta and Omicron variants. In response, MOFA has been disseminating information such as Travel Advice and Warning on Infectious Diseases and Spot Safety Information to Japanese nationals residing or traveling abroad in order to raise their awareness in a timely and appropriate manner, via its website and e-mails (see the Opening Special Feature 2 on page 2).

As for other infectious diseases, cases of Ebola were reported in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Guinea, and measles was prevalent in various parts of the world. In addition, cases of the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) have been reported in the Middle East. Mosquito-borne diseases, including the Zika virus, yellow

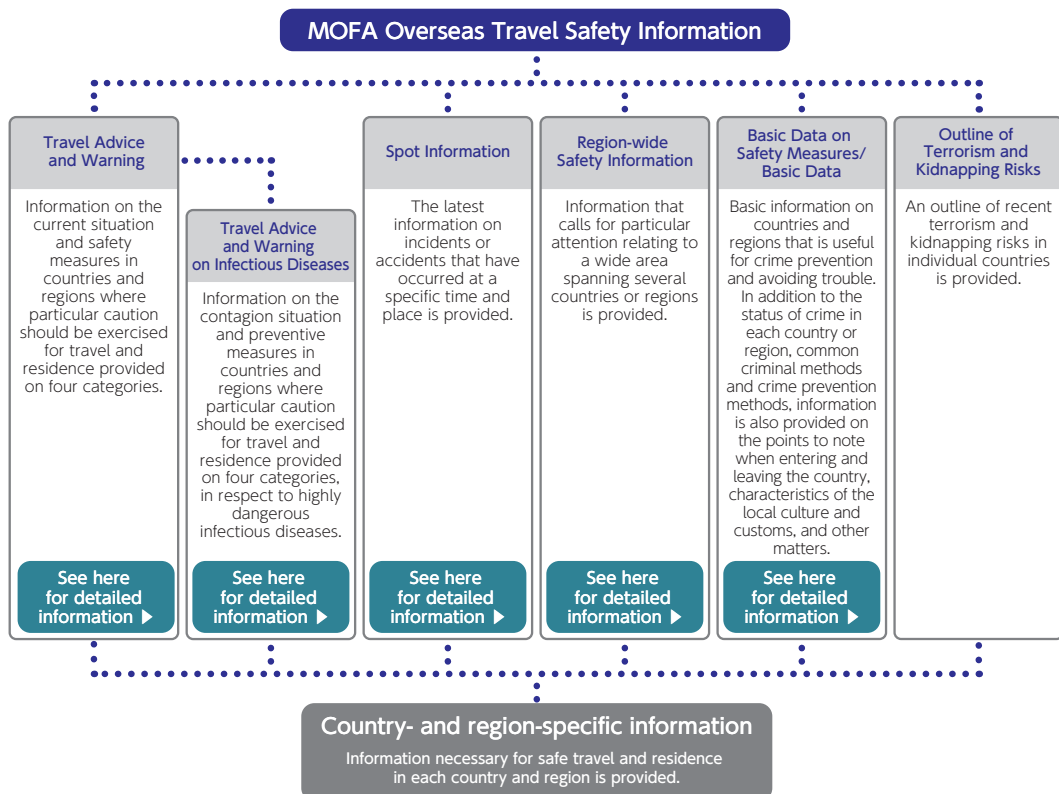
fever, dengue fever and malaria, also spread throughout the world.

## (2) Safety Measures for Japanese Nationals Overseas

The number of Japanese nationals receiving support or protection from Japanese diplomatic missions overseas and the Japan-Taiwan Exchange Association fell in 2020 to a total of 14,771, given that the number of people traveling overseas did not significantly increase due to the impact of COVID-19. Nevertheless, the number of cases of support or protection increased to 21,762 as Japanese embassies, consulates-general and other diplomatic missions worldwide frequently assisted Japanese residents and travelers who had difficulty returning to Japan, and communicated COVID-19 information.

The safety of Japanese nationals is threatened constantly in various regions throughout the

### Main Overseas Safety Information posted on MOFA's Overseas Safety Website (structure and overview)



world. In particular, with the prolonged impact of COVID-19, Japanese nationals traveling abroad must be prepared for multiple risks such as terrorist attacks amid an infectious disease pandemic, continued restrictions on entry and movement imposed on the travelers of various countries and various constraints such as reduced flights. In addition, because it is becoming more difficult than ever before to respond in cases where such travelers are unfortunate enough to encounter a terrorist attack or other incident or accident while overseas, the need for every possible effort to be expended on overseas safety measures is increasing all the more.

Based on this perspective, MOFA works to enhance the safety awareness of Japanese nationals and promote its safety measures by disseminating information widely to the general public.

Specifically, MOFA added panels to its Overseas Safety website page for easy access to the necessary information, and issues the latest safety information for each country and region on the website. In addition, MOFA emails the latest safety information on travel destinations to Japanese residents and travelers who have registered with Overseas Residential Registrations, or Tabi-Regi, MOFA's overseas travel registration service.

MOFA strives to enhance the knowledge and capability of the Japanese people concerning overseas safety measures and crisis management through seminars and training. In 2021 MOFA held virtual seminars on safety measures inside and outside Japan to address the need for safety measures taking into account the prolonged impact of COVID-19. Furthermore, Consular Affairs Bureau staff delivered lectures in a virtual format at seminars held throughout Japan by domestic organizations, associations and other groups (12 times overseas and 11 times within Japan).

In addition, the public and private sectors are cooperating to advance safety measures even overseas, and the diplomatic missions in each country host regular meetings of Security Consultation and Liaison Committees. Even

amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the diplomatic missions overseas are continuing to share information, exchange opinions and bolster collaboration in preparation for emergencies with local Japanese nationals in their respective countries, including by hosting such events online.

Following the terrorist attack in Dhaka in July 2016, MOFA developed Golgo 13's Security Guidelines for Japanese SMEs Abroad, with the aim of raising the awareness of international cooperation personnel, as well as small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), students studying abroad and short-term travelers, who have limited access to information on safety. MOFA continued to promote awareness by adding cases and commentary on addressing the combined risk of an infectious disease pandemic and terrorist attacks and other composite risks to the Security Guidelines.

Furthermore, with regard to Japanese students studying overseas, MOFA personnel hold lectures at universities and other educational institutions, on the grounds that many such institutions have not accumulated sufficient expertise or experience in safety measures and dealing with emergency situations, and requested their cooperation in raising the submission rate of Overseas Residential Registrations. Requests for lectures



from educational institutions declined in 2021 due to the impact of COVID-19, but MOFA nevertheless continues to strive to help those institutions to raise awareness of safety measures among their students and build in-house crisis management structures, including by holding online lectures on safety measures. MOFA is moving ahead with efforts to connect government agencies with educational institutions, overseas study agencies and students studying abroad, by beginning an automatic Tabi-Regi registration system with some overseas study institutions.

As for safety measures for short-term travelers, MOFA is engaged in PR activities mainly focused on promoting registration to the above-mentioned Tabi-Regi, including by distributing information cards and the *Kaigai Anzen Tora no Maki* (handbook for overseas travelers).

As of November 2021, the number of travelers who had registered on Tabi-Regi since its launch in July 2014 exceeded 6.75 million, reflecting initiatives for enhancing the system's convenience and activities that aim at promoting registration.

## **2 Consular Service and Assistance for Japanese Living Overseas**

### **(1) Improving Consular Service**

With the aim of providing quality consular services to Japanese nationals overseas, MOFA conducts a questionnaire survey every year on services such as consular staff's attitudes in over-the-counter and telephone responses as well as work implementation status at diplomatic missions overseas. The survey conducted in January 2021 covered 145 diplomatic missions overseas and received valid responses from 18,349 people. The survey results suggested that respondents were for the most part satisfied with the level of consular services provided by diplomatic missions overseas. Nevertheless, some respondents also submitted views calling for improvements in consular staff's attitude to users, including that staff seem to adopt matter-of-fact attitudes and terms

of speech. MOFA takes such user feedback seriously, and will continue its efforts to enhance services and make improvements so as to provide better consular services that are oriented to the perspective of its users.

In addition, MOFA will further digitalize consular procedures, including online application of passports, visas and certificates, as well as introduce cashless payment approach for fees in order to increase user convenience.

### **(2) Passports: Maintaining trustworthiness, enhancing convenience and making administrative tasks more efficient**

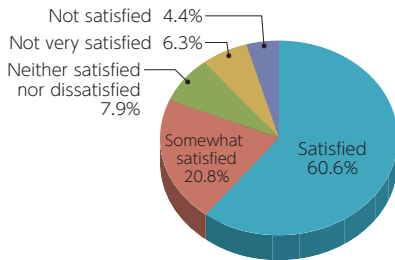
The issuance of Japanese passports has continued to slow down since 2020, due to the global decline in overseas travel as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The number of passports issued in 2021 was 630,000, falling by 53.1% compared to 2020. In addition, there were approximately 24.4 million valid passports in circulation as of the end of December, falling by 11.9% compared to 2020.

In July 2021, municipalities began issuing paper COVID-19 vaccination certificates for overseas travel that conform with Japan's own specifications. Since December, Japan has also issued certificates with a 2D barcode (electronic version) for overseas use. The barcode adopts the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Visible Digital Seal for Non-Constrained Environments (VDS-NC) standard, which uses a system that authenticates genuine passports.

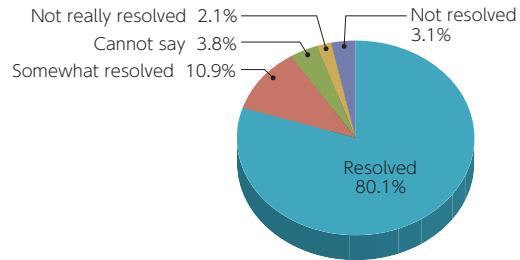
On the basis of the "Digital Government Execution Plan" that was amended in December 2020, MOFA has been working closely with relevant ministries and agencies, including the Digital Agency, to prepare for the launch of online passport applications by the end of March 2023, taking into account the opinions of diverse stakeholders received at regular consultations with prefectures and from expert study groups. Specifically, a website for online applications will be created on the My Number Portal (a government-run online administrative service). Applicants in Japan will

## Results of questionnaire survey on users of consular services (FY2021: 141 diplomatic missions)

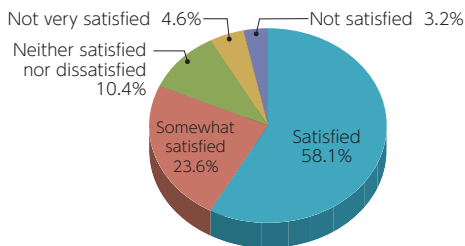
Overall, how satisfied are you with the consular services you have received?



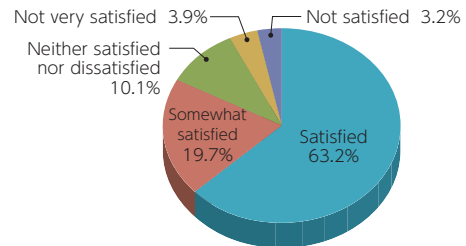
Has your problem (application, notification, consultations, etc.) been resolved through the use of consular services?



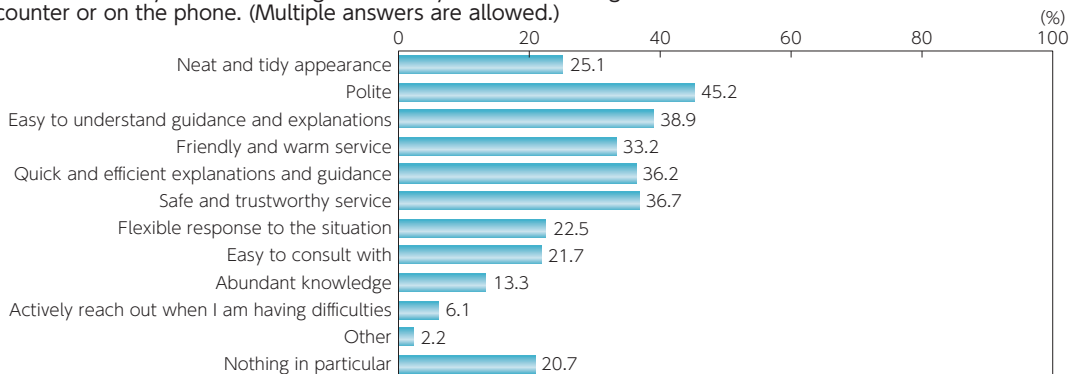
How satisfied are you with the knowledge of duties and processing speed of the consular services?



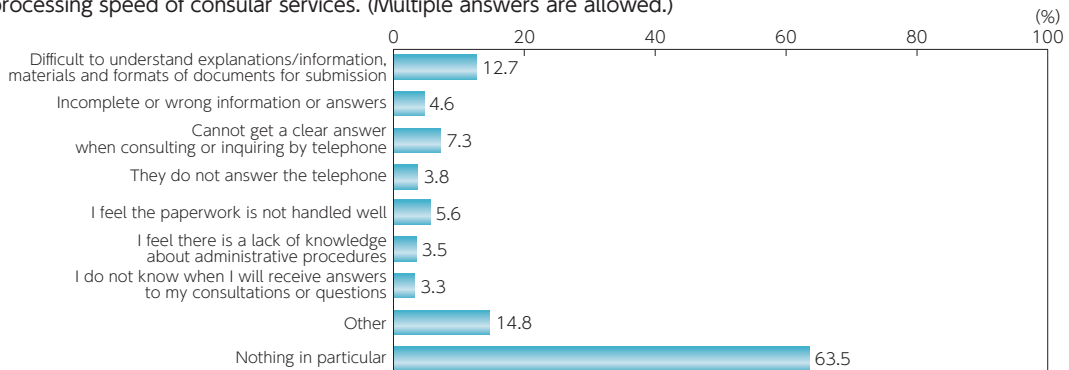
How satisfied were you with the customer service manners of staff while receiving consular services?



Please select any of the following items that you found to be “good” about the staff at the consular service counter or on the phone. (Multiple answers are allowed.)

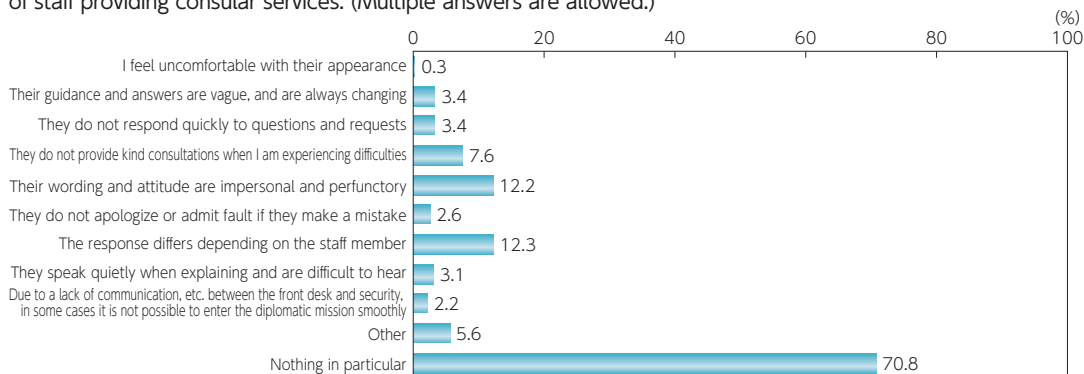


Please select all that apply if you feel that improvement needs to be made for the knowledge of duties and processing speed of consular services. (Multiple answers are allowed.)

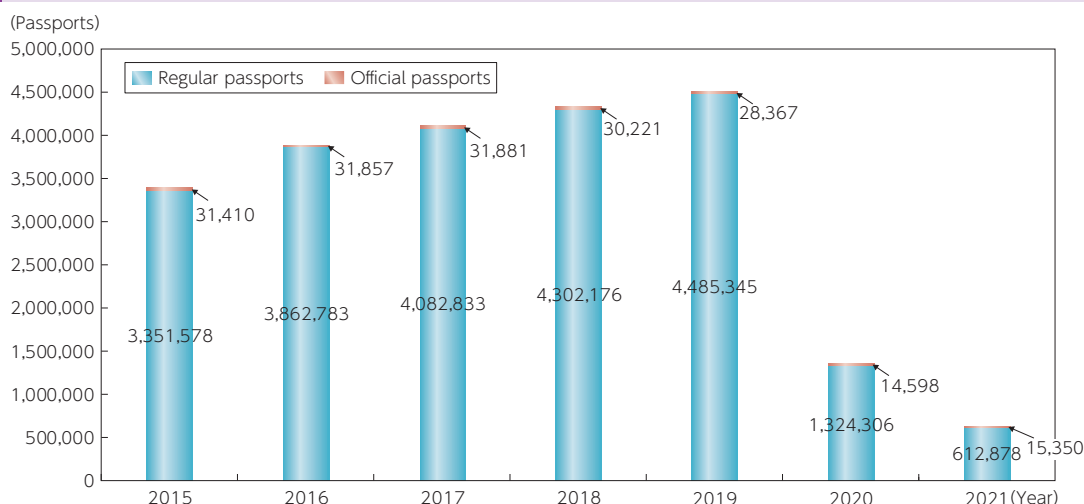




Please select all that apply if you feel that improvement needs to be made for the customer service manners of staff providing consular services. (Multiple answers are allowed.)



### Changes in the number of passports issued



Note: Official passports include diplomatic passports.

Source: Prepared based on passport statistics for 2021 (MOFA's Passport Division)

be able to take a photograph of their face and create a signature and submit them via a smartphone or other devices. In principle, this will make it unnecessary to appear at the counter in person when applying to switch to (renew) passports that do not require submission of a transcript or extract of the family register. At the same time, MOFA will use digital technology to make passport operations more efficient and engage in legislation development for this purpose.

As applicants will be able to refer to electronic certificates of the family register from FY2024, MOFA will make efforts to eliminate the need to appear at the counter in person in principle for

new applications as well. In addition, in order to better prevent passport forgery and alteration, MOFA will introduce next-generation passports with laser printing on thermoplastic material. MOFA has also begun considering the possibility of issuing passports that can be delivered upon request, in preparation for the development and design of a system for safe and secure issuance of passports through means such as identity verification using the Individual Number Card (My Number Card).

In a passport index (number of travel destination countries not requiring visas) that was announced by a private-sector UK company in

January 2022, Japanese passports ranked first out of 111 countries, the same as Singapore. MOFA will continue to engage in maintaining the trustworthiness of Japanese passports while enhancing convenience for applicants and making passport administrative operation more efficient.

### (3) Overseas Voting

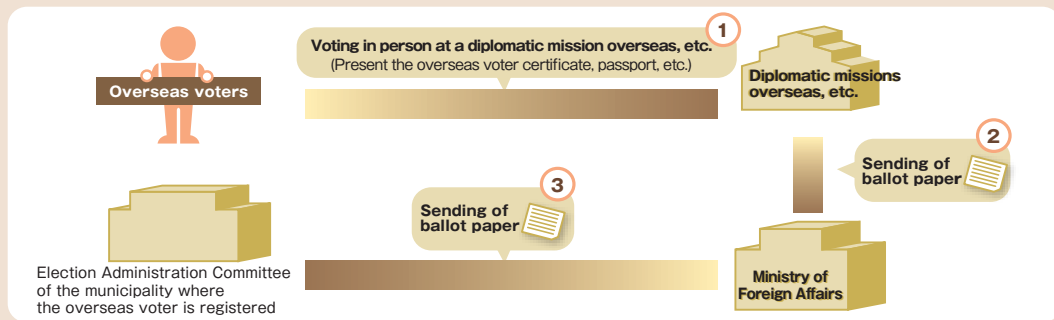
The overseas voting system allows Japanese voters living overseas to vote in national elections. In order to vote through the overseas voting system, it is necessary to be registered in advance

on the overseas voter directory managed by the election board of the city or town government and to obtain overseas voter identification. Starting in June 2018, in addition to the conventional method of applying through a diplomatic mission overseas after moving there, Japanese nationals can now apply at their municipal service counter at the same time as filing their notice of moving overseas. As a result, there is no longer a need to appear in person at a diplomatic mission overseas after moving outside Japan, which simplifies procedures. Voters can vote by choosing one of the three methods of

#### Voting in elections for overseas voters

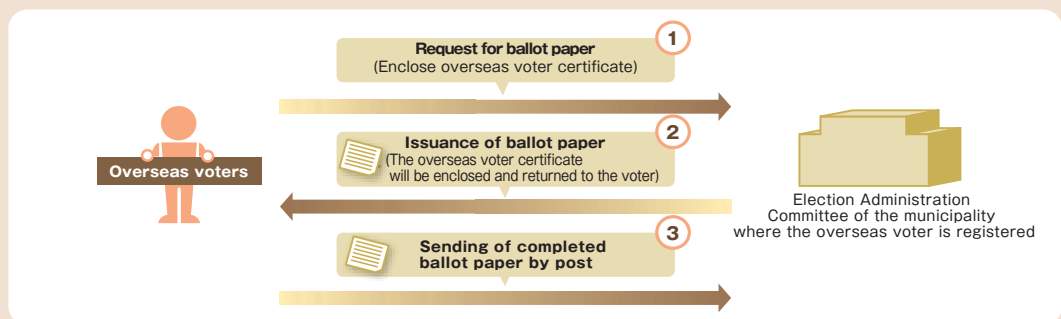
##### a. Voting at a foreign diplomatic mission

Voters who are registered on the overseas electoral roll may vote by presenting their overseas voter certificates, passports and other necessary documents to a diplomatic mission overseas set up as a polling station. (The period and time of voting differs depending on the diplomatic mission.)



##### b. Postal voting

Send the overseas voter certificate and request form for ballot paper to the chairperson of the Election Administration Committee of the municipality that you are registered with to request for a ballot paper. Complete and return the ballot paper to the chairperson of the Election Administration Committee of the municipality, ensuring that the ballot paper reaches the polling station by the time the voting ends on the date of the election in Japan (8:00 p.m. Japan time). (Voting is carried out from the day after the date of public notice.)



##### c. Voting in Japan

In the case where the overseas voter returns temporarily to Japan at the time of the elections, or where the overseas voter is not yet registered on the electoral roll in Japan after returning to Japan, he or she may vote through the same voting methods as voters in Japan (early voting, absentee voting, voting on election day)

voting, a) voting at diplomatic missions overseas, b) voting by mail, or c) voting in Japan.

The diplomatic missions overseas have been making efforts to spread the overseas voting system and to increase the number of registered voters by publicizing the overseas voting system to the territories under their jurisdiction and carrying out a visiting service for the registration of Japanese nationals living in remote areas. In addition, whenever an election is held, diplomatic missions overseas are responsible for voting administration, including PR prior to elections. In 2021, for the 49th general election of the House of Representatives, voting at diplomatic missions overseas was conducted for the 15th time involving 226 diplomatic missions and offices. Ahead of the regular election of the House of Councillors to be held in 2022, MOFA will continue its PR and other activities to increase the number of registered voters and promote voting at diplomatic missions overseas.

#### **(4) Assistance for Japanese Nationals Living and Engaging in Activities Overseas**

##### **A Japanese Schools and Supplementary Education Schools**

Education for children is one of the major concerns for Japanese nationals living abroad. In cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, MOFA provides assistance to Japanese Schools (partial assistance for school building rental fees, remuneration for locally hired teachers, and safety measures expenses) so that the overseas school children at the age of compulsory education in Japan can receive a level of education equivalent to that in Japan. MOFA also provides the same assistance for Japanese Schools to Supplementary Education Schools (educational institutions established to maintain children's academic ability, such as Japanese language proficiency) mainly in areas where Japanese Schools are not located.

In 2021, additional assistance was provided to Japanese Schools and Supplementary Education

Schools whose school operations were affected by the decrease in students due to the COVID-19 pandemic. MOFA also provided assistance until March 2022 to Japan societies and Japanese Schools that offer e-libraries and online learning services, so that children aged 3 to 18 living abroad can study while taking measures against infectious diseases.

##### **B Medical/Health Measures**

MOFA gathers information on outbreaks of infectious diseases overseas and provides this information to a broad audience through the overseas safety website, websites of diplomatic missions overseas, emails and other means. Furthermore, in order to provide health advice through consultations to Japanese nationals residing in countries where the medical situation is poor, MOFA dispatches medical teams with the cooperation of domestic medical institutions (not implemented in FY2021 due to the impact of COVID-19). MOFA also organizes health and safety virtual lectures by medical specialists for regions where infectious diseases or air pollution are becoming serious issues.

##### **C Support for Japanese Nationals Living Overseas and Japanese Descendants (Nikkei)**

Between March and December 2021, in order to support Japanese nationals living overseas and Japanese descendants (Nikkei) whose lifestyles are being disrupted by the spread of COVID-19, MOFA carried out the Program to Strengthen Livelihood and Business Foundations for Japanese Nationals Overseas and People of Japanese Descent (Nikkei), which supported projects that are being implemented by Japan societies, Japanese chambers of commerce and industry and Nikkei groups overseas. The projects included PCR testing, distribution of masks and disinfectants, and other awareness raising in order to halt the spread of infections, as well as legal and tax consultation services to nurture business environments. Until March 2022, MOFA also carried out a

program that provided medical and psychological counseling to Japanese nationals living overseas.

#### **D Responses to Other Needs**

In order to eliminate the complexity of various procedures for Japanese nationals living overseas (such as converting Japanese driver's licenses, obtaining residence/work permits) and to make living abroad more comfortable, MOFA continues to engage with the authorities in the respective countries where Japanese nationals reside.

For example, when converting driver's licenses issued in foreign countries to Japanese driver's licenses, all persons with driver's licenses issued in a foreign country are exempted from taking certain sections of the Japanese driver's license examination (theory/practical), when it has been confirmed that they have no problems with driving vehicles. On the other hand, as it is mandatory for Japanese nationals to take driving tests when converting Japanese driver's licenses to local licenses in some countries and states, MOFA is calling for those countries to simplify the procedures for license conversion to the same degree as in Japan.

MOFA also supports victims of atomic bombings living overseas in applying for the authorization of Atomic Bomb Diseases and for the issuance of Health Check Certificates, via diplomatic and consular missions. Furthermore, for Japanese nationals struggling with loneliness and social isolation, MOFA offers referrals to groups with consultation services (see the Column on page 367).

### **3 Cooperation with Emigrants and Japanese Descendants (Nikkei)**

The migration of Japanese nationals overseas has a history of 153 years, as of 2021. There are over 3.8 million overseas Japanese and Japanese descendants (Nikkei) around the world, with especially large numbers residing in North, Central

and South America. They make a significant contribution to the development of the countries in various fields, including politics, the economy, education and culture, and at the same time, they act as a bridge between Japan and these countries in developing close relations.

Together with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), MOFA provides cooperation in Central and South America, where over two million Nikkei live. Various forms of assistance are offered, including welfare support for aging emigrants, training in Japan for Nikkei people, and dispatch of volunteers to the local Nikkei communities. MOFA is also working to further strengthen relationships with Nikkei communities based on the report submitted to the Minister for Foreign Affairs from the Panel of Experts on Collaborating with Nikkei Communities in Latin America and the Caribbean in May 2017.

Thus far, invitation programs to Japan for Nikkei leaders in various fields, and from various countries and regions, have been carried out in North, Central and South America. In addition, efforts are underway to strengthen relations with Nikkei people in these regions through close cooperation between the diplomatic missions in each country and Nikkei communities, including actively creating opportunities for senior officials from Japan to meet with Nikkei persons during their visits to these countries.

In 2021, the 61st Convention of Nikkei and Japanese Abroad was held virtually due to the impact of COVID-19. Accordingly, the welcome reception hosted by the Foreign Minister was cancelled. However, like the online forum held in 2020, a video message from Foreign Minister Motegi was played. Going forward, along with providing support to Japanese abroad and Nikkei people, MOFA will promote cooperation with the younger generation and strengthen their bonds with Japan.

## 4 The Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction (the Hague Convention) and its Implementation

The Hague Convention is designed as an international mechanism for addressing disputes arising from the wrongful removal or retention of children across borders in the belief that the interests of children are of paramount importance. It requires cooperation between Contracting States to the Convention for returning children to their state of habitual residence and establishing opportunities for transboundary parent-child access.

This Convention came into force in Japan on April 1, 2014. As of December 31, 2021, 101 countries including Japan are parties to the Convention.

The Convention is implemented through mutual cooperation among the governmental agencies designated as the Central Authority in Contracting States to the Convention. In Japan, MOFA as the Central Authority avails itself of experts in various fields and provides assistance to both the parent whose child was removed and the parent who removed the child for the resolution of child removal cases, in communication and cooperation with foreign Central Authorities.

In the seven years and nine months between the entry into force of the Convention and the end of December 2021, MOFA received a total number of 468 applications: 302 applications seeking the return of the child and 166 applications seeking access to the child. Of the cases seeking the return of the child from Japan to another country,

children were returned in 55 cases and conclusions were reached not to return the child in 43 cases. Of the cases requesting the return of the child from another country to Japan, children were returned in 53 cases and conclusions were reached not to return the child in 29 cases.

In March 2021, MOFA, together with the Hague Conference on Private International Law, co-hosted the “Web Seminar on the 1980 Hague Convention in the Asia Pacific” with a view to strengthening cooperation in the Asia-Pacific region on the Hague Convention. It was attended by judges and officials of Central Authorities from 12 countries and regions.

In addition, in order to make the Hague Convention known to a broad public, MOFA sent leaflets on the Hague Convention (electronic version) to our Embassies and Consulates and posted them on our websites. It also holds online seminars to raise awareness among Japanese nationals living overseas, as well as seminars in Japan for local governments and relevant institutions such as bar associations. MOFA also puts efforts into PR activities by creating awareness-raising videos on the Hague Convention and posting them on MOFA's website and video-sharing platforms.

### Number of Applications for Assistance Received by the MOFA Based on the Implementation Act of the Hague Convention (as of the end of December 2021)

	Application for assistance in child's return	Application for assistance in visitation or contacts with child
Applications related to children located in Japan	164	126
Applications related to children located overseas	138	40

## Measures Against Loneliness and Isolation Among Japanese Expatriates — “Undesirable Loneliness” as a Cross-Border Issue

Ozora Koki, CEO, NPO “Anata no ibasho” (IbashoChat.org)

In February, Japan appointed a Minister for Loneliness and Isolation and launched measures to counter the issue. Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Japan was already facing a serious situation with regard to problems such as suicide, child abuse, and domestic violence (DV). One of the factors behind this situation was the “undesirable loneliness” that came from not having anyone to rely on. However, this problem further manifested when interpersonal bonds were cut off during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have set up a chat consultation service that everyone can use free of charge and anonymously regardless of their age and sex, and which offers advice and support around the clock, every day of the year, to those facing “undesirable loneliness.” With volunteer counselors living overseas participating in this activity, we have built a 24-hour consultation support system by having these volunteers respond to consultations during the night and late-night hours when the number of consultations reaches its peak. In March, soon after our proposal for the government to work as one to address loneliness and isolation was accepted and the corresponding measures were launched in Japan, the counselors received a consultation from a Japanese child living abroad who was being abused by a parent. Due to the nature of chat consultations, although we had previously received consultations from Japanese nationals overseas, this was the first time we had received a consultation that called for emergency response (crisis intervention in collaboration with child consultation centers, police and other parties). However, Japan’s child consultation centers are unable to respond to child abuse cases involving Japanese nationals overseas, and we were also unable to encourage inquirers who did not understand the local language to approach the local authorities and support organizations for assistance. Moreover, private-sector consultation services like ours did not have a system for communicating with MOFA or diplomatic missions overseas. We were literally at our wits’ end.

Of course, problems such as suicide, child abuse, and DV also arise among Japanese nationals overseas. This group is particularly susceptible to loneliness and isolation partly because they face difficulties such as language and cultural barriers as well as differences in lifestyles. In fact, the second most common cause of death for Japanese nationals overseas is suicide (Source: 2020 Statistics on Assistance Provided by MOFA to Japanese Nationals Overseas). MOFA provides various forms of assistance through its diplomatic missions overseas, but it is necessary to further strengthen measures, including cooperation with private organizations, to address the problem of loneliness and isolation among Japanese nationals overseas. In view of that, we submitted a request to Foreign Minister Motegi on measures to address loneliness and isolation among Japanese nationals overseas, and proposed that MOFA commence reviews on concrete measures. As a result, since July, MOFA has been working in cooperation with five domestic consultation services, including “Anata no ibasho,” to provide information on these consultation services to Japanese nationals overseas. Inquirers who require emergency assistance are supported through the use of a communication system established between the MOFA Headquarters and the consultation service providers. There were actual cases in which emergency response was undertaken, and the measures to address loneliness and isolation among Japanese nationals overseas are gradually producing results. Since the launch of this initiative, our consultation service has been responding to consultations from about 200 Japanese nationals overseas every month.



The author (right) submitting the request on measures to address loneliness and isolation among Japanese nationals abroad, to Foreign Minister Motegi



There are also cases where calls from Japanese nationals living in the United States are answered by Japanese volunteer counselors living in the United Kingdom, for example. “Undesirable loneliness” is a problem that extends across national borders, so the provision of support is similarly borderless. We will continue to put our best efforts into providing consultation support, so that the cooperation between MOFA and our global network of counselors can be even more effective toward eradicating “undesirable loneliness” among Japanese nationals abroad.



A 24-hour consultation support center in Tokyo

## 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



Press Conference by Foreign Minister Hayashi  
(November 11, Tokyo)

#### Dissemination of Information through Press Conferences

Minister for Foreign Affairs	101 times
Press Secretary	40 times
<b>Total</b>	<b>141 times</b>

\*From January 1 to December 31, 2021

#### Dissemination of Information through Documents

Statements by the Minister for Foreign Affairs	24 times
Statements by the Press Secretary	50 times
Press releases by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs	1,453 times
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,527 times</b>

\*From January 1 to December 31, 2021

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.



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



MOFA's website in the Japanese language provides a variety of contents for Japanese nationals across a wide range of age groups, including the "Anything Report from Around the World," "Find Out about International Situations" and "MOFA for Kids." In particular, "MOFA for Kids" publishes contents for young people such as videos and quizzes 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. In 2021, as face-to-face activities were significantly constrained due to the impact of COVID-19 for two years in succession, efforts were made to provide information through the Internet, such as live streaming of the regular press conferences by the Foreign Minister and

posting of video messages delivered at international conferences on social media.

#### (4) Dialogue with Japanese Nationals

With the notion of "Public Relations through Dialogue," MOFA promotes direct dialogue between the people of Japan and the Foreign Minister, the State Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs and MOFA officials.

In December, Foreign Minister Hayashi and Japanese staff who serve as heads or in other positions of the Japanese offices of international organizations, and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Uesugi Kentaro and Japanese staff of the Japanese offices of UN agencies inside the United Nations University building, sat around a table respectively and held lively discussions



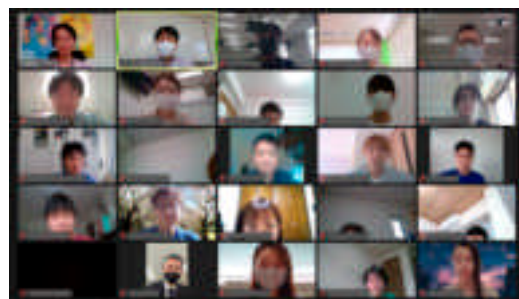
Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki responding to a question from a "child reporter" on "Children's Kasumigaseki Tour Day" (August 18 and 19, MOFA)



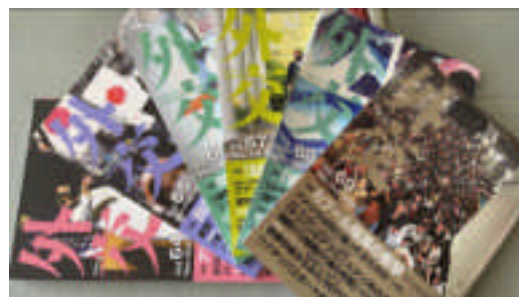
Lectures on the International Situations (October 7, UN Association of Japan Fukuoka Head Office)



One of the Diplomatic Talks (June 28, Kagawa University)



One of the Diplomatic Talks (June 28, Kagawa University)



Periodical journal "Diplomacy"

regarding the activities of the organizations and their partnerships with Japan.

At the “Dialogue with Students,” a MOFA seminar for university students and others held online in February, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki Hayato gave an opening address, and Foreign Ministry officials exchanged views with a large number of the participating students during the lectures. At the “Children’s Kasumigaseki Tour Day” held online in August, Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs Suzuki answered various questions from elementary and junior high school students regarding diplomacy and other matters in the “Children’s Press Conference.”

Various programs in which MOFA sends its officials to venues such as international exchange organizations, universities and high schools throughout Japan were conducted online (some in-person) due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Among them are “Lectures on the International Situations,” “Diplomatic Talks,” “Talks for High School,” “International Issue Presentation Contest” for university students and “Visits by elementary, junior and senior-high school students to MOFA.” 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 officials also give lectures on Japan’s ODA policies and specific measures to numerous schools in online “ODA Delivery Lectures.” 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 2021 the journal took up a range of diplomatic challenges as themes, such as the outlook for the post-COVID-19 world, climate change and economic security, and featured a large number of essays and other articles from renowned experts both inside and outside Japan.

Moreover, MOFA also produced various easy-to-understand pamphlets for a broad readership as well as videos in order to promote a deeper understanding on the organizational structure and foreign policies of MOFA. In addition to the above, MOFA hears comments and opinions from the public through 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 that have been transferred to the Diplomatic Archives and made public since then reached approximately 36,000 by the end of 2021.

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 2021, MOFA received 1,245 requests for disclosure, and documents totaling 81,068 pages were disclosed.

## 2 Strengthening the Foreign Policy Implementation Structure

As Japan faces drastic changes in the power balance of the international community, the rapid development of an ever more severe and uncertain security environment surrounding Japan, and the increasingly fluid international situation caused by the global spread of COVID-19, MOFA must enhance its foreign policy implementation structure while also looking ahead to the post-COVID-19 world, in order to vigorously advance diplomacy for maintaining and developing an international order based on universal values. 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. In addition, as human resources are a key asset to diplomacy, and as distribution of limited resources in terms of personnel, budget and time must be focused on diplomatic activities that can only be carried out by staff members, MOFA is promoting digitalization, work efficiency and productivity, in line with the priority areas to be reinforced over the next five years.

Diplomatic missions overseas, such as embassies and consulates-general, not only represent Japan, demonstrate its presence and engage in diplomatic activities, 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 response to COVID-19, overseas missions disseminate relevant information to a broad group of Japanese abroad in a timely and appropriate manner through their websites, e-mails and other mediums, such as Travel Advice and Warning on Infectious Diseases, country and region-specific infection situations, and restrictions on entry and movement.

In January 2022, Japan established a consulate-general in Da Nang in Viet Nam. As a result, the number of diplomatic missions overseas as of FY2021 is 230 (153 embassies, 67 consulates-general and 10 permanent missions). 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 the important strategic locations toward realizing “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” Japan will deepen its relations with the Da Nang region in a multi-layered manner by establishing a base for information gathering on security and economic affairs in the area.

In FY2022, Japan will establish a new embassy in Kiribati. As a key junction in the South Pacific, Kiribati has an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) that is the largest among Pacific Island countries and the 12th largest in the world. Deepening Japan-Kiribati cooperative relations is essential for the realization of FOIP. Furthermore, Kiribati is an important partner that has often supported Japan’s position at international fora. It is vital that Japan establish an embassy there to continue maintaining and strengthening the favorable bilateral relationship and enhancing the system for more effective gathering of various information and provision of assistance in emergency situations.

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



## The 50 year journey of the Diplomatic Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

The Diplomatic Archives is a facility of MOFA for preserving, publishing, compiling and displaying historically important materials. It was founded on April 15, 1971, and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2021.

MOFA has always been aware of the importance of referring to past negotiations and precedents. In 1870, a year after the ministry was established, a bureau was set up to manage documents, and ever since, MOFA has placed an emphasis on classifying and preserving diplomatic records. Ishii Kikujiro who once served as Foreign Minister said "Whether documentation is complete or not determines final success in foreign policy." Those words symbolize the ministry's stance of attaching importance to documents, in that the management of documents can even influence the outcomes of diplomacy. Additionally, following World War I, the U.S. and European countries embarked on making the background to diplomatic events available to the public, including by publishing compilations of diplomatic documents, and MOFA likewise began disclosing diplomatic documents. The first such volume was published in 1936, and MOFA carries on the work of compiling the Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy (Nihongaikobunsho) up to the present day.

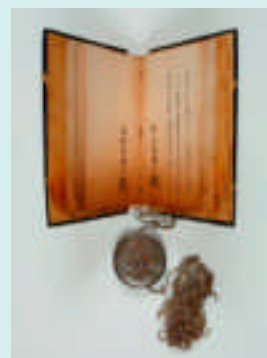
With this foundation of managing and publishing documents, and amid the growth in interest in the historical facts of Japan's foreign policy after the end of World War II, the Diplomatic Archives was opened in 1971 as a facility for providing access to historical documents from the pre-war era that had been kept in MOFA. Subsequently, from 1976 MOFA began disclosing post-war diplomatic records as a voluntary initiative, and furthermore, in May 2010 the transfer and disclosure of post-war diplomatic records were advanced significantly, as a result of an independent MOFA rule stipulating that records created or received more than 30 years ago will in principle be made available to the public. When the Diplomatic Archives was initially established, it held only about 50,000 files from the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate through to the pre-war Showa Period, but the number of files now exceeds 110,000. The historical documents held at the Archives range from the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between Japan and the United States, which was signed in 1858, to records of post-war diplomatic negotiations, such as negotiations relating to the reversion of Okinawa and the normalization of diplomatic relations between Japan and China. The custody of records of more recent periods is also being steadily transferred to the Diplomatic Archives, which is making them available to the public. The Public Records and Archives Management Act (enforced in April 2011) positions public documents as "an



Front entrance of the Diplomatic Archives



MOFA records concerning Japan-U.S. negotiations just prior to the start of the Pacific War (The Archives holds over 100,000 files of this kind).



The Treaty of Amity and Commerce between Japan and the United States (an Important Cultural Property), which was concluded at the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate.

intellectual resource to be shared by the people in supporting the basis of sound democracy” and makes it mandatory for the historical documents held in the Diplomatic Archives to be preserved in perpetuity. At the Archives, steady efforts have been made on a daily basis to arrange documents, control their environment and restore them in order to preserve the common property. The historical documents that have been passed down present the journey of Japan’s foreign policy, and serve as material to understand Japan’s history.

The Diplomatic Archives has been making much effort not only to preserve historical documents, but also to promote their active utilization. The Archives provide access to a broad range of historical facts through the Reading Room’s reference support, publishing the series of “Documents on Japanese Foreign Policy,” holding exhibits of precious historical documents, and making documents available on the Internet in response to the demands of the times. Making large amounts of highly reliable historical documents available to the public and verifying historical facts are important also in terms of encouraging an amicable resolution to issues of the recognition of history. Diplomatic documents are very important in nurturing Japanese history and building a future of international goodwill. The Diplomatic Archives will continue endeavoring to make its facilities available to as many people as possible.

### Diplomatic Archives

5-3, 1-chome, Azabudai, Minato Ward, Tokyo, 106-0041 Japan

Opening hours: 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

(Excludes Saturdays, Sundays, national holidays, Year-end and New Year Holidays (December 28 to January 4), and days on which the Diplomatic Archives announces that it will be temporarily closed. (The opening hours could be changed due to the situation of COVID-19. We may recommend checking the latest information on our website or by telephone.))

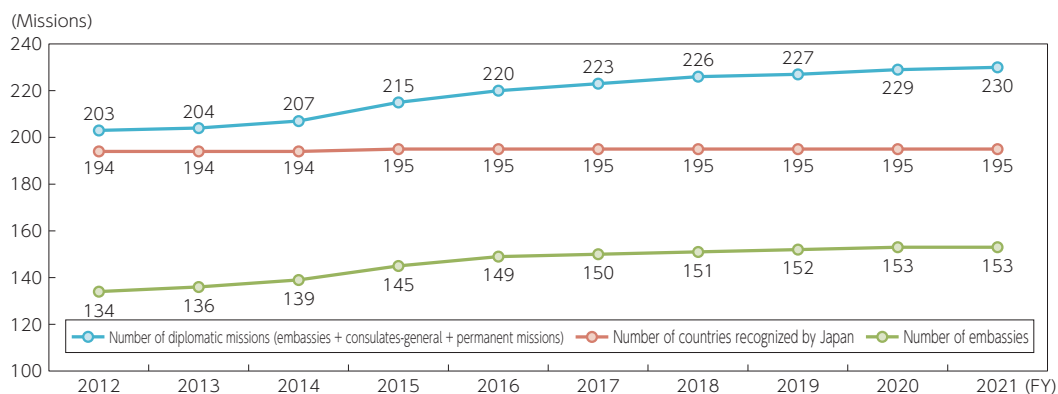
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/about/hq/record/index.html>



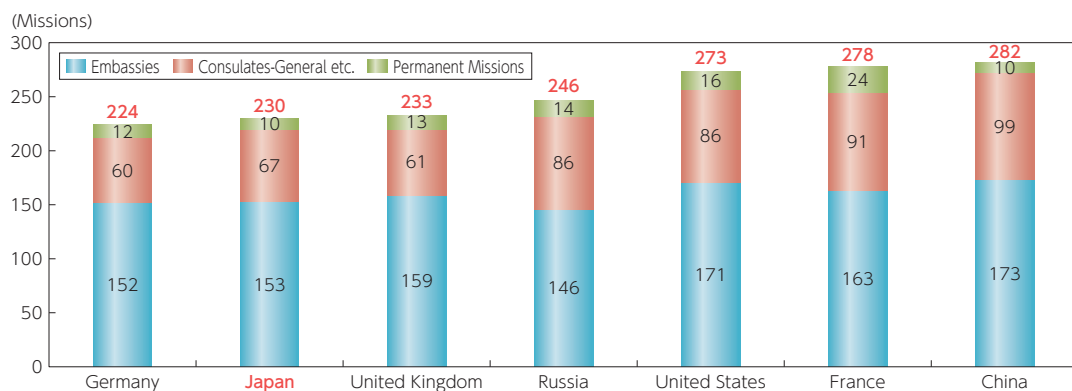
increase the number of staff members to support diplomacy at the MOFA headquarters and diplomatic missions overseas. In the context of the Government’s policy to reduce the overall personnel expenses due to the current severe budget situation, the number of staff members at MOFA was increased to 6,430 in FY2021 (6,358

in FY2020) in order to address bilateral relations and regional situations, advance Japan’s Proactive Contribution to Peace policy, conduct strategic communications, promote economic diplomacy, contribute to addressing global issues, and implement protection and safety measures for Japanese nationals abroad. The number of staff members,

### Changes in the Number of Diplomatic Missions



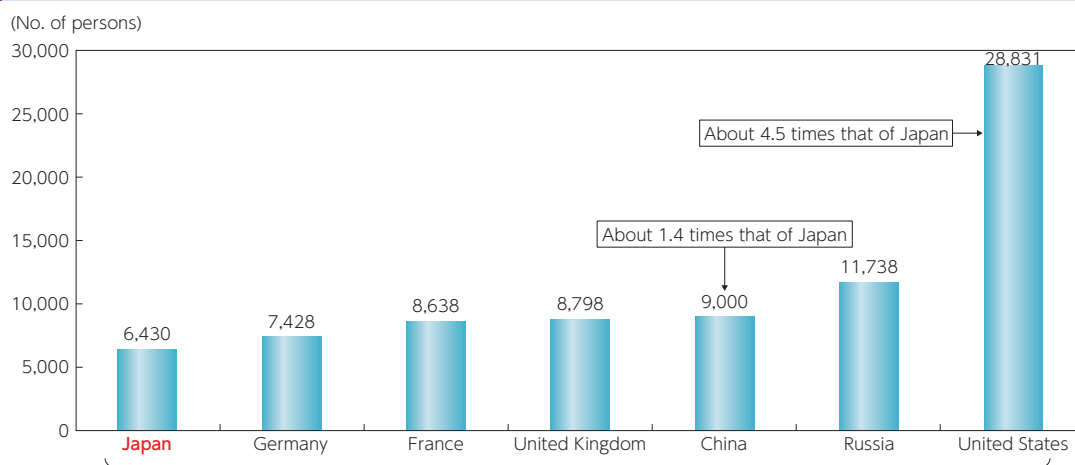
## Comparison of the Number of Diplomatic Missions of Japan with Major Countries



Note: As of January 2022

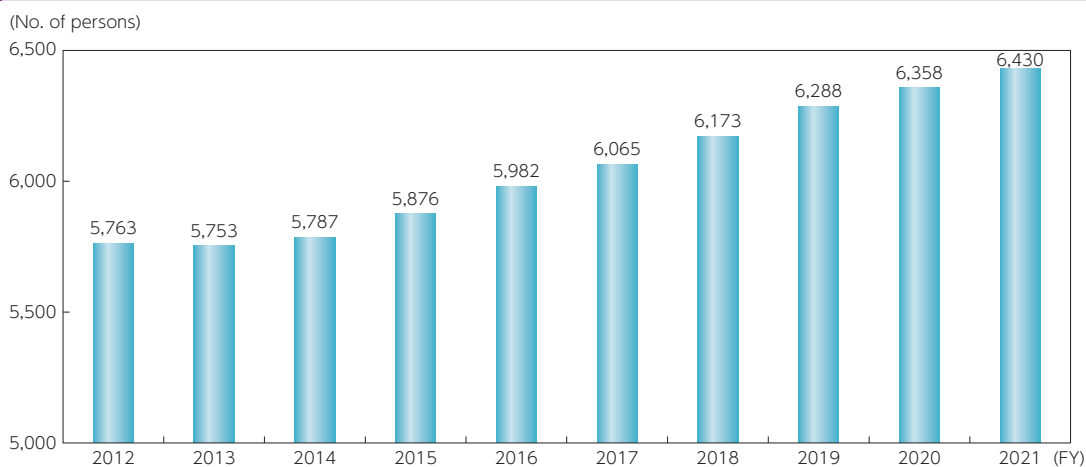
Average number of diplomatic missions among these seven countries: Approximately 252

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



\* based on the FY2021 survey result, etc.

## Number of Staff Members at MOFA



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 FY2022, MOFA will increase its workforce by 74 staff.

MOFA appropriated 709.7 billion yen in the budget for FY2021 (of which 13.8 billion yen related to digital is appropriated in the budget of the Cabinet Secretariat and later the Digital Agency) in order to overcome COVID-19 and advance “diplomacy with robustness and a sense of caring.” In addition, MOFA appropriated 146.4 billion yen in the supplementary budget for FY2021 (of which 4.1 billion yen is appropriated in the Digital Agency budget). The funding appropriated in the budget included contribution to the COVAX Facility's Advance Market Commitment (AMC). Accordingly, Japan pledged 800 million US dollars at the COVAX AMC Summit in June. Furthermore, MOFA appropriated funding mainly to support developing countries in Asia, Oceania, the Middle East, Africa and other regions in order to prevent the spread of COVID-19 and improve their humanitarian situation, and for supporting the overseas expansion of Japanese companies.

MOFA's FY2022 initial government budget proposal appropriated 707.4 billion yen (of which a digital-related budget of 17.0 billion yen is appropriated in the Digital Agency budget) based on the following priorities: (1) overcoming COVID-19 and leading the response to infectious diseases; (2) promoting human security and demonstrating leadership in addressing global issues; (3) collaborating with like-minded ally and partners in defending universal values in the international community; (4) cementing understanding and trust in Japan using an array of diplomatic tools; and (5) further strengthening the foreign policy and consular service implementation structure by promoting digitalization. The budget included appropriations for leading the response

to infectious diseases, including COVID-19, and for demonstrating leadership in addressing global issues, such as climate change. Furthermore, MOFA appropriated a budget for realizing FOIP, including strengthening collaboration with like-minded allies and partners and strategically using ODA in order to defend universal values, such as fundamental human rights. Additionally, MOFA appropriated a budget for strengthening the foreign policy and consular service implementation structure, including enhancing strategic communications and promoting digitalization.

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 the drastically changing world of recent years, 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.

The leading platforms for such policy discussions include: the World Economic Forum (Davos Forum), which has had a major influence on the trade policies of each country; the Shangri-La Dialogue, where prominent experts and ministers of the world 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. While the COVID-19 outbreak continues to present challenges for in-person meetings, the use of online technology has also enabled experts around the world to participate in meetings more easily. In Japan, it is becoming increasingly important to develop think tanks, researchers and others capable of participating in such major conferences

and contributing to shaping international public opinion. Furthermore, Japanese think tanks are increasingly expected to host international meetings comparable to the aforementioned major conferences.

Against this backdrop, MOFA provides subsidies to support Japanese think tanks' foreign policy and security activities, in order to strengthen their abilities in collecting, analyzing and disseminating information as well as making policy proposals, and to promote participatory diplomacy that brings together all of Japan's resources and engages everyone. In addition, MOFA launched a new subsidy scheme in FY2017 that aims at supporting research and information dissemination of Japanese think tanks 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. In 2021, as a part of the outcome, JIIA launched a 3D contents exhibition that allows visitors to learn about the nature of the Senkaku Islands at the National Museum of Territory and Sovereignty and other venues. Furthermore, in order to raise public awareness regarding the Takeshima issue and promote a correct understanding by the international community, JIIA held a webinar and other events to explain the flaws with the argument of the Republic of Korea, based on its old maps and archival materials. It is expected that the scheme will support Japanese think tanks in accumulating historical records and knowledge pertaining to Japan's territory, sovereignty and history, and enhancing their information dissemination domestically and abroad.

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



## 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.

### ■Aiming for greater heights with “Dubai and Washoku, Japan’s traditional food”

Sameshima Naoto, Executive Chef, Consul-General of Japan in Dubai

My name is Sameshima Naoto and I work as the executive chef at the Consulate-General of Japan in Dubai. I took up the position of executive chef in Dubai in September 2020 at the recommendation of a close friend of 30 years who has been working at MOFA. In my own case, as this was my first experience of being overseas, including going on holiday, and considering the impact of the spread of COVID-19, I was a little anxious initially. However, thanks in part to Dubai’s good living environment, I am able to devote myself to my work.

My main job activity is preparing meals for guests at the official residence and the food served at stand-up buffet receptions. The first thing that surprised me upon taking up my position in Dubai was that I am able to access many more ingredients than I had imagined. Because Dubai is a global aviation hub, ingredients that are difficult to obtain locally can be sourced by having them airfreighted from Japan, and furthermore there are stores in Dubai that specialize in handling Japanese ingredients. Seasonings such as soy sauce and rice vinegar are even available at local supermarkets. However, I also had close calls in which ingredients I planned to use on the day of a meal failed to arrive due to distribution problems, and I had to hurriedly come up with an alternative menu using the ingredients I had on hand.

The biggest difference with Japan is that Dubai is part of the Islamic world. Consequently, the selling of alcoholic beverages is limited to very few liquor stores. It is difficult to obtain cooking sake and mirin, and when inviting Muslim guests to



In front of the official residence



Sashimi made using Hamour obtained at a fish market in Dubai (The Hamour is shown on the right side of the plate. In Japan this variety of fish is known as Hitomihata.)



Seabream cooked in a salt crust



meals, it is only possible to use food that has been processed using a special procedure known as Halal, and to employ seasonings that do not contain alcohol or extracts derived from pork. The dishes are thus prepared while exercising ingenuity in response to what the situation demands. For example, when making simmered Japanese dishes that require cooking sake, I use a mirin-style seasoning as a substitute and adjust the flavors by using less sugar than usual.

I also noticed that in Dubai even vegetables that are the same as those found in Japan have different qualities as a result of the environment in which they are grown. From November until the end of March, Dubai's climate resembles early summer in Japan, but the temperatures climb from around April, and from August to September, the temperatures repeatedly rise above 40 degrees celsius during the day and exceed 35 degrees celsius even at night. On the other hand, almost no rain falls throughout the year. Thanks to this climatic environment, Dubai produces what are generally referred to as summer vegetables in Japan, such as capsicums, tomatoes and eggplants, that are available throughout the year in supermarkets. Nevertheless, many of these local vegetables have tough skins that are impossible to chew, or consist mainly of seeds, so I pay attention to these factors when sourcing ingredients locally.

When making preparation for meals or receptions, the thing I keep in mind the most is conveying the deliciousness of Japanese ingredients to guests. Taking fish in particular, even if the same kind of fish that are available in Japan were being sold locally, the "flavor and deliciousness" of the fish itself would likely feel different compared to the fish in Japan. As a result, there is always a process of trial and error involved in trying to convey Japan's strengths by having guests savor the "deliciousness" of Japan-raised fish delivered directly from Japan.

Although we are still in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, every time I have the opportunity to serve dishes as an executive chef, I always approach it with a "spirit of challenge" and a sense of responsibility, and I try to make each day a day of personal growth.



Serving seabream cooked in a salt crust at a New Year networking meeting

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.

[The International Hospitality and Conference Service Association (IHCSA)  
<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)



**“Creating” overseas establishments such as embassies and consulates**

- The work of technical officials of the building and repair section

Were you aware that there are roles at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that do not involve diplomacy, known as “technical officials?” As the “face of Japan,” overseas establishments such as Japanese embassies abroad provide the bases and settings for Japan’s diplomatic activities, and they serve as the last strongholds for protecting Japanese nationals during emergencies. Technical officials manage, design, construct, operate and maintain these facilities. It can be said that they support diplomatic activities behind the scenes, while partly shouldering the huge responsibility of protecting the lives of Japanese nationals. Here, we feature Kaneko Shinya, a technical official of the building and repair section, who is responsible for construction, maintenance and repair duties overseas, who describes the work that technical officials do.

**■Lengthy duty overseas**

I had wanted to work overseas since my student days, and it was this desire that led me to join MOFA. Out of my 13 years of continuous service, I have spent nine years abroad. The countries I have been posted to thus far – the United States, Iran, Qatar and Thailand – have completely different histories and cultures, yet I have irreplaceable memories from each assignment. I undertook a broad range of duties at the construction sites of the projects in each country, including applying for building permits, managing schedules, checking a variety of construction blueprints, doing quality inspections, selecting equipment, procedures for importing materials, and negotiating with companies in order to ensure connection to public infrastructure. In order to carry out the duties, not only the knowledge of the field of electricity, which is my specialty, but also expertise in fields such as construction and machinery are required. However, I initially lacked both technical knowledge and experience and was unable to even read the construction blueprints correctly, which led to some frustrating moments. Nonetheless, I gradually learned and acquired knowledge from the veteran technicians, who were my supervisors or seniors, which empowered me to continue working hard until today.



Chatting with an official of Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Qatar at the groundbreaking ceremony

**■The path to completing an embassy**

When I was posted to Qatar, I was in charge of the construction of the embassy offices. Given that the temperature in Qatar often exceeds 40 degrees Celsius during the day, we exercised ingenuity from the design stage in order to make the indoor environment comfortable under the severe climatic conditions, including by configuring the windows to shield the offices from direct sunlight. Once the project got underway, proceeding with the construction work under the severe environment emerged as a challenge. The concrete work in particular posed the greatest difficulty. The work had to be carried out during the night when the temperature dropped, which led to some difficult experiences unimaginable in Japan, such as carrying out quality tests and other confirmation work for all concrete mixer trucks throughout the night.

After overcoming numerous challenges during construction, the building was at last completed. Nevertheless, immediately after the completion of construction, a series of problems surfaced in one form or another, leaving me with no time to rest. However, once the initial glitches were resolved, I was able to share my delight at completing the project with the construction workers and embassy staff who had been involved in it. Furthermore, once the building began being used, I felt that all my laborious work paid off when I saw the sight of the embassy staff working cheerfully within the new building’s bright spaces.



The new Embassy of Japan in the State of Qatar



A briefing session with construction workers at the construction site

### ■The significance of the work of “creating” embassy and consulate buildings

Being in charge of constructing embassies and consulates overseas is by no means an easy job. Nevertheless, when working alongside locals in a country that has a different architectural culture, history and practices, the joy that I felt upon completing a building that would continue to be a symbol of Japan in that country for coming generations is an unforgettable experience. Furthermore, my job allows me to express a connection between Japan and the country of posting in the form of a building I created with my own hands, and this is one of the joys that is unique to our work. From here on, I am looking forward to engaging in construction projects in countries I have not seen before and linking that work to my own personal growth. I also hope to experience the thrill of “creating a building” that overshadows many hardships that “construction” entails.

# References

The Issue of Comfort Women

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The Issue of Former Civilian Workers from the Korean Peninsula  
(CWKs)

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# The Issue of Comfort Women

## Announcement by Foreign Ministers of Japan and the Republic of Korea at the Joint Press Occasion



December 28, 2015

(Scan here for publications on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website)

### 1. Foreign Minister Kishida

The Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) have intensively discussed the issue of comfort women between Japan and the ROK at bilateral meetings including the Director-General consultations. Based on the result of such discussions, I, on behalf of the Government of Japan, state the following:

(1) The issue of comfort women, with an involvement of the Japanese military authorities at that time, was a grave affront to the honor and dignity of large numbers of women, and the Government of Japan is painfully aware of responsibilities from this perspective. As Prime Minister of Japan, Prime Minister Abe expresses anew his most sincere apologies and remorse to all the women who underwent immeasurable and painful experiences and suffered incurable physical and psychological wounds as comfort women.

(2) The Government of Japan has been sincerely dealing with this issue. Building on such experience, the Government of Japan will now take measures to heal psychological wounds of all former comfort women through its budget. To be more specific, it has been decided that the Government of the ROK establish a foundation for the purpose of providing support for the former comfort women, that its funds be contributed by the Government of Japan as a one-time contribution through its budget, and that projects for recovering the honor and dignity and healing the psychological wounds of all former comfort women be carried out under the cooperation between the Government of Japan and the Government of the ROK.

(3) While stating the above, the Government of

Japan confirms that this issue is resolved finally and irreversibly with this announcement, on the premise that the Government will steadily implement the measures specified in (2) above. In addition, together with the Government of the ROK, the Government of Japan will refrain from accusing or criticizing each other regarding this issue in the international community, including at the United Nations.

### 2. Foreign Minister Yun

The Government of the Republic of Korea (ROK) and the Government of Japan have intensively discussed the issue of comfort women between the ROK and Japan at bilateral meetings including the Director-General consultations. Based on the result of such discussions, I, on behalf of the Government of the ROK, state the following:

(1) The Government of the ROK values the GOJ's announcement and efforts made by the Government of Japan in the lead-up to the issuance of the announcement and confirms, together with the GOJ, that the issue is resolved finally and irreversibly with this announcement, on the premise that the Government of Japan will steadily implement the measures specified in 1. (2) above. The Government of the ROK will cooperate in the implementation of the Government of Japan's measures.

(2) The Government of the ROK acknowledges the fact that the Government of Japan is concerned about the statue built in front of the Embassy of Japan in Seoul from the viewpoint of preventing any disturbance of the peace of the mission or impairment of its dignity, and will strive to solve this issue in an appropriate manner

through taking measures such as consulting with related organizations about possible ways of addressing this issue.

(3) The Government of the ROK, together with the Government of Japan, will refrain from

accusing or criticizing each other regarding this issue in the international community, including at the United Nations, on the premise that the Government of Japan will steadily implement the measures it announced.

**Regarding the Confirmation of the Judgment of the Seoul Central District Court of the Republic of Korea in the Lawsuit Filed by Former Comfort Women and Others**  
(Statement by Foreign Minister MOTEGI Toshimitsu)



(Scan here for publications on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website)

January 23, 2021

1. In the lawsuit filed by former comfort women and others against the Government of Japan on January 8, 2021, the Seoul Central District Court of the Republic of Korea rendered a judgment which ordered the Government of Japan, *inter alia*, to pay compensation to the plaintiffs, denying the application of the principle of State immunity under international law. On January 23, 2021, this judgment was confirmed.
2. Under international law, a state is, in principle, not to be subject to the jurisdiction of other states, as each state has sovereignty and states exist on an equal basis with each other. Japan has repeatedly expressed its position that this lawsuit therefore must be dismissed because it is not acceptable for the Government of Japan to be subject to the jurisdiction of the Republic of Korea in accordance with this principle of State immunity in international law. The fact that the Seoul Central District Court of the Republic of Korea recently rendered the judgment denying the application of the principle of State immunity is clearly contrary to the international law which was also articulated in the judgment of the International Court of Justice.
3. The Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea of 1965 stipulated that the issue concerning property and claims between Japan and the Republic of Korea, including the

issue of comfort women, was “settled completely and finally” and no contention shall be made (Article II). As such, this Agreement has provided the basis for the bilateral relationship up until now.

4. In addition, it is confirmed that the issue of comfort women was “resolved finally and irreversibly” with the agreement reached at the Japan-ROK Foreign Ministers’ Meeting in December 2015. The Government of Japan has implemented all measures it committed to under this agreement. The Government of the Republic of Korea also acknowledges that this agreement is an official agreement between the two governments and the international community has been closely following the implementation of the agreement by the Government of the Republic of Korea.
5. This judgment is extremely regrettable and absolutely unacceptable, as it is clearly contrary to international law and agreements between the two countries.
6. Japan once again strongly urges the Republic of Korea to immediately take appropriate measures to remedy the status of its breaches of international law on its own responsibility as a country.

(Reference 1) Agreement on the Settlement of Problem Concerning Property and Claims and on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea (entered into force on



December 18, 1965)

## Article II

1. The Contracting Parties confirm that problem concerning property, rights and interests of the two Contracting Parties and their nationals (including juridical persons) and concerning claims between the Contracting Parties and their nationals, including those provided for in Article IV, paragraph (a) of the Treaty of Peace with Japan signed at the city of San Francisco on September 8, 1951, is settled completely and finally.

...

3. Subject to the provisions of paragraph 2, no contention shall be made with respect to the measures on property, rights and interests of either Contracting Party and its nationals which are within the jurisdiction of the other Contracting Party on the date of the signing of the present Agreement, or with respect to any claims of either Contracting Party and its

nationals against the other Contracting Party and its nationals arising from the causes which occurred on or before the said date.

(Reference 2) Announcement by Foreign Ministers of Japan and the Republic of Korea at the Joint Press Occasion

[https://www.mofa.go.jp/a\\_o/na/kr/page4e\\_000364.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/page4e_000364.html)



(Reference 3) Japan's Efforts on the Issue of Comfort Women (PDF)

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/files/100104783.pdf>



Please see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website for other related documents.

[https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/page22e\\_000883.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/postwar/page22e_000883.html)



## The Issue of Former Civilian Workers from the Korean Peninsula (CWKs)

**Failure of the Republic of Korea to comply with obligations regarding arbitration under the Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea**  
(Statement by Foreign Minister Taro Kono)



(Scan here for publications on the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website)

July 19, 2019

1. Japan and the Republic of Korea have built a close, friendly and cooperative relationship based on the Treaty on Basic Relations between Japan and the Republic of Korea and other relevant agreements that the two countries concluded when they normalized their relationship in 1965. The Agreement on the Settlement of Problem concerning Property and Claims and on Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea (the “Agreement”), which is the core of these agreements, stipulates that Japan shall supply to the Republic of Korea 300 million USD in grants and extend loans up to 200 million USD (Article I), and that problem concerning property, rights and interests of the two Contracting Parties and their nationals (including juridical persons), as well as concerning claims between the Contracting Parties and their nationals, are “settled completely and finally,” and no contention shall be made thereof (Article II). As such, the Agreement has provided the basis for the bilateral relationship up until now.

2. In spite of the above, a series of judgments of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea last year ordered respondent Japanese companies, inter alia, to pay compensation to the plaintiffs. These decisions are extremely regrettable and totally unacceptable. The decisions clearly violate Article II of the Agreement and inflict unjustifiable damage and costs on the said Japanese companies. Above all, the decisions completely overthrow the legal foundation of the friendly and cooperative relationship that

Japan and the Republic of Korea have developed since the normalization of diplomatic relations in 1965.

3. Japan has long placed an emphasis on the rule of law in the international community. Consistent with its strong belief in the importance for States, irrespective of domestic circumstances, to abide by their commitments under international law, the Government of Japan, on 9 January 2019, requested diplomatic consultations with the Government of the Republic of Korea under the Agreement. This was the initial step to settle the issue of breaches of international law by the Republic of Korea due to the judgments of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea rendered last year, as well as related judgments and proceedings.

4. However, the Government of the Republic of Korea failed to respond to the request for diplomatic consultations, taking no action as the Korean claimants took steps to attach assets of the respondent Japanese companies in satisfaction of the judgments of the Korean Supreme Court. Given that failure by the Government of the Republic of Korea, the Government of Japan transmitted a Notification and Statement of Claim to the Republic of Korea on 20 May 2019 (“Notification”). By this Notification, the Government of Japan invoked the arbitration clause in the Agreement, referring the dispute to arbitration in accordance with Article III.2 of the Agreement; and Japan has proceeded with the arbitration process up to the present. The Government of the Republic of Korea, however,

did not follow the procedures set forth in Article III of the Agreement and failed to comply with its obligation not only to appoint an arbitrator, but also to choose a third country, the government of which is to appoint an arbitrator for the Contracting Party, within the period provided for in the Agreement.

5. Japan deeply regrets that, as a consequence, an arbitration board under the Agreement referred to on 20 May could not be constituted.
6. The repeated failures of the Republic of Korea to take the steps toward the constitution of the arbitration board, which is the agreed dispute settlement procedure provided under the Agreement, constitute further breaches of the Agreement, in addition to the breaches already caused by the series of judgments of the Supreme Court of the Republic of Korea last year, as well as related judgments and proceedings.
7. Given the severe situation surrounding the Japan-Republic of Korea relationship caused by the Republic of Korea side, including the aforementioned, the Government of Japan will be taking necessary measures against the Republic of Korea.
8. The settlement of this dispute requires the Republic of Korea to remedy its accumulated breaches of international law. Japan renews its request for the Republic of Korea to take concrete actions for that purpose immediately.

(Reference 1) Agreement on the Settlement of Problem Concerning Property and Claim on the Economic Co-operation between Japan and the Republic of Korea (entered into force on December 18, 1965)

#### Article II

- 1 The Contracting Parties confirm that problem concerning property, rights, and interests of the two Contracting Parties and their nationals (including juridical persons) and concerning claims between the Contracting Parties and their nationals, including those provided for in

Article IV, paragraph (a) of the Treaty of Peace with Japan signed at the city of San Francisco on September 8, 1951, is settled completely and finally.

. . .

- 3 Subject to the provisions of paragraph 2 above, no contention shall be made with respect to the measures on property, rights and interests of either Contracting Party and its nationals which are within the jurisdiction of the other Contracting Party on the date of the signing of the present Agreement, or with respect to any claims of either Contracting Party and its nationals against the other Contracting Party and its nationals arising from the causes which occurred on or before the said date.

#### Article III

- 1 Any dispute between the Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation and implementation of the present Agreement shall be settled, first of all, through diplomatic channels.
- 2 Any dispute which fails to be settled under the provision of paragraph 1 shall be referred for decision to an arbitration board composed of three arbitrators, one to be appointed by the Government of each Contracting Party within a period of thirty days from the date of receipt by the Government of either Contracting Party from the Government of the other of a note requesting arbitration of the dispute, and the third arbitrator to be agreed upon by the two arbitrators so chosen within a further period of thirty days or the third arbitrator to be appointed by the government of a third country agreed upon within such further period by the two arbitrators, provided that the third arbitrator shall not be a national of either Contracting Party.
- 3 If, within the periods respectively referred to, the Government of either Contracting Party fails to appoint an arbitrator, or the third arbitrator or a third country is not agreed upon, the arbitration board shall be composed of the two arbitrators to be designated by each of the governments of the two countries respectively chosen by the

Governments of the Contracting Parties within a period of thirty days and the third arbitrator to be designated by the government of a third country to be determined upon consultation between the governments so chosen.

- 4 The Governments of the Contracting Parties shall abide by any award made by the arbitration board under the provisions of the present Article.

(Reference 2) Background and Position of the Government of Japan Concerning the issue of former civilian workers from the Korean Peninsula (FACT SHEET)

English (PDF)

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000499948.pdf>

Japanese (PDF)

<https://www.mofa.go.jp/files/000499946.pdf>



Please see the Ministry of Foreign Affairs website for other related documents.  
[https://www.mofa.go.jp/a\\_o/na/kr/page4e\\_000947.html](https://www.mofa.go.jp/a_o/na/kr/page4e_000947.html)

