

Section 3

North America

1 Overview

<The Importance of Cooperation with the North American Region, Which Shares Fundamental Values and Principles>

Currently, the international community is at a turning point in history. The international community is becoming increasingly divided and confrontational due to factors such as the escalation of tensions in the Middle East and Russia's continued aggression against Ukraine.

In addition, the security environment surrounding Japan is becoming increasingly severe, as evidenced by North Korea's launch of ballistic missiles, including those of intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM)-class, and continued and strengthened unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force in the East China Sea and South China Sea, which greatly increases the importance of solidarity with allies and like-minded countries, including the G7, that share fundamental values and principles. The United States (U.S.) is Japan's only ally. The strong Japan-U.S. Alliance is the linchpin of Japan's foreign and security policy, and the foundation of peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region. It is also essential to have cooperation with Canada, a member of the G7 and Japan's important partner in the Indo-Pacific region that shares universal values. Cooperation with these countries, based on the relationships of trust that Japan has built over the years, is essential to maintaining peace and stability in the region and the international community.

<Foreign Policies of the U.S. and Canada>

In 2022, under the Biden administration, the U.S. announced its Indo-Pacific Strategy and National Security Strategy, which outline its commitment to

tackling various challenges facing the international community in cooperation with allies and like-minded countries, including Japan. Based on this strategy, the U.S. has been proactive in its diplomatic activities, holding summits with the G7, Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad), Japan-U.S.-Republic of Korea (ROK), Japan-U.S.-Philippines, and Japan-U.S.-Australia-Philippines, and emphasizing multilateral cooperation.

With an eye toward serving as the G7 Presidency in 2025, Canada placed importance on strengthening cooperation with like-minded countries, especially the G7 countries. Following the announcement of the Indo-Pacific Strategy in 2022, Canada continued to demonstrate a diplomatic stance that emphasized the Indo-Pacific region and the Arctic in its revised National Defense Policy in April 2024, and its Arctic Foreign Policy announced in December of that year. Specifically, throughout the year, Canada worked with like-minded countries in the Indo-Pacific region, including Japan, to combat ship-to-ship transfers,⁽¹⁾ monitor illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activities, and conduct joint training with other countries. Regarding the Arctic, Canada issued a joint statement in July with the U.S. and Finland on cooperation in building icebreakers. Furthermore, the Arctic Foreign Policy announced in December clearly stated Canada's intention to strengthen cooperation with non-Arctic countries, including Japan.

In the economic field, as the chair of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) in 2024, Canada took the lead in maintaining and strengthening a free and fair economic order in the Indo-Pacific.

⁽¹⁾ In this context, "ship-to-ship transfers" refers to the transfers to or from North Korea-flagged vessels of any goods or items at sea, which UN Security Council resolution 2375 (adopted in September 2017) prohibits UN member states from facilitating or engaging in.

<Japan's Diplomatic Relations with North America>

Against this backdrop, 2024 was a year of further deepening relations between Japan and the U.S. and Canada. With the U.S. as Japan's only ally, the Japan-U.S. relationship is stronger and deeper than ever before, with multilayered cooperation in all areas, not just security and economy. Japan and the U.S. were in constant communication and cooperating at all levels, including holding five summit meetings (including one telephone call) and six foreign ministers' meetings (including one telephone call) between January 2024 and the end of February 2025, in an effort to maintain peace and stability in the region and the international community. In April, Prime Minister Kishida was the first Japanese Prime Minister in nine years to pay an Official Visit with State Dinner to the U.S. The visit deepened the personal relationship of trust between the two leaders and confirmed that Japan and the U.S. are bound by deep trust and multilayered friendship, and that they are not just bilateral or regional, but are global partners that work together to maintain and strengthen a free and open international order based on the rule of law. At the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting in September and the Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting between Prime Minister Ishiba and President Joseph Biden in

November, the two countries concurred on continuing to work closely together to maintain and strengthen Japan-U.S. relations, which have become stronger than ever. In February 2025, Prime Minister Ishiba visited the U.S. for the first Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with President Donald J. Trump, where the two leaders confirmed that they would cooperate closely to realize a "Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)" and elevate the Japan-U.S. Alliance to new heights.

On the other hand, between January 2024 and the end of January 2025, Japan and Canada held three summit meetings and four foreign ministerial meetings (including one telephone call). At the meetings, the two countries confirmed that they would steadily implement the "Canada-Japan Action Plan for contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific" jointly announced in 2022, and that Japan and Canada will continue to cooperate toward realizing FOIP. Cooperation based on the Action Plan has progressed steadily in areas such as security and the rule of law, including cooperation in the Japan-Canada Bilateral Exercise (KADEX24) and surveillance activities of IUU fishing. Furthermore, Japan-Canada relations have been further strengthened through the promotion of a wide range of diplomatic initiatives, including the G7 and CPTPP.

2 United States

(1) U.S. Domestic Situation

A Politics

U.S. domestic politics in 2024 revolved around the November presidential election. The presidential primaries took place from mid-January to early June, with President Biden and former President Trump each seeking re-election. By mid-March, both candidates secured enough delegates for nomination as their respective parties' presidential candidates, meaning they were competing as their parties' de facto presidential candidates without waiting for the formal nomination at the national party conventions. However, following the presidential debate televised in June, calls for the replacement of the candidate grew within the Democratic Party. Following his withdrawal from the election campaign in July, President Biden was

replaced by Vice President Kamala Harris as the presidential candidate. Former President Trump won the November presidential election, and as President-elect, soon began nominating cabinet members and senior officials for his second term.

(A) Presidential Primaries

The presidential primaries began on January 15 with the Iowa caucuses. There was no presidential debate held in the Democratic Party because there was no major candidate to challenge President Biden, and the presidential primary election mainly focused on his advanced age and policies. In terms of policy, one of the factors holding back President Biden's approval rating was the pressure on the national livelihoods caused by high prices, as well as criticism from part of the party's base

over the administration's response to the worsening situation in Gaza since the previous year. Particularly, with regard to the situation in Gaza, residents of Michigan, where about 2% of the state's population is Arab or Muslim, and some left-wing political activists, launched a campaign to force President Biden to revise the administration's Middle East policy by casting protest votes in the Democratic presidential primaries election. These protest votes accounted for more than 10% of the total votes cast in Michigan, Pennsylvania, and North Carolina. This campaign posed a threat that could derail President Biden's reelection, especially in battleground states where a small margin of votes could change the result.

Meanwhile, in the Republican primaries, former President Trump, who had announced his candidacy in November 2022, former UN Ambassador and former South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, former Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson, and entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy ran in the election. However, former President Trump, who had an overwhelming advantage in terms of name recognition and approval ratings, did not participate in a single televised Republican presidential debate, and the primaries began without a direct debate between him and any other candidate. Given the results of the Iowa caucuses — the first primary — all candidates except former President Trump and Nikki Haley withdrew from the race. After the contest became a two-way race, Haley became the sole candidate for the anti-Trump faction within the Republican Party and some independent voters, creating a showdown between Trump supporters and anti-Trump factions. However, on March 5, Super Tuesday, when primaries were held in 15 states, including California, former President Trump won by a landslide. Following these results, former Ambassador Haley withdrew the next day, making former President Trump the *de facto* Republican presidential nominee.

On March 12, President Biden and former President Trump respectively won enough delegates for presidential candidate nominations, diminishing the public attention on the primaries. The presidential primary process highlighted the core issues surrounding both candidates in the November presidential election. With respect to President Biden, it became clear that his

support for abortion rights following the 2022 ruling in the *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization* case (the *Dobbs* ruling) could work to his advantage, while his advanced age, his track record of economic policies particularly on high prices, and his response to the worsening situation in Gaza could work against him. On the other hand, it became clear that the issues of illegal immigration and the Southern border were in former President Trump's favor, while the anti-Trump faction within the Republican Party base and the possible outcome of the four criminal trials could work against him. In addition, civil lawsuits imposed large legal fees on him, putting a strain on his political war chest.

(B) Replacement of Democratic Party Presidential Candidate

As the primaries ended in early June and the November presidential election approached, President Biden's approval rating continued to trail former President Trump's since the beginning of the year both nationwide and in the seven presidential battleground states (Pennsylvania, Michigan, Wisconsin, Georgia, North Carolina, Arizona, and Nevada). At this point, there was already widespread anxiety within the Democratic Party about former President Trump's lead in the polls, but there was no move to call for any major changes to President Biden's candidacy.

However, during the month following the televised presidential debate, the political situation within the Democratic presidential campaign rapidly changed. During the debate with former President Trump on June 27, President Biden repeatedly stumbled and made speech errors. President Biden's performance in the debate led to an eruption of calls for the replacement of the party's presidential candidate among some Democratic lawmakers. About two weeks later, on July 13, former President Trump was shot while giving a speech during a rally in Pennsylvania. Although he was injured, he attended and gave a speech at the Republican National Convention held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin from July 15 to 18. The convention was held at a time when the Republican Party was more united and it buoyed the wounded former President Trump. The convention selected the then-39-year-old Senator J.D. Vance of Ohio as the party's vice-presidential

nominee. With the Republican Party gaining traction, the simmering anxiety and caution quickly surfaced and spread within the Democratic Party after the presidential debate, and calls for a replacement of the presidential candidate rapidly gained momentum. On July 21, President Biden announced his withdrawal from the presidential election. Immediately after his withdrawal, Vice President Harris secured intraparty support as an alternative presidential candidate and won the party's provisional nomination for the candidacy in an online internal vote. Subsequently, at the Democratic National Convention held in Chicago, Illinois from August 19 to 22, Vice President Harris was selected as the Democratic presidential candidate and Governor Tim Walz of Minnesota as the vice-presidential candidate.

With the replacement, public attention in the election campaign increasingly focused on Vice President Harris and former President Trump. As the first black female presidential candidate in U.S. history, Vice President Harris brought a freshness to the election and was able to dispel the issue of age. With less than three months until the November election, it was imperative for her to explain to voters the legitimacy of her becoming a presidential candidate without going through the primary election, and to differentiate herself from President Biden, whose approval rating was waning while she was serving as Vice President in his cabinet. By replacing the candidate, the Democratic Party succeeded in temporarily reversing the nationwide poor approval ratings of its presidential candidate that had persisted since the beginning of the year. However, the Democratic Party entered the November presidential election remaining unable to break former President Trump's lead on such salient issues clarified in the primary process as economic policies, particularly on high prices, illegal immigration and border measures, and response to the Gaza conflict. With respect to third-party candidates and third parties in the race, the new contest that emerged between Vice President Harris and former President Trump substantially diminished their presence, leading to the withdrawal of Robert F. Kennedy Jr. in late August and his later entry into the Trump camp.

(C) Presidential and Congressional Elections

On November 5, the presidential, congressional, and state gubernatorial elections were held across the U.S. Contrary to the predictions of many experts regarding possible turmoil arising from close races, except for some congressional elections, the results became known relatively quickly. Former President Trump won all seven battleground states and received 312 electoral college votes, far exceeding the majority of 270 needed to win. However, out of a total of approximately 152.3 million votes cast nationwide, the difference in votes won between former President Trump and Vice President Harris was only about 2.3 million votes (about 1.5%), making it an extremely close race. As in past elections, the basic electoral structure in which the election outcome is determined by just a few percent of voters, especially in battleground states, remained unchanged. In terms of voter trends, it was particularly noteworthy that 20% of black male voters — the majority of whom have traditionally been considered Democratic Party supporters — and 50% of Hispanic voters, voted for former President Trump.

The Republicans also won both chambers of Congress, gaining majorities in the Senate (53 seats) and the House of Representatives (220 seats).

Following the result of the presidential election, some pundits assessed that former President Trump had transformed the Republican Party from the party of the wealthy into the most multi-ethnic working-class party in recent decades, while the Democratic Party had transformed from the party of workers and the socially disadvantaged into a party supported by relatively wealthy, well-educated voters.

(D) Preparations for the Second Trump Administration

President-elect Trump finished nominating most of his cabinet members, including the Secretary of State within a month after the presidential election results were known, while keeping illegal immigration and border measures, security and drug measures, and economic measures as his priorities. Much attention was given to the appointments of Mr. Elon Musk, the wealthy businessperson who financially supported former President Trump during this election cycle, and

Mr. Vivek Ramaswami to the newly created role of head of the Department of Government Efficiency.

B Economy

(A) Current Economic Situation

Real GDP grew 2.9% year-on-year for all of 2023 and continued to grow at 2.8% year-on-year in 2024. From October to December, the economy grew at an annualized rate of 2.3% year-on-year, marking the 10th consecutive quarter of positive growth. Consumer spending, which accounts for about 70% of GDP, also led GDP growth at an annualized rate of 2.8% year-on-year. It is necessary to pay attention to the downside risk due to the impact of continuing high interest rates and the impact of future policy trends.

As for inflation, which had been the focus of public attention, the consumer price index (CPI) slowed after reaching 9% year-on-year in September 2022 for the first time in about 40 years, and fell below 3% in July 2024 for the first time in approximately three years. Regarding the target policy interest rate, the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) had kept it at 5.25% to 5.50% for about a year since July 2023, but in September 2024, in response to the decline in the inflation rate, the FOMC lowered the target rate to between 4.75% and 5.00%, marking the first interest rate cut in about four and a half years. At the November FOMC meeting, the rate was further cut by 0.25 percentage points, to between 4.2% and 4.5%. In terms of employment, the unemployment rate remained low at around 4% throughout the year, as in 2023, and the number of workers employed also increased steadily.

(B) Major economic policies

Economic policy became one of the biggest issues in the presidential election. The U.S. economy was performing relatively well, with GDP maintaining growth for 11 consecutive quarters as of the fourth quarter of 2024 and the unemployment rate remaining low. However, economic disparities within the country have been widening year by year, and according to statistics from the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, for the first half of 2024, household assets owned by the top 10% accounted for approximately 67% of all assets, while household assets owned by the bottom 50% accounted for only about 2.5% of the total. Only a small portion

of the population has benefited from the prosperous economy, including the long-term upward trend in stock prices in the U.S. market. With continuing inflation, public dissatisfaction with the current situation is considered to have had a certain influence on the election results.

Policy on China was pursued with bipartisan support amid growing attention to the divisions in American society and domestic politics. In April, the U.S. Congress passed a bill that would ban the use of apps including TikTok, managed by the Chinese company ByteDance, in the U.S. unless certain conditions were met. In May, the U.S. Government announced the results of a review of tariff measures on imports from China that have been implemented since 2018 based on domestic law (Section 301 of the Trade Act), and President Biden instructed the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) to raise the tariff rates on some tariffs imposed on China. Specifically, the Biden administration targeted increased tariffs on Chinese steel and aluminum, semiconductors, electric vehicles (EVs), batteries and critical minerals, solar cells, ship-to-shore cranes, and medical-related products, with a total value of 18 billion U.S. dollars (approximately 4% of the amount of annual U.S. imports from China). In June, the U.S. Treasury Department announced a proposal to restrict foreign investment in advanced technologies that could have a significant impact on national security, and to restrict investment in “countries of concern,” consisting of China, Hong Kong, and Macau. In September, the USTR proposed adding polysilicon and wafers, which are necessary for the production of solar cells and semiconductors, to the list of items subject to increased tariffs, and announced a final revised draft for the review of additional tariffs on China under Section 301 of the Trade Act, including provisions for partial exemptions for ship-to-shore cranes. In December, the U.S. Department of Commerce announced an interim final rule to make certain semiconductor manufacturing equipment subject to new export restrictions, as well as a final rule to add 140 companies to the Entity List in order to strengthen controls on semiconductor exports to China. In addition, that month, the USTR announced that it would launch an investigation into China's legacy semiconductors under Section 301 of the Trade Act.

At his inauguration ceremony in January 2025, President Trump stated that a corrupt ruling class was squeezing power and wealth from the people, and that he would take measures to combat inflation and lower prices, including the declaration of a national energy emergency and promoting fossil fuel production. Immediately after taking office, he signed a number of presidential executive orders in the field of the economy, including the “America First Trade Policy” memorandum which instructs relevant agencies to conduct investigations into unfair and unbalanced trade, economic and trade relations with China, and economic security, and to submit reports by April 1 that include recommendations for appropriate measures. President Trump also signed the “Unleashing American Energy” executive order which orders the temporary suspension of spending of funds allocated through the Inflation Reduction Act and the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, purporting to abolish the Green New Deal policy.

(2) Japan-U.S. Political Relations

Between January 2024 and the end of February 2025, Japanese and U.S. leaders held a total of five meetings (including one telephone call) and six meetings between their foreign ministers (including one telephone call). In April, Prime Minister Kishida paid an Official Visit with State Dinner to the U.S., the first time in nine years that a Japanese prime minister had done so, and deepened his personal relationship of trust and ties with President Biden. Based on the deep trust between the leaders and foreign ministers, the Japan-U.S. Alliance is stronger than ever. The Japan-U.S. Alliance is the cornerstone of Japan's diplomacy and security and is the foundation for peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region and the international community. Japan and the U.S. are working closely together on all fronts, including regional affairs, security, the economy, global issues, and people-to-people exchanges, toward realizing a “Free and Open Indo-Pacific (FOIP)” based on the rule of law.

Foreign Minister Kamikawa visited Washington, D.C. on January 12 and held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Antony Blinken. The two Ministers exchanged views on regional situations, including the situation in the Indo-Pacific region, Russia's aggression in Ukraine, and the

situation in the Middle East, and shared the view to advance efforts to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance.

Prime Minister Kishida made an Official Visit with State Dinner to the U.S. from April 8 to 14, the first such visit by a Japanese prime minister in nine years.

Prime Minister Kishida visited Arlington National Cemetery on April 9 and laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. Afterwards, at the invitation of President Biden and Dr. Jill Biden, the Prime Minister and Mrs. Kishida visited the White House and attended an informal dinner. The Prime Minister and Mrs. Kishida enjoyed a friendly exchange in a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere. They were given a tour of the White House by the President and Dr. Biden, who were then presented with a cherry blossom sapling that the Prime Minister and Mrs. Kishida had brought from Japan. The two leaders and their spouses posed for photographs with a model of a pressurized lunar rover being developed by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) and Toyota Motor Corporation and confirmed their expectations for, and the importance of, Japan's contribution to the Artemis program. At the informal dinner that followed, the two leaders and their spouses deepened their rapport in a relaxed atmosphere and strengthened their personal bonds and trust.

On April 10, Prime Minister Kishida attended a welcoming ceremony held at the White House. President Biden stated that the Japan-U.S. Alliance is the cornerstone of the peace, security, and prosperity of the Indo-Pacific region and international society and that Japan and the U.S. are true global partners. President Biden also stated that Japan and the U.S. are the closest of friends. Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan would lead the work on solving the challenges of the Indo-Pacific region and the world together with the U.S. as global partners. Prime Minister Kishida also touched upon the cherry blossoms on the Potomac River, the symbol of Japan-U.S. friendship, and noted that Japan had decided to give 250 cherry blossom trees to the U.S., commemorating the 250th anniversary of U.S. Independence.

That day, Prime Minister Kishida held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting with President Biden. Prime Minister Kishida stated that Japan and the U.S. are bonded by deep trust and multilayered friendship, and that based



Prime Minister Kishida explaining the gifts, including Wajima lacquerware, to the President and Dr. Biden (April 9, Washington, D.C., U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

on those bonds, Japan and the U.S. have become global partners beyond bilateral or regional spheres, to uphold and bolster the free and open international order based on the rule of law. The two leaders concurred on this point, and shared the recognition that division of the international society is deepening and it is facing an unprecedented level of challenges, and shared the view to jointly uphold and bolster the free and open international order based on the rule of law. As the role of the Japan-U.S. Alliance has become more significant than ever before, Prime Minister Kishida stated that, with a strong determination, he has been making efforts to reinforce Japan's defense capabilities in accordance with its National Security Strategy. In response, President Biden reiterated his strong support for the Prime Minister's initiatives. The two leaders reaffirmed the urgent need to further strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance and shared the view to expand and deepen security and defense cooperation. President Biden also reiterated the unwavering U.S. commitment to the defense of Japan.

The two leaders exchanged views on regional issues that included various issues related to China; responses to North Korea, including its nuclear and missile issues and the abductions issue; the situation in Ukraine; and other regional situations including the situation in the Middle East. The two leaders reaffirmed that unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force or coercion are totally unacceptable anywhere in the world and to resolutely respond to them, in coordination with allies and like-minded countries.

The two leaders concurred on further promoting cooperation between Japan and the U.S. in the area



Arrival ceremony at the White House (April 10, Washington, D.C., U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

of outer space. They welcomed the signing of a Lunar Surface Exploration Implementing Arrangement, which includes the provision of a pressurized lunar rover from Japan as well as the allocation of two astronaut flight opportunities to the lunar surface to Japan. Furthermore, the two leaders announced a shared goal for a Japanese national to be the first non-American astronaut to land on the Moon on a future Artemis mission, assuming important benchmarks are achieved.

The two leaders confirmed that realistic and practical efforts on nuclear disarmament are making progress, including the announcement of the "G7 Leaders' Hiroshima Vision on Nuclear Disarmament" in the previous year. Prime Minister Kishida welcomed the U.S. participation in the Friends of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty (FMCT)."

They reaffirmed that people-to-people ties are the foundation of unwavering bilateral relations between Japan and the U.S. and that it is important to further promote people-to-people exchanges to further strengthen the bilateral ties.

To manifest the unwavering determination to uphold and bolster the free and open international order based on the rule of law, which is the basis of global peace and prosperity, the two leaders issued a Japan-U.S. Joint Leaders' Statement "Global Partners for the Future" as a guideline of their determination.

On April 11, Prime Minister Kishida gave an address entitled "For the Future: Our Global Partnership" at a Joint Meeting of the U.S. Congress. The address was presided over by Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives Mike Johnson, and was attended by many members of both chambers of the U.S.

Congress, including U.S. Vice President and President of the Senate Kamala Harris, members of the U.S. Congressional House and Senate Leadership, and people from various sectors of society. Prime Minister Kishida received warm applause and standing ovations from the floor. Prime Minister Kishida conveyed the message that Japan and the U.S. are, and will continue to be, global partners for the future, based on a solid alliance and enduring friendship.

On July 28, Foreign Minister Kamikawa held a Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting with Secretary of State Blinken, who was visiting Japan to attend the Japan-U.S. Security Consultative Committee ("2+2") and the Japan-Australia-India-U.S. (Quad) Foreign Ministers' Meeting. The two Ministers discussed responses to issues common to both countries including economic security and exchanged views on regional issues surrounding Japan, including the situation on the South China Sea. Both sides reaffirmed the importance of cooperation between the two countries, as well as the importance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

On September 21, Prime Minister Kishida, who was visiting Delaware, held a Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting at President Biden's private residence. At the beginning of the meeting, Prime Minister Kishida and President Biden walked together through the President's private residence, and President Biden introduced Prime Minister Kishida to the buildings and the lake surrounding the residence. The two leaders engaged in the meeting in a friendly atmosphere. The two leaders comprehensively reviewed the progress of Japan-U.S. relations and candidly exchanged their views on common issues that both countries share. Both leaders concurred on the importance of continuing to enhance the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and of steadily advancing bilateral security cooperation. Prime Minister Kishida emphasized that Japan and the U.S. should further promote FOIP through advancing their partnerships with like-minded countries, including the G7, Japan-Australia-India-U.S., Japan-U.S.-ROK, and Japan-U.S.-Philippines, and also stressed the need to advance such cooperation with the Global South.

The two leaders exchanged views on regional issues that included various issues related to China; responses



Prime Minister Kishida giving an address at a Joint Meeting of the U.S. Congress (April 10, Washington, D.C., U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)



Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting (July 28, Tokyo)

to North Korea, including its nuclear and missile issues and the abductions issue; the situation in Ukraine; and other regional situations including the situation in the Middle East. The two leaders shared the view to continue working closely together. Prime Minister Kishida emphasized the importance of continuing cooperation with the U.S. in leading efforts toward a world without nuclear weapons. At the end of the meeting, the two leaders confirmed that Japan and the U.S. continue to be global partners at the core of a free and open international order.

The Ishiba administration, which took office in October, has also positioned strengthening the Japan-U.S. Alliance as the administration's top priority in terms of foreign and security policy. On October 2, Prime Minister Ishiba had a telephone call with President Biden. Prime Minister Ishiba stated that he wants to continue working closely together with the U.S. as global partners at the core of a free and open international order, and both leaders concurred on the importance of continuing to enhance the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. The two leaders also concurred on working together



Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting (September 21, Delaware, U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

on economic security cooperation, and on further developing networks of like-minded countries, including Japan-U.S.-ROK, Japan-Australia-India-U.S., and Japan-U.S.-Philippines. The two leaders shared the intention to continue working closely on issues related to China, dealing with North Korea including on the nuclear and missile issues as well as the abductions issue, and the situation in Ukraine.

On October 2, Foreign Minister Iwaya held a telephone call with Secretary of State Blinken. Foreign Minister Iwaya stated that he would like to work closely together with Secretary Blinken to further deepen cooperation as global partners to uphold and bolster the free and open international order based on the rule of law, and to further strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance, which is stronger than ever. The two Ministers concurred to implement cooperation to further strengthen Japan-U.S. Alliance deterrence and response capabilities, building on the outcomes of the Japan-U.S. “2+2” in July, and to work closely together in the preservation and enhancement of the rules-based economic order in the Indo-Pacific region and economic security cooperation.

On November 7, Prime Minister Ishiba held a telephone call with President-elect Donald Trump. At the outset, Prime Minister Ishiba congratulated President-elect Trump on his victory in the presidential election. Both sides confirmed that they would work closely together to bring the Japan-U.S. Alliance to new heights, and also concurred on realizing a meeting in-person at the earliest possible opportunity that would be convenient for both sides.

On November 14, Foreign Minister Iwaya, who was visiting Lima, Peru to attend the APEC Ministerial

Meeting, held the first in-person foreign ministers’ meeting with Secretary of State Blinken. The two Ministers exchanged their views on regional situations such as issues related to China, policies toward North Korea including on the nuclear and missile issues as well as the abductions issue, and the situation in Ukraine. The two Ministers also concurred to implement cooperation to further strengthen Japan-U.S. Alliance deterrence and response capabilities, and further develop networks of like-minded countries.

On November 15, Prime Minister Ishiba, visiting Lima, Peru to attend the APEC Summit Meeting, held a meeting with President Biden. The two leaders concurred on continuing cooperating to strengthen the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and to further develop networks of like-minded countries, including Japan-U.S.-ROK. They also concurred on continuing working closely on policies toward the situation regarding North Korea including on the nuclear and missile issues as well as the abductions issue.

On January 7, 2025, Foreign Minister Iwaya held a working lunch with Secretary of State Blinken, who was visiting Japan. Foreign Minister Iwaya expressed his gratitude to Secretary Blinken for his contribution to the Japan-U.S. Alliance, and the two Ministers concurred on continuing working closely together to further uphold and bolster the Japan-U.S. relationship, which has become stronger than ever.

On January 20, Foreign Minister Iwaya visited Washington, D.C. to attend President Trump’s inauguration ceremony at the invitation of the U.S.

On January 21, Foreign Minister Iwaya held a foreign ministers’ meeting with Secretary of State Marco Rubio. This was the first meeting between



Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers’ Meeting (November 14, Lima, Peru)



Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting (November 15, Lima, Peru; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)



Japan-U.S. Summit Meeting (February 7, 2025, Washington, D.C., U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)



Japan-U.S. Foreign Ministers' Meeting (January 20, 2025, Washington, D.C., U.S.)

the two Ministers. Foreign Minister Iwaya congratulated Secretary Rubio on his appointment, and the two Ministers concurred to work together to continue elevating the Japan-U.S. Alliance to new heights and to realize FOIP. Furthermore, the two Ministers concurred to maintain close partnership to further uphold and bolster Japan-U.S. relations, which have become stronger than ever.

On February 7, Prime Minister Ishiba, during his visit to Washington, D.C., held the first in-person meeting with President Trump. The two leaders shared views on the severe and complex security environment and concurred to work closely to realize FOIP and to elevate the Japan-U.S. Alliance to new heights. They also concurred to strengthen the deterrence and response capabilities of the Japan-U.S. Alliance. Prime Minister Ishiba reiterated Japan's unwavering commitment to fundamentally reinforcing its defense capabilities and President Trump welcomed such commitment. President Trump underscored the unwavering commitment by the U.S. to the defense of Japan, using its full range of capabilities, including nuclear. The two leaders

once again reaffirmed that Article V of the Japan-U.S. Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security applies to the Senkaku Islands. The two leaders confirmed their commitment to the steady implementation of the realignment of U.S. Forces in Japan in accordance with the Okinawa Consolidation Plan, including the construction of the Futenma Replacement Facility at Henoko and the return of Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Futenma. The two leaders exchanged views on regional situations such as issues related to China, dealing with North Korea including on the nuclear and missile issues as well as the abductions issue. The two leaders concurred on the importance of further developing coordination of like-minded countries, including Japan-U.S.-ROK, Japan-Australia-India-U.S., and Japan-U.S.-Philippines. They shared the intention to maintain close partnership to further uphold and bolster Japan-U.S. relations, which have become stronger than ever, and they issued a joint statement. At the end of the meeting, Prime Minister Ishiba invited President Trump to make an official visit to Japan at an early date.

(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 national security and human interactions. For example, Japan has been the world's largest investor in the U.S. for five consecutive years in terms of outstanding direct investment in the U.S. (783.3 billion U.S. dollars in 2023), and helped to create approximately 970,000 jobs in 2022 (second place following the United Kingdom). In addition to Japanese companies strengthening ties, 2024 was a year in which Japan-U.S. economic relations

further deepened, including the Prime Minister's visit to the U.S.

On April 10, Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with President Biden in which the two leaders shared the recognition that facilitating private sector-led two-way investment between Japan and the U.S. is crucial for the two countries to together lead global economic growth. Touching upon the investments by Japanese companies in North Carolina, where he was scheduled to visit during his stay in the U.S., Prime Minister Kishida explained that Japanese companies have made tremendous contributions to the U.S. economy through investments and job creation, to which President Biden expressed his applause. With a view to maintaining and strengthening competitiveness in advanced technologies, including semiconductors, artificial intelligence (AI), and quantum technology, the two leaders welcomed the materialization of ongoing research and development cooperation and confirmed their intention to accelerate bilateral collaboration on establishing start-up environments that promote innovation and human resource development exchange. The two leaders concurred on strengthening cooperation to respond to economic coercion, non-market policies and practices, and overproduction, enhance supply chains resilience, and work toward the realization of sustainable and inclusive economic growth through efforts such as decarbonization. In this context, the two leaders shared the view to further deepen coordination toward ensuring economic security either bilaterally, through the G7, or based on other various frameworks. Furthermore, Prime Minister Kishida stated that the U.S. economic engagement in the Indo-Pacific region is essential, and the two leaders exchanged views on the economic order of the region.

Japan and the U.S. are also strengthening their cooperation in a wide range of fields together with regional partners with the aim of achieving sustainable and inclusive economic growth in the Indo-Pacific region. Regarding the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) (See Chapter 3, Section 3, 2(1) A(b)), which was launched in conjunction with President Biden's visit to Japan in May 2022, the IPEF Supply Chain Agreement (Pillar 2) entered into force on February 24, 2024. Furthermore, an IPEF Ministerial Meeting and Investor Forum were held in

Singapore in June, and signing ceremonies were held for the IPEF Clean Economy Agreement (Pillar 3), the IPEF Fair Economy Agreement (Pillar 4), and the IPEF Agreement. The IPEF Clean Economy Agreement and the IPEF Agreement entered into force on October 11. The IPEF Fair Economy Agreement entered into force on October 12.

Regarding the Japan-U.S. Partnership on Trade, which was launched in November 2021, a meeting was held in July 2024, discussing issues such as strengthening Japan-U.S. cooperation in the field of trade in the Indo-Pacific region and Japan-U.S. cooperation on the global agenda. In addition, regarding the Japan-U.S. Economic Policy Consultative Committee (the Economic "2+2"), which was launched in January 2022, a Vice-Ministerial Meeting was held in September 2024, where Senior Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs Akahori, Vice-Minister for International Affairs at the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry Matsuo, Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment Jose W. Fernandez, and Under Secretary of Commerce for International Trade Marisa Lago confirmed they would further materialize bilateral initiatives toward (a) strengthening the rules-based economic order in the Indo-Pacific region as well as (b) protecting and promoting critical and emerging technologies. They also concurred to work toward further strengthening the bilateral economic relationship, including expanding mutual investment between Japan and the U.S. Both sides shared the recognition that the Economic "2+2" has been functioning as an effective framework in promoting Japan-U.S. cooperation in areas including economic security. Furthermore, they confirmed that, through this framework, they will continue to discuss diplomacy, security, and economy as a whole and further strengthen their cooperation on common challenges, including economic security as well as maintaining and strengthening the rules-based economic order.

During the eighth and ninth expert-level working group meetings of the Japan-U.S. Global Digital Connectivity Partnership (GDGP) held in May and October, government officials and the private sector exchanged views on Open RAN, 5G, and submarine cables, among other issues, and Japan and the U.S. seized various other opportunities to strengthen

COLUMN

A New Tradition in New York, the City of Parades
— Japan Parade

Consulate General of Japan in New York

What comes to mind when you think of New York? Perhaps it is the night view of skyscrapers, or the hustle and bustle of New Year's Eve in Times Square? New York is actually known as a city of parades, hosting approximately 200 to 250 parades each year. On weekends, multiple parades take place across the city, celebrating specific holidays, countries, or ethnic communities, sometimes even several in a single day. Many people have probably seen the longstanding Thanksgiving Day Parade on the news, but beyond that, there are parades honoring Irish, Italian, Caribbean, and other cultures and traditions. Meanwhile, aside from occasional events like the welcome parade held in 1860 for a Japanese diplomatic mission to the U.S., New York has never had a recurring Japan-related parade.

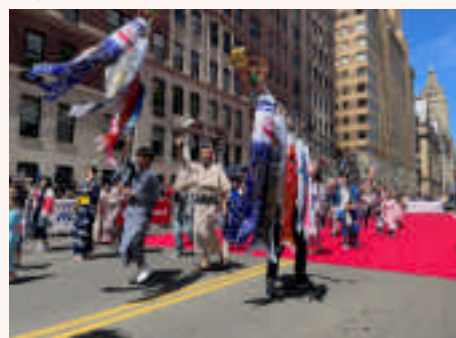
Facets of Japanese culture, such as anime and cuisine, as well as the activities of Japanese companies, the Consulate General, and the Japanese American community — including individuals of Japanese descendants — have been warmly embraced by Americans as an everyday part of life in the U.S. and New York. For this, the Japanese American community expressed its gratitude to New York by holding the first Japan Parade in May 2022 along Central Park West in the heart of Manhattan.

Japanese and Japanese Americans, as well as Americans with an interest in Japan, participated in the parade. It featured groups ranging from Japanese traditional performing artists to anime fans, schools, and local police and fire departments, leaving a strong impression on spectators of the diverse and vibrant exchanges between Japan and the U.S. The parade also included performances featuring popular Japanese anime characters, as well as booths showcasing a broad range of Japanese cuisine. The event was covered by various media outlets, including the three major U.S. television networks.

At the third Japan Parade held in May 2024, 2,500 marchers participated in the procession and the event attracted a crowd of 50,000 people along the route. The parade is steadily becoming a hallmark of early summer in New York and serves as a good opportunity to highlight Japan's presence and its contributions to the society and economy of the U.S.

In particular, the third Japan Parade featured a float commemorating 2024 as “U.S.-Japan Tourism Year,” as well as the first-ever participation of a Japanese local government, Yamaguchi City, which was ranked third in the New York Times’ “52 Places to Go in 2024.” To promote the city’s charm and culture, the float showcased Mayor ITO Kazutaka of Yamaguchi City, members of the Yamaguchi *Gion Bayashi* Preservation Society, and “Yuda Yuko,” *Yuda Onsen*’s mascot character. The float drew significant attention from the crowd and became one of the high points of the parade. With some spectators expressing interest in visiting Yamaguchi — saying things like “I’d love to go there!” — Yamaguchi City’s participation was recognized as a good practice in attracting inbound tourism to regional cities and held significant value in terms of promoting regional cooperation.

There are various Japan-related events held on a regular basis in New York, including the Japan Parade. Seeing is believing. If you ever have the opportunity, please come and experience Japan in New York.



Scenes from the third Japan Parade (top) with Yamaguchi City's float (bottom) (May 11, New York, U.S.)

COLUMN

Assistance for the Maui Wildfire

Consulate General of Japan in Honolulu

On August 8, 2023, dry and strong winds caused by the passage of Hurricane Dora sparked wildfires across the Hawaiian Islands. On Maui, at least 102 people lost their lives, and approximately 2,200 buildings in the town of Lahaina and 550 buildings in the district of Kula were damaged. Total damages are estimated at 5.5 billion U.S. dollars, making it the most destructive fire in U.S. history in the past 100 years.

The town of Lahaina, which was particularly hard hit, was the capital of the Kingdom of Hawaii in the early 19th century. It is designated in the National Register of Historic Places and is a historic preservation area. It was home to many historical and cultural buildings and was one of Maui's main tourist destinations. However, the town was burned to the ground in an instant, and many residents and tourists were forced to evacuate with only the clothes on their backs.

Japan and Hawaii share deep and strong historical, cultural, economic, and geopolitical ties. After the fires broke out, Japanese local governments, companies, voluntary organizations, and individuals sent considerable support. The Government of Japan also provided a total of approximately 2 million U.S. dollars in assistance through the American Red Cross and Japan Platform (JPF)¹ for the victims of the disaster. Japan also organized the Kibou for Maui Project in collaboration with the U.S.-Japan Council (USJC),² a Japanese-American organization founded by Japanese-Americans that remains active today. This project seeks to build a more disaster-resilient future by inviting affected students and leaders from the State of Hawaii and the County of Maui to Japan to share Japan's experiences and knowledge in disaster recovery and reconstruction.

One part of the project, the TOMODACHI Kibou for Maui Program invited 21 high school students from Maui to the Tohoku region in March and July, 2024. When the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred in Japan in 2011, a similar program called the TOMODACHI Initiative³ was organized by USJC and the U.S. Embassy in Japan. At that time, students from Tohoku were invited to Hawaii to participate in a program that offered spiritual healing through experiential learning. The participants from that time played a central role in welcoming Maui high school students to Japan this time. High school students from Maui said that they saw a ray of hope for the future after interacting with Japanese people and learning about local government reconstruction efforts, disaster risk reduction, environmental protection efforts, and leadership.

In May, a program for the leadership delegation from the County of Maui was held, with a delegation of 15 people visiting Japan led by Maui County Mayor Richard Bissen. In the Tohoku region, they exchanged views with local government officials and visited local companies and energy facilities. In Tokyo, they visited companies engaged in disaster risk reduction and mitigation projects. After returning home in August, a meeting was held where the participating students and leaders shared their experiences in Japan and engaged in lively exchanges of opinions regarding the recovery and reconstruction of the town of Lahaina. The students actively participated in the discussion on how to better develop the town, including ways to maintain a balance between the living environment of local residents and tourism — the main industry in Lahaina — while still respecting its history and culture, efforts toward further economic development, and measures to handle changes in the natural environment.



Participants of the first cohort of the TOMODACHI Kibou for Maui (March, Higashi-Matsushima City, Miyagi Prefecture; Photo: USJC)



Participants in the Kibou for Maui Project leadership delegation program (May, Tokyo; Photo: USJC)

Japan and Hawaii have long fostered people-to-people bonds while cooperating, helping, and learning from each other in response to common challenges, including natural disasters. It is hoped that Japan's support for the Maui wildfire will contribute to the recovery of the affected areas, deepen mutual understanding and trust between Japan and Hawaii, and lead to a future bound by even stronger ties.

- 1 JPF: Japan Platform, or JPF, is an NGO established in August 2000 (obtained NGO status in May 2001). It was established jointly by NGOs, the business community, and the Government of Japan, with the purpose of providing prompt and effective emergency humanitarian assistance activities by Japanese NGOs in response to natural disasters and refugee situations outside of Japan.
- 2 USJC: The U.S.-Japan Council is an educational non-profit organization established in 2009, with headquarters in Washington, D.C. and offices in California, Hawaii, and Tokyo.
- 3 The TOMODACHI Initiative is a public-private partnership between USJC and the U.S. Embassy in Tokyo that was born out of support for Japan's recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake. It invests in the next generation of Japanese and American leaders through educational and cultural exchanges, as well as leadership programs.

cooperation in the digital field. In particular, with regard to ICT infrastructure such as Open RAN and 5G, it was confirmed that Japan and the U.S. will identify priority countries to jointly engage with under a shared vision and will continue to hold discussions with the aim of expanding cooperation to promote inclusive Internet connectivity and build secure ICT infrastructure.

Along with the federal government, building closer ties with the unique individual states of the U.S. will help deepen Japan-U.S. economic ties at an even closer level. In 2024, the Japan-U.S. Business Conference, the Joint Meeting of the Japan-Midwest U.S. Association and the Midwest U.S.-Japan Association, and the Joint Meeting of the Southeast U.S.-Japan and Japan-U.S. Southeast Associations were held in person in the U.S. The governors of Texas and Idaho also visited Japan on separate occasions.

Moreover, in order to strengthen the foundation of Japan-U.S. economic relations from the grassroots level, the Government of Japan is also working as one on efforts to promote understanding of Japan. Since the launch of the Government Taskforce on Strengthening Japan-U.S. Ties at the Grass Roots Tour in 2017, the Government of Japan has undertaken efforts to build tailor-made relations in accordance with the characteristics of each region and the level of interest in Japan within the target regions. As an example, various initiatives have been implemented with the cooperation of various ministries and agencies, such as the "Grassroots Caravan" to disseminate the contributions of Japanese companies to regional economies, and projects related to supporting Japanese start-up companies in light of the "New Form of Capitalism" set forth by the Kishida Cabinet.

3 Canada

(1) Canada's Domestic Situation

The Trudeau administration had been running its government stably thanks to the "Supply and Confidence Agreement" with the New Democratic Party (NDP) concluded in March 2022, but in September, the NDP announced the termination of the agreement. The ruling Liberal Party suffered defeats in the Toronto by-election in June and the Montreal by-election in September and has since carried out multiple cabinet reshuffles. In November, the Trudeau administration

announced a temporary reduction of the goods and services tax and support measures for citizens to revive the government's sluggish approval ratings. In December, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance Chrystia Freeland resigned, and the Trudeau administration embarked on another cabinet reshuffle, but in January 2025, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced his intention to resign as leader of the Liberal Party and as Prime Minister. On the economic front, according to the Department of Finance

Canada's economic statement in December, real GDP growth in 2024 is expected to be 1.3% (1.2% in the previous year), the unemployment rate to be 6.4% (5.4% in the previous year), and the annual average of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) to be 2.5% (3.9% in the previous year). In addition, the government was unable to achieve the goal set out in the previous year's economic statement of keeping the fiscal deficit for fiscal year 2023-24 below the 40.1 billion Canadian dollars projected in the 2023 budget guideline.

On the diplomatic front, Canada has been strengthening its involvement in the Indo-Pacific region based on the Indo-Pacific Strategy announced in November 2022. Canada's Defence Policy, revised in April 2024 also sets forth a policy of ensuring a persistent presence in the region. In 2024, Canada further strengthened its presence in the Indo-Pacific with the deployment of three warships to the region.

There have also been major developments in the traditionally stable U.S.-Canada relationship. After the U.S. presidential election in November, President-elect Trump announced that he would impose a 25% tariff on all products from Canada and Mexico, citing illegal immigration and the influx of fentanyl. In response to this, Prime Minister Trudeau had a telephone call with President-elect Trump and visited Florida for a dinner with the President-elect. In addition, in response to the concerns of President-elect Trump, the Government of Canada announced in December a comprehensive plan to strengthen border security over six years, worth 1.3 billion Canadian dollars.

Based on the "Strategic Partnership" established with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in September 2023, Canada is strengthening its relationship with ASEAN, including holding a special summit in October to strengthen ASEAN connectivity and resilience. In December, Canada announced that negotiations for a comprehensive economic partnership agreement with Indonesia had been concluded. Regarding relations with China, in July, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mélanie Joly visited China for the first time in seven years as a Canadian foreign minister. In August, the Government of Canada announced additional tariff measures of 100% on Chinese-made electric vehicles (EVs) and 25% on steel and aluminum products from China, to protect Canadian workers and

key economic sectors from China's unfair trade practices. These measures were applied starting in October. Dialogue is continuing, with the foreign ministers of Canada and China holding a meeting during the APEC Ministerial Meeting in November. Regarding relations with Taiwan, former President Tsai Ing-wen visited Canada for the first time in November and delivered a speech at the Halifax International Security Forum. As for relations with the ROK, a Canada-ROK Foreign Ministers' Meeting was held in July, and the Canada-Korea Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Action Plan was adopted. The first Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting "2+2" was held in November. Relations with India have remained tense since the murder of a Sikh leader in Canada in 2023. In May, the Government of Canada arrested three Indian suspects. Also in October, both Canada and India announced the expulsion of six diplomatic and consular staff.

In response to the situation in Ukraine, Canada has continued to impose sanctions on Russia and provide support to Ukraine, including making statements expressing full support for Ukraine's use of long-range weapons. Since February 2022, the Government of Canada has committed a total of 19.5 billion Canadian dollars (approximately 2.1 trillion Japanese yen) in assistance, including military assistance totaling 4.5 billion Canadian dollars. In October, Canada hosted a ministerial meeting on Ukraine's Peace Formula in Vancouver. In response to the situation in Israel and Palestine, the Government of Canada announced new humanitarian aid of 50 million Canadian dollars in November, bringing the total amount of humanitarian aid to 215 million Canadian dollars (approximately 23 billion Japanese yen).

(2) Japan-Canada Relations

From January 2024 to the end of January 2025, three summit meetings and four foreign ministers' meetings were held between Japan and Canada.

On January 13, Foreign Minister Kamikawa visited Foreign Minister Joly's hometown of Montreal for a Japan-Canada Foreign Ministers' Meeting. The two Ministers confirmed the progress of the "Japan-Canada Action Plan for contributing to a free and open Indo-Pacific region," and concurred that they would work closely together on the CPTPP, people-to-people



Japan-Canada Foreign Ministers' Meeting (January 13, Montreal, Canada)



Japan-Canada Foreign Ministers' Meeting (July 22, Tokyo)

exchanges, the success of Expo 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan, and to achieve a world without nuclear weapons.

On June 14, Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau while visiting Apulia, Italy, to attend the G7 Summit. Prime Minister Kishida welcomed Canada's recent revision of its Defence Policy, in which Canada expressed its commitment to contribute to stability in the Indo-Pacific region by maintaining a more persistent presence. He also welcomed recent progress in Japan-Canada cooperation in the area of the rule of law including surveillance activities against illegal ship-to-ship transfers and illegal fishing. The two leaders confirmed that Japan and Canada would continue to work together to contribute to the peace and stability of the Indo-Pacific region.

On July 22, Foreign Minister Kamikawa held a working lunch with Foreign Minister Joly, who was visiting Japan. The two Ministers welcomed the new cooperation being advanced in the joint exercises and surveillance activities targeting IUU fishing, and concurred to continue to work together to promote bilateral cooperation on economic issues,



Japan-Canada Summit Meeting (September 22, New York, U.S.; Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

including the establishment of a comprehensive EV value chain. The two Ministers also concurred to keep promoting bilateral cooperation in the areas of Women, Peace and Security (WPS) as well as in the Arctic.

On September 22, Prime Minister Kishida held a meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau while visiting New York, U.S., to attend the United Nations General Assembly, where Prime Minister Kishida recognized Canada's contribution as the chair of the CPTPP in 2024 and mentioned that Japan would like to continue cooperating with Canada toward a world without nuclear weapons.

On October 11, immediately after assuming his position, Foreign Minister Iwaya held a telephone call with Foreign Minister Joly. The two Ministers confirmed their intention to advance bilateral and G7 cooperation with Canada and concurred to hold a face-to-face foreign ministers' meeting at an early date.

On November 18, Prime Minister Ishiba, who was visiting Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to attend the G20 Summit, held his first meeting with Prime Minister Trudeau. The two leaders concurred to continue working together toward promoting bilateral economic and security cooperation including on the liquefied natural gas (LNG) production and EVs. The two leaders confirmed that they would cooperate on regional situations such as responses toward North Korea and relations with China, and given Canada's G7 Presidency in 2025, the two leaders concurred to continue working closely together toward the success of the G7 Summit.

On November 26, Foreign Minister Iwaya held a meeting with Foreign Minister Joly during his visit to Fiuggi, Italy to attend the G7 Foreign Ministers'



Japan-Canada Summit Meeting (November 18, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil;
Photo: Official Website of the Prime Minister of Japan and His Cabinet)

Meeting. The two Ministers shared the view on the importance of cooperation among like-minded countries in relation to the regional situations, including deepening military cooperation between Russia and North Korea, and situations in the Middle East, Ukraine and East Asia. Foreign Minister Iwaya welcomed Canada's increased engagement in the Indo-Pacific region, stating that the security in the Euro-Atlantic and Indo-Pacific regions is inseparable, and that Japan would support Canada during its G7 Presidency in 2025.

In the economic and trade fields, Japan cooperated with Canada, the 2024 chair of the CPTPP, in advancing discussions on issues such as accessions to the CPTPP and the general review, with a view to maintaining and strengthening a free and fair economic order in the Indo-Pacific. Japan also worked together with Canada on reform of the World Trade Organization (WTO), including discussions in the Ottawa Group. In October, the first meeting of the Dialogue based on the Memorandum of Cooperation concerning Battery Supply Chains, which was signed in September 2023, was held in Ottawa. At this meeting, the participants discussed collaboration between Japan and Canada on battery supply chains, exchange



Japan-Canada Foreign Ministers' Meeting (November 26, Fiuggi, Italy)

of information on policies of the two countries, measures to promote trade and investment, and research and development, among other topics. The two countries reaffirmed that they would continue to strengthen their coordination based on the Memorandum of Cooperation in order to build sustainable and reliable global battery supply chains, from the perspectives of carbon neutrality and economic security. In addition, economic relations between Japan and Canada have been further strengthened through the establishment of a comprehensive EV value chain in Canada and bilateral cooperation on LNG Canada.

In the field of science and technology, the 16th Japan-Canada Joint Committee Meeting on Cooperation in Science and Technology took place in Tokyo in May. The meeting provided an opportunity to share information on recent developments concerning national policies on science, technology, and innovation (STI); discuss funding opportunities and researcher mobility, mechanisms for co-innovation, Open Science, and research security/integrity; and highlight current and future bilateral initiatives in various fields: energy research, Arctic research, aerospace, health-related technologies, semiconductors, nanotechnology, physics R&D, quantum, AI, and marine/ocean research.