

Opening Special Feature

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Opening Special Feature

Defending National Interests through Co-Creation with the World

Cooperation with Global Partners



▲Commemorative photo at the Japan-ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Summit (October 10, Vientiane, Laos; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

▼Prime Minister Ishiba speaking at the Japan-ASEAN Summit (October 10, Vientiane, Laos; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)



Japan has worked to address the challenges and support the development of numerous developing countries over many years. Today, these countries have a major presence in the world as the “Global South” and are growing into key partners for shouldering the future of the international community. Looking ahead, it is essential for Japan to cooperate with global partners, including the developing and emerging countries that make up the “Global South,” in order to uphold the free and open international order based on the rule of law, tackle global challenges, protect Japan’s own peace and security, and drive economic growth.

In 2024, as divisions and confrontations deepened in the international community over the situations in Ukraine and Gaza, and the security environment surrounding Japan became increasingly severe, Japan actively worked to collaborate not only with its ally and like-minded countries but also with the Global South to guide the international community toward reconciliation and cooperation.

As an example, the “officials in charge of cross-border economic affairs” have been designated at some diplomatic missions overseas to further support Japanese companies in their business expansion across borders, thereby contributing to the resolution of social issues in the Global South while also connecting that dynamism to Japan’s economic growth.

In addition, Japan supported developing countries with the Co-creation for common agenda initiative⁽¹⁾ and Official Development Assistance (ODA) that mobilizes private-sector funds, which were newly set forth in the 2023 Development Cooperation Charter. Japan also actively promoted cooperation through Official Security Assistance (OSA), established in 2023 with the expectation of creating a desirable security environment for Japan by enhancing the security and deterrence capabilities of like-minded countries.

This feature introduces the 10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM10), the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Ministerial Meeting, and the Japan-CARICOM Ministerial-Level Conference, all of which were hosted by Japan in 2024 as part of its cooperation with global partners, particularly the Global South.



▲Prime Minister Ishiba speaking at the G20 Rio de Janeiro Summit (November 18, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

▼The 5th Japan-Arab Economic Forum Ministerial Conference (July 11, Iikura Guest House, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo)



(1) Co-creation for common agenda initiative: A new initiative in which Japan proposes appealing cooperation menus that leverage Japan’s strengths and combine ODA, Other Official Flows (OOF), and private sector funds in the areas that should be strategically addressed from a foreign policy perspective.



PALM10: The 10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting

What is the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting?

The Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) is a summit held every three years since 1997 with the aim of facilitating candid discussions at the summit level on the various issues faced by Pacific Island countries and regions, contributing to regional stability and prosperity, and strengthening the partnership between Japan and the Pacific Islands countries region.

PALM10: Themes and Overview

- PALM10 was held in Tokyo from July 16 to 18. Under the co-chairmanship of Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Mark Brown of the Cook Islands (Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF)), there was participation by leaders and others from 19 countries and regions, including Japan, 14 Pacific Island countries,⁽¹⁾ two French territories,⁽²⁾ Australia, and New Zealand, as well as the PIF Secretary General.
- Discussions centered around the seven areas outlined in the PIF's "2050 Strategy": (1) Political Leadership and Regionalism, (2) People-Centered Development, (3) Peace and Security, (4) Resources and Economic Development, (5) Climate Change and Disasters, (6) Ocean and Environment, and (7) Technology and Connectivity, as well as regional and international affairs.



Commemorative photo of PALM10: Prime Minister Kishida and participants (July 18, Tokyo; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)



- Based on these discussions, Japan and the Pacific Island countries and regions reaffirmed their relationship to “stride forward together” toward the future while tackling common challenges, and adopted “The 10th Pacific

Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM10) Japan – Pacific Islands Forum Leaders’ Declaration” along with its annex titled “PALM10 Joint Action Plan.”



Prime Minister Kishida at the opening session (July 18, Tokyo; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

- (1) Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu
- (2) French Polynesia, New Caledonia



Marking the milestone of the 10th summit, this occasion enabled Japan and the Pacific Island countries and regions to elevate their trust and cooperative relations to a new level in order to address contemporary challenges, and to present determination and a concrete path to “stride forward together” into the future.

◀ Prime Minister Kishida at the joint press conference (July 18, Tokyo; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

Key Discussion Points by Sector

(1) Political Leadership and Regionalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIF leaders welcomed Japan's respect for the Pacific region's determination to act with unity and solidarity in its engagement and advocacy with partners • Both sides concurred on continuing to strengthen their partnership, including ensuring the appropriate level of representation and the realization of ambitious outcomes at the annual Pacific Islands Forum Dialogue Partners meeting and PALM-related meetings
(2) People-Centered Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of expansion of cooperation in the fields of education and health to protect and enhance “human dignity,” and on fostering people-to-people exchanges and human resource development through various programs
(3) Peace and Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commitment to oppose all wars of aggression and to pursue permanent and sustainable peace consistent with the purposes and principles of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations • Expression of strong opposition to attempts to unilaterally change the status quo through the threat or use of force or coercion
(4) Resources and Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirmation that transparent and fair development finance and the maintenance of correspondent banking relationships are essential to achieve sustainable and resilient economic development • Confirmation of promotion of efforts by Japan such as business matching, including with startup companies, and fostering local industries
(5) Climate Change and Disasters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcement of the “Pacific Climate Resilience Initiative,” a concerted national effort mobilizing Japan's technology, know-how, and financial resources based on three pillars: (a) Strengthening disaster risk reduction and response capabilities, (b) Promoting clean energy, and (c) Supporting Pacific-led efforts
(6) Ocean and Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirmation of commitment to a free, open, and sustainable maritime order based on the rule of law and in accordance with international law • Expression of commitment to jointly address illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing
(7) Technology and Connectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming of Japan's cooperation to enhance connectivity across land, sea, air, and digital space through the development of “quality infrastructure,” including subsea cables. Confirmation of the importance of countering the spread of disinformation

Bilateral Meetings and Other Events with Pacific Island Countries and Regions

During PALM10, Prime Minister Kishida held 17 summit meetings and other meetings with leaders of Pacific Island countries and regions. In addition, prior to the summit, a welcome reception was held by Chief Cabinet Secretary HAYASHI Yoshimasa and his spouse on July 16, and a banquet was held by Prime Minister Kishida and his spouse on July 17. The banquet featured

dishes prepared with ingredients from Ishikawa Prefecture to support reconstruction efforts of the areas affected by the earthquake in the Noto region, as well as a Japanese “summer festival” that embodied people-to-people exchanges. These events served as an opportunity to reaffirm the *kizuna* (bonds) between Japan and the Pacific Island countries and regions.



◀ Banquet hosted by Prime Minister Kishida and his spouse (July 17, State Guest House, Akasaka Palace, Tokyo; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

▶ Prime Minister Kishida and Prime Minister Sitiveni Ligamamada Rabuka of Fiji visiting the stall of a Japanese confectioner from Ishikawa Prefecture at the “summer festival” (July 17, State Guest House, Akasaka Palace, Tokyo; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)





Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) Ministerial Meeting

What is TICAD?

The Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) is an international conference on African development launched by Japan in 1993. It supports African development based on the fundamental principles of “ownership” by Africa and “partnership” with the international community, including Japan.

2024 TICAD Ministerial Meeting — Theme and Overview —

- The TICAD Ministerial Meeting was held in Tokyo from August 24 to 25. Foreign Minister Kamikawa co-chaired the meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Cooperation and Mauritanians Abroad of Mauritania Mohamed Salem Ould Merzoug, who is also the Chair of the African Union (AU). A total of 47 African countries participated, along with representatives from international organizations, private companies, members of Japan’s Diet, and civil society groups.
- Under the theme “Co-create innovative solutions with Africa,” and looking ahead toward TICAD 9 in 2025, discussions were held on the three pillars of society, peace and stability, and economy, which were underpinned by three perspectives: future-oriented problem solving, emphasis on youth and women, and the connectivity and knowledge platforms.



Opening ceremony of the 2024 TICAD Ministerial Meeting (August 24, Tokyo)

- Many innovative solutions were shared, including at the six theme-based related meetings and three multi-lateral meetings (in working lunch format). Participants concurred on expanding these solutions and ideas

across Africa and further contributing to solving global challenges. The “TICAD Ministerial Meeting Joint Communiqué” was adopted as the outcome document.



Bon Odori dancing at the TICAD Ministerial Meeting welcome reception (August 24, Tokyo)



Closing session of the TICAD Ministerial Meeting (August 25, Tokyo)



Foreign Minister Kamikawa serving as co-chair (August 24, Tokyo)

With the aim of co-creating solutions to African challenges jointly between Japan and Africa, we want to develop “Made with Japan” cooperation that contributes to solving African issues through innovative approaches, while utilizing local Japanese technologies and the ideas of young people!

Bilateral Meetings with African Countries

During the TICAD Ministerial Meeting, Foreign Minister Kamikawa held 33 meetings, State Minister for Foreign Affairs TSUJI Kiyoto held 10 meetings, and Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs FUKAZAWA Yoichi held 3 meetings with representatives of African countries and organizations. Through these

meetings, they exchanged views on bilateral relations and cooperation in the international arena, including UN Security Council (UNSC) reform. Many representatives from countries and organizations expressed their gratitude for Japan’s contributions to Africa through the TICAD process.

Overview of Each Session

<p>Session 1 Society: “Realizing a Sustainable Future”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of the need for exchanges and cooperation between Japanese and African youth • Sharing of useful ideas for solving various social issues such as strengthening health systems and environmental and climate change measures
<p>Session 2 Peace and Stability: “Ensuring Human Dignity and Human Security”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of the importance of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) • Announcement of the launch of the “Women’s Peace Human Resource Development Initiative in the Horn of Africa” • Confirmation of the importance of conflict prevention; addressing root causes of conflict; a cross-sectoral approach through humanitarian aid, development, and peace cooperation; good governance; and strengthening the rule of law • Confirmation of the need for UN Security Council reform to properly reflect African voices
<p>Session 3 Economy: “Promoting Trade and Investment”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was participation by approximately 400 people from both the public and private sectors, including about 70 companies. Focus was placed on startups from both Japan and Africa, with Part 1 being a panel discussion and Part 2 a networking session • In Part 1, discussions were held on support for building startup ecosystems. The African side expressed high appreciation for TICAD and private-sector-led digital transformation (DX), while the corporate side expressed expectations for improvement of the business environment in Africa • Part 2 brought together African ministers and business representatives from both Japan and Africa, providing new business opportunities



Japan-Mauritania Foreign Ministers' Meeting (August 24, Tokyo)



The Eighth Japan-CARICOM Ministerial-Level Conference



What is CARICOM (Caribbean Community)?

CARICOM is a regional organization composed of 14 countries and one region,⁽¹⁾ mainly consisting of former British Caribbean colonies. The member states are diverse, ranging from the Bahamas, which has a relatively high GDP per capita, to Haiti, the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Despite this diversity, the member states all share vulnerabilities as small island states to natural disasters and external economic fluctuations, and they often act in coordination in the international arena. Japan has promoted dialogue and cooperation with CARICOM based on the three pillars of its CARICOM policy: “Cooperation towards sustainable development, including overcoming the vulnerabilities particular to small island states;” “Deepening and expanding fraternal bonds of cooperation and friendship;” and “Cooperation in the international arena.”

The Eighth Japan-CARICOM Ministerial-Level Conference: Objectives and Outcomes

- The year 2024 was celebrated as “Japan-CARICOM Friendship Year 2024,” as it marked the 30th anniversary of the start of the Japan-CARICOM Consultations, as well as the 60th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and both Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. (See the Column on page 115.) At the end of the year, Japan held the Eighth Japan-CARICOM Ministerial-Level Conference in Tokyo in December, inviting the foreign ministers and other officials from CARICOM member states.⁽²⁾ This was the first Ministerial-Level Conference held in Tokyo in 10 years.
- At the meeting, Japan expressed its determination to expand cooperation with CARICOM member states as partners in addressing global challenges based on the “three pillars of Japan’s CARICOM policy,” amid the increasingly severe international situation and global challenges surrounding Japan and CARICOM. Japan stated that under the “Diplomatic Initiative toward Latin America and the Caribbean,” it will build new forms of cooperation in fields that are becoming increasingly important, particularly maritime issues, disaster risk reduction, climate change, and human security. The CARICOM member states expressed their support of these views.

(1) Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and Montserrat (British Overseas Territory).

(2) Countries and other participants in the Eighth Japan-CARICOM Ministerial-Level Conference (in alphabetical order): Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Christopher and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, and the CARICOM Secretariat.



Reception for the Eighth Japan-CARICOM Ministerial-Level Conference
(December 12, Iikura Guest House, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Tokyo)



Foreign Minister Iwaya, Foreign Minister Vince Henderson of Dominica (Co-chair, front left), and foreign ministers of CARICOM member states at the joint press conference (December 14, Tokyo)

Overview of the Ministerial Joint Statement between Japan and CARICOM

General Overview	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirmation of collaboration under a global partnership based on shared values and principles • Expression of determination to expand and deepen cooperation under the “three pillars of Japan’s CARICOM policy” in order to co-create solutions to new challenges faced by Japan and CARICOM, such as challenges to the international order and the intensification of global issues • Confirmation of the importance of regular high-level political dialogue between Japan and CARICOM.
First pillar: Cooperation towards sustainable development, including overcoming the vulnerabilities particular to small island developing states	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reaffirmation of Japan’s active participation in discussions in the international arena regarding the vulnerabilities particular to small island developing states • Expression and confirmation of both sides’ positions on the preservation of baselines and maritime zones in the face of sea level rise; a comprehensive approach to financing for development that considers various factors, not limited to per capita income; and support through the Japan-CARICOM Friendship and Cooperation Fund • Under Japan’s Diplomatic Initiative toward Latin America and the Caribbean, Japan will continue cooperation in new and existing fields, such as oceanic affairs; climate change; food security; and Women, Peace and Security (WPS)
Second pillar: Deepening and expanding fraternal bonds of cooperation and friendship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of further strengthening of mutual understanding and friendly relations • Confirmation of appreciation and continuation of people-to-people exchanges, and the importance of people-to-people exchanges at all levels • Agreement to cooperate to promote the participation of CARICOM member states in Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan
Third pillar: Cooperation in addressing challenges of the international community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirmation of the recognition that unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion, as well as economic coercion, are unacceptable anywhere in the world, and that such challenges to the international order are a shared concern for Japan and CARICOM • Reaffirmation of the commitment to realize a world without nuclear weapons • Confirmation of the necessity of reforming the UN Security Council, including the expansion of both permanent and non-permanent membership categories • Confirmation of close cooperation on climate change • Confirmation of the importance of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) • Confirmation of the importance of the sustainable use of marine living resources, and that illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing is one of the most serious threats to this; the prompt entry into force of the Fisheries Subsidies Agreement of the WTO, and maintenance of the freedom of navigation and overflight consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) • Sharing of serious concerns about North Korea and confirmation of the need for the immediate resolution of the abductions issue • Confirmation of the importance of Japan’s support for Haiti

- In addition, the member states concurred that unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion constitute a challenge to the international order based on the rule of law, which is the common foundation of peace and prosperity, and that no country can remain unaffected, making it necessary for Japan and CARICOM member states to cooperate in responding. Furthermore, they affirmed their cooperation toward shared goals in fields such as nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, reform of the UN Security Council, and climate change.



Courtesy call on Prime Minister Ishiba by foreign ministers of CARICOM member states (December 13, Tokyo; Photo: Cabinet Public Affairs Office)

- Following the conference, the participating countries adopted the Ministerial Joint Statement between Japan and CARICOM as an outcome document. Furthermore, the countries signed and exchanged notes on “The Project for Industrial Development and Technology Transfer in the Member States of the Caribbean Community (in cooperation with UNIDO),”⁽³⁾ grant aid totaling 730 million Japanese yen to be provided to the 14 CARICOM member states.



Foreign Minister Iwama serving as Chair (December 14, Tokyo)

Bilateral Meetings with CARICOM Member States

On the occasion of the CARICOM Ministerial-Level Conference, Foreign Minister Iwama held bilateral meetings with the foreign ministers of 12 CARICOM member states who visited Japan. In addition, State Minister for Foreign Affairs MIYAJI Takuma held meetings with vice minister-level officials of two countries and a representative of the CARICOM Secretariat. The ministerial level conference and bilateral meetings strengthened multilayered relations between Japan and CARICOM member states.



▲Japan-Jamaica Foreign Ministers' Meeting (December 12, Tokyo)

▼Japan-Trinidad and Tobago Foreign Ministers' Meeting (December 14, Tokyo)



(3) Grant aid (totaling 730 million yen) that supports the provision of equipment using Japanese companies' technologies in fields such as water and agribusiness, the invitation of investment officials, and technical cooperation in industrial fields. This cooperation is expected to contribute to overcoming the vulnerabilities of CARICOM member states, with the aim of addressing development challenges and promoting industrial diversification by utilizing the expertise of Japan and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO).